



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL
ARKANSAS™

SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-Learning Annual Report

2017-2018

Letter from the Director

In 2017-2018, the service-learning program at UCA continued to grow, with service-learning courses being offered across all of the university's academic colleges. UCA's support for our community partners continued with the nonprofit workshop series offered in collaboration with United Way of Central Arkansas and the Arkansas Community Foundation / Faulkner County, and we continued our summer intensive faculty fellows program.

Last year, we welcomed President Houston Davis to UCA, and as this academic year drew to a close, we welcomed a new provost as well, Dr. Patty Poulter. In the Division of Outreach and Community Engagement, we additionally celebrated the retirement of our Associate Vice President, Shelley Mehl, after three years of leadership of departments from Service-Learning to the Center for Community and Economic Development and the Arkansas Coding Academy.

As we once again look back on a year full of change and growth, we are encouraged to see so many UCA students taking part in high-impact learning experiences that not only support their academic learning and professional skills development, but more importantly their connections to one another and their sense of efficacy as community members. These learning opportunities would not be possible without our many community partners who are willing to serve as co-educators on our students' academic journeys.

Yours in Service,



Lesley Graybeal
Director of Service-Learning

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Definition of Service-Learning

Academic service-learning is a 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.

Program History and Structure

The University of Central Arkansas Service-Learning Program advances the university's mission to engage with local, national, and global communities by providing central coordination for academic service-learning and co-curricular service opportunities in partnership with community organizations. While many UCA faculty members were using service-learning pedagogy in their classes prior to the creation of a formal program, the Service-Learning Program officially began operations in 2013. The Service-Learning Program is housed in the Division of Outreach & Community Engagement and additionally supported by the Service-Learning Faculty Liaison and the Center for Teaching Excellence.

Project Examples

Service-Learning is often best understood through the use of examples, and UCA faculty have guided their students through many unique and engaging projects in 2017-2018, including

- Creating graphic design projects for Arkansas Asset Builders, Child Care Aware, and Literacy Action of Central Arkansas
- Providing literacy instruction support in local elementary school classrooms
- Leading historic bus tours as part of the Imagine if Buildings Could Talk project commemorating the desegregation of Little Rock's Central High School
- Hosting health information events with local nonprofits and community organizations
- Creating nutrition materials for local food pantries
- Hosting a women in STEM day on UCA campus
- Partnering on a community policing event with local law enforcement partners
- Leading a Super Science Saturday event for children with special needs through Community Connections

By the Numbers: Program Outputs

Community Partners Served	69
Number of Service-Learning Courses	134
Number of Service-Learning Faculty	59
Number of Service-Learning Students	2,307
Number of Departments Represented	26
Number of Colleges Represented	8
Estimated Hours Served	15,744
Estimated Value of Community Service*	\$322,594.56

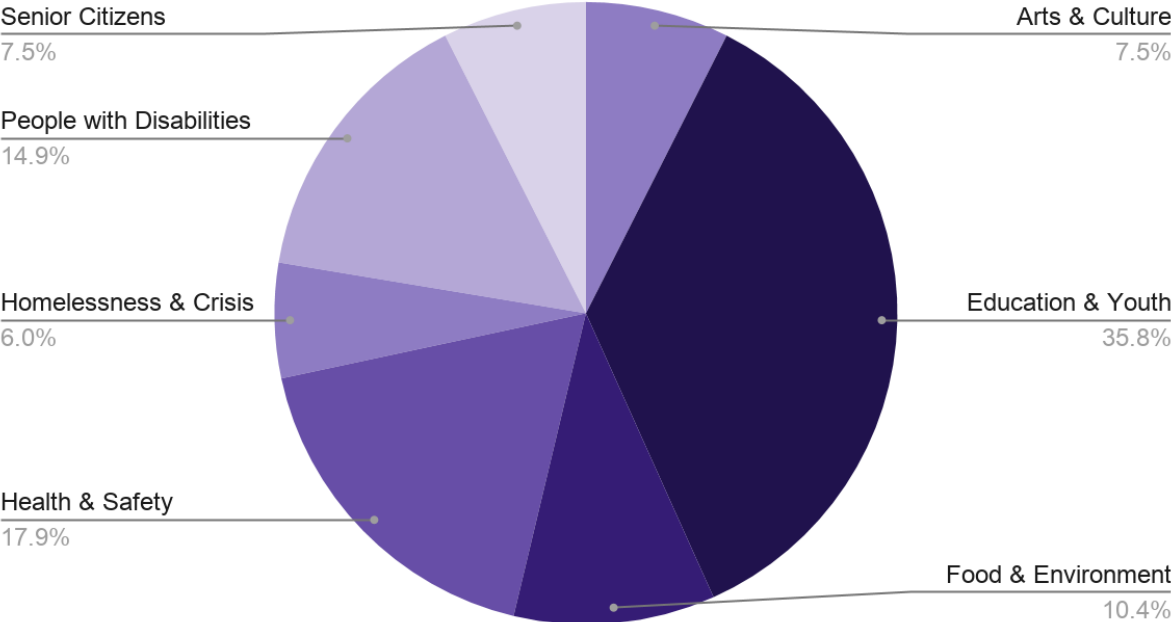
*The value of volunteer service is estimated at \$19.66/hour in the state of Arkansas. Source: Independent Sector, "The Value of Volunteer Time." Available from https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

