

CITIZENSHIP AND SERVICE-LEARNING (CASL)

The office of Citizenship and Service-Learning provides academic service-learning opportunities through various courses for freshman through senior students attending Missouri State University. Service-learning, which requires the use of effective reflection activities as a part of the coursework, is a type of experiential education that combines and pursues both academic achievement and work with a community learning site in a seamless weave. Results from decades of scholarly research clearly indicate that Service-learning increases student retention, contributes to higher GPA's, provides for career/major exploration and preparedness, and is associated with long-term commitment to civic engagement in communities. Service-learning opportunities help students connect their coursework with real-world experiences, explore majors and careers, engage in [core career readiness skills](#) (like critical thinking, collaboration and professionalism), and gain meaningful hands-on experiences with a learning site partner in our community.

Currently, the office of Citizenship and Service-Learning offers three types of service-learning options for students:

- 1) **Introduction to Service-Learning (INT)** requires a minimum of 4 hours of service-learning and is embedded within the course;
- 2) **Integrated Service-Learning (ISL)** requires a 15 hour (minimum) service-learning project and is embedded within the course; and
- 3) **Component Service-Learning** is a one-credit course taken in conjunction with a regular class (referred to as the 'designate' course) and requires 40 hours of service with an identified learning site.

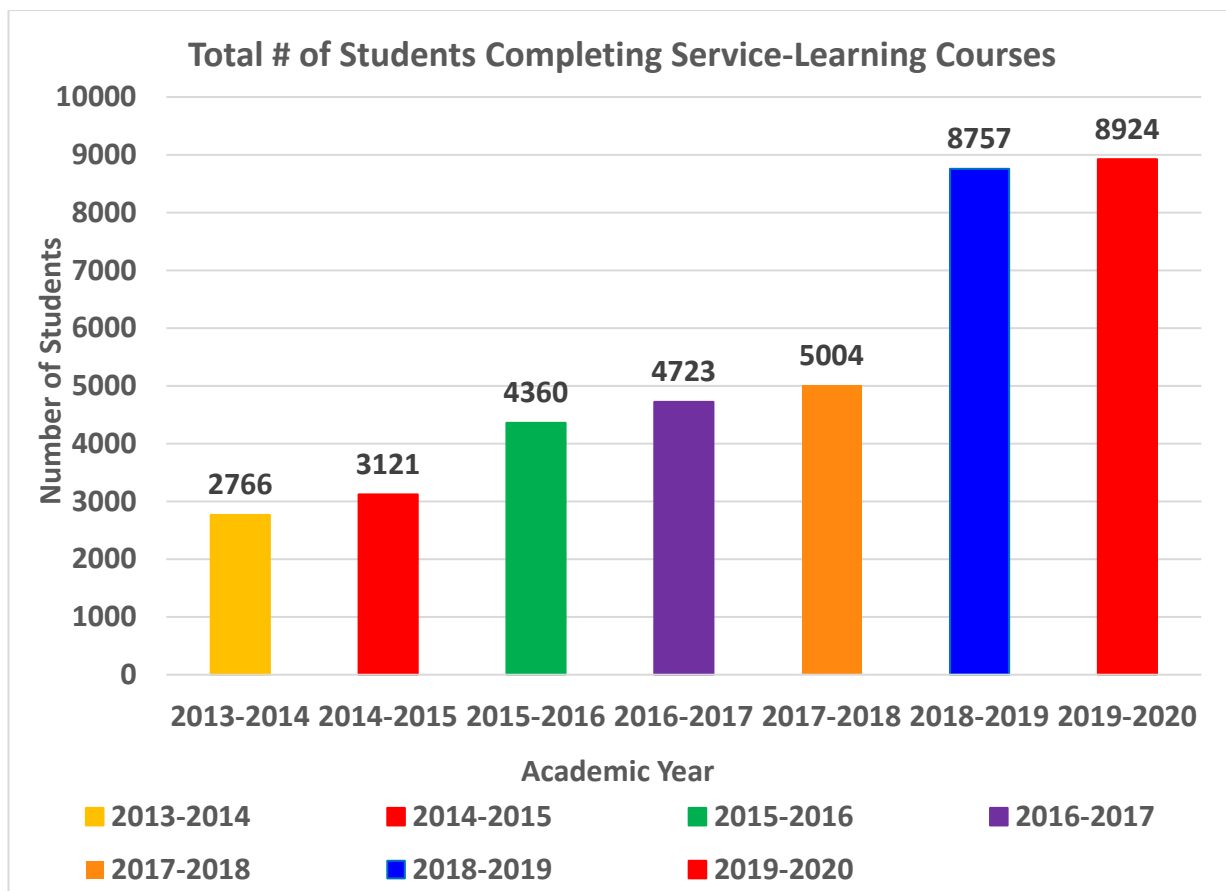
Highlights of 2019-2020

The CASL office continues to experience growth in number of students engaged in service-learning. Over the course of the 2019-2020 academic year, there were increases in the number of students completing service-learning courses, the number of faculty and service-learning courses offered, and the development of new and sustainable community partnerships.

