

## Getting Started in Service Learning:

([http://writing.colostate.edu/references/teaching/service\\_learning/](http://writing.colostate.edu/references/teaching/service_learning/))

1. Adequate planning time
  - SL is not a supplemental activity; it is an alternative teaching method and requires time to develop objectives, etc.
2. Not all courses should be SL courses
  - Course objectives drive teaching methods
  - Course objectives must be related to community needs for SL course
3. Consider the make-up of the class
  - Age, commuters, transportation needs
  - Large classes need more community partners
  - Small classes may foster deeper, on-going relationships
4. Contacting community partners
  - Make contact early
  - Include course objectives, number of students, timeline of course
  - Invite partners to visit class; you visit the service site
5. Syllabus
  - Make clear connections between readings, assignments, discussions, presentations, agency training period, timelines, student assessment
  - Allow flexibility for special need students
6. Anticipating time requirements
  - Significant time is required on the part of students and instructor
  - Assume the roles of both and mentally walk through the preparation, training, orientation, service hours, class time, assignment time, etc.
7. Consider assessment methods
  - Grades should assess student processing, not service hours
  - Evaluate analytical skills, communication, critical thinking, judgment
  - Use papers, presentations, discussion grades
  - May use evaluations from service supervisors and clients for feedback
8. Considering collaboration
  - Several sections of same course? Collaborate
  - Consider team teaching
  - Use upper level students as service mentors
9. Precluding student objections
  - Distinguish service learning from volunteering
  - Designate service-learning courses in the curriculum
  - Allow for flexibility
  - Reserve class time for critical reflection about student assumptions regarding service
  - Don't assume students will complain! UCLA study found in-coming Freshmen were most service-oriented in the 31 years of monitoring.
10. Challenging Stereotypes
  - Benefit of SL is to challenge student stereotypes about persons different than they
  - Caveat: Do diversity training and challenge stereotypes by in-class discussion first or you might reinforce stereotypes (literacy training example)
11. Tips on facilitating reflection:
  - Connect course objectives to service through requiring skills on higher level thinking and problem-solving
  - Schedule opportunities for guided reflection in class
  - Define criteria for evaluating reflection
  - Use journals, papers, class discussion, small groups, presentations, responses to course readings, outside readings, on-line discussion forums.