The following year-to-year trends can be observed:

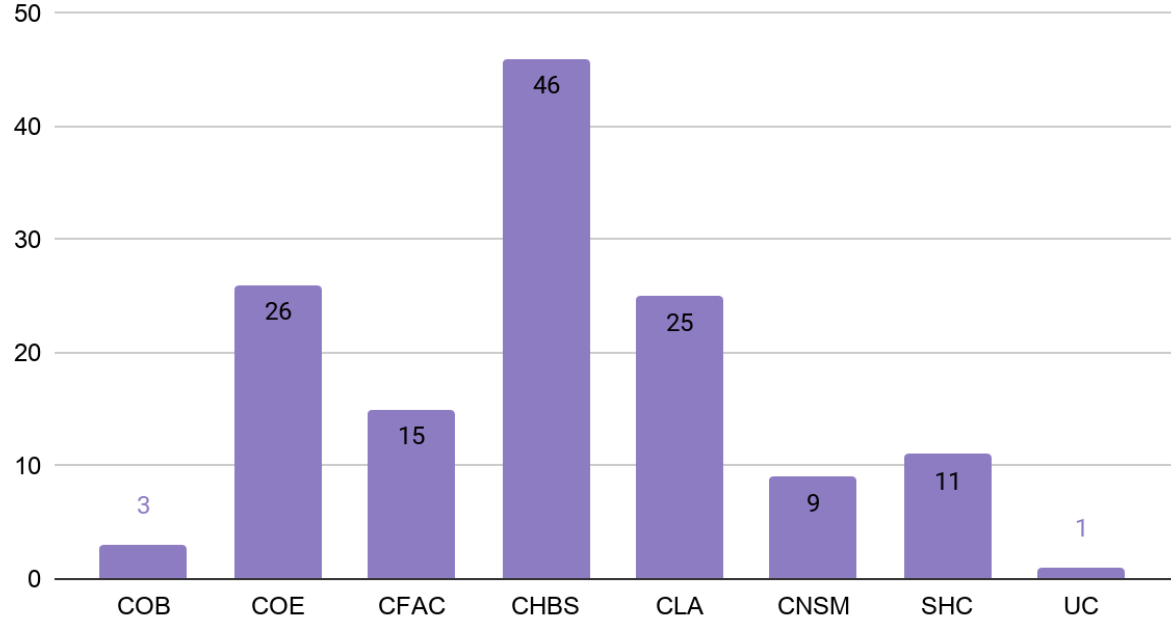
Criterion	2016-2017	2017-2018	% Change
SL Faculty	48	59	+23%
SL Courses	117	134	+15%
SL Students	1,738	2,307	+33%

The Service-Learning Assessment Plan targets the faculty outcome that the number of service-learning course offerings will increase 10% every year for the first five years of the program.

