



UNIVERSITY OF
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SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-Learning Annual Report

2020-2021

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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

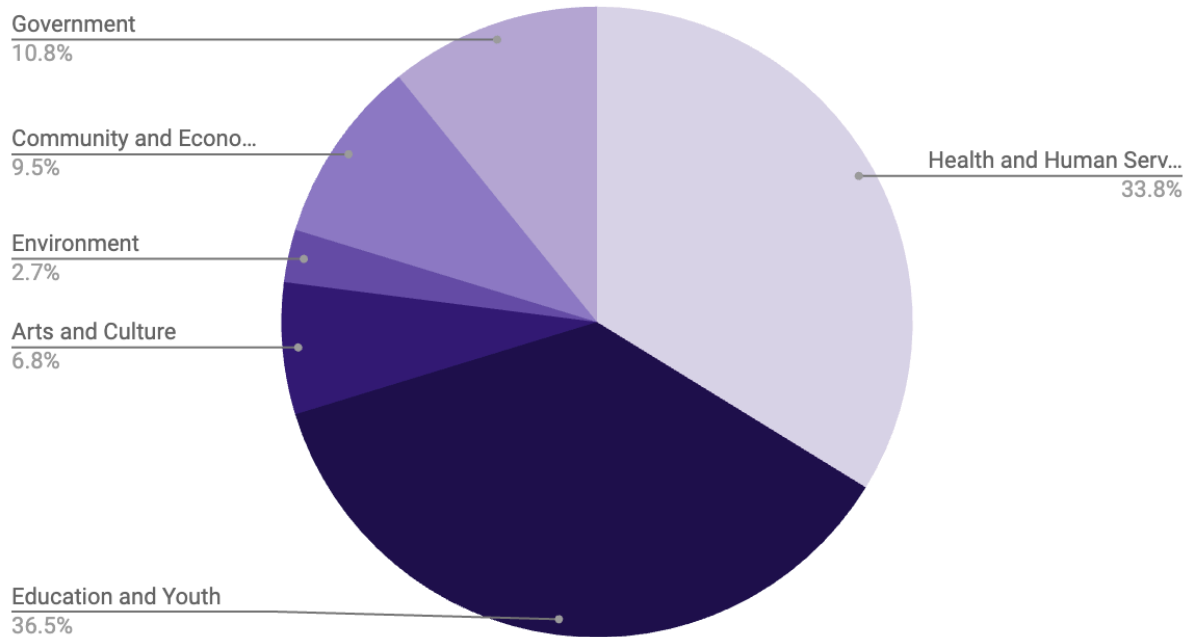
The University of Central Arkansas Service-Learning Program advances the university's mission to engage with local, national, and global communities by providing central coordination for academic service-learning and co-curricular service opportunities in partnership with community organizations. While 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.

