ON A BEAUTIFUL TUESDAY morning in early July, several student grantwriters and their instructor from a service-learning course gathered during their class time at a huge warehouse in an industrial section of their city. The space they were about to tour—the former administrative and manufacturing headquarters of a local sportswear company—had been donated to their community partner, whose vision was to create an inclusive space for both emerging and established artists to come together outside of the competitive world of commercial galleries and conservative museums. This prospective artistic community center, which was to include spaces for exhibitions and performances and a resource center for working artists, now sat in front of them, behind a massive (and locked) front door. Those assembled waited five, ten, fifteen minutes. A few more students showed up. They all waited a bit longer. Now the community partner was really late. So were about half of the students from the class.

Though perhaps seemingly minor, the apparent breakdown in communication described above is no trivial matter in a community partnership, but it is quite a common one. In this chapter, we explore the process of creating successful partnerships (those that serve not only the community, but also the students who are working on behalf of community change) and the outcomes that result from such partnerships. We will return to the above scenario and examine others to investigate how these students might actively approach this opportunity to build their own knowledge and skills through effective collaboration with the world outside their college campus.

Orienting the Self toward Serving and Learning

Before we talk about the hallmarks of a successful partnership, let’s think about “service” itself. In chapter 1, you learned why colleges and universities are increasingly focused on engaging with their communities. This commitment allows the expertise of those who make up the higher education community (students, faculty, and staff) to impact the surrounding community positively, in order to address societal and political challenges and to create positive change both for individuals and within systems.

That’s not the only reason colleges and universities partner with the community, however. In addition to the social change possible from these partnerships, students may receive extraordinary benefits not accessed through traditional lecture-style courses. Because community-based learning environments energize, enhance, and make real the course curricula, students typically report significant growth in their abilities to communicate with diverse audiences in multiple ways, enhancement of leadership and project management skills, and development of their capacities for understanding themselves in relation to others who are both similar to and different from themselves. Participating
in a service-learning course may also help students clarify career goals and provide a network of contacts (and even, in some cases, job opportunities). Like students before you, you may also experience a significant shift in your identification as an informed and involved participant in your communities and your world.

These outcomes don't result by accident. Thoughtful preparation for community-based learning on the part of all involved dramatically increases the chances of successful results. We all have individual gifts and skills to offer our classmates, the instructor, and the community. By participating in this experience, we implicitly agree to put these capacities to use to create a rich, meaningful, and vibrant experience in an environment of mutual respect and commitment.

As noted in chapter 1, you can also expect to build academic discipline skills, deepen your knowledge of the issues facing your communities, and develop greater capacities for self-awareness. In fact, it is precisely through the reciprocal action of all of the parties involved in community-based learning that everyone benefits from the endeavor. That is to say, the community is able to achieve its outcomes and objectives through your focused actions, and you expand your knowledge and skills through putting theory into practice. This is the meaning of "partnership": All parties gain in the relationship, and they gain precisely because the others are gaining, too.

In chapter 3, you will complete an activity to help you identify specific objectives for your service-learning experience, and you will develop a plan for achieving these objectives within the context of your particular community site. For now, we are going to explore how best to initiate and create a community partnership for your service-learning experience, and we'll start by exploring "service."

Community Partnerships

Community partners are members of the community in businesses, government agencies, and social service organizations that agree to work with students individually or collectively in order to meet community needs. Partnerships are designed to create a service to the community while addressing educational opportunities for students. No two community partnerships are exactly alike. Each partnership occurs in a different

★★ Exercise 2.1: Exploring “Service”

Look up the words community, service, partner, and reciprocity in the dictionary and write the definitions down. How are these words and their definitions related to each other and to this course?

