Minor Curriculum Change Proposal

Service-Learning Office, Student Affairs
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Service-Learning Across the Curriculum

I. Nature of Change

To add a one-credit Service-Learning course that has enrollment in a specific base course and section as a co-requisite. The Service-Learning Credit option will be designated by the prefix and course number of the base course followed by the suffix SL.

II. Current Catalog Statement and Proposed Catalog Statement


Chapter 9, Current Catalog Statement:

Service-Learning

Service-Learning provides you with a way to link community service to your course work. One of the ways you can become involved is to add a credit of Service-Learning to an already established course. Through Service-Learning, you will receive course credit for participating in service opportunities that are intentionally designed to promote learning while helping meet human and community needs. You will have an opportunity to not only serve but to reflect on that service so as to gain further understanding of course content and how that information is of benefit to society. For more information, contact the Service-Learning Program office at (208) 426-1004.

Chapter 12, Current Heading and Heading Description:

University-Wide Course Numbers

Some course numbers have been made standard throughout the university, indicating a particular type of course. Each standard course number or is defined below.

B. Proposed Catalog Statements to be located in Chapter 11, “Obtaining a Degree at BSU” sub-section Credit Limitations, and Chapter 12, “Summary of Programs and Courses” sub-section University-Wide Course Numbers of the BSU catalog
Chapter 11, Proposed Catalog Statement:

**Service-Learning**

Service-Learning provides you with a way to link community service to your course work. You can become involved by enrolling in a designated Service-Learning course which is linked to a specific section of an already established course. In the Directory of Classes, the Service-Learning Credit will be designated by the base course prefix and number followed by the suffix SL (i.e. XXXX306 base course; XXXX306SL Service-Learning component). Through Service-Learning, you will receive course credit for participating in service opportunities that are intentionally designed to promote learning while helping meet human and community needs. You may take up to three Service-Learning Credits in a semester. You may apply no more than nine Service-Learning Credits toward your degree. For more information, contact the Service-Learning Program office at (208) 426-1004.

Chapter 12, Proposed Heading Change, Heading Description and Catalog Statement:

**University-Wide Course Numbers and Designations**

Some course numbers and designations have been made standard throughout the university, indicating a particular type of course. Each standard course number or designation is defined below.

**SL Service-Learning Credit** (1 credit). A student may earn a Service-Learning Credit by enrolling in a base course whose instructor offers the option of registering for one additional credit designated by SL. The Service-Learning credit is earned for participating in service opportunities that are intentionally designed to promote learning while helping meet human and community needs. The assigned amount of credits for the base course remains the same, but the student receives an additional Service-Learning Credit for meeting the learning and service requirements. A student may take up to three Service-Learning Credits in a semester and may apply no more than nine Service-Learning Credits toward his/her degree.

III. Justification of Change

A. **Reason for Change**

Service-Learning courses have been offered as Special Topics courses for three semesters and the University requires permanent course designation for the courses to be offered in subsequent semesters.
B. **Definition of Service-Learning**

On our campus Service-Learning is defined as a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in organized service activities that meet identified community needs. Students then reflect on the service in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (See Appendix A). (Hatcher, Bringle, 1994)

C. **Student Interest**

Demand for Service-Learning courses on the Boise State University campus was made evident two years ago when a group of students from ASBSU and the Volunteer Services Board requested and received a student fee increase of $3.50 per full-time student and .35 per credit hour for part-time students. These funds were primarily requested to support a Coordinator position and the development and implementation of Service-Learning courses on the BSU campus.

During the Spring 1998 semester, faculty in Marketing, Psychology and Health, Physical Education and Recreation offered three Service-Learning courses. Twenty students participated during this introductory semester. The Fall 1998 semester saw an increase in both the amount of courses offered and the total number of students selecting the Service-Learning Credit option. Departments offering Service-Learning during the Fall 1998 included: Communications, Health Studies, Public Administration, Psychology, Marketing, and Health, Physical Education and Recreation

| Student Enrollment in Service-Learning Courses |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                 | Spring 1998 | Fall 1998 | Spring 1999 | Fall 1999 Projected |
| Courses         | 3          | 7         | 5          | 9          |
| Students        | 20         | 49        | 31         | 60         |

D. **Benefits to Boise State and the Community from Service-Learning Courses**

**BENEFITS TO STUDENTS:**
Service-Learning provides scholarly, personal and professional benefits for students. It helps to develop critical thinking skills, allows students to develop a greater understanding of their role as a citizen, and provides those applying for advanced professional degrees, such as in Medicine, with a required and relevant service experience.

