**West Chester University**

**Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs**

**www.wcupa.edu/volunteer**



**What is Service-Learning?**

West Chester University and the Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs defines academic service-learning as a teaching method that combines community service with curricular goals as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility. Service-learning differs from other forms of experiential education because it benefits both the service providers (students and faculty) and the recipients (community members).

How students benefit:

* Creates academic, professional and personal opportunities
* Increases understanding of academic topics
* Provides hands-on experience
* Develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills

How faculty benefit:

* Encourages interactive teaching and reciprocal learning between students and faculty
* Adds new insights and dimensions to class discussions
* Provides opportunities to tap into expertise of community agencies as co-teachers
* Helps identify areas for research and publication related to current trends and issues

How the community benefits:

* Gains access to university skill, knowledge and resources
* Opportunity to contribute to the educational process
* The community plays a strong role in solving pressing local needs

How the University benefits:

* Enhances teaching, research and outreach activities
* Faculty and staff become active participants in the community
* Promotes positive community relationships and collaborations
* Equips university graduates to develop creative solutions to today’s most pressing issues

**Getting started: Creating a Service-Learning Course**

The Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs offers resources to assist faculty with the creation of service-learning courses through:

* One-on-one consulting around implementing and designing service-learning projects
* Assistance in identifying community partners interested in collaborating with students and faculty
* Workshops and professional development opportunities
* A service-learning resource library of journals, books, articles, sample syllabi, practitioner guides, etc.
* The Service-Learning Faculty Work Group, comprised of faculty from a range of disciples who promote service-learning by engaging with new faculty who are interested in this teaching method
* The Service-Learning Faculty Associate, who coordinates service-learning efforts while educating faculty on the benefits of service-learning. The 2019-2020 Faculty Associate is Dr. Ashlie Delshad ([adelshad@wcupa.edu](mailto:adelshad@wcupa.edu))
* Associate Director for Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs, Pam Frontino, is available to support faculty interested in the pedagogy of service-learning ([pfrontino@wcupa.edu](mailto:pfrontino@wcupa.edu))

**Civic Responsibility**

Service experience promotes active citizenship