

Project Details

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| Title | Enhancing the Serving to Learn and Learning to Serve Initiative | Status | IN REVIEW |
| Category | 1-Helping Students Learn | Updated | 08-27-2010 |
| Timeline | | Reviewed | |
| Planned Project Kickoff | 08-13-2010 | Created | 08-12-2010 |
| Target Completion | 07-31-2012 | Last Modified | 08-27-2010 |

- 1: Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:
- A: The project goal is to improve and enhance the Service-Learning program at Wayne State College. Students will be positively impacted by increasing their opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their community while building their academic and civic skills. The institution will seek a qualified individual to serve as Service-Learning coordinator who will continue and expand the current Service-Learning efforts of the institution. A Service-Learning retention study started in 2008, will be continued. Preliminary findings of this study of Service-Learning and First-Year Student retention indicate an increased 6% retention rate for first-year students who are involved in Service-Learning initiatives.
- 2: Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:
- A: At Wayne State College, Academic Service-Learning is a pedagogy that integrates service in the community with academic study (theory/curriculum). Faculty, in partnership with representatives of non-profit, community organizations, design Service-Learning projects based on two main objectives: 1) meeting identified community needs, which helps strengthen the community, and 2) advancing the students' understanding of course content. Strong reflective components are built into the course to help students consider relationships between their service, the course curriculum, and its impact on their personal values and professional goals to instill an ethic of lifelong community service.

Co-Curricular Service-Learning differs only with regard to a link to course content. It maintains the service to meet a community need and includes strong reflection and evaluation components. Generally, these service activities are directed under the leadership of student organizations and groups.

Service-learning projects are helping our students perform better in college while improving their communities through service. By connecting classroom knowledge with community service projects, service-learning engages students and brings learning to life. Service-learning offers a unique opportunity for students to get involved in a tangible way by integrating community service projects with classroom learning. Service-learning engages students in the educational process, using what they learn in the classroom to

solve real-life problems. Students not only learn about democracy and citizenship, they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform. In addition, our recent study indicates increased retention rates for those involved.

Nationally, there is a growing interest in service-learning projects. The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, launched in 2006, recognizes colleges and universities nationwide that support innovative and effective community service and service-learning programs. The Honor Roll's Presidential Award, given each year to only a handful of institutions, is the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement. The Honor Roll is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and is sponsored by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, the USA Freedom Corps, and the U.S. Departments of Education and Housing and Urban Development.

- 3: List the organizational areas -- institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units - - most affected by or involved in this Action Project:
- A: All academic departments and organizations will be involved with this project as additional Service-Learning opportunities are added. Student services will be an important part of this project for advising and financial services for grants and funding. A community partner council assists in bring ideas and community needs to the attention of the campus Service-Learning team and a campus advisory committee offers ideas and suggestions for improvement of the campus program.

- 4: Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:
- A: Advising processes will be changed to make students more knowledgeable of Service-Learning initiatives. The number of courses integrating Service-Learning projects will be increased for greater course selection following faculty and registrar office procedures. Employing a Service-Learning Coordinator will improve the continuity of the Service-Learning program, funding grants and applications, and increased promotion of the program.

- 5: Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):
- A: This project should be completed in a two year timeframe. This should give the institution time to secure funding and hire a Service-Learning Coordinator. The Coordinator will work with the campus and community advisory councils to promote and increase program opportunities. Increased faculty involvement will be initiated through funding and grant enhancements. Continued research and monitoring of the Service-Learning and First-Year Student retention study will provide additional incentives for the institution's ongoing support for Service-Learning.

- 6: Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

- A: The Service-Learning Coordinator and staff will measure general attitudes and perceptions of Wayne State College students enrolled in Service-Learning courses. These pre-service and post-service surveys will provide useful information for program assessment to further improve the quality of Service-Learning experiences. Funding for sub grants to support the integration of Service-Learning in courses or as part of campus organizational activities will be continued and expanded as funds are available. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2009 results indicated that by the time they are seniors, 70% of WSC students have participated in community service or volunteer work; the NSSE 2012 percentage will be higher.
- 7: Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:
- A: Success of the program will be measured on campus by the number of students involved, the number of faculty involved, the number of disciplines and courses involved, and the number of co-curricular groups involved in Service-Learning projects. An increase in the number of community partner/agencies would also be an indicator of success. A Service-Learning Coordinator will be employed and will coordinate campus Service-Learning initiatives. Retention rates will be monitored as indicators of success for First Year students involved in Service-Learning projects. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results will show increased student involvement in community service or volunteer work.