

Top Ten Reasons To Do Service-Learning

Service-Learning...

1. Has a positive effect on student personal development such as sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth, and moral development
2. Has a positive effect on interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others, leadership, and communication skills
3. Has a positive effect on reducing stereotypes and facilitating cultural and racial understanding
4. Has a positive effect on sense of social responsibility, citizenship skills, and commitment to service
5. Has an impact on academic outcomes such as demonstrated complexity of understanding, problem analysis, critical thinking, and cognitive development.
6. Contributes to career development and can influence major and career selection
7. Contributes to stronger student/faculty relationships
8. Has long-term effects that may surface even years after graduation in terms of public service commitment, willingness to contribute to social causes, and willingness to give back to one's institution
9. Has relevancy—it helps to link the often abstract theory of the classroom with day-to-day experiences of students and community members
10. Builds Community—links students, faculty and the institution of higher learning to the local community and beyond.

Sources of Support for these conclusions

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse Factsheet

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse publishes a *Fact Sheet* that addresses the topic of the evidence base for service-learning in higher education. Many of the sources it lists are available online. It is available at:

http://www.servicelearning.org/resources/fact_sheets/he_facts/evidence/

At A Glance

At a Glance summarizes the findings of service-learning research in higher education from 1993-2000 and includes an annotated bibliography. An executive summary provides a quick overview and the annotated bibliography serves as a map to the literature. It is available online in an Adobe Acrobat (pdf file) version by clicking on “At A Glance” at:

<http://www.compact.org/resources/detail.php?id=1>

How Service-Learning Affects Students

Alexander Astin and associates performed a longitudinal study on a large number of undergraduates at entry into college and then again at or near graduation. The Executive Summary is at (note, you can purchase or view online by clicking online button):

http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/understanding_service_learning.html

Another study by this group looked at longer-term impacts on students from service performed while undergraduates: Astin, A. W., Sax, L. J., and Avalos, J. (1999). “Long-term effects of volunteerism during the undergraduate years.” *The Review of Higher Education* 22 (2), 187-202. This is available by request from the Center for Service-Learning.