Now, as you write responses to the questions below, try to locate yourself within these terms and their meanings. Please be as concrete as possible, using examples, as you consider the following:

- How have you experienced a sense of community in other settings?
- When have you been of service to others? In what ways?
- When have you been served by others? In what ways?
- What did you give to others when you were providing service? What did you gain from your service experience?
- What images about those being served do you carry?
- Have you experienced situations in which benefit has resulted from a collaborative effort?
- What have been some of the critical elements of those partnerships that contributed to the success? What do you think and feel about them as a result of having been involved in them?
- What communication skills, critical thinking abilities, or other new skills did you develop as a result?
- How do you think your experience might prepare you for this current community-based learning opportunity?
BUILDING AND MAINTAINING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

community context, with multiple constituents who bring diverse sets of needs and assets to the table. In community-based learning courses, who you are—and how you and your classmates interact with one another—meets the particular nature of your community partner to create your unique partnership. Because the very character of collaboration is dynamic and relationship based, it is not possible to offer a single set of standardized steps that will ensure the success of your shared work.

It is possible, however, to look at the key elements of successful partnerships as a way to guide your current service-learning opportunity. The next few sections of this chapter are meant to provide you with a set of preparatory tools to help you work effectively in your unique community environment. For those students who are able to choose their community setting from among several possibilities, we will start by describing different kinds of community-based learning environments.

Community-Based Learning Environments

Your service-learning course is an opportunity for you to connect academic knowledge with community challenges. Broadly speaking, community-based learning environments can be characterized as two basic types: direct-service and project-based (or indirect service). In a direct-service experience, students work directly with the persons served by the partnering community organization. For example, students might spend several hours a week tutoring non-native-language speakers who recently arrived in the United States, or they may interview elderly persons living in a nursing home in order to compile oral histories of their life experiences.

In a project-based learning experience, students are more likely to focus on an end product and develop the necessary processes to lead them to the achievement of that goal. Writing grant proposals to win funding for a community partner’s programs and developing a public relations campaign for an organization are two examples of project-based experiences.

The nature of the work you will take on—and the methods you will use to accomplish your tasks—will help to frame the ways you will most effectively interact with your community partner. If you are part of a class that will be working one-on-one with homeless and low-income individuals (direct service) to provide resources for housing, for example, you should certainly expect to receive training from the organization involved to understand the policies and protocols to which you will be subject. You may need to fill out a series of forms (including, perhaps, a background check and confidentiality agreements). It is the responsibility of your instructor and community partner to prepare you for the work you will be engaged in, and it is your responsibility to take advantage of the preparation afforded by them.

If you are working in a project-based partnership, you still need to be oriented to your partnering organization, its mission, the methods it uses to fulfill its mission, the persons it serves, and the particular tasks you will be undertaking. In some cases, your faculty may be able to provide a comprehensive introduction to your community organization, but usually some time spent with contact persons from the organization will be vital, as well.

In some instances—such as a group of students creating a photo essay about a changing neighborhood to supplement their coursework on understanding community cultures—community-based learning happens without a formal community partner present.

Often, the decision about whether you will engage in direct service or in a project-based experience is made long before you step foot in the classroom. Instructors may determine this in advance and select the community partner. In other cases, one of the first tasks of your service-learning course might be to work collaboratively to decide the type of community service and the community partner. If you are embarking on a community-based learning adventure on your own and can make this choice yourself, turn to Exercise 2.7: Which Type of Community-Based Learning Is Right for Me? located on page 28. You may also want to contact your college’s service-learning or community service office to inquire about potential community partners and to get a list of service-learning course offerings.
Even without an identifiable community organization to whom you are accountable, it is still important that you, your classmates, and your instructor understand the goals of the project and that you identify the roles and responsibilities each person has in a successful community experience. After all, while you are not providing direct service to a specific set of clients in the example above, you are still serving the community in terms of the accuracy and honesty with which you represent it.

Am I Ready for This Challenge? Is My Community Partner Ready for Me?

Students engaged in the community are faced with unique responsibilities as workers and learners. As a service-learner, you will be a representative of your college or university, requiring you to think about how your individual actions will portray your institution. As an ambassador to the community, you should consider and stay attentive to the ways in which your behavior may influence how a community partner approaches working with students in the future.

Community partners also have a lot at stake. Frequently working on “shoestring budgets” subject to the changing perceptions of social need, many organizations rely on input and expertise from students and faculty to help them fulfill their missions. Not only are the contributions of students and faculty a cost-effective means of furthering the work of community organizations, but they also bring a diversity of perspectives into those organizations, creating entities with greater capacities to serve their constituents.

