# APPLICATION FOR SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE DESIGNATION

**Service-Learning (S)**

Department:

Course Number and Title:

Credit Hours:

Course Description:

Prerequisites:

Credit Restrictions *(if any):*

Frequency of Course Offering:

Course Capacity per Semester: *(per course & total if multiple sections)*

Contact Name, Phone, Email:

**Service-Learning (S) Standards:**

Service-learning is a course-based experiential learning strategy that engages students in meaningful and relevant service with a community partner while employing ongoing reflection to draw connections between the service and course content. When implemented according to the below standards of best practice, service-learning can enhance academic learning, promote civic responsiveness, and strengthen communities.

The “S” designation is intended to identify courses in which service-learning is implemented in accordance with the following four standards:

1. The course includes clear and specific student learning outcomes, which reflect what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course. Student learning outcomes should reflect the presence of service in the course, and the service should enhance the academic learning.1
2. One or more of the student learning outcomes addresses civic learning.2
3. The course includes a service project that reflects mutual benefit between community3 and university partners such that it is meaningful to the community partner and relevant to the course.4 The service project includes significant student-community interaction. The roles and expectations of all involved are clarified in the service project design.
4. The course includes structured reflection upon the service project by the students in light of course learning. Reflection should be continuous throughout the course, connected to the student learning outcomes, and challenging to the students—requiring higher-order thinking skills.5

**Application Questions:**

1. Please list below the student learning outcomes from your course. The outcomes should be clear and specific, and should reflect what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course. Student learning outcomes should reflect the presence of service in the course, and the service should enhance the academic learning. At least one of the student learning outcomes should address civic learning. See Standards #1 and #2 above and corresponding footnotes for more detailed information and examples.
2. Please describe how the service project reflects mutual benefit such that it is meaningful to the community partner and relevant to the course. Describe how the roles and responsibilities of those involved will be clarified. If students will be charged with identifying service projects with a community partner themselves, indicate how the instructor will guide and oversee students during this process. See Standard #3 above and the corresponding footnote for more detailed information and examples.
3. Please describe how reflection will be structured within the course to prompt students to consider the service project in light of course learning. Reflection should be continuous throughout the course, connected to student learning outcomes, and challenging—demanding higher-order thinking skills. See Standard #4 above and the corresponding footnote for more detailed information and examples.
4. If the designated course will be taught by multiple instructors, please describe the program, department, and/or college’s plan for ensuring that the “S” designation standards are maintained when the course changes hands.
5. Please attach a representative course syllabus (including course description, prerequisites, clear indication that the course is a Service-Learning course, and course objectives that include academic and civic learning outcomes that will be enhanced by the service).
6. The S Subcommittee encourages faculty applying for the S designation to conduct a self-scoring exercise using the rubric attached on page 4 of this document. The self-scored document does not need to be included with the application, rather has been provided to allow applicants the opportunity to evaluate their own proposals prior to submission.

**Submission Instructions:**

Colleges seeking approval for courses to receive S-designation must follow the curricular submission guidelines for new courses. After the course is approved at the department and college levels, the Chair or designee of the College’s Curriculum Committee should submit the designation application, syllabus, and any supporting materials with a statement of purpose and documentation of approval of the new “S” course at the department and college levels. (Note that the addition of the "S" designation to a course number constitutes the proposal of a new course, even if developed from an existing course, and must follow the standard approval process for new courses.) Proposals and accompanying syllabi are submitted through each college’s standard curricular approval process.

The designated college representative then submits any proposals that have received college-level approval to Molly Sullivan, Coordinator for Curriculum and Catalogue, at [msulli27@utk.edu](mailto:msulli27@utk.edu). Catalog proposal information must be sent as a Microsoft Word file; application material may be sent as Microsoft Word or PDF.

**Deadline and Additional Support:**

Proposals must be submitted by the college representative to Molly Sullivan by October 15, 2019 for consideration of inclusion in the 2020-21 catalogue. Once a course has been approved, it will be immediately listed as an official S-designated course on the Teaching & Learning Innovation website, and will receive preferred review status for faculty development and course redesign funding offered through Teaching & Learning Innovation.

Footnotes from page 1:

1 - Enhanced academic learning refers to the added value the service project brings to the students’ learning. Generally there are two ways that the integration of service can enhance learning: 1) through complementing more traditional classroom- and book-based pedagogies (e.g. students improving Spanish speaking abilities by serving in a Latino/a community organization), or 2) through enabling learning possibilities precluded in more traditional pedagogies (e.g. the same students learning about Latino/a culture as a complement to their language learning). The instructor should be purposeful to design the service project and accompanying coursework in a way that enhances the students’ academic learning in one or both of these ways. The instructor should communicate these provisions to the community partner during the planning stage.

