

USM Service Learning Courses: Student Survey Report

Student Opinions and Attitudes about their Service Learning Courses

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USM Service Learning Courses: Student Survey (N=250)

Executive Summary

The purpose of this assessment project was to obtain feedback from students about their service-learning courses. Students were administered a service-learning survey (during class time) at the end of the spring 2016 semester. The survey (originally designed by Indiana University, but revised for the USM student population) consisted of various items asking students about their opinions and attitudes about their course. A sample of the USM service learning courses participated (N= 15), and 250 students completed the survey. Approximately 82% of the respondents were full-time students, and 75% were junior and senior students.

Based upon the survey results, only one-third of the students (32%) reported that they knew before signing up for the course that there was a service component in the course; and nearly half (46%) estimated that their service hours were between 0 to 10 hours for their course. A large percentage of the students (over 75%) reported that the course contributed to their growth (medium to a great deal of growth) on things like: generating new ideas about how to improve things, formally communicating and analyzing ideas, and being able to modify how to approach a problem based upon the situation.

According to the student opinions, more than 70% of the students (strongly agreed/agreed) that integrating a service component into a college course is a very good idea, they felt that the course provided them with skills they can use in their career, and would highly recommend that other students take a service-learning course. Lastly, 67% of the students reported that the reflection activities in the course were linked to the learning objectives. Overall, the students expressed a number of positive activities in their service-learning course. Please see the following charts showing all the survey responses.

Number of Service-Learning Courses Participated and Number of Students Per Course

Participating Courses	Number of Students	
	N =250	%
• BIO 109	10	4%
• BIO 281	57	23%
• BIO 409	1	1%
• CHY 233	25	10 %
• CMS 300	7	3%
• CMS 450-1	9	3%
• CMS 450-2	11	4%
• EDU 310	12	5%
• EGN 304	31	12%
• ESP 203	21	8%
• ESP 303	15	6%
• SWO 393-1	20	8%
• SWO 393-2	17	7%
• SWO 403	9	4%
• SWO 553	5	2%

Demographic Information

Class Level of Respondents:	N =250	
	N =250	%
• Freshmen	2	1%
• Sophomore	36	14%
• Junior	92	37%
• Senior	95	38%
• Other	24	10%

Enrollment Status of Respondents:	N=250	
	N=250	%
• Full-time	204	82%
• Part-time	39	16%
• Non-degree	5	2%

Service-Learning : Part of the Course

Participated in Service as a part of this class:	N=250	%
• Yes	237	95%
• No	13	5%

Students who knew there was a service component <u>before</u> signing up for the course:	N = 250	%
• Yes	77	32%
• No	167	68%

Was service <u>required</u> in this course:	N =250	%
• Yes	224	90%
• No	24	10%

Estimated total number of <u>service hours</u> contributed as part of this class:	N = 250	%
• 0-10 hrs.	116	46%
• 11-20 hrs.	69	28%
• 21-30 hrs.	24	10%
• 31-40 hrs.	10	4%
• More than 40 hrs.	30	12%

Items about Principles of Undergraduate Learning

How much this course contributed to your <u>growth</u> in the following areas:	No Growth		Little Growth		Medium Growth		Great Deal Growth	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. Formally communicating ideas and information.	12	5%	45	18%	128	52%	60	25%
b. Communicating with a team to solve problems.	16	6%	51	21%	105	43%	74	30%
c. Analyzing different ideas and proposed solutions.	9	4%	51	21%	124	50%	62	25%
d. Reviewing your own ideas about how to approach an issue.	7	3%	49	20%	107	43%	83	34%
e. Generating new ideas about how to improve things.	8	3%	41	17%	126	51%	71	29%
f. Meeting professional standards and competencies in your field.	16	7%	52	21%	108	44%	69	28%
g. Furthering the goals of society.	9	4%	55	22%	109	45%	72	29%
h. Having an understanding of subjects outside my major.	21	9%	67	27%	90	37%	67	27%
i. Being able to modify how I approach a problem based on the situation.	11	5%	45	18%	123	50%	67	27%
j. Seeing the relationships among local, national and global issues.	17	7%	46	19%	96	40%	82	34%
k. Working effectively with those of different races, ethnicities, religions.	44	18%	50	20%	80	33%	72	29%
l. Respecting people whose viewpoints differ from mine.	17	7%	56	23%	83	34%	90	36%
m. Exercising my responsibilities as a citizen	22	9%	56	23%	95	39%	73	29%

Items about their Opinions about this Course

Indicate the choice that best describes your <u>opinion</u> :	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. This course helped me know about opportunities to become involved in the community.	4	1%	14	6%	58	24%	95	39%	73	30%
b. I think integrating a service component into a college course is a very good idea.	7	3%	10	4%	43	18%	68	28%	116	47%
c. This course has given me knowledge and skills I need to address community issues.	6	3%	18	7%	85	35%	76	31%	57	24%
d. This course has helped me to gain a clearer idea of my professional goals.	12	5%	37	15%	61	25%	82	34%	50	21%
e. The nature of this course helped motivate me to be the best student I can be.	12	5%	21	9%	66	27%	86	35%	59	24%
f. I think community service should be required for all college students.	17	7%	27	11%	54	22%	58	24%	88	36%
g. I feel confident that I can apply what I learned to solve real problems in society.	11	4%	16	7%	65	27%	88	36%	64	26%
h. I have a strong sense of civic responsibility to become involved in my community.	8	3%	21	9%	63	26%	83	34%	68	28%
i. I attended this course more consistently than I normally attend other courses.	36	15%	26	11%	74	30%	51	21%	55	23%
j. This course provided me with skills/knowledge that I can use in my career.	4	2%	15	6%	46	19%	89	37%	88	36%
k. I participated in class discussion more frequently than I did in other courses.	28	12%	33	14%	78	33%	65	27%	34	14%
l. This course has helped with my decision-making about my major or career	27	11%	38	16%	73	30%	63	26%	41	17%

m.	This course helped me listen to others & understand controversial issues.	16	7%	26	11%	61	25%	77	32%	61	25%
n.	This course motivated me to stay current on social, political or community issues.	21	9%	34	14%	76	31%	52	22%	58	24%
o.	This course had a positive impact on my plans to complete my college degree.	15	6%	19	8%	71	30%	63	26%	72	30%
p.	I would highly recommend that other students take this course.	5	2%	11	4%	58	24%	70	29%	98	41%
q.	This course caused me to feel more concerned about social or community problems.	14	6%	23	10%	57	23%	85	35%	63	26%
r.	This course has enriched me by having contact with cultural or ethnic diversity.	26	11%	23	9%	82	34%	54	22%	57	24%
s.	Because of this course, I am better able to discuss controversial social issues with civility and respect.	20	8%	27	11%	75	31%	60	25%	59	25%

Items about Reflection Activities in this course

Reflection activities as an important part of a service learning course:	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. Reflection activities were a regular part of this course.	14	6%	20	8%	51	22%	65	27%	87	37%
b. The reflection activities were well structured with clear directions and guidelines.	10	4%	21	9%	58	25%	70	30%	76	32%
c. Reflection activities provided me an opportunity to explore and clarify my values.	13	6%	19	8%	62	26%	71	30%	70	30%
d. The reflection activities were clearly linked to the learning objectives of the course.	13	6%	12	5%	52	22%	64	28%	92	39%