The organization Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) has outlined a number of principles of good practice for effective partnerships, principles that delineate responsibilities shared by colleges and universities (and the students who represent them in community-based learning projects) and communities. In the view of CCPH, partners in effective community-based learning situations exhibit the following traits:

- Agreed-upon goals and values on how to progress towards accomplishing those goals
- Mutual trust, respect, authenticity, and commitment
- Intentional working out of identified strengths, addressing areas that need improvement
- A balance of power and a sharing of resources
- Open and accessible communication
- Collaborative processes established through the interaction of all
- Feedback for improvement
- Sharing credit for accomplishments
- Commitment to spending the time it takes to develop these elements

As a student you have both responsibilities and rights that attend your participation in a service-learning experience. Let’s consider each of these areas and how they impact the community partnership and your own learning.

As a student you have responsibilities, including legal ones, to ensure that all persons associated with your partnership may achieve maximum benefit without experiencing undue risk or potential harm. Your instructor and community partner, for example, will have very clear ideas about the parameters within which you may operate. For example, most (if not all) partnerships will not permit students to transport clients of a community organization in their cars or to visit with clients in a private home. You are responsible for understanding the role you are fulfilling with regard to your community partnership and the expectations for your performance in that role. Also, as a community-based learner, you need to make good ethical and legal decisions that are consistent with and further the shared vision of the service-learning effort.

You are also responsible for negotiating time and time management issues. The majority of community partners we have worked with, when asked about the greatest challenges they have encountered, identify students’ failure to manage their time well (and the resulting difficulty this causes) in their partnerships.

For an exercise that helps you to consider visually your weekly time commitments to assist you in creating space for community commitment, turn to Exercise 2.8: As Time Goes By ... on page 29.
Moreover, it is your responsibility to learn in this nontraditional learning environment (which you may remember seeing in schematic form in chapter 1), through engaging with the community, dialoguing with others, and reflecting on how your work connects to the content of your course, larger societal and political issues, and your own sense of yourself.

Now let's examine your rights in the community setting. Your community partner is responsible for creating an environment in which it is possible for you to learn through serving, an environment in which you may use what you know for the benefit of yourself and others. This environment must be free from the kinds of threats that prevent learning through serving from taking place, particularly sexual and other forms of harassment based in discrimination. If possible, review the pertinent sections of your community partner's personnel manual that articulate the rights of staff, volunteers, and clients of the agency. These rights apply to you, as well, when you are working on behalf of the community partner.

So far, we have looked at your rights and responsibilities as a community-based learner and your connection to a community partner's responsibilities to create an environment that supports your work as a learner. Further, we must address the rights of the community partner, what a collaborating organization may expect to count on from the students with whom it is working. The following activity—which may be completed in writing, discussed with others, or both—is intended to further your understanding of the reasonable expectations of a community partner.

Exercise 2.10: Pre-Service Checklist of Student Rights on page 31 is intended to reaffirm those rights and identify any areas that need to be addressed before and/or during your work with your community partner.

Exercise 2.2: What Can a Community Partner Expect?

Imagine that you are the Program Director for an organization that serves the refugee community in your city by providing workforce readiness programs and tutoring in English. You are preparing to welcome a group of students from a local college involved in a service-learning course that combines both direct and indirect service: tutoring small groups of refugees in English language skills and revising the outdated tutoring manual that your organization uses as a guide for volunteer tutors.

Because your organization has worked with student interns, you have a fairly good sense of your responsibilities to the students. You've prepared job descriptions for the students, scheduled training sessions, and identified a process for them to get feedback and to assess their efforts.

In the past, though, some of these relationships have not worked so well for your organization. For example, students often arrived late for their sessions, and occasionally they did not show up at all. As a result, some tutoring sessions had to be doubled up or canceled. To prevent this from happening again, your supervisor has asked you to create a list of the organization's rights in relation to this service-learning class to share with the students before their first tutoring session.