By the Numbers: Program Outputs

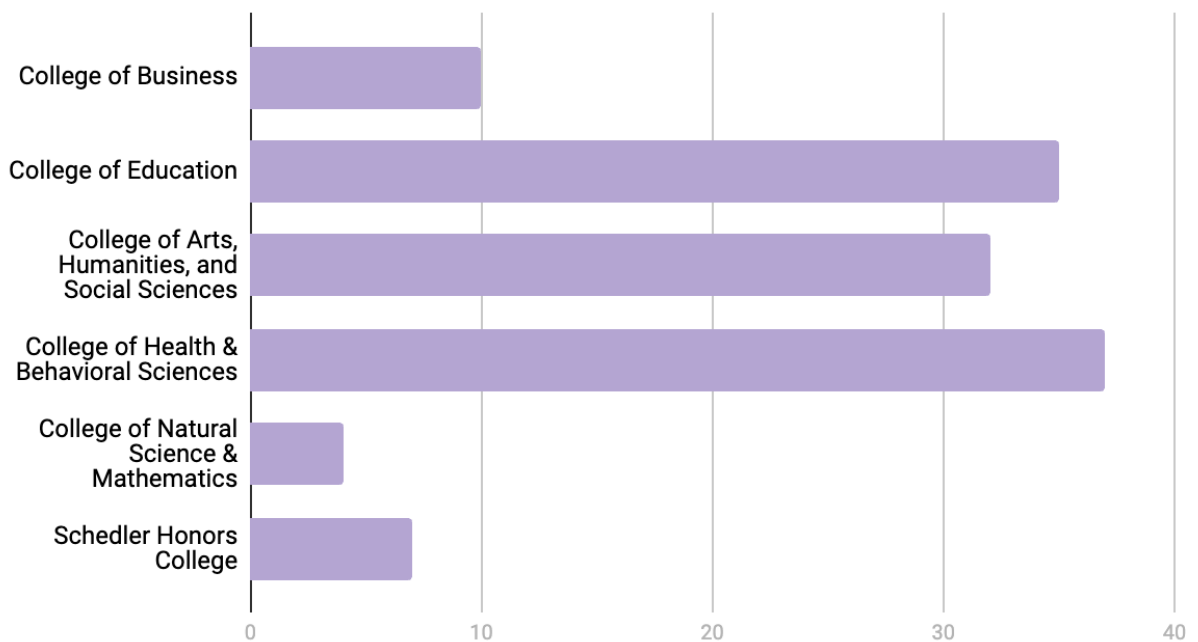
Community Partners Served	73
Number of Service-Learning Courses	127
Number of Service-Learning Faculty	54
Number of Service-Learning Students	1694
Number of Academic Programs Represented	27
Number of Colleges Represented	7
Estimated Hours Served	7,690+
Estimated Value of Community Service*	\$175,870

*The value of volunteer service is estimated at \$22.87/hour in the state of Arkansas. Source: Independent Sector, "The Value of Volunteer Time." Available from https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

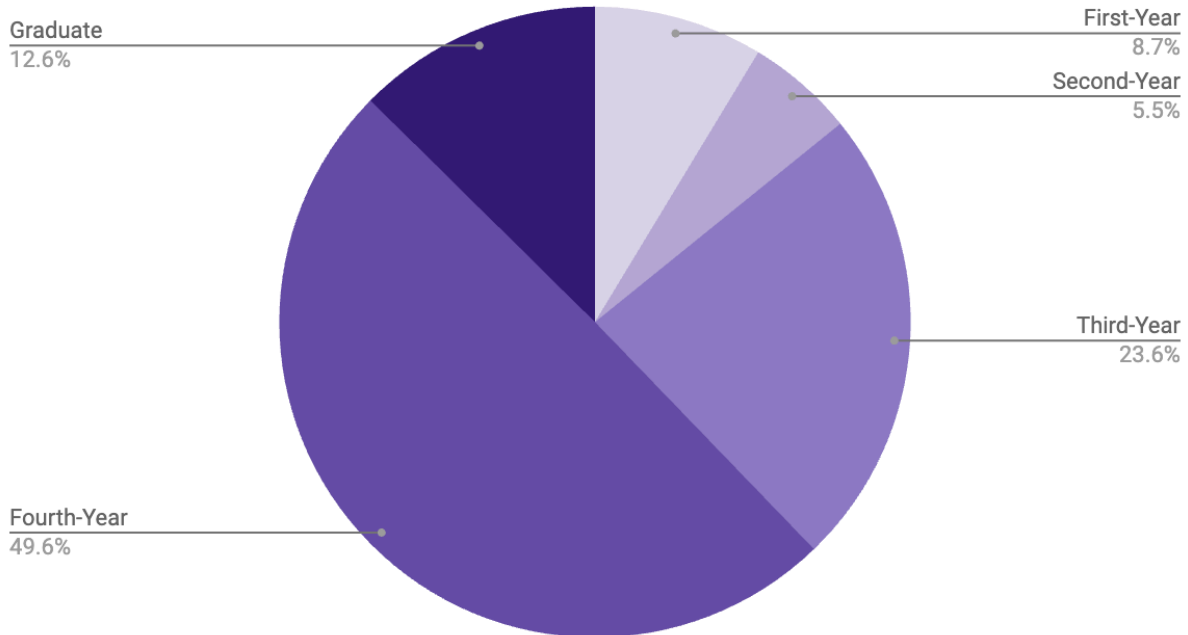
Type of Community Partner Organization



Service-Learning Courses by College



Service-Learning Courses by 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. Course evaluation data represented 985 out of 1694 students (58%) enrolled in service-learning coursework.

