WHY ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING?

FAU

WEPPNER CENTER FOR LEAD AND SERVICE-LEARNING

Division of Student Affairs
Florida Atlantic University

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IN SEARCH OF OUR PURPOSE

➢ Research, see and act on problems individuals and communities face

➢ Engage directly in dialogue and problem solve with those most affected

➢ Observe firsthand effects of various social issues such as racism, sexism, poverty, and oppression

➢ Participate in engaged, challenging learning experiences

➢ Foster change

➢ Discover relevance of learning through real-world experiences and related reflection

Building engaged leaders

MORE ON WHY A S-L…

- Personal growth and development

- Apply classroom knowledge and skills

- Explore career options

- Networking

- Résumé building

- Hours posted to official transcript

- Experience civic responsibility

THE COMMUNITY'S WHY

➢ Innovative ideas and approaches

➢ Skilled volunteers

➢ Additional expertise for community development

➢ Participate in the student's academic experience

➢ Build long-lasting relationships

➢ Strengthen advocacy efforts

➢ Enhance public awareness of community needs

➢ Potential employees

FOUNDATIONS OF A S-L

"Discover relevance of learning through real-world experiences"

WHERE DOES THIS COME FROM?

ROOTS FROM the early 20th century where John Dewey introduced **experience in education** and described **reflection** as linking understanding with doing, whereby one cannot fully understand without doing**.**

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION combines direct, hands-on experience with guided reflections and analysis of what is being done

A S-L "How to" Guide

1. **Investigate**

   Students begin to research community issues of interest/relevance that correlate with course objectives.

2. **Plan**

   Students, often working with professors and community partners, plan ways in which to address the community need.

3. **Act**

   Students and community partners implement plans by engaging in activities to meet community needs. This is the actual service portion of service-learning.

4. **Reflect**

   Students engage in activities to help process what they have learned about the community need, their actions, their impacts, what worked and did not work, and/or similar types of critical thinking.

INVESTIGATE WHERE TO SERVE

WHO ARE OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING?

➢ Non-profit organizations, government agencies, elementary schools, secondary schools, institutions of higher education, hospitals, community service programs, faith-based organizations, and tribal nations, etc.

➢ Contact the Weppner Center for LEAD & Service-Learning for a list of suggestions for appropriate local community agencies.

■ Tip: Organization's website should end in .edu, .gov, .org to be classified as a non-profit.

Embrace the Opportunity to Grow

➢ This is a unique opportunity to develop a passion, foster a relationship with a potential employer, and/or test the waters about major decisions.

➢ This is not the time to be an 'Envelope Licker'!

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MODEL THE WAY

➢ Dress appropriately/professionally for the community site.

➢ Arrive on-time and call when you cannot make it.

➢ Respect the diversity of the Community environment.

➢ Personal business during service hours using employer resources is inappropriate, (e.g. telephones, photocopy machines, fax machines, computers/email).

➢ Notify your instructor should any problems arise during service hours to help solve problem in a timely and professional manner (e.g. communication with supervisors or co-workers, inappropriate conduct).

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REFLECTION: THE CONNECTING LINK

Reflection is the process of deriving meaning from experience

➢ Conscious and intentional critical thinking about the service experience
➢ Builds bridges between content learning, personal reflections, and first-hand experiences

FAU REFLECTION REQUIREMENTS

➢ HOW THE A S-L PROJECT LINKS TO YOUR COURSE OBJECTIVES

➢ HOW THE PROJECT IMPACTED YOUR PERSONAL AND/OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

➢ HOW THE COMMUNITY WAS IMPACTED BY YOUR WORK

Forms of reflection

Reading: Case Studies, books about social issues, government documents, professional journals
Writing: Journals, reflective essays, portfolios, grant proposals, letters to other students/clients of agency, published articles
**Doing**: Conducting interviews, role playing, collecting photos
Telling: Presentations, focus groups, informal discussions, formal class discussions
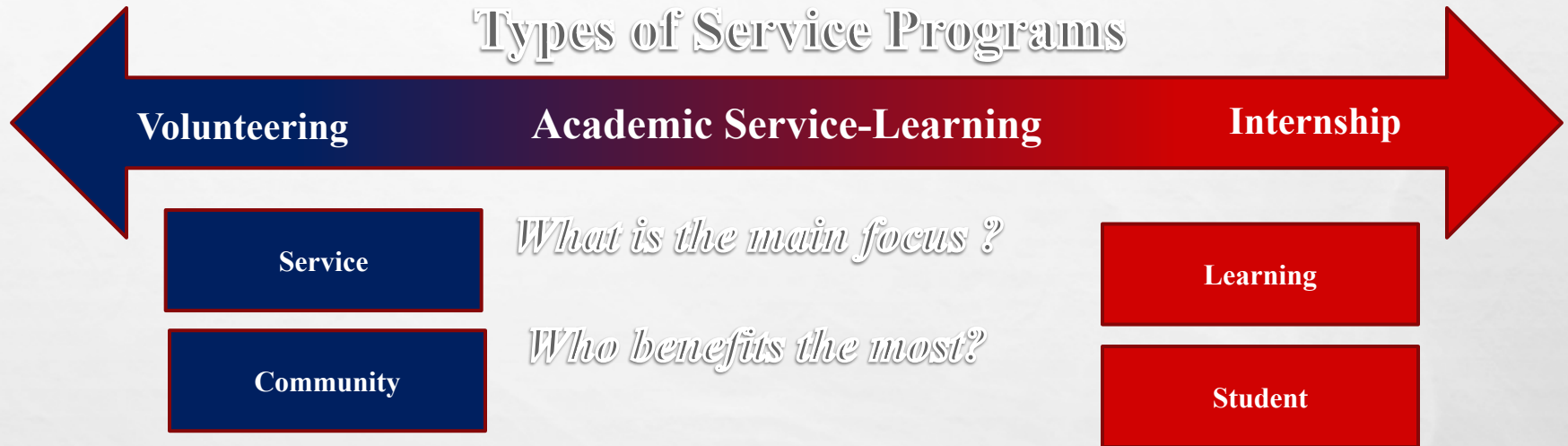
WHAT IS ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING?