Your task is to create that list. What, fundamentally, can your organization expect to get from the students who are preparing to engage with you?
This section was designed to draw parameters around your upcoming experience and make transparent the fundamental rights and responsibilities inherent in the community-based learning endeavor. In the next section, we’ll take a closer look at how you might flesh out these basic rights and responsibilities in the context of your particular community partnership.

What’s This Place? What’s My Place?

Before we discuss specific ways that you can formally learn more about your community organization and how your particular academic framework and skills might be of support, let’s start with an exercise to identify what you hope to accomplish, what your concerns are, what you need to be successful, and what you expect from others.

Your service experience will be greatly enhanced if you can have a discussion with your community partner representatives about their hopes, fears, needs, and expectations and compare them to your own. If you are able to do so, plan a specific time within the next week to have a one-on-one or group discussion with your community partner representatives about goals for this partnership to increase the likelihood of success for all involved.

Learning about Your Community Partner

Effective community engagement requires us to understand the needs, assets, mission, and goals of the organization with which we are preparing to work. Without this understanding we may be insensitive to the challenges and capacities of individuals within the organization; we may provide services that are actually of little use to the organization; or we may fail to comprehend the impact we have had on the organization, the community it represents, and the larger world.

Further, while our community partner and those it serves have needs that we might hope to address, they are not just “needy.” In fact, it is essential to a true collaboration that students understand that those they serve bring their own capacities, as well as their self-identified needs, to the table—just as students bring their needs as learners, along with their capacities and skills.

Our initial impressions of an organization and their clients may be based in reality or influenced by our biases and lack of information. We risk an unproductive service-learning experience unless we clarify our own perceptions with the community partner and with others involved in the community experience. The next exercise is intended to bring into alignment our notions with the reality of the community partner.

By now you have thought about what you bring to the partnership and what you hope to get out of it. You have considered your rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of your community partner. You have begun to develop your partnership by learning more about the community organization. In effect, things are off to positive start.

Because any collaboration is rooted in human relationship, there is the possibility—and, realistically, the probability—that something will arise to challenge

★★ Exercise 2.3: Hopes, Fears, Needs, and Expectations

Divide a sheet of paper into four columns: Hopes, Fears, Needs, and Expectations. Fill in whatever comes to mind under each category as it relates to the service-learning experience you are beginning. Then answer the following questions by completing a seven- to ten-minute "freewrite".

- What steps can you next take to begin realizing your hopes?
- What are the sources of your fears? What can you do to minimize these?
- What do you need and how will you get it to accomplish your hopes?
- What are the sources of your expectations? Are these your own or someone else’s?
- Using this information as a guide, list three action steps you can take in the next week to create the service-learning experience you desire.
Exercise 2.4: Organizational Action Research

This activity is designed for you to learn about the mission, history, staffing, structure, and budget of the community organization with which you are working through interviewing different persons associated with the organization. You are not limited to gathering information from the primary contact person at the organization. Instead, try to get a broad and comprehensive view of the organization by talking to as many people associated with the organization as possible. In addition to answering the questions below, gather one piece of organizational literature that best describes the organization's mission and services.

- Name of organization
- Brief history of the founding of the organization
- Mission statement
- Summary of vision: What would this organization like to accomplish/become? What is it trying to make happen?
- Describe the population the organization serves.
- Outline the public policy areas the organization might influence.
- What geographic area does the organization serve?
- How many paid staff are employed by the organization? What are their roles?
- What roles do volunteers play in the organization?

Adapted from R. Battistoni (2002), Civic Engagement across the Curriculum: A Resource Book for Service-Learning Faculty in All Disciplines.

you, your classmates, your instructor, and the community partner. In the next section, we will explore what to do when there are breakdowns in even the best-laid plans.

What Now?—Navigating Breakdowns

Remember our half-formed group of students waiting outside their community partner's door at the beginning of this chapter? Rejoining their story, we find one of the students using his cell phone to call the Executive Director of the organization, who had visited the students' class the week before and confirmed that today's visit was on the organization's calendar. Reaching her, the student learned that she was in her car on her way to the organization's office site but was turning around to come meet the students at this exhibition space. There had apparently been a misunderstanding, she said; she thought that the Artistic Director had offered to facilitate today's visit, but now she wondered whether she thought she was scheduled to do it. She apologized for the miscommunication and asked the students to please wait.