- **Service-Learning Students = 8,924*** students participated in one or more service-learning courses. * This number was lower by approximately 340 students as a result of GEP 101 student decrease in enrollment. Overall, however, service-learning numbers increased by 167 students compared to the AY 2018-2019.
- **Total Service-Learning hours** provided to community = **160,833**
- **Value of Service** to community @ \$23.96/hour = **\$3,853,559.00** (Independentsector.org)

- **Number of Service-Learning course sections = 863 course sections** (Introduction, Integrated and Designate/Component Courses); up from **667 course sections during the AY 18-19**
- **MSU Faculty/Staff Offering/Teaching Service-Learning courses = 368** (Introduction, Integrated and Designate/Component Courses); up from **292 during the AY 18-19**
- **Overall Average Retention Rate Semester-to-Semester: 92%**

The following graph illustrates the increase in the number of students completing service-learning courses since the 2013-2014 academic year. Of the 8,924 students who completed academic service-learning courses, 2,534 of those students were enrolled in more than one academic service-learning course during the 2019-2020 academic year.



Note: The increase in service-learning students between the 2017-18 academic year and the 2018-2019 academic year is the result of GEP 101 becoming a service-learning course for all students.

Of the unduplicated count of 6,390 students, 5,442 students re-enrolled in MSU courses the following semester. This represents **an overall semester-to-semester retention rate of 93% for students who completed academic service-learning courses.**

The service-learning office is now able to look at the retention rates, associated with the completion of service-learning courses, for a variety of demographics including students who identified as First-generation students. During the 2019–2020 academic year, 1,839 students (non-duplicated) who identified as First-generation students completed an academic service-learning course. Of those 1,839 students, 1,662 students (undergrad) re-enrolled in coursework for the following semester. This represents a **90% semester-to-semester retention rate for First-generation students.**

Carnegie Classified Community Engaged Institution Recertification

In addition to the increase in service-learning numbers, the service-learning office, in conjunction with the office of Public Affairs Support, spearheaded the recertification of the University's Carnegie Classification as a Community Engaged University during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years. The year and a half long application process entailed a collection of data from across the entire campus (colleges, academic departments, administration, student affairs, etc.) and the community-at-large, compiling an in-depth report, and then the submission of the report to the Carnegie Foundation in April of 2019. **Notification was received in December of 2019 that MSU was recertified as a Carnegie Classified Community Engaged University.** This certification is important to the University and aligns with the University's Public Affairs mission, the University's Long-range Goals, and the University's accreditation from HLC.

CASL Service-Learning Signature Programs & Featured Initiatives

During the spring of 2020, when the COVID pandemic hit, service-learning students moved from direct service-learning to indirect, advocacy-based, and research-based service-learning to assist our communities. As a result of working with some of our community partner learning sites, new opportunities came about:

Masks & Meals Project

- In partnership with Community Partnership of the Ozarks and Life 360, service-learning students, from multiple academic areas, including biology, biomedical sciences, nutrition, and sociology either made sew or no-sew masks and/or packaged meals to be distributed throughout southwest Missouri and beyond.
 - **69 service-learning students**, including international service-learning students from Ningxia University in China, **made well over 500 sew and no-sew masks.**
 - **23 service-learning students contributed some 500 hours** to packaging meals for children and families in partnership with Life 360 to address the nutritional

needs of children who might go hungry as a result of schools being closed due to COVID-19.

Prosper Springfield

- In partnership with Prosper Springfield, **9 service-learning students**, worked alongside Lauren Rogers, Assistant Director, and Francine Pratt, Director, on the grant-funded research project, [School-to-Prison Pipeline Research Project](#) for the State of Missouri. This project is being conducted on behalf of the Missouri Department of Developmental Disabilities Council (MODDC) to make policy and practice change recommendations for Missouri K-12 institutions. Beginning late March, based on the need for virtual projects for our students, Prosper Springfield provided the **9 MSU service-learning students** provided **276 hours of service** at a **value* of \$6,613.00** to this project. (independentsector.org).

The Fairbanks

- In the wake of needing indirect projects for the remainder of the spring semester due to COVID-19, The Fairbanks/Drew Lewis Foundation/Northwest Project, provided opportunities for **15 service-learning students**, to work alongside Amy Blansit, Executive Director, on a number of research and assessment projects that examined community health services and assessments, education, and resource management of services in the community. These **15 MSU service-learning students** provided **448 hours of service** at a **value* of \$10,734.00** to this project. (independentsector.org).

