



Academic Writing & Research Service-Learning

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UCA's Definition of Service-Learning:

Service Learning is an academic course-based teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

(National Service-Learning Clearinghouse)

Course Description

This course explores academic research and writing by examining arguments in texts on food- and hunger-related issues and by reflective writing on experiences in community service. In Heifer International's Global Challenge program, students gain new perspectives on food and resource use in the Global South. Work in the vegetable gardens of the Faulkner County Urban Farming Project offers experience with local community food systems.

Special Requirements

Students agree to participate in Heifer International's overnight Global Challenge program at Heifer Ranch near Perryville, AR. They will eat and sleep in conditions roughly similar to those in resource-limited rural communities in Guatemala, Zambia, Thailand and other countries, and in urban slums and refugee camps. Students in small groups must trade with each other for firewood, water, food, cooking vessels and utensils. Also, students commit to working at least 5 hours in the Faulkner County Urban Farming Project garden in Conway. The urban farming project donates vegetables to area food pantries and soup kitchens.

Course Objectives

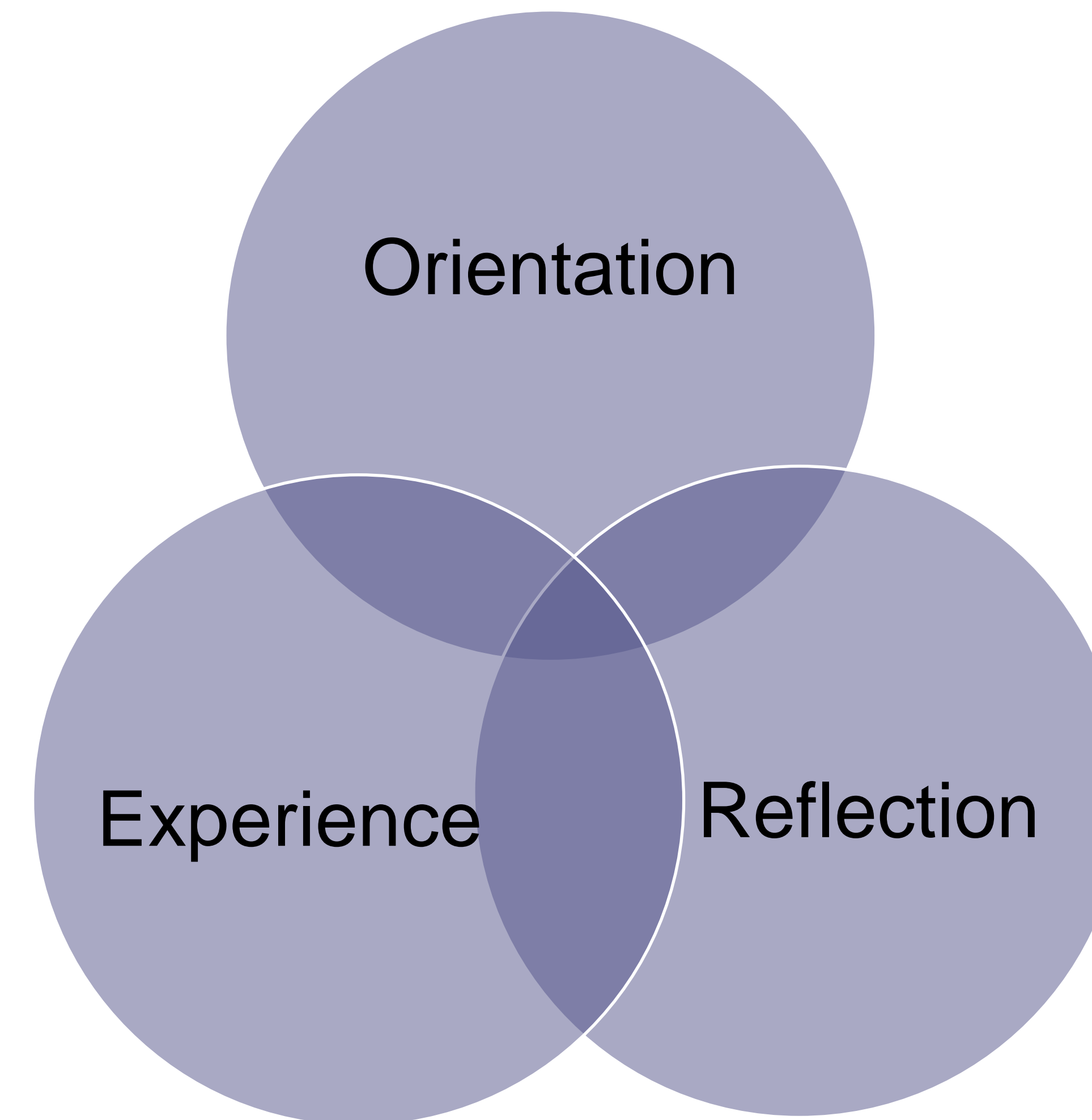


Students will:

- Develop their understanding of writing's relationship to academic inquiry.
- Learn the nature and benefits of the writing process.
- Understand the practical value of comprehensive revision.
- Examine the characteristics of academic conversations and engage an academic audience.
- Learn the concepts, principles and vocabulary of reasoning and argumentation and how analysis, synthesis, and evaluation work to advance arguments.
- Explore rhetorically persuasive arrangements of source information and of their own ideas in order to advance an argument.
- Expand their understanding of scholarly presentation.
- Become more aware of their inclusion in and responsibility to the academic community.



Service Learning



(Richard L. Conville, Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi)

Course Requirements

Orientation, the service learning experience, and reflection combine to offer students with a means of understanding and communicating about domestic and global food and hunger. The combination of these three elements help students to continue developing their critical thinking, critical reading and persuasive writing skills.

Orientation: Readings, discussion and Q and A sessions during classroom visits by Heifer staff and Faulkner County Urban Farming Project representatives prepare students for writing assignments and service experiences.

Experience: The Global Challenge program and related service work and work in the Faulkner County Urban Farming Project.

Reflection: Journal entries and essay assignments help students to reflect on personal thought about the issues and the service learning experience .

Assignments

Journal

Student journals offer a space for reflection on experiential learning and service learning, on reading and writing assignments.

Journal entries go beyond mere lists of activities and invite students to engage in critical thinking and to express their thoughts on hunger, poverty and the politics of food.



Essay 1: Rhetorical analysis of an essay on food, hunger and poverty.

Essay 2: Persuasive essay on global and/or local issues related to food, hunger, and poverty.

Essay 3: Analysis and Reflection Essay integrating experiences and service learning with the larger issues of food and hunger.

Students with the most thoughtful and best written essays will be invited to contribute their Analysis and Reflection essays on Heifer International's When Cows Fly page at Heifer.org.