The rest of the students from class arrived just as the Executive Director pulled in with more apologies and a key to the locked door. The students toured the cavernous space filled with art from a huge cross section of regional artists, taking notes for their grant proposals and asking questions of the Executive Director. Some stayed past the end of class, interested in interviewing the artists who were arriving to install even more art for the exhibition opening that weekend.

When the students were asked to reflect during their next class session on their visit to the gallery, many spoke about the negative impact the Executive Director's lateness had made on them. Several wondered aloud whether their grantwriting project was important to the community partner, let alone a priority; others maintained that the incident had soured them on the relationship and the project for good. Another student remarked that it was indicative of the flakiness of artists in general to blow off an important meeting. Many expressed that their time was valuable and that they resented having to wait.

Then one student offered an alternate view. He said that, from his perspective, the community partner's internal miscommunication signaled that they were working really hard with very little funding to pull off an enormous task—creating an inclusive exhibit of dozens
of artists—and that proved to him how important his grantwriting would be to the organization. The small staff was so overtaxed with the basic work of the organization, he imagined, that they had failed to remember a meeting that would potentially benefit them. He said he was impressed that the Executive Director acted so quickly to correct the mistake the organization had made, redirecting her entire day to accommodate their visit despite her understanding that someone else was responsible for it. Finally, he suggested that just as we were judging the community partner’s lateness, so might the community partner judge the lateness of half of the students in the class—assuming that those who were late didn’t care about and hadn’t prioritized the visit, or were just “too flaky” to show up on time.

What these students were illustrating in a very practical way was the difference between intent and impact in communication. When interacting with others, all of us hold certain intentions for what we hope to communicate, and we use the various tools of communication (word choice, tone of voice, body language, behavior, and so on) to get that message across. Try as we might, we sometimes fail to have the impact on others that we intend; we also sometimes create impacts that inadvertently send a message that is directly opposed to our intentions. When the other students in the class heard that their lateness could be interpreted as flakiness or willful disregard of the community partner, they protested this perception: One argued that the bus had been late, several others that their bike rides had taken longer than they had imagined, and another that she had gotten lost on the way to the site. All of these quite legitimate reasons for lateness—like our contact person’s—illustrated the fine line we walk as communicators between intent and impact.

Because service-learning courses are collaborations between persons (and groups of persons) with a variety of needs and resources, inevitably breakdowns in the process will occur. Students, faculty, and community partners may choose to view these glitches as fatal to the collaborative process and, as a result, shirk their commitment to the shared endeavor. On the other hand, students, faculty, and community partners may choose to understand that such mistakes are opportunities for learning and growth, as these are often exactly the things that expose areas ripe for improvement (for example, the need for greater communication between staff people within an organization, or the importance of getting accurate directions before driving to a new place for the first time).

You may have noticed that the word “choose” is used in the preceding paragraph to describe how students, faculty, and community partners assess the success of their efforts at partnership. At a basic level, the only things within the control of any single person involved in community-based learning are his or her own behavior and responses. The community partner, the instructor, and the on-time students did not control whether the other students were late or not, just as the instructor and students did not control the community partner’s choices. However, all of these persons controlled how they reacted to the choices of the others and whether or not they used those outcomes to further their own learning.

Exercise 2.5, Exploring Breakdowns, offers several situations of breakdown between community partners and students. Investigate your reactions to these situations either in writing, in discussion with others, or both.

As you may have noted, the perceptions and perspectives of any one person in a situation are impacted by many factors, some of which that person may have in common with others, and some of which will differ from person to person. Further, many of these differences in experience result from the multiple ways that persons do and do not experience privilege and access to power in the world. In chapter 5, we explore in depth what it means to investigate power, understand privilege, and navigate difference. As you begin to work with your community partner, however, you might start to think about how who you are and what you have experienced impact the way you see the world, including the current world of this partnership. Don’t stop there, either: Get curious about the multiple realities you will encounter as a community-based learner. Think about how a genuine exchange, which is the promise of true collaboration, can leave all persons fuller, more whole, and better able to relate effectively to others than before they entered the partnership.