2 - Civic learning involves the personalizing of the learning experience in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar, or professional. The civic knowledge, skills, values, or propensities to be advanced through the service-learning should be determined by the instructor, and should be reflected in the student learning outcomes and content of the course. Civic learning can range in its level of intensity from a general focus on responsible citizenship (e.g. democratic preparedness or professional ethics) to an emphasis on change-making (e.g. political or social action).

3 - A service-learning community partner can be 1) any nonprofit or public sector organization, agency, or institution, or 2) a private sector business or establishment that is underserved in the traditional market economy. In cases such as university-operated legal or veterinary clinics, the community partner can also be the client.

4 - The service project or experience should 1) clearly contribute to the community partner organization’s ability to fulfill their mission or charge, and 2) clearly advance one or more academic and civic student learning outcomes from the course. The instructor and the community partner should work together to define an appropriate service project or experience in line with these goals. This entails the instructor sharing the anticipated student learning outcomes with the community partner, and the community partner sharing information about the organization’s mission and needs.

5 - Reflection is the purposeful consideration of the service project or experience by students in light of intended academic and civic learning outcomes. Reflection assignments might incorporate analysis of issues observed in the community in light of structural systems of inequality, synthesis of new ideas, self and/or peer evaluation, development of recommendations or policy proposals, etc. Through ongoing reflection, the service should continually inform the learning and the learning should continually inform the service so that each adds value to the other. Reflection activities can include guided discussion, structured journals, blog entries, oral presentations, or written essays. Reflection questions should be rooted in course content, and should prompt students to consider their roles and responsibilities as citizens, academics, and professionals in a complex and diverse society.

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| ***Service-Learning Course Designation Reviewer Rubrics***  *The Service-Learning (S) course designation is intended to allow departments to demonstrate alignment of proposed service-learning courses with University of Tennessee, Knoxville standards for effectiveness. S Designation applications will be reviewed by the Service-Learning Subcommittee, and successful applications routed to the Curriculum Committee of the Undergraduate Council. The following rubric will be used by the S designation subcommittee to score applicant responses to S designation application questions. A score of 12 or higher is required to receive the designation, with no entries in the (0) column.* | | | | |
| **Designation Standard #1 & #2** | **Components of Standard** | **0 (lowest)** | **1** | **2 (highest)** |
| 1. **Outcomes Reflect Enhanced Academic Learning**   The course should include clear and specific student learning outcomes, which reflect what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course. Outcomes should reflect enhanced academic learning from the service project. | *Outcomes reflect what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course.* | The outcomes are unclear and unspecific regarding what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course. | The outcomes listed somewhat reflect what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course, but could be more clear or specific. | The outcomes clearly and specifically reflect what students should be able to demonstrate, know, or do by the end of the course. |
| *One or more outcomes reflect the presence of a service project that enhances the academic learning of the course.* | There are outcomes listed but none of the outcomes reflect the presence of service in the class. | One or more of the learning outcomes reflects the presence of service in the class, but it is not evident that the service will enhance the academic learning. | One or more outcomes reflects the presence of service in the class, and it is clearly evident how the service will enhance the academic learning from the course. |

