



Department of Social Work & Sociology
Community Service Learning
2016 – 2017 Academic year

Purpose

Community service learning involves a shared and balanced focus on the students' learning and addressing real community needs. It will help students to determine what areas they want to work in during their required senior year internship/practicum as well as help them to gain work experience that will enhance their overall academic learning.

Students are to be utilized in ways that benefit the agency and help the students to learn about the services that it provides so that they might, as future social workers or human service workers, be able to use the agency services as resources and referrals for their clients. We also want our students to be able to learn about the importance of contributing their time and energy to community programs.

The benefit to students is to expand their exposure to social work agencies and programs and integrate that experience with their classroom learning. It will also expand their social work experience prior to graduation, which should make them more attractive both to graduate programs as well as to potential employers.

How to start

You are to set up an interview with a potential agency. You should go to the interview in business or business casual attire and bring two copies of your resume. Although a number of agencies are listed in our site booklet, you may arrange to work with another agency. If you want to work with another agency, speak with Dr. Flynn once you have identified the agency and know what opportunities will be available to you *before* you begin there.

This is expected to be volunteer hours, so you may **not** do it at your place of employment unless you do this as extra, volunteer hours. Bring a copy of your current resume, *the Letter to Colleague* and the *Approval Sheet*, as well as a copy of your class schedule so that you can arrange hours that fit with your schedule.

You may work any hours that fit with both your schedule and the agency's schedule. You are NEVER to be the only person at the agency. There MUST be a paid staff member working with you at all times. Please take precautions to remain safe (do not park in dark areas; ask for an escort if you have to walk to your car after dark).

If problems arise at the agency over the course of your work there, try to resolve them with your supervisor. If that is not possible, please notify Dr. Sandra Flynn and she will help to resolve them with you.

If you feel that you are in a dangerous situation, do not hesitate to call 911 for assistance.

Professionalism

Please dress professionally at all times, both for your interview and for your volunteer hours. Remove extra ear piercings, lip, tongue, eyebrow and other facial piercings. Dress appropriately for the activities that you will be doing at the agency. Dress modestly (no excessive display of breasts, buttocks or other private parts of your body) and cover tattoos. Do not wear excessive make up, perfume, or jewelry. If in doubt, don't wear it.

Do not use your cell phone at your agency unless it is to contact help in an emergency. Put your purse/ cell phone/ iPod/ etc. in a safe place. Do not bring possessions into the agency that you cannot safely store away. Please remember that you represent yourself, the Social Work Department and VUU.

Letter to Colleague

This letter is to be given to the person who will be your supervisor at the agency; it explains the purpose of the program and gives them some ideas of what you might do at the agency. It also has the contact information of Dr. Flynn, who is the Director of Field Instruction (which includes Community Service Learning).

Approval Sheet

You and your agency supervisor will complete this sheet once it is decided that you will work together. After the form is completed, turn it in to the Director of Field Instruction.

Required Hours

Each student is required to complete a specific number of community service learning hours each semester (*freshman - 40, sophomores - 50, juniors - 60*). However, a portion of those required hours may be earned by participating in specific activities designated by the Department (*freshman - 15, sophomores - 10, juniors - 5*). **If a student fails to complete the hours in any semester, that student will not be allowed to enroll in any social work courses the following semester.** All community service hours for the semester that the student sat out of social work classes as well as the semester that the student failed to complete the hours must be made up before the student can enroll in any more social work courses.

All social work minors (regardless of their classification) are required to complete 50 hours for each semester they are enrolled in a social work course.

Time Logs - Due dates are on the time logs

Each time you go to your agency, you will keep track of your hours on the time log, and ask your supervisor to initial the entry before you leave each day. Do not expect your supervisor to remember the date and time you worked at a later date. If your supervisor cannot verify any of the hours worked, you must make those hours up.

A portion of your required hours (*freshman - 15, sophomores - 10, juniors - 5*) may be earned by participating in specific activities designated by the Department such as programs sponsored by the Social Work Club, the Social Work Department, or the Office of Career Services. You will keep track of the non-agency hours on the log sheet, and ask the person in charge of the event to initial the entry before you leave the event. If you are uncertain if the activity is appropriate, please see Dr. Flynn before you participate to ensure your time will count.

You will keep track of your hours on the appropriate time log sheet. If you need extra time log sheets, they are posted on MYVUU under Social Work. You may also choose to earn all required hours at the agency.

If you have any questions or are uncertain about any of the information, please see Dr. Flynn or other social work faculty immediately. Dr. Flynn's contact information is listed below.

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