

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING – OVERVIEW

WHY ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING (AS-L)?



Academic Service-learning (AS-L) is a nationally recognized high-impact teaching practice that is central to a quality changemaking education. With a rich 25-year history of leading in AS-L pedagogy, the Institute for Civic Engagement & Democracy (iCED) at Miami Dade College (MDC) continues to push forward with incorporating best practices in this evolving field. Based on the latest research of best practices in AS-L, these standards for implementation ensure that MDC faculty will align with the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) framework. CLDE intentionally prepares students for informed, engaged participation in their communities’ civic and democratic life and provides opportunities to develop civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets.

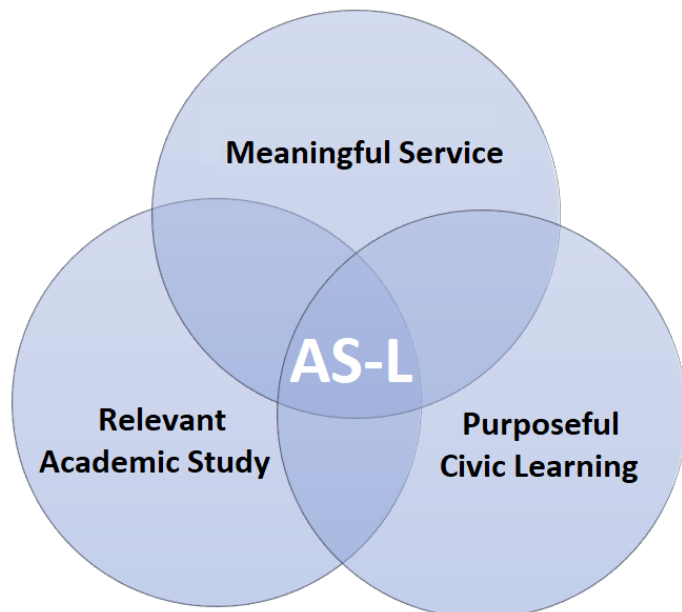
By implementing AS-L, **faculty** will have an opportunity to transform teaching and learning by bridging the divide between the world beyond their classroom and their course learning objectives. MDC **students** will participate actively in public life, have a chance to develop empathy, ethics, and a sense of social responsibility, and develop workforce skills. MDC’s **service partners** will establish sustainable relationships with the College and increase their capacity through collaborating with students and faculty.

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING; DEFINITION & KEY COMPONENTS

At MDC, AS-L occurs within a credit-bearing course and is a form of experiential education in which students engage with iCED-approved service partners in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities for critical reflection designed to achieve desired learning outcomes. (adapted from Barbara Jacoby, 1996).

Key Components of AS-L

All AS-L experiences **MUST** include the key components of meaningful service, relevant academic study, and purposeful civic learning. **Each implementation feature on the table below must be fulfilled in order to ensure a high-fidelity AS-L program.**



AS-L Implementation Features

| Key Component | Key Elements |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Meaningful service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Service activity must meet iCED's Standards for Service. <input type="checkbox"/> Service activities must be completed through, with, or for a service partner, and must provide a clearly identifiable benefit to a community. |
| Relevant academic study | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus provides a rationale for why AS-L is an important component of the course and provides clear expectations for how to complete the AS-L component of the course. <input type="checkbox"/> Service activities are incorporated into course design and linked to one or more of the course's learning objectives and MDC Learning Outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Critical reflection is ongoing throughout the course's AS-L experience and connects to course learning objectives and MDC Learning Outcomes. Critical reflection is continuous, connected, challenging and contextualized. <input type="checkbox"/> Academic credit is given for demonstrated learning, not service. |
| Purposeful civic learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Experience includes a critical exploration of the nature of 'service' and the role of education in the health of our democracy. <input type="checkbox"/> Critical reflection addresses at least one of the eight elements of Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (e.g., developing informed perspectives on social issues; working through controversy with civility; participating actively in public life, public problem solving, and service; developing a sense of social responsibility, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Course contributes to the development of student skills and/or attributes that can support them in becoming changemakers. MDC's Changemaker attributes are: Reflection, Resilience, Action, & Empathy. |

Steps for Success in AS-L

1. Contact [your campus iCED staff](#) and/or [Faculty Facilitator](#) to inform them of your intention to incorporate AS-L into your course(s) and receive assistance in designing and/or implementing AS-L.
2. Complete the "Introduction to Academic Service-Learning Pedagogy" [CIOL FPD workshop](#)*.
3. Review the Faculty Guide for Academic Service-Learning for details about each element*.
4. Complete the AS-L Course Development Worksheet*.
5. Ensure course meets each features on the "AS-L Implementation Elements" table (above).

*Contact your iCED office for information on these three items



CHOOSING A SERVICE PARTNER

A service partner **CAN BE** one or more of these:

- A 501(c)3 organization
- A nonprofit organization
- A pro-bono initiative to meet a community need by a for-profit organization
- A campus-based service provider (Single Stop, ACCESS, Food Pantry, STEM Tutoring etc.)
- A public sector agency such as a school, government office, or parks and recreation department
- A community-led initiative such as a grassroots organization, coalition, or community group working to meet a clearly identifiable community need

A service partner **IS NOT**:

- An assignment or project for a course that is not linked to a service partner and/or a community need
- A student club on campus
- A for-profit organization (unless a pro-bono service to meet a community need is being provided)

ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Campus-based Community Partner | A campus department that addresses a social, cultural, or environmental need of MDC students and that has been onboarded by iCED. Examples include ACCESS and Single Stop. Student clubs are not campus-based community partners. |
| Changemaking Education | An approach to education which sparks a sense of agency in students and provides real life opportunities to understand problems and practice creating positive social and environmental change. |
| Critical Reflection | The process of analyzing, reconsidering, and questioning one's experiences within a broad context of issues and content knowledge. (Jacoby, 2014, p. 26) |
| Standards for Service | iCED guidelines for what does and does not constitute service. Applies to all types of service, such as academic service-learning, co-curricular service-learning, and individual volunteering. |

REFERENCES

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