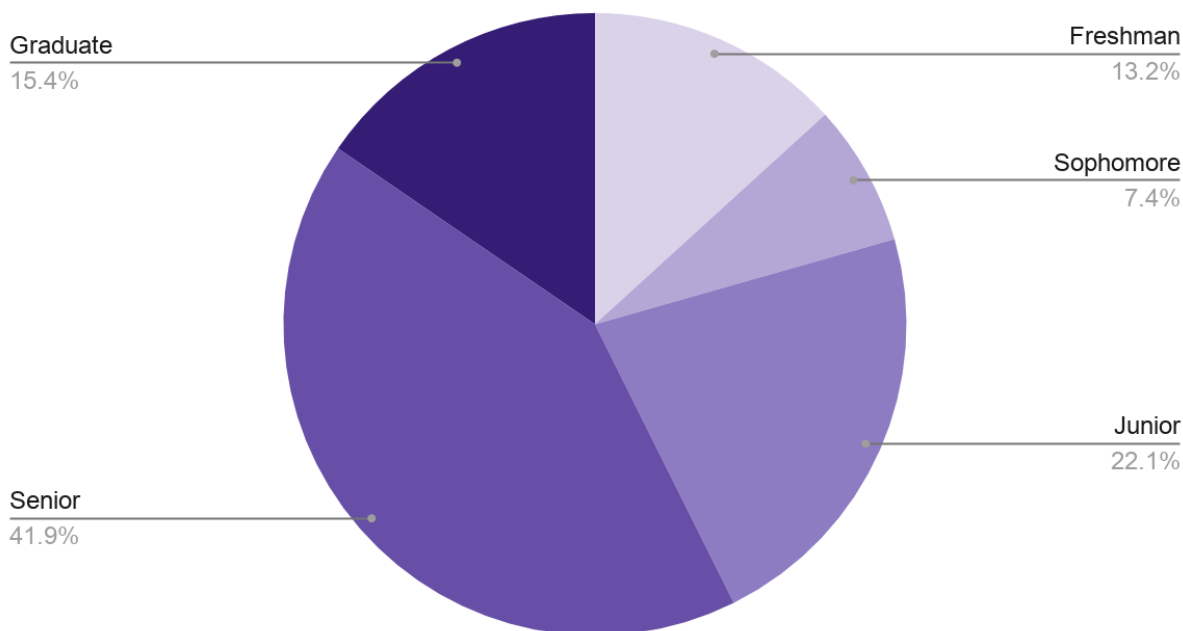
Types of Community Partner Organizations



Service-Learning Courses by College



Service-Learning Courses by Course Level



Student Outcomes

Student learning outcomes are measured in the Service-Learning Assessment Plan through six items (scored on a 5-point scale) included on the end-of-semester course evaluations of courses designated with a service-learning attribute, as well as through faculty assessment of a student learning artifact from their course using a standard rubric.

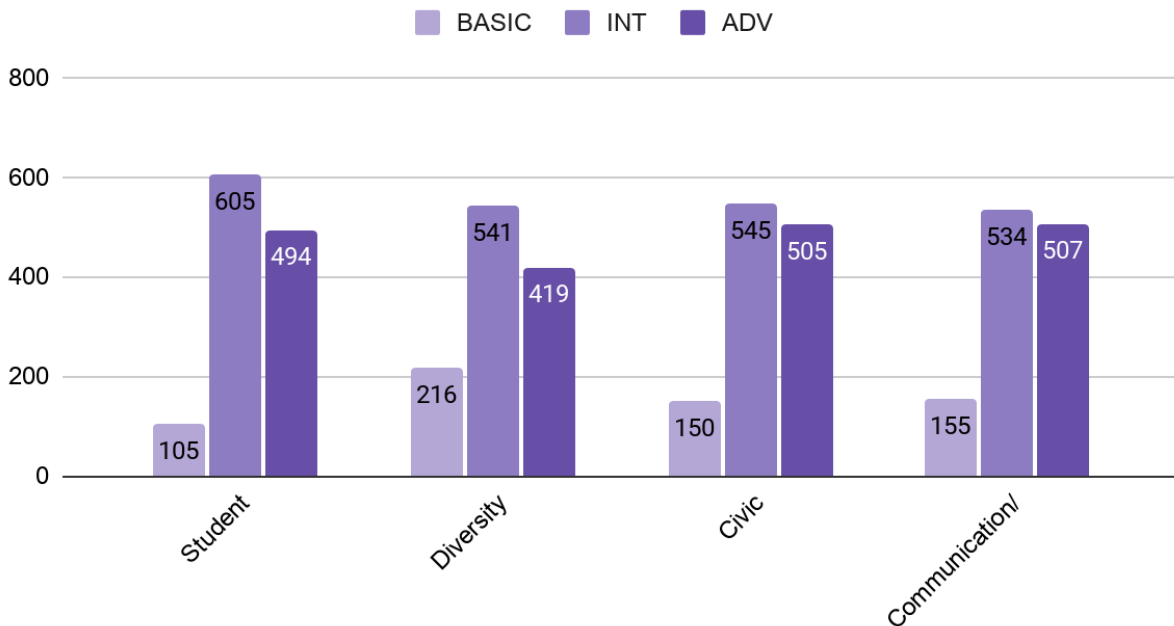
The assessment plan set a target outcome of 85% of students responding with the top two ratings (“more than half the time” and “almost always”) to all six items.