Research and anecdotal information about Service-Learning has demonstrated that there are many benefits to students including:

- Increases retention
- Stimulates unique application of course content
- Provides vision for professional roles
- Develops a student’s ability to incorporate ideas across the curriculum
• Increases the relevancy of education to students “living in the real world”
• Enhances personalized education of students
• Empowers students as learners, teachers, achievers, and leaders
• Teaches positive values, leadership, citizenship and personal responsibility
• Invites students to become members of their own community
• Stimulates students to trust their judgements in problem solving

As demonstrated in the following quotes, Boise State University students have recognized many of the benefits listed above:

“I have gained a tremendous appreciation for everything I have in my life. I also have a new perspective on the challenges people face in their lives and that with empathy one can try to understand. But, it is very difficult to actually understand.”

“The class material sticks with me, it is more concrete because of the experience. It is more meaningful and more memorable.”

“Provides a great understanding of children and their learning. Going outside of the text with debates and projects really makes the learning exciting and involved. I know I’m going to take a lot with me when I’m done with this class.”

“I have discovered that contrary to stereotype, most homeless persons are not ‘scary.’ I have more respect for the plight of the homeless. I understand exactly how low-income affects every facet of a family’s life.”

“I think my retention and understanding of theories is better than they would be without my participation. Also, I’ve learned techniques of handling children and difficult situations from the other Head Start teachers and volunteers. . . .You’re able to see what you’ve learned operate in the real world.”

BENEFITS TO FACULTY:
Service-Learning provides faculty with opportunities to meet all three of their professional responsibilities of teaching, research and service thereby participating in what Ernest Boyer has defined as the scholarships of application, integration, and teaching. Faculty at BSU have utilized the information from their Service-Learning courses to develop articles for publication in scholarly journals, such as the Journal for Marketing Education, and for presentation at scholarly conferences (Western Region Campus Compact Conference and American Psychological Association). They have utilized the questions that have evolved from their students’ experiences to develop research projects, such as Dr. Susan Amato’s work with the WIC Program. Service-Learning also provides faculty with direct interaction with the community allowing them to serve in areas of need that are relevant to their field, such as Dr. Ed Petkus’ work at the Boise Art Museum.

Service-Learning also provides faculty with new means of development through conferences and peer interaction and stimulates knowledge growth in the area of teaching
and learning methodology. It also makes available a variety of funding opportunities through such entities as the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) and the Pew Charitable Trust.

**BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY:**
As an integral component of its methodology, the community members partner with the faculty and students to define needs and develop the methods to appropriately address those needs. It is a matter of “doing with” not “doing to.” In this role, community members serve as co-facilitators of student learning, thereby demonstrating the applicability of the course information to specific community needs. This provides the community with informed volunteers who potentially gain a life-long understanding of the value of their civic involvement.

**BENEFITS TO THE UNIVERSITY:**
Service-Learning provides Boise State University with positive recognition of student activities and faculty involvement. Service-Learning demonstrates the attachment of faculty and students to the broader community. It also fulfills the university’s mission to “foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces educated, literate people—people knowledgeable of public affairs, committed to life-long learning, and capable of creative problem solving,” students capable of participating “in society as active, informed citizens.” Service-Learning literature has consistently reported these exact benefits to students.

**E. Accreditation**

Service-Learning is not required for accreditation. However, Service-Learning is recognized nationally and accreditation teams view its use favorably.

**IV. Projected Enrollment**

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**V. Resources Required**

All faculty are eligible to apply for Service-Learning designation for their respective courses through a proposal process (Appendix B). The individual department/college provides the academic support for the Service-Learning Credit and it determines whether/how the Service-Learning Credit is included in the individual faculty member’s workload. Thus, the dean’s approval of the proposal indicates that the department/college is willing/has the financial resources to offer the Service-Learning Credit. Payment for faculty time is at the discretion of the individual departments and colleges.
Student Affairs, through the designated student fee discussed above in the Student Interest section (III. C.), provides the administrative support for the faculty who offer Service-Learning Credit. The student fees are utilized to support a Coordinator position and the development and implementation of Service-Learning courses on the BSU campus. Growth in the program is limited by the Coordinator’s availability of time to assist in mentoring faculty, conducting reflection sessions, guiding faculty through the course development process, interacting with students and agencies, administrative responsibilities, etc. These limitations are recognized and the Service-Learning Coordinator is developing a group of students who have successfully completed Service-Learning classes to serve as Service-Learning Assistants. The Service-Learning Assistants help with reflection session facilitation, agency coordination and review of reflective journals. Assistants will receive a small stipend and may have the opportunity to participate in an internship (See Appendix C).

