Barry University

Center for Community Service Initiatives

Service-Learning

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates relevant community service with course work and critical reflection to enrich the learning experience, foster social responsibility and civic engagement, and strengthen communities.

The community service component may address issues related to education, health, the environment, economic opportunity, disaster preparedness, or other human needs.

Service-learning …

► extends learning beyond the classroom;

► facilitates deeper understanding of course content;

► increases students' ability to apply classroom learning to real-life situations;

► improves critical thinking and promotes the development of civic, social, and leadership skills;

► deepens appreciation of diversity;

► helps students clarify professional goals and prepare for careers;

► enhances participants' résumés and portfolios;

► creates valuable neighborhood networks; and

► improves the quality of life in our community.

Best Practice in Service-Learning

- Students provide meaningful service (i.e., service that meets a real community need or goal).

- Members of the community usually identify the need or goal.

- Community partners and service sites are appropriate for the course.

- The service that students provide is tied to course objectives.

- Service is integrated into the course by means of an assignment that requires some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives.

- Students are encouraged to learn from the communities in which they are serving.

- Students receive a grade based on the assessment of learning (although the quality of the service itself should be considered as well).

Importance of Reflection

Reflection is the process through which students derive meaning and gain understanding from their community service experience. The process should challenge and guide students in (a) connecting their service experience to course content; (b) examining critical issues related to their service-learning project; (c) developing civic knowledge, skills, and values; and (d) finding personal relevance in their work. Through guided/structured reflection, students learn to talk comfortably about values, think deeply about choices, and respond imaginatively to the needs of their community.

Barry University

CCSI | Center for Community Service Initiatives

11300 NE Second Avenue, Miami, FL 33161-6695
Phone: 305-899-3696 │ Fax: 305-899-3225 │ E-mail: service@barry.edu
Web: www.barry.edu/service

Instagram
Barry_CCSI

Facebook
BarryCCSI

Twitter
CCSIBarry