In 2017-2018, insufficient student evaluation data were available for this report.

Faculty assessment with the service-learning rubric from represented outcomes for 1189 of 2307 students (52%) enrolled in service-learning courses. Faculty assessed their service-learning students’ learning outcomes in four areas using the rubric below.

Goal	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Student Understanding: Understand how this academic discipline can serve the needs or address the issues of the community/ nation/world	Students understand service-learning but are unable to articulate discipline specific connections	Students demonstrate awareness of how discipline-based knowledge can impact social needs/issues	Students analyze and evaluate how disciplinary expertise can impact the social needs/issues
Diversity: Appreciate cultural and community diversity	Students articulate one's own cultural and/or community values and assumptions	Students compare cultural and/or community values across a range of contexts	Students respond to complex questions with answers that reflect multiple cultural and/or community perspectives
Civic Responsibility: Value their role as engaged and informed citizens	Students identify community/national/international issues or needs	Students recognize their responsibility and research their role in addressing issues or needs	Students take responsible and informed action to address an issue or need
Communication, Collaboration and Community: Demonstrate the ability to work with others toward shared goals	Students understand the need to work collaboratively with peers and/or community/national/international partners to address issues/needs	Students work collaboratively with peers and/or various partners to address issues/needs	Students work collaboratively with peers and/or various partners to produce positive outcomes to address issues/needs

Faculty Rubric Data



Faculty Outcomes

Faculty outcomes are measured in the Service-Learning Assessment Plan through eight Likert-type items and four open-ended questions in an end-of-semester evaluation of their participation in the service-learning experience. Faculty evaluation data represent 29 of 59 faculty members (49%) teaching service-learning courses in 2017-2018.

The assessment plan set a target outcome of 85% of faculty responding that they agree or strongly agree that they were satisfied with the Faculty Fellows Program and that they were satisfied with the overall support they received to develop and launch a service-learning course.

Faculty Evaluation Item	Mean Score	Agree / Strongly Agree
Students in the service-learning course benefited academically.	4.39	97%
After completing the service-learning course, students had a stronger sense of civic responsibility and community collaboration.	4.46	93%
Students in the service-learning course had an increased awareness of diversity, of various cultures, and of racial and class background.	4	65%

Students who participated in the service-learning course will say it was a beneficial experience and were satisfied with the service project overall.	4.5	90%
As a faculty member, I was strongly satisfied with the information I received in the Faculty Fellows Program.	4.75	52%
As a faculty member, I was strongly satisfied with the support from Outreach & Community Engagement and the Service-Learning Program Coordinator.	4.81	86%
As a faculty member, I was strongly satisfied with the overall support I received to develop and launch my service-learning course.	4.69	86%
I plan to continue offering service-learning courses in the future.	4.71	94%

When asked **what made them interested in teaching a service-learning course**, faculty respondents cited factors including

- Personal passion for civic engagement and service
- Belief that students learn best through service-learning
- Providing practical, hands-on, experiential learning opportunities for students
- Motivating students and sustaining their interest in the discipline
- Exposing students to the expectations of a helping profession

When asked **what aspects of the service-learning project worked particularly well in the course**, respondents cited elements such as

- Allowing student choice in the project format (individual or group) or service site
- Providing class time for students to work on service-learning projects
- Class visits by community partners
- Exposure to diversity and interaction between students and community members
- Connection of theory to practice
- Encouraging student reflection on passions and interests prior to choosing a service-learning site
- Providing faculty guidance throughout the service-learning project

When asked **what aspects of the course needed improvement**, faculty identified the need for

- Better preparing students for the service-learning experience
- Creating more structured reflection assignments
- Better communication with students and community partners
- Improving student motivation to complete the service-learning project
- More upfront preparation and planning

- More class time dedicated to reflection

When asked **what additional support is needed from their college or department, the Center for Teaching Excellence, or Outreach & Community Engagement**, respondents expressed the need for the following:

- Support designing research on service-learning courses
- Opportunity to participate in Service-Learning Faculty Fellows Program
- Comprehensive database of community partners interested in working directly with students
- Increased opportunities to check in with and learn from other service-learning faculty

Community Partner Outcomes

Community partner outcomes are measured in the Service-Learning Assessment Plan through eleven Likert-type items and four open-ended questions in an end-of-semester evaluation of their participation in the service-learning experience. Community partner evaluation data represent 45 of 69 organizations (65%) partnering with service-learning courses in 2017-2018.