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.

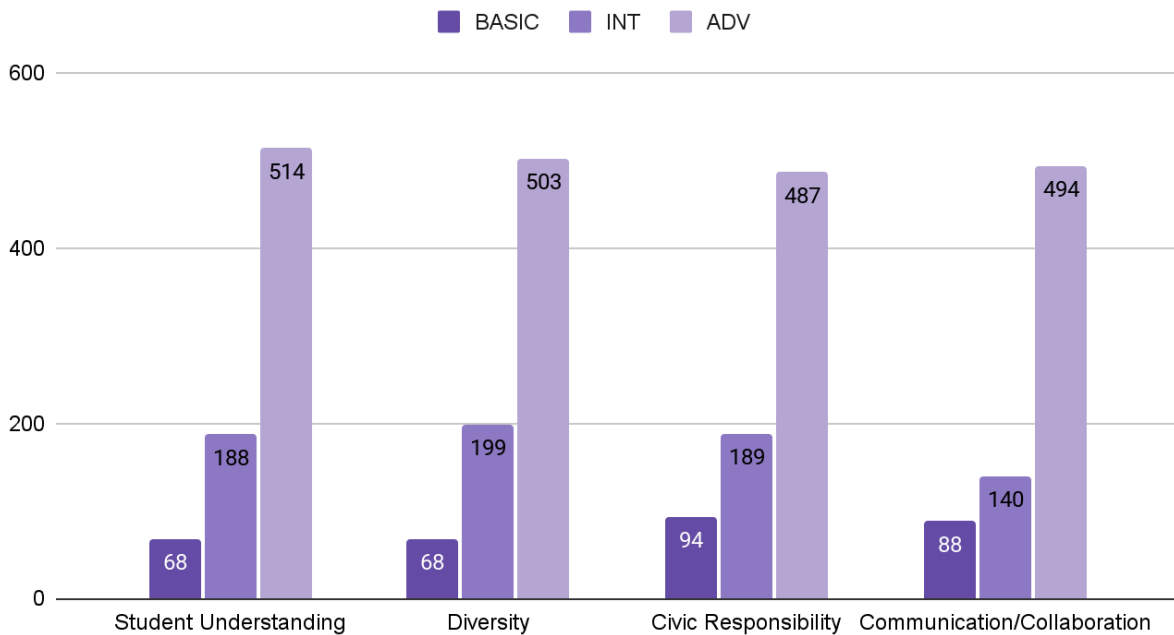
Course Evaluation Item	Mean Score	Top Two Ratings
The service-learning experience helped me achieve course objectives.	4.60	91%
The service-learning portion of this course helped me learn to work well with others to achieve common goals.	4.58	90%
The service-learning portion of this course helped me understand and appreciate local, national, and/or global diversity.	4.57	90%

The service-learning portion of this course helped me understand how this academic discipline can serve the needs of the community/nation/world.	4.59	91%
The service-learning portion of this course helped me understand my role as an engaged and informed citizen.	4.61	91%
The service-learning portion of this course helped me understand the importance of UCA's responsibility to help address the needs of the community/nation/world.	4.54	88%

Faculty assessment with the service-learning rubric represented outcomes for 788 of 1694 students (47%) 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 19 of 54 faculty members (35%) teaching service-learning courses in 2020-2021.

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.	4.42	95%
After completing the service-learning course, students had a stronger sense of civic responsibility and community collaboration.	4.11	84%
Students in the service-learning course had an increased awareness of diversity, of various cultures, and of racial and class background.	4.16	84%

Students who participated in the service-learning course will say it was a beneficial experience and were satisfied with the service project overall.	4.37	95%
As a faculty member, I was strongly satisfied with the information I received in the Faculty Fellows Program.	3.89	67%
As a faculty member, I was strongly satisfied with the support from Outreach & Community Engagement and the Service-Learning Program Coordinator.	4.53	93%
As a faculty member, I was strongly satisfied with the overall support I received to develop and launch my service-learning course.	4.47	93%
I plan to continue offering service-learning courses in the future.	4.56	94%

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

- A passion for service and helping struggling learners in the community
- The connection to course content
- The benefits of hands-on, experiential learning for students
- The opportunity for students to work on a relevant community issue
- The application of theory in practice
- Opportunities for students to gain interpersonal skills
- Raising awareness among students of community issues

