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Critical Service Learning

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Critical Service Learning

The practice and the need it addresses

**SLICES**

**Program Description:**
Service Learning Initiative for Community Engagement in Sociology (SLICES) is a critical, research-focused, community-based, leadership and knowledge project. By engaging in Community Based Participatory Action Research Projects (CBPAR) students have an opportunity to work multiple semesters, if they choose, to develop research skills, serve in leadership roles, serve and collaborate with local organizations, and engage in professional development.

**SLICES Goals:**
- To connect classroom learning to the larger social environment
- To increase critical thinking and research skills
- To foster a life-long community engagement
- To foster a social change model of leadership

**SLICES relies on three key assumptions:**
- That education can and should be intimately tied to social justice and the work of social change
- That ALL students can make important contributions to the learning space and to learning activities
- That the engaged student is a successful student

Evidence this practice benefits UNLV Students

**SLICES CBPAR Projects: Example**

**Imigrants Justice Initiative:**
Provide low cost or pro bono legal aid to asylees
- Las Vegas 2015: 3% asylum verdict
The literature review:
- Explanations for verdict variations at local court levels
The data:
- Evidence of country conditions in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador
The action:
- Immigration workshops

**Successes:**
- OUR presentations
- Employment opportunities
- Leadership opportunities
- Special edition in peer reviewed journal
- Connect with immigrant community
- Experience an asylum hearing
- IJI 2016: 2 asylum verdicts

**UNLV Resources**

**Student Engagement and Diversity, Office of Service Learning:**
- Course development support
- Partnership agreements
- Liability waivers

**University Libraries:**
- Library research literacy workshops
- Calvert awards

**Office of Undergraduate Research:**
- Student resources
- Faculty resources
- Research symposium
- Workshops

**Michigan Journal of Service Learning:**
- Peer reviewed research on community based service learning

Adopting Service Learning: Example

**Service Learning Framework:**
- Identify a community partner
- Align civic engagement with course learning objectives
- Develop reflection activities

**Course Theoretical/Methodological Design:**
- Feminist Standpoint Theory
- Critical Theories of Race/Racism
- Intersectionality
- Community Based Participatory Action Research

**Course Learning Objectives (example):**
- Increase culturally sensitive research literacy

**Associated Learning Activities:**
- Library research literacy workshop
- Critical reading workshop
- Module reading summaries
- Annotated bibliography
- Research workshop
- Data assignment
- Community activities
- Research presentation/presentation

A CADAemic DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

STUDENT SUCCESS

UNLV University of Nevada, Las Vegas