The assessment plan set a target outcome of 85% of community partners responding that they agree or strongly agree that service-learning students added value to the programs/services they provide and that they would be interested in hosting service-learning students in the future.

Community Partner Evaluation Item	Mean Score	Agree/ Strongly Agree
The Service-Learning students added value to the programs/services we provide.	4.64	99%
The Service-Learning experience allowed us to build organizational capacity.	4.26	89%
The Service-Learning students' work was high quality.	4.54	94%
Materials that Service-Learning students prepared for our organization will be used in the future.	4.20	81%
The students' Service-Learning experience was properly designed to serve our clients.	4.63	100%
Communication between our organization and UCA faculty and students was positive.	4.81	99%
Service-Learning students were prepared to serve our organization.	4.67	97%

Our organization is interested in hosting Service-Learning students in the future.	4.71	99%
Working with Service-Learning students was a positive experience.	4.79	97%
We felt prepared to work with Service-Learning students.	4.64	99%
Working with the Service-Learning Program Coordinator was a positive experience.	4.74	93%

When asked **what could be improved for future service-learning experiences**, community partner respondents suggested

- Improved alignment between service-learning project and academic content of class
- Additional connections with other service-learning courses, student groups, and individual student volunteers
- Support for marketing events hosted by service-learning classes or students
- Ensuring that the scope of service-learning assignments are appropriate for the time limitations of the site and/or the course
- Helping students to understand the importance of their role within a service-learning project and with a community partner organization

When asked about **negative experiences with service-learning students**, only one community partner shared a negative experience with a service-learning student who was not professional in their interactions with a community partner site.

When asked about **positive experiences with service-learning students**, community partners provided the following responses:

- Service-learning students were eager to learn from community sites
- Increased capacity at service-learning sites
- Service-learning students were knowledgeable and well prepared for service
- Students formed positive relationships with community members or served as positive role models
- Service-learning students were helpful and adaptable to the needs of the community partner

Finally, when asked how, *beyond service learning*, UCA can help community partners accomplish their mission, respondents identified the need for

- On-going volunteers, groups of volunteers, and interns
- Nonprofit workshops on the topic of marketing

Faculty Development

The following faculty development programming in service-learning was offered through the Center for Teaching Excellence in 2017-2018:

- Service-Learning Speed Date: Community Partner, Student, and Faculty Perspectives
- Service-Learning Faculty Fellows Panel

The Service-Learning Faculty Fellows Seminar was offered for the sixth time in Summer 2018. The Service-Learning Assessment Plan targets the outcome that Faculty Fellows applications will increase every year over the first five years of the program. In 2018, twelve applications were received, which represented a 50% increase from the previous year.

The following Faculty Fellows were named for 2018:

- **Taine Duncan**, Philosophy and Religion
- **Annette Gartman**, Communication
- **Carl Olds**, Department of Student Transitions
- **Zach Smith**, History
- **Sunny Styles-Foster**, Teaching and Learning

Finally, Service-Learning Seed Grants of up to \$250 each were awarded to nine faculty members in 2017-2018 to cover costs associated with service-learning projects.

Faculty Member	Course	Project Expense
Denise Demers	Mental Health	Supplies for university-wide service day activities, such as card and blanket making
Sonya Fritz	Literature for Adolescents	Books selected by students for children served by Children's Advocacy Alliance
Staci Fritzges	Principles of Communication	Super Stars Saturday arts festival for children with special needs
Buck Foster	Role of Arkansas in the Nation	Museum display materials
Sunjung Kim	Language and Literacy	Supplies for literacy lessons with Boys & Girls Club

Dave Martinez	Graphic Design III	Printed graphic design materials for community partners
Rachel Schichtl	Community Nutrition	Fruit trees for Faulkner County Urban Farm Project
Zach Smith	Global History of Student Protest	Supplies for zinemaking activity at ArtsFest
Azida Walker	Women and Minorities in STEM	Celebration of Women in STEM event

Recognition of Service-Learning

The UCA Service-Learning Program has hosted a Service-Learning Awards event each year since the program's inception. Award criteria are detailed on the [Service-Learning Program website](#).

The following individuals and organizations were recognized in 2017-2018:

- **Ben Askew**, Leadership in Service-Learning
- **Lauren Montgomery**, Exceptional Achievement in Service-Learning
- **Dr. LaVona Traywick**, Peter J. Mehl Service-Learning Faculty of the Year
- **Community Connections**, Community Partner of the Year

The Service-Learning Program additionally nominated one student for a national award through Campus Compact.

- **Jayda Williams**, Newman Civic Fellows Award