VRCO / Dr. Debra Williams Clinical Research Study Program

- In a new partnership program with the Vision Rehabilitation Center of the Ozarks (VRCO) and Dr. Debra Williams, **35 service-learning students**, in Biology, Biomedical Sciences, and Nursing, were provided with the opportunity to begin the initial gathering of data and examination of literature and previous studies conducted on the topic of Diabetic Retinopathy in preparation for a clinical research study to begin within the next few months. As the CASL office began seeking opportunities for our students to have a meaningful impact, while completing their service-learning experience through indirect, research-based experiences, this project was an excellent fit. Examination of literature and previous research studies conducted by service-learning students included, but was not limited to, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, Medical Device and Treatment protocols through the FDA, Testing Protocols, Oxidative Stress on Cellular Levels, Electrophysiology of ERG/VEP and the brain as read by Diopsys Instrumentation, and Genetics of Diabetes.

- These **35 MSU service-learning students** provided **868 hours of service** at a **value*** of **\$20,797** to this project that will ultimately work to improve the lives of those with Diabetic Retinopathy. (independentsector.org).

MSU Vision Screening Program

- The MSU Vision Program has been in place since 2013 and continues to remain the top service-learning opportunity for students.
- **Eight-four (84)** Biomedical Science, Nursing, Pre-Med, Pre-Optometry, Biology and Education majors enrolled in service-learning courses were trained to conduct the vision screenings throughout southwest and central Missouri. Service-Learning students contributed **1,870 hours of vision screenings valued at \$23.96 per hour. This equates to a value of \$44,805.00 in services to communities.**
- During the **AY 19-20, these students screened 15,085** children, youth, adults, and seniors. **Of those screened, 1,693 or 11%** were identified to have significant or potentially significant vision problems and referred to the Vision Rehabilitation Center of the Ozarks (VRCO) our partner organization for follow-up services.
- **Screenings for color-blind deficiencies took place** as a part of the vision program. During the 2019-2020 academic year, 2,259 individuals received testing for color-blind deficiencies. Of those tested, screeners found **89 individuals or 4%** to be color-blind.
- Screenings took place in some **107 locations** including, low-income day care centers, elementary, middle and high schools throughout southwest and central along with community locations including OTC's Adult Literacy Program and the Hope Connection event and
- **This program provides early detection screening** to identify significant or potentially significant vision problems such as hyperopia, myopia, astigmatism, anisometropia, esotropia, exotropia, vertical alignment errors and opacities.
- **Vision screenings, utilizing high-tech, ophthalmic screening cameras,** can help to identify problems early so that children can get the help they need.
- **Service-Learning students from the Biomedical Science department continue to conduct research** examining the role genetics plays in vision deficiencies and color-blindness.

Springfield Community Gardens

- **Having just completed the third year of this three-year collaborative partnership with Springfield Community Gardens, Service-Learning students from the Biomedical Science, Sociology, and Biology departments** engaged in providing services to eradicate poverty and hunger in the community.
- During the 2019-2020 academic year, despite the excessive amount of rain in the months of January, February, and early March, and the 21 garden locations being

closed from mid-March through the end of the academic year that prevented gardening, **816 service-learning and leadership students, provided 4,627 hours of service at a value of \$110,863.00.** (independentsector.org). These figures do not include services provided by MSU student volunteers.

- The purpose behind this three-year collaborative partnership between Springfield Community Gardens, US Department of Agriculture, and Missouri State University, was to create a local food hub that empowers low-income individuals to reduce food insecurity while also enabling those individuals with education and skills to generate their own means for financial security.

Community Red Flag Issues

Missouri State University Service-Learning students continue to work addressing problems and issues in our communities through a variety of signature projects.

Ongoing Signature Programs

Urban Roots Farm

- The CASL office was pleased to receive funding for a second year for the Urban Roots Farm program. Service-learning students, from dietetics, biology, agriculture, psychology and education work to develop programs centered on farming and healthy eating for communities. Programs include serving as mentors for at-risk youth that visit the farm frequently.
- At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when students were unable to work at the farm, the funders for the Urban Roots Farm grant graciously gave permission for students to work with the MSU Food Pantry to address hunger and food insecurity in our community.

Lift-Up Springfield/Ozark Valley Medial

- This signature initiative provides dental and medical services to those in need of medical or dental services and who have limited access to funds and/or healthcare and associated resources.
- Pre-Med, Pre-Dental, Pre-PA, Nursing, and other service-learning students enrolled in health related courses provide services to those in need while providing MSU service-learning students with hands-on experience in the medical and dental field.