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| 1. **Outcomes Address Civic Learning**   One or more of the student learning outcomes addresses civic learning. Civic learning involves the personalizing of the learning experience in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar, or professional. Civic learning can range in its level of intensity from a general focus on responsible citizenship to an emphasis on change-making. (This may be the same outcome or outcomes as those described in Standard 1. above.) | *One or more outcomes involve the personalizing of the learning in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar, or professional.* | The outcomes listed do not reflect the personalizing of the learning in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar, or professional. | | One or more of the outcomes listed somewhat reflect the personalizing of the learning in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar. | | One or more outcomes listed clearly and specifically reflect the personalizing of the learning in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar, or professional. | |
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| **Designation Standard #3** | **Components of Standard** | **0 (lowest)** | **1** | **2 (highest)** |
| 1. **The Service Project is Mutually Beneficial**   The service project design reflects mutual benefit between community and university partners such that it is meaningful to the community partner and relevant to the course. The service project includes significant student-community interaction. If students are charged with identifying a service project with a community partner themselves there is guidance and oversight from the instructor. The roles and responsibilities of all involved in the service project have been clarified. | *The service project design reflects mutual benefit between community and university partners such that it is meaningful to the community partner and relevant to the course. The roles and responsibilities of all involved are clear.* | The application does not reflect mutual benefit to those involved. If students are expected to identify their own service projects there is no instructor guidance or oversight of this process. | The application includes information about the service project design but is unclear how the project is meaningful to the community partner and/or relevant to the course. If students are expected to identify their own service projects there is insufficient instructor guidance or oversight of this process. | The application includes information about the service project design and it is clearly of mutual benefit to all involved. The application clearly addresses how the service project will be meaningful to the community partner and relevant to the course. If students are charged with identifying a service project with a community partner themselves there is guidance and oversight from the instructor. The expectations of all involved are clarified in the service project design. |
| *The service project includes significant student-community interaction.* | The application does not include information regarding student interaction with the community, and it is unclear how the service project will reflect significant student-community interaction. | The application reflects some level of student-community interaction, but based on the information provided the level of interaction should be greater. | The application adequately explains and reflects how required service comprises significant community interaction. |
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| **Designation Standard #4** | **Components of Standard** | **0 (lowest)** | | **1** | | **2 (highest)** | |
| 1. **The Course Includes Structured Reflection**   The course includes structured student reflection upon the service project in light of intended student learning outcomes. Reflection is continuous throughout the course, is connected to the academic and civic learning outcomes, and is challenging, building upon higher-order thinking skills. | *Reflection is continuous throughout the course.* | The application mentions reflection, but the reflection does not appear to be continuous throughout the course. | | The application mentions reflection, but could be clearer as to how the reflection is structured continuously throughout the course. | | The application states clearly how reflection is structured continuously throughout the course. | |
| *Reflection is connected to the academic and civic learning outcomes.* | The application mentions reflection, but the reflection does not appear to be connected to the academic or civic learning outcomes. | | The application mentions reflection, but could be clearer as to how the reflection is connected to the academic or civic learning outcomes. | | The application states clearly how the reflection is connected to the academic or civic learning outcomes. | |
| *Reflection builds upon higher-order thinking skills (e.g., analysis of structural inequities, synthesis of new ideas, self and/or peer evaluation, development of recommendations or policy proposals, etc.)* | The application mentions reflection, but the reflection does not appear to build upon higher-order thinking skills. | | The application mentions reflection, but could be clearer as to how the reflection challenges the students, building upon higher-order thinking skills. | | The application describes reflection that is clearly challenging, requiring demonstration of high-order thinking skills. | |
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| **Plan for Maintenance of Standards** | |
| ***Plan for Maintenance of Standards*** | *If the designated course would be taught by multiple instructors, the department and/or college should describe their plan for ensuring that each of the designation standards are maintained when a new instructor teaches the course.* |

**Exemplar Responses from 2016-17 Designation Applications:**

The below statements are responses that received the highest score possible by the S designation subcommittee during the 2016-2017 academic year. Please note that some revisions have been made to the application process since the 2016-17 designation reviews. Thus, the below responses may not entirely align with the 2019-20 designation metrics. Please reference the revised application at <https://teaching.utk.edu/s-designation/> and the above rubric for the most up to date scoring metrics for each application question.

1. ***Student Learning Outcomes are Clear, Specific, and Reflect Service that Enhances Academic Learning***

* Geology 206: Students will apply methods to address sustainability issues, and evaluate these methods.
* Spanish 494: Students will improve their language proficiency in Spanish.

1. ***One or More Student Learning Outcomes* *Address Civic Learning***

* Spanish 494: Students acquire a clearer understanding of their potential role as advocates for the Hispanic community in education and social services.
* Architecture 370/371: Students will understand the architect’s responsibility to work in the public interest, to respect historical resources, and to improve the quality of life for local and global neighbors.

1. ***Service Project is the Developed in Collaboration with the Community and is Mutually Beneficial to All Involved***

* Philosophy 255: Each instructor will develop a “Partner Contract” that will establish the expectations relating to Standard #3. It will require the Instructor to meet with the Community Partner in advance of the semester, so that they can collaborate on the design and implementation of a service project for the students. The “partner contract” will require that the instructor and community partner i) identify a specific need of the community partner, ii) specify the task to be undertaken, iii) the responsibilities of the various stakeholders, and iv) the expected learning outcomes.
* Philosophy 256: Together, students and supervisors will fill out and sign a Learning-Work Agreement (LWA) that will outline their mutual expectations regarding scheduled work hours, work duties, frequency of supervisory meetings, and learning goals. The course instructor will also check in regularly with placement supervisors over the course of the semester to ensure that the LWA is being followed.

1. ***The Course Includes Structured Reflection***

* Adapted from Philosophy 256: Students will write 4 short (2-3 page) philosophical reflection papers based on given prompts over the course of the semester. Papers will reflect specificity in analysis (breaking down broad ideas into more specific ones) and make connections between ideas not previously connected. Both analysis of ideas and novel synthesis between concepts are important parts of this form of writing. Papers should connect abstract ideas from the texts to placement experiences.
* Another possible response: Throughout the course students will be asked to complete reflection responses to assess their learning of the intended learning outcomes in light of course texts and service project experiences. Responses will be graded, and must reflect consideration of placement experiences in light of concepts presented in the texts, and vice versa. We will discuss these responses in class regularly.

***Plan for Maintenance of Standards***

* Adapted from Architecture 370/371 & 496: The College of Architecture proposes to have faculty seeking to teach a course with an “S” designation to submit a one-page proposal to the curriculum committee outlining how the course will meet the above standards. The college curriculum committee will review proposals to ensure alignment with the designation standards.