

USM Service Learning Courses: Student Survey Report

Student Opinions and Attitudes about their Service Learning Courses

Overall Results: Fall 2017

Prepared by:

Office of Academic Assessment

University of Southern Maine

Fall 2017

USM Service Learning Courses: Student Survey (N=85)

Executive Summary

The purpose of this assessment project was to obtain feedback from students about their service-learning courses. Students in participating service-learning courses were asked to complete an in-class survey at the end of the fall 2017 semester. The survey consisted of various items asking students about their opinions and attitudes about the service-learning component of their course. There were only five USM service learning courses that participated, and 85 students who completed the survey. Most of the students were full-time students and over half were juniors and seniors. Although, the sample size was rather small, there were useful data obtained about the student's learning experiences.

Overall, 90% of the student respondents reported that they gained either “medium or a great deal” of growth from their course learning in areas, such as; furthering their goals of society, seeing the relationships among local, national and global issues, and respecting people with differing viewpoints. In addition, many students “agreed or strongly agreed” that integrating a service component into a college course is a very good idea (83%), and 77% of the students reported that the course helped them know about opportunities to become involved in the community, and they would highly recommend that other students take this course.

Lastly, over 70% of the students reported that reflection activities were a regular part of the course, and the activities were clearly linked to the course learning objectives. Of the 85 students who completed the survey, 78% reported that they contributed up to 20 hours of service as part of their course.

In general, based upon the results of this study, students appeared to have a positive experience in their service learning course. Please see the following data tables which display the overall (aggregated) survey results.

Number of Service-Learning Courses Participated and Number of Respondents per Course

Service-Learning Courses that participated in fall 2017:	Number of Respondents	
	N	%
• EDU 310	21	25%
• FSP 200	28	33%
• FSP 210	8	9%
• SWO 201-1	14	16%
• SWO 201-2	14	16%
• Overall Total	85	100%

Demographic Information

Class Level of Respondents:	N		%	
	N	%	N	%
• Freshmen	12	14%		
• Sophomore	25	30%		
• Junior	28	33%		
• Senior	19	22%		
• Other	1	1%		
Enrollment Status of Respondents:	N		%	
• Full-time	79	93%		
• Part-time	6	7%		
• Non-degree	---	---		

Service-Learning Component of the Course

Participated in Service as a part of this class:	N	%
• Yes	70	83%
• No	14	17%

Did students know there was a service component <u>before</u> signing up for the course:	N	%
• Yes	26	31%
• No	58	69%

Was service <u>required</u> in this course:	N	%
• Yes	68	80%
• No	17	20%

Estimated total number of <u>service hours</u> contributed as part of this class:	N	%
• 0-10 hrs.	29	35%
• 11-20 hrs.	35	43%
• 21-30 hrs.	13	16%
• 31-40 hrs.	2	2%
• More than 40 hrs.	3	4%

Course Contribution to the Student's Growth

How much this course contributed to your growth in the following areas:	No Growth		Little Growth		Medium Growth		Great Deal Growth	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. Formally communicating ideas and information.	2	2%	13	15%	49	58%	21	25%
b. Communicating with a team to solve problems.	5	6%	22	26%	29	34%	29	34%
c. Analyzing different ideas and proposed solutions.	1	1%	13	15%	35	42%	36	42%
d. Reviewing your own ideas about how to approach an issue.	1	1%	11	13%	40	48%	33	38%
e. Generating new ideas about how to improve things.	2	2%	12	14%	36	43%	35	41%
f. Meeting professional standards and competencies in your field.	3	3%	9	11%	40	48%	33	38%
g. Furthering the goals of society.	1	1%	7	9%	36	42%	41	48%
h. Having an understanding of subjects outside my major.	2	2%	19	22%	29	35%	35	41%
i. Being able to modify how I approach a problem based on the situation.	4	5%	13	15%	35	41%	33	39%
j. Seeing the relationships among local, national and global issues.	1	1%	8	9%	31	37%	45	53%
k. Working effectively with those of different races, ethnicities, religions.	3	4%	8	9%	27	32%	47	55%
l. Respecting people whose viewpoints differ from mine.	3	4%	4	5%	29	34%	49	57%
m. Exercising my responsibilities as a citizen	2	2%	15	18%	30	35%	38	45%

Student Opinions about this Course

Indicate the choice that best describes your opinion:	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.	1	1%	4	5%	14	17%	31	37%	34	40%
b. I think integrating a service component into a college course is a very good idea.	2	2%	3	4%	9	11%	19	23%	51	60%
c. This course has given me knowledge and skills I need to address community issues.	2	2%	7	8%	21	25%	26	31%	28	32%
d. This course has helped me to gain a clearer idea of my professional goals.	5	6%	11	13%	20	24%	17	20%	31	37%
e. The nature of this course helped motivate me to be the best student I can be.	2	2%	9	11%	25	30%	24	29%	24	28%
f. I think community service should be required for all college students.	5	6%	9	11%	18	22%	20	24%	32	37%
g. I feel confident that I can apply what I learned to solve real problems in society.	1	1%	2	2%	22	27%	30	36%	29	34%
h. I have a strong sense of civic responsibility to become involved in my community.	1	1%	5	6%	27	32%	22	27%	29	34%
i. I attended this course more consistently than I normally attend other courses.	9	11%	8	10%	31	37%	12	14%	24	28%
j. This course provided me with skills/knowledge that I can use in my career.	1	1%	4	5%	24	29%	21	25%	34	40%
k. I participated in class discussion more frequently than I did in other courses.	3	4%	14	17%	19	23%	21	25%	27	31%
l. This course has helped with my decision-making about my major or career	9	11%	13	16%	22	26%	12	14%	28	33%
m. This course helped me listen to others & understand controversial issues.	---	---	5	5%	17	21%	28	34%	34	40%

n.	This course motivated me to stay current on social, political or community issues.	3	4%	8	10%	21	25%	26	30%	26	31%
o.	This course had a positive impact on my plans to complete my college degree.	5	6%	4	5%	18	22%	24	29%	33	38%
p.	I would highly recommend that other students take this course.	1	1%	4	5%	14	17%	23	27%	42	50%
q.	This course caused me to feel more concerned about social or community problems.	---	---	4	5%	22	26%	23	27%	35	42%
r.	This course has enriched me by having contact with cultural or ethnic diversity.	1	1%	5	6%	29	35%	20	24%	29	34%
s.	Because of this course, I am better able to discuss controversial social issues with civility and respect.	2	2%	6	7%	14	17%	29	35%	33	39%
		<i>(Strongly Disagree)</i>				<i>(Neutral)</i>				<i>(Strongly Agree)</i>	

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.	2	2%	3	4%	13	16%	19	23%	47	55%
b.	The reflection activities were well structured with clear directions and guidelines.	1	1%	8	10%	12	15%	22	27%	41	47%
c.	Reflection activities provided me an opportunity to explore and clarify my values.	2	2%	3	4%	17	20%	24	29%	38	45%
d.	The reflection activities were clearly linked to the learning objectives of the course.	1	1%	2	2%	13	16%	21	25%	47	56%