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

- Community partners being flexible and allowing multiple ways for students to engage
- Interactions between students and community partners or community members
- Student excitement and enthusiasm for the project
- Implementing a research-based or indirect service project
- Enthusiasm and passion of community partners
- Opportunities for student voice and leadership of the project

When asked **what aspects of the course needed improvement**, faculty identified issues such as

- Ensuring that they have a contingency plan for all aspects of the project
- Challenges around virtual and hybrid learning environments
- Planning and goal setting with community partners
- Organization of deadlines and instructions for students
- Frequency of interactions with community partners

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 19 of 73 organizations (26%) partnering with service-learning courses in 2020-2021.

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.	4.73	95%
The Service-Learning experience allowed us to build organizational capacity.	4.42	84%
The Service-Learning students' work was high quality.	4.42	84%
Materials that Service-Learning students prepared for our organization will be used in the future.	4.36	86%
The students' Service-Learning experience was properly designed to serve our clients.	4.61	100%
Communication between our organization and UCA faculty and students was positive.	4.83	100%
Service-Learning students were prepared to serve our organization.	4.42	79%
Our organization is interested in hosting Service-Learning students in the future.	4.63	89%
Working with Service-Learning students was a positive experience.	4.74	89%
We felt prepared to work with Service-Learning students.	4.26	79%
Working with the Director of Service-Learning was a positive experience.	5.00	100%

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

- Clarifying expectations around virtual, hybrid, and in-person interactions with students
- Extended engagement that lasts more than one semester

When asked about **negative experiences with service-learning students**, community partners offered constructive feedback that included

- Workload created by the service-learning project
- Challenges working around students' class schedules
- Lack of engagement or interest from some students
- Limited ability to deliver services due to COVID-19

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

- Professionalism of students
- Consistency of students
- Opportunities to exchange ideas
- Impact of students' work on the organization's ability to fulfill its mission
- Interactions with Outreach & Community Engagement staff

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

- Donations drives hosted by campus organizations or departments
- Opportunities to recruit volunteers, including during the summer months
- Help with strategic planning and community development best practices

Faculty Development and Support

The following faculty participated in the **Service-Learning Faculty Fellows** seminar during Summer 2021:

- **Eric Bowne**, Sociology, Criminology, and Anthropology
- **Alicia Brown**, Early Childhood, Literacy, and Special Education
- **Lisa Christman**, Student Transitions
- **Jennifer Hawkinson**, Music
- **Leah Horton**, Schedler Honors College
- **Rebekah Luong**, Nutrition and Family Sciences
- **Duston Morris**, Health Sciences
- **Krista Peppers**, Biology
- **Darshon Reed**, Psychology & Counseling

Service-Learning Seed Grants of up to \$250 each were awarded to the following faculty members in 2020-2021 to cover costs associated with service-learning projects.

Faculty Member	Course	Project Expense
Alicia Brown	Elementary & Special Education Practicum	Creating a sensory playground for Compass Academy
Rachel Dortin	Technical Writing	Creation of a membership management system for the Arkansas Black Mayors' Association
Sonya Fritz	Literature for Adolescents	Purchase of books for Children's Advocacy Alliance
Trina Harlow	Art Education Practicum / Art Education Internship	Supplies for Art in the Park event for kids
Amy Hawkins	Public Relations Cases and Campaigns	Printing campaign proposals for Community Action Program for Central Arkansas
Stefanie Sorbet	Positive Classroom Environment	Supplies for literacy bags for students in North Little Rock Schools

Recognition of Service-Learning

The UCA Service-Learning Program has hosted a Service-Learning Awards event each year since the program's inception. In 2020-2021, the following awards were given:

- **Sabrina Gonzalez**, Leadership in Service-Learning
- **Mariandree Ramirez**, Spirit of Humanity
- **Bo Meyers**, Exceptional Achievement in Service-Learning
- **Monica Lieblong**, Peter J. Mehl Service-Learning Faculty of the Year
- **Faulkner County Cooperative Extension Services**, Community Partner of the Year

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

- **Emma Davis**, Newman Civic Fellows Award