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING (A S-L) Is learning achieved through service while applying curriculum taught in class.

➢ Beyond classroom learning to learn and serve locally, nationally or globally

➢ Structured time for thoughtful planning of service experience and guided reflection.

➢ Emphasis on **both** learning and service

- Class instruction= the *what?*
  - Classes offer insight into *what* the issues are and *what* skills are needed to address the issues in community.
- A S-L component = the *how* and *why*?
  - Service allows you to learn *how* to address the issue impacting/affecting the community and *why* you are learning the necessary skills in class.
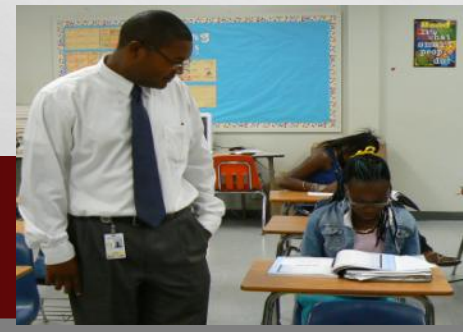
ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING VS. VOLUNTEERING AND INTERNSHIPS

Types of Service Programs

Volunteering ← → **Internship**

Academic Service-Learning

| Service | | Learning |
| Community | | Student |

What is the main focus ?
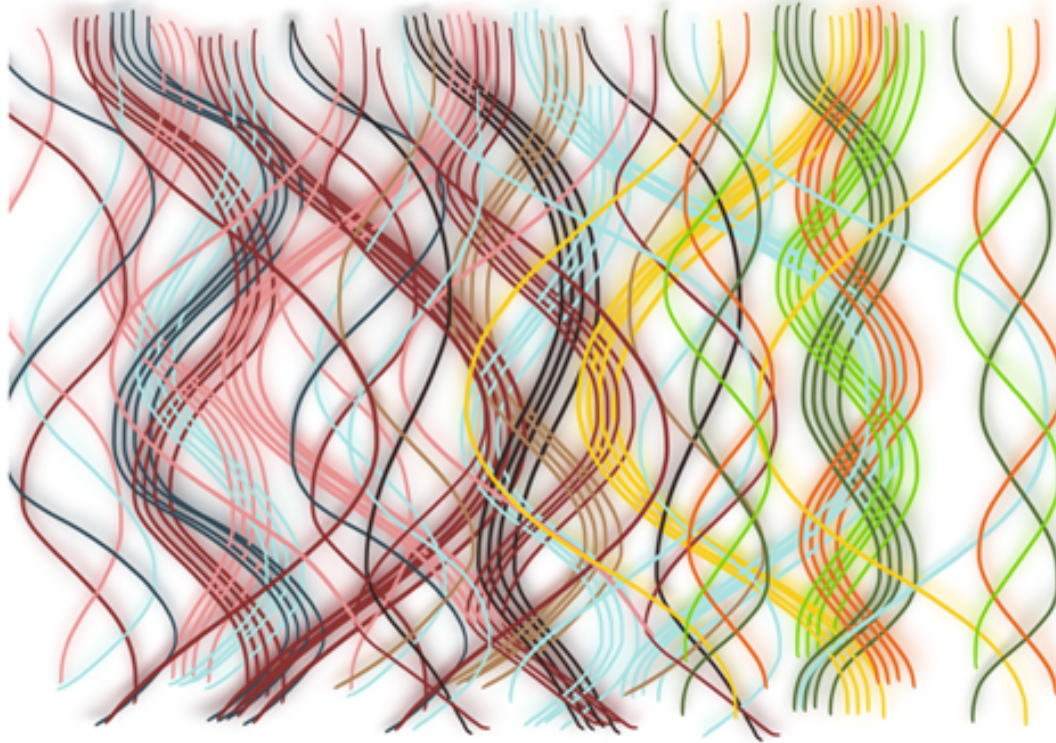
Who benefits the most?

➤ **Volunteering** Main focus: *service being provided* ; Primary intended beneficiary: *community* agency where service is done (e.g., stuffing envelopes to be mailed out).

➤ **Internship** Main focus: purpose of providing students with hands-on learning experiences in a specific area of study; Primary intended beneficiary: student intern (e.g., pharmacy student interns at a for-profit branch of a pharmacy chain).

➤ **Academic Service-Learning** Equal focus: both learning and service; Benefits both student and community (e.g., Students in an intro sociology course tutor children and adolescents in K-12 schools applying learning topics of race and class, socialization, social institutions, inequality, etc.)

REQUIREMENTS FOR A S-L STUDENTS

1. Review "Why Academic Service-Learning?" presentation prior to beginning your academic service-learning project and completing hours in the community. Congratulations! You've just done this!

2. Once you have selected your location of service, complete an "academic service-learning risk waiver" form. The waiver may be found on the WCLSL website, under academic service-learning, for students. Waivers are to be collected by your faculty instructor.

3. Track academic service-learning hours to submit to your faculty instructor by deadline provided by faculty instructor. Hours submitted by your faculty/instructor will be reported to the registrar's office for posting to your official transcript—a benefit for your future employment or professional/graduate school enrollment.

4. At the end of your academic service-learning project, complete an electronic academic service-learning student survey about your academic service-learning experience. The link to the survey will be available mid-semester on the WCLSL website: www.fau.edu/leadandserve.

THANK YOU!

LEAD AND SERVE TEAM