Developing an Action Learning Plan for Serving (ALPS)

Perhaps the best strategy for circumventing potential problems is the development of an “Action Learning
Exercise 2.5: Exploring Breakdowns

Situation 1a
You are a student working with a community organization dedicated to welcoming refugees into your city by offering workforce training and tutoring in English. For your service-learning course, you have committed yourself to meeting with a tutee every Tuesday afternoon at the public library for a two-hour tutoring session. Your tutee showed up for the first scheduled session, missed the second session entirely, and came for the third session but indicated that he could only stay for an hour. While he was there, he told you that he might be moving out of town next week.

Situation 1b
You are a student working with a community organization dedicated to welcoming refugees to your city by offering workforce training and tutoring in English. For your service-learning course, you have committed yourself to meeting with a tutee every Tuesday afternoon at the public library for a two-hour tutoring session. Everything went fine for the first two sessions, but your car broke down on the way to the library for the third session, and you had a dentist appointment scheduled during the fourth. You aren’t sure where things stand with your tutee at this point.

Situation 2a
You are part of a team of students developing a public relations campaign for an organization that provides free health care to persons experiencing homelessness in your community. Your team has been very excited about diving into this project after listening to a panel of persons who had received care from this organization talk about the difference it made in their lives. In order to complete your project, you need concrete information from your community partner, but in the past week you have sent three e-mails to your contact person, none of which have been answered.

Situation 2b
You are part of a team of students developing a public relations campaign for an organization that provides free health care to homeless persons in your community. Your team has been very excited about diving into this project after listening to a panel of persons who had received care from this organization talk about the difference it made in their lives. You are the designated contact person for your team, but you just moved into a new apartment and haven’t hooked up your e-mail yet. You aren’t sure whether or not you gave your new phone number to your teammates or your community partner.

Situation 3a
For your service-learning class, you are interviewing senior citizens at a local nursing home for a compilation of oral histories about the experience of living through the Depression. After your second day of interviewing, your contact person, the director of recreational programming at the nursing home, compliments your work with the seniors and suggests having a beer together over the weekend so you can get to know each other better.

Situation 3b
For your service-learning class, you are interviewing seniors at a local nursing home for a compilation of oral histories about the experience of living through the Depression. Since you’re considering changing your major, you ask your contact person, the director of recreational programming at the nursing home, to have a beer with you over the weekend so you can get to know each other better.

Reflect on the above scenarios. How would you describe the breakdown in each of these situations? Who do you imagine is responsible for the breakdown? How does the “you” of each situation perceive the breakdown? How might the other person(s) involved perceive the breakdown? How are the perspectives in each of these situations impacted by the context of that situation? How might you choose to act in each of these situations to heal the breakdown and put the partnership back on track, and what choices might you make if the other person chooses to keep the partnership off course? If you really were the “you” of these situations, what would you do?

Now return to the list of principles of good practice found on page 20. Read this list and the above scenarios again. Where do you find a breakdown between these principles and the situations above? How could you make choices in these situations that would line up with these best practices?
Plan for Serving” (ALPS). Creating an ALPS can help you achieve your mountainous hopes because you have anticipated in advance the needs, resources, timelines, and obtainable objectives for the service-learning experience. The ALPS also includes the rights and responsibilities of all parties and offers an initial framework for assessing and evaluating your actions. Moreover, it allows you to track your progress during the experience to see if adjustments need to be made midstream. Exercise 2.6 (p. 27) introduces you to the ALPS, which you’ll refer back to throughout your service-learning experience. Complete it with your class or on your own before continuing.

Conclusion

The writer Angeles Arrien, in the book *The Four-Fold Way: Walking the Paths of the Warrior, Teacher, Healer, and Visionary*, explores indigenous wisdom traditions to articulate four central human tasks. Arrien asserts that, in order to live authentically with others, we must *show up, pay attention, tell the truth, and be open to the outcome*. These words ring true perhaps in no courses more than community-based ones. Students entering a collaborative exchange with the world outside their institution’s doors find that a dynamic experience awaits them, an experience that promises tremendous payoffs in personal growth, skill building, and understanding oneself and others in exchange for a commitment of time and follow-through.

