Service-Learning in the Foreign Language Curriculum

REGIONAL COLLABORATION IN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
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What is service-learning?

“...a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.”

(National Commission on Service-Learning)
What is service-learning?

- Community-based experience
- Reflection
- Academic work
What is service-learning?

- **Service experience**
  - Structured
  - Reciprocal
    - Fits course goals
    - Fits students’ needs
    - Fits community needs

- **Reflection**
  - Structured around course goals
  - Guided to integrate service experience and course content
Service-learning in FL

- Development of linguistic competencies
- Development of cultural competencies
- Development of five Cs
Service-Learning at UMSL

- Practicum in Spanish (Spanish 3215)
- Service Learning in Foreign Languages (FGN LANG 2192)
Spanish 3215: Practicum in Spanish

Course goals:

- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the issues affecting the Hispanic/Latino communities in the US both at the local and national level, especially those issues relevant to the people they serve.
- Perform with increased control, advanced proficiency level tasks and functions in the Spanish language --such as describing and narrating in major time frames--both in speech and in writing, as established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
Spanish 3215: Practicum in Spanish

- Service experience
  - Tutoring and mentoring in after-school programs
  - Tutoring and mentoring in adult ESL programs
  - Telephone intake
  - Translation & interpretation

- Learning:
  - Readings and discussions
  - Reflection
    - Journal/Blog (oral and written)
    - Community-based project
    - Oral presentation
“I have learned a lot about myself. I learned that I am able to work with people who do not speak English and make good connections with them. I learned that I can help other people in different ways, I’ve always wanted to help others and I realize now that there are many opportunities. I learned that I am good at explaining things in Spanish and English so that others can understand. The way the students appreciated my work even make me consider the possibility of becoming a teacher. I learned that the perceptions that people in the US have towards the Hispanic culture are not totally accurate. People think that Hispanics are not trying hard enough to learn English, but after meeting these students I realize that this perception is wrong. These students come every day to class to learn.”
FGN LANG 2192: Service Learning in Foreign Languages

- 1-3 credit hour course
- Requires concurrent enrollment in another language course
- Past Models
  - After school cultural experience in Japanese
  - Costa Rican school experience
- In Development
  - Reading program and pre-service teacher experience at St. Louis Immersion Schools
Campus Commitment to Service Learning

- Community engagement has been a central focus of the mission of UMSL since its founding in 1963

- Recognized by Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a Community-Engaged Campus

- Annual Civic Engagement Day
Campus Resources

- **UMSL SOS (Students of Service)**
  - Three year initiative, funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service.
  - Partnership with Beyond Housing, the Normandy School District and other community based organizations
  - Foreclosure prevention activities, nonprofit capacity building, neighborhood improvement efforts and mentoring and tutoring programs for the surrounding communities.
  - More than 1,400 students in over 23,000 hours of service during the three year grant period

- **Service Learning Leadership Team**
  - Plan and coordinate Brunch and Learn Programs for faculty
Resources: Online

- **Campus Compact:**
  
  [http://www.compact.org](http://www.compact.org)
  
  Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents - representing some 6 million students - dedicated to promoting community service, civic engagement, and service-learning in higher education.

- **National Service-Learning Clearinghouse:**
  
  [www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org)
Resources: Print

- **Learning Through Serving: A Student Guidebook for Service-Learning Across the Disciplines**
  Christine M. Cress, Peter J. Collier, Vicki L. Reitenauer

- **Fundamentals of Service-Learning Course Construction**
  Kerrissa Heffernan

- **Civic Engagement Across the Curriculum: A Resource Book for Service-Learning Faculty in all Disciplines**
  Richard M. Battistoni

- **Construyendo puentes (Building Bridges): Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Spanish**
  Josef Hellebrandt and Lucía Varona (ed)