



1999 Service-Learning Needs Assessment

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Beginning December 1998 through March 1999, The UCLA Higher Education Research Institute Service-Learning Clearinghouse Project, a partner organization of the Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, conducted an electronic survey of grantees and subgrantees of the Corporation for National Service (CNS) to determine the needs of service-learning practitioners in colleges and universities nationwide. The survey gathered information about training, technical assistance, research and program needs of the field.

The survey questionnaire was distributed via the World Wide Web and approximately 70 respondents completed the survey. While the majority of respondents were directors of service-learning programs at their college or university, some were both service-learning program directors and faculty members of an academic department.

Included in this write-up is a brief description of the survey instrument; a profile of the institutional and respondent characteristics; and a summary of the major findings from the Service-Learning Needs Assessment. The responses to all items in the survey follow this brief summary.

The Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was divided into 14 sections. The first 10 sections contained questions that covered a broad array of issues, generally considered pertinent to the higher education community involved in service-learning. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of various needs to either sustain, strengthen or advance their efforts in service-learning. Respondents were also provided the opportunity to write open-ended comments about their experiences. In section 11, respondents were asked to indicate the type of methods they most prefer using to address the needs identified. The two remaining sections solicited information that depicted the college or university's institutional and service-learning program characteristics. The final section allowed respondents to provide additional information and comments about their service-learning experiences.

The specific issues addressed are listed below:

Service-Learning Program Development

- Integration of Service with the Curriculum
- Service-Learning Staff Development
- Community Linkage
- Service-Learning Literature
- Service-Learning Research and Evaluation
- Service-Learning Resources
- Faculty Involvement in Service-Learning
- Student Involvement in Service-Learning
- Methods to Address Service-Learning Needs

Institutional Profile

Service-Learning Program Affiliation

Consortia/membership-based organization	29%
Institution of higher education	71%

Institutional Type

Public	78%
Private	22%
2-year college	25%
4-year college	16%
4-year university	59%

Historically Black colleges/universities	2%
Women's college	0%
Religiously affiliated institutions	10%

Campus Compact Member

Yes	73%
No	27%

Grantee or Subgrantee of the Corporation for National Service Learn and Serve America

Direct grantees of CNS	47%
Subgrantee/ member of a consortium	53%

% Holding both director and faculty position

Yes	49%
No	51%

Years respondent has been involved in Service-Learning

1-2 years	22%
3-4 years	32%
5-10 years	32%
10+ years	14%

Years the college or university Service-Learning program has been in existence

1-2 years	30%
3-4 years	22%
5-10 years	44%
10+ years	8%

Service-Learning Program Organizational Location

Academic Affairs	62%
Student Affairs	38%

Number of Faculty Campus Wide Involved in Service-Learning

0-5	18%
6-10	16%
11-20	29%
21-40	14%
40+	22%

% Service-Learning Budget Covered by Institution

0-20%	20%
21-40%	14%
41-60%	30%

61-80%	20%
81-100%	16%

% of Service-Learning Budget Covered by External Funds

0-20%	30%
21-40%	21%
41-60%	32%
61-80%	9%
81-100%	13%

Survey Results

Respondents were asked to indicate (based on a five point scale) the degree to which nine general categories represent "areas of need" with regard to their service-learning program. Two general categories clearly stand out as areas in which respondents perceived the greatest needs. Seventy percent of respondents indicated a high need with regard to "increased service-learning research and evaluation" and "greater faculty involvement in service-learning". Table 1 displays the expressed needs for all nine areas presented in the survey.

Table 1: Areas of Need	Total % choosing Mod/High and High
1. Information regarding service-learning program development & implementation	22%
2. Information regarding integration of service with the curriculum	42%
3. Increased service-learning staff development	41%
4. Stronger institution/community partnership [community linkage]	40%
5. Increased service-learning literature	24%
6. Increased service-learning research and evaluation	70%
7. Increased/varied access to service-learning resources	28%
8. Greater faculty involvement in service-learning	70%

9. Greater student involvement in service-learning	59%
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Research and Evaluation

Within the category of service-learning research and evaluation, respondents were asked to select the three most pressing areas of need from a list which presented nine possible choices. The items most commonly chosen were: "impact of service-learning on students (16%), longitudinal studies of service-learning (15%) and impact of service-learning on faculty (14%)."

Faculty Involvement in Service-Learning

Within the category that explored faculty involvement in service-learning, respondents were asked to indicate what factors might facilitate greater involvement among faculty members. Table 2 lists the needs of faculty currently involved in service-learning. The highest need identified is "faculty release time", followed by the need to have "institutional clarification of the faculty's role in service-learning." The next highest pressing need was "increased awareness on campus of current service-learning efforts."

Table 2: Areas of Need for Faculty CURRENTLY Involved in Service-Learning

	Total % choosing Mod/High and High
1. Faculty release-time to organize service-learning activities	62%
2. Institutional clarification of faculty's role in service-learning	57%
3. Increased awareness on campus of current service-learning efforts	56%
4. Securing departmental support for service-learning	54%
5. Technical assistance on the assessment of student learning	53%
6. Discipline-based resources/information on service-learning	53%
7. Promotional incentives for engaging in service-learning	52%
8. Training on service-learning reflection	49%
9. Monetary incentives for engaging in service-learning	46%
10. Support of a "service-learning coordinator" staff person	44%
11. Securing high level administrative support for service-learning	42%
12. Training on service-learning pedagogy	30%

13. Technical assistance on the logistical organization of service-learning 30%

Respondents were also asked to indicate what factors might increase the number of faculty who would be willing to engage in service-learning. Table 3 lists those results. "Increasing the awareness of service-learning efforts on campus", "faculty release-time", and "securing departmental support for service-learning", were all selected as factors that could result in greater faculty involvement.

Table 3: Areas of Need to INCREASE THE NUMBER of Faculty Involved in Service-Learning	Total % choosing Mod/ High and High
1. Increased awareness on campus of current service-learning efforts	78%
2. Discipline-based resources/information on service-learning	77%
3. Training on service-learning pedagogy	76%
4. Faculty release-time to organize service-learning activities	75%
5. Securing departmental support for service-learning	75%
6. Institutional clarification of faculty's role in service-learning	70%
7. Training on service-learning reflection	69%
8. Technical assistance on the assessment of student learning	66%
9. Monetary incentives for engaging in service-learning	65%
10. Promotional incentives for engaging in service-learning	64%
11. Securing high level administrative support for service-learning	62%
12. Support of a "service-learning coordinator" staff person	59%
13. Technical assistance on the logistical organization of service-learning	54%

While there are certainly differences between the needs of faculty currently involved in service-learning and the needs of faculty to increase their involvement, three of the top five needs for both groups were identical. In particular, respondents identified "faculty release-time to organize service-learning activities," "increased awareness on campus of current service-learning efforts," and "securing departmental support for service-learning" as important needs for both groups. After participants identified the issues that reflect their most pressing needs, they were asked to select the methods they would most prefer to meet the needs identified.

Clearly, the most desired choices include: local workshops (23%), faculty consultants (20%), and regional workshops and disciplined based publications/conferences/workshops (19% each).

Table 4: Methods Preferred to Address Service-Learning Needs

	Total %
1. Program Development & Implementation Needs Regional Workshop	18%
2. Integration Of Service With The Curriculum Disciplined based publication / conferences / workshops	19%
3. Program Staff Development Regional Workshops	19%
4. Community Linkage Needs Local Workshops	23%
5. Faculty Involvement in Service-Learning Needs Faculty consultants	20%
6. Student Involvement Needs Local Workshops	20%

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