As one of these students, you can use the material presented in this chapter to prepare you to show up and be fully present in the work that needs you to bring it to fruition; to learn all that you can through the experience of doing and reflecting on that doing; to articulate the meaning that the experience holds for you; and to deepen your capacity to understand that, in a true collaboration, no single person controls the outcome of the exchange. It is up to each of us to determine whether that is a frightening or an exciting proposition—and how to make our way through it, as individuals connected through the bonds of community.

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<th>Key Concepts</th>
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<td>community partner</td>
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<th>Key Issues</th>
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<td>How do students benefit through engaging in community-based learning?</td>
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<td>What are the different types of community-based learning a student might participate in?</td>
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<td>What are the characteristics of a successful community-based learning partnership?</td>
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<td>What are some of the basic responsibilities and rights of student-learners in community-based settings? What are some of the basic responsibilities and rights of community partners?</td>
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<td>What is the difference between <em>intent</em> and <em>impact</em> in communication, and what are some examples of the breakdown between these factors?</td>
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Exercise 2.6: Action Learning Plan for Serving (ALPs)

This first ALPs worksheet asks you to consider what the purpose of this community-based learning experience is from the perspectives of all who are involved. To continue orienting yourself to your community partnership, answer the following questions, and keep your responses to refer to as your service-learning experience progresses. If you don't have responses to some of these questions, return to this worksheet when you have developed them out of your experience.

1. Review your course syllabus and recall the ways that your instructor framed this service-learning experience. From your instructor's perspective, what is the purpose/what are the purposes of this collaboration?
   •
   •
   •

2. From your community partner's perspective, what is the purpose/what are the purposes of this collaboration?
   •
   •
   •

3. What are your individual learning goals for this collaboration? At the end of your time in this experience, what do you expect to have learned?
   •
   •
   •

4. What are your individual service goals for this collaboration? At the end of your time in this experience, what do you expect from its service component?
   •
   •
   •

5. What is the final product, if any, for this collaboration, and how will the final product be evaluated?

6. What are the main components of the final product for this collaboration?
   •
   •
   •

7. What are the deadlines for the project and its components, as you know them so far?
ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

Exercise 2.7: Which Type of Community-Based Learning Is Right for Me?

Reflect on the following questions to help you clarify which type of community-based learning to choose.

- What is the nature of the direct-service work I might take on? What kinds of projects might I complete? If there is not a preselected set of options, is there an office on campus that can help me identify my choices for community-based learning? Does my college/university offer an orientation to community-based learning, or will I get that in the course itself? Can I do a site visit with possible choices?
- As I consider my options, what kind of training, supervision, and feedback is available to me for each? How do these kinds of support fit with the type of support I think I will need?
- As I consider each option, do I understand the range of activities I’ll be expected to complete? Am I willing to do these activities? Do I know where to get support for my work?
- What are the logistical considerations for each of my options? Will I be traveling to the partner’s site or working from another location? Will I be alone or working with other students or employees of the partnering organization?
- How much time will I need to devote to this project in order to satisfy my community partner, my instructor, and myself? Am I prepared to dedicate this amount of time and rearrange my schedule as necessary?
- Will I be able to feel physically and emotionally safe enough in this environment to serve and to learn? What do I need to feel physically and emotionally safe? Are those factors present in the environments I am considering?
- What are my past experiences of working in a direct-service capacity? In a project-based capacity? What are my greater and lesser strengths working directly with others? What are my greater and lesser strengths in managing and completing projects?
- What are my personal/academic/professional goals for this experience? When I complete this experience, what do I want to have accomplished?
Exercise 2.8: As Time Goes By . . .

Start by taking a large sheet of paper (at least 11 × 14 inches, if possible) and creating seven columns, each of which will be labeled at the top with the days of the week. Across the left side of the sheet, make twenty-four rows and label them for each hour of the day. Begin to block off time for the activities that fill your time in a typical week at this specific point in your life: sleeping, eating, classes, employment, homework, travel, free time, and so on. Be sure that every hour of every day is accounted for with some activity.