Based on current course projections, an additional staff person would be required in order to offer full support to more than ten classes. That additional staff person’s responsibilities will be to serve as a liaison with community non-profit agencies (See Appendix D) thereby strengthening the partnerships that are necessary for program success, to develop new service sites for students, to assist faculty in the facilitation of reflection sessions, to conduct ongoing Service-Learning Assistant training, to assist in student advising and to share in general office duties. A budget request with funding alternatives will be developed during FY2000.

VI. Library Resources Required

The Service-Learning Program has requested and received the support of the Library in the purchase of the following books, which will serve as the basis for a reference collection at Boise State:

AAHE’s 18 volume series on Service-Learning in the Disciplines $450.00
Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning (5 issues) 50.00
Community Service as Values Education (NSEE) 20.00
Practioner’s Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning 13.00
Combining Service and Learning: A Resource Book for Community And Public Service, Vols. I, II & III (NSEE) 123.00
A Guide for Developing Community-Responsive Models In Health-Profession Education 30.00
Connecting Cognition and Action: Evaluation of Student Performance 9.00

$695.00

VII. Semester Offered

Service-Learning courses will be available every semester, F/S/SU.

VIII. Implementation Date

Implementation of the SL designation will be effective Spring 2000 (to appear in the Spring 2000 Directory of Classes and the 2000/01 Boise State University Catalog)
Appendix A

Scholastic Integrity

Course design
The instructor determines both the base and Service-Learning course components. Nationally recognized Service-Learning course components include:

• A clear connection between the service and course competencies or objectives

• A relevant experience with a carefully structured assignment which includes:
  - clear learning objectives, specific directions, and evaluation criteria
  - critical thinking and/or problem solving
  - reflection that allows student to analyze and draw lessons from the experience
  - accountability

• Perform service that makes a meaningful contribution to the community

• Evaluation of the components (e.g. experience, course, student, agency)

Grading
Academic credit is allocated on the basis of learning not on service. Therefore, the experience must be integrated into the students’ academic curriculum and a grade assigned by the instructor.

To facilitate the grading process, the faculty member provides students with a structured time to think, talk, or write about: 1. what they did and saw during the actual service activity; 2. how that service activity relates to their course work and the course to their service; and 3. questions they may have regarding course material or supplemental information they believe is necessary to meet the needs of the people they are serving. It is recommended that students maintain a journal and complete a summary paper that synthesizes the experience with the course content.
Appendix C

Service-Learning Assistant Duties

Before the semester starts
Initiate and maintain contact with the community agency’s service coordinator for the site where the student is volunteering.
  • Provide him/her with your phone number
  • Promote open lines of communication to facilitate quick problem solving when issues arise

Under the guidance of the Service-Learning Coordinator and the faculty member, set up all service placements before the semester starts. Be sure to provide or decide on the following information:
  • A course syllabus with clear learning objectives
  • An approximate number of service-learning students
  • Number of hours per week/semester students will be expected to serve
  • The level of commitment the agency wants or can expect from the service-learning students
  • The skills or expertise the service-learning students can provide
  • The potential for a final evaluation of the student’s service

Arrange for an orientation for students at their service site. Plan on attending these orientations.

Getting the semester started
Promote service-learning and the various service options on the first day of class.

Provide a time line to the students and agencies, of when placement connection are to be made, orientations conducted, reflection sessions held, journals and final reports submitted.

Communicate with faculty member to develop a reflection plan:
  • Review journals or other written material for discussion topics
  • Discuss the course highlights of the past 2 weeks
    - Expected learning
    - Important issues that would be relevant to the experience
  • Create (or utilize pre-made) reflection activities that relate to the course information

Conduct or assist in conducting the reflection session. Review the reflective journals.

Maintain open lines of communication with the students to promote reflective discussion and facilitate quick problem solving when issues arise. Provide students with a phone number where you can be reached.

Gather any materials, such as reflective journals, from students at a predesignated time for submission.

Closing the semester
Ensure that students disengage responsibly and thoughtfully from service placement. They should provide the agency or individual they are serving with their “final date” of service 3 weeks prior to that date to facilitate the transition and evaluation process.
Appendix D

Criteria for Service-Learning Sites

Service-Learning sites shall usually be beyond Boise State University and shall include:
  • Private and public non-profit agencies such as those defined by 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(7) status. Examples of these include religious, educational, charitable, scientific, literary groups and organizations; programs for children and the aging; social welfare organizations, and; social and recreational clubs.
  • Proprietary health-care agencies and organizations such as nursing homes and hospice care facilities.

The service site accepts responsibility for assignment and supervision of volunteers. Students at these sites may not displace a employed worker. Documentation of site classification and liability insurance coverage must be provided prior to provision of service.