After you have finished labeling all of the hours in your week, use colored pencils to lightly shade in each block. Use one color for activities that absolutely cannot be moved to another time in your week (classes, for example); use a second color for activities that are fairly firm but that could be moved around if absolutely necessary (perhaps your work schedule); and use a third color for the activities that are least fixed in your week (maybe free time or meals). Be sure that every block of time in your week has now been shaded in.

Now take a look at your week and use this visual representation of your time to help you make decisions about how you might commit yourself in this project. As you move more deeply into your project this term, you might repeat this exercise to reflect the changed nature of your schedule.

Note: This activity may also be used to guide teams in their negotiation of time responsibilities or as a template for scheduling with the community partner.
Exercise 2.9: Pre-Service Checklist of Student Responsibilities

As a means of facilitating a practical consideration of the roles and responsibilities you have in working with your community partner, complete the following checklist prior to your first actual workday. Read the following statements and initial on the line adjacent to the statement, indicating that you understand and have received adequate information about that item. If you have not received adequate information, put an asterisk (*) on the adjacent line and inform your instructor or appropriate college administrator.

1. Students should clearly understand the requirements of their community project:
   ____ I have a clear understanding of both my instructor’s and my community partner’s expectations of me.
   ____ I understand my parameters (I have thought of the consequences of performing actions beyond my agreed-upon responsibilities).
   ____ I have identified the skills needed to carry out this project, and I feel comfortable with those skills.
   ____ I have identified the skills needed to carry out this project, and I have devised specific plans for strengthening skills with which I am not comfortable or familiar.
   ____ I know my client population and am making every attempt to understand their needs from their perspective.
   ____ I know what to do in case of an emergency.

2. Students need necessary legal documents:
   ____ If I will be driving, I have a valid license and liability insurance.

3. Students should take responsibility for their behavior throughout the community-based project:
   ____ I understand that I am responsible for my own personal health and safety.
   ____ I have insurance (if agency requires specific coverage for volunteers).
   ____ I understand the waivers I sign.
   ____ I have thought of risks involved in this community-based project. For example:
     - What are clients’ special needs?
     - In case of accidents, what is unsafe?
     - What can I do to reduce risks by my own behavior, clothing, and preparation?
     - What behaviors fall outside my job description? (Example: Is it okay to transport clients?)

4. Students should understand these legal issues:
   ____ Negligence involves a mistake, lack of attention, reckless behavior, or indifference to the duty of care to another person. A reasonable person should have been able to foresee the possibility of injury. (Example: wet spot on the floor, child climbing on top of a table)
   ____ Intentional or criminal misconduct involves potential harm caused by a volunteer. A volunteer is responsible for any harm caused to an organization or individual if the harm resulted from intentional or criminal misconduct on the part of the volunteer.
   ____ Invasion of privacy involves confidentiality. I know and understand what the confidentiality policies of my partnering organization are. (Example: Client histories and personal records are confidential.)
Exercise 2.10: Pre-Service Checklist of Student Rights

As a means of facilitating a practical consideration of the rights you have in working with your community partner, complete the following checklist prior to your first actual workday. Read the following statements and initial on the line adjacent to the statement, indicating that you understand and have received adequate information about that item. If you have not received adequate information, put an asterisk (*) on the adjacent line and inform your instructor or appropriate college administrator.

____ I have received a description of the work I am expected to perform and have committed to doing that work.
____ I have received or am currently receiving proper training for the work I’ve committed to doing, or I understand that my training is on-the-job and will be supervised as I go.
____ I understand how I will receive supervision and feedback for the work that I do.
____ I understand the channels of communication through which I should express my concerns about the work I am doing, the ways I am being treated, or breaches of my service plan or other agreements.
____ I understand that I may expect to work in an environment that is reasonably safe and free from sexual and other forms of harassment.
____ I understand that I may not be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and/or other protections offered by my college/university and/or community partner.