Victory Mission

- Service-learning students, from multiple academic disciplines, work to provide access to food, distribution of products, art initiatives, and provide other resources for homeless individuals who access the mission.

Bear POWER

- Bear POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Work Education and Resilience) is a two-year, five semester, inclusive college program for individuals with intellectual disabilities. During the summer of 2019, MSU students worked alongside perspective Bear POWER students to engage them in service activities.
- As of January of 2019, several of the Bear POWER students served as Bear POWER leaders in our office and within the community. They worked on projects to include the art design for stepping stones at many of the Springfield Community Garden locations, work with our Robberson afterschool programs, and work with our community garden programs. One student in the Bear POWER program hand-designed and then assisted with the painting of two large wall murals in the new MSU Bear Pantry.

Robberson Community School

- Our collaboration with Robberson connects the academic resources of the University to the development of a sustainable community in this low-income area of Springfield. Service-learning students organize and lead after-school programs and activities such as a Club Med, FENLE, Art Clubs, Spanish Clubs, and Math LEGOLAND to name a few.

Women's Medical Respite

- Nursing and pre-Med service-learning students continue to work with homeless women who are under medical care in a respite type setting. Often women discharged from the hospital who are in need of wound care, for example, are unable to take care of the wound living in homeless situation.

Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program

- Accounting, business and gerontology students continue to work with the VITA program providing individuals throughout the community, who are high-poverty or seniors with limited resources, with assistance in preparing their income tax returns during tax session.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning 2019-2020

As a commitment to Research and Resources for faculty and staff, CASL provided the following opportunities:

- **Provided one-on-one training for new faculty** engaging in use of the service-learning teaching methodology.

- Provided information about service-learning at the **Master Advisor Training** sessions.
- **Engaged in and worked collaboratively with faculty** on research studies centered on service-learning topics.
- Co-hosted a workshop in the spring of 2019 with the office of Public Affairs Support.

Assessment and Program Improvement Efforts

Assessment continues to be an essential tool for all programs and initiatives, including academic service-learning. As the University has been recognized and granted, for the second time, the Carnegie classification of “Community engaged University”, the requirements for this classification served as and continues to serve as a guide for excellence as we develop and evaluated programming through the office of Citizenship and Service-Learning.

In addition to the requirements provided under the Carnegie Classification, the CASL Office uses a survey to assess student service-learning outcomes. Beginning with the fall of 2013, both integrated and component service-learning students complete a survey at the end of their service-learning course. The survey examines the students’ perception of expected outcomes related to and having completed a service-learning course. The survey also examines the students’ perception of their role as an ethical leader, who is culturally competent, and who is or intends to be engaged in their communities. Results from the survey continue to inform the delivery of academic service-learning and provide a lens from which to view areas of success and determine areas for improvement.

The assessment consists of 15 course outcome questions that examine critical thinking skills, communication skills, career and teamwork, civic responsibility, and academic development and educational success as it related to the students’ service-learning course/experience and 15 questions from the MSU Public Affairs Scale that examined ethical leadership, cultural competence, and community engagement. Questions were to have consisted of a 5-point Likert scale from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. Overall weighted average for each of the survey question areas is provided in the below tables.

It is important to note that data collected for the academic year 19/20 does not include spring 2020 data. As a result of COVID-19 and moving all service-learning students placed in direct service-learning sites, to indirect service-learning projects. Even without the spring 2020 data, results remained comparable to previous academic years.

Table 1: Service-Learning Student Outcomes & Public Affairs Scale (5-year Period)

Summary of Scores	Weighted Average Score (Based on a 5-Point Likert Scale)					Percent "Agree / Strongly Agree"				
	AY 15/16	AY 16/17	AY 17/18	AY 18/19	AY 19/20	AY 15/16	AY 16/17	AY 17/18	AY 18/19	AY 19/20 *
Service-Learning Student Outcomes										
Critical Thinking	4.25	4.00	4.12	4.37	4.40	86%	82%	82%	93%	90%
Communication Skills	4.33	4.19	4.34	4.45	4.51	91%	88%	92%	95%	97%
Career and Teamwork	4.39	4.21	4.38	4.50	4.54	90%	90%	91%	95%	95%
Civic Responsibilities	4.29	4.12	4.25	4.41	4.44	87%	87%	88%	92%	92%
Academic Development & Educational Success	4.44	4.15	4.25	4.39	4.44	90%	84%	80%	88%	85%
Public Affairs Scale Responses										
Community Engagement	4.30	4.36	4.41	4.40	4.45	95%	89%	88%	92%	92%
Cultural Competence	4.12	4.11	4.16	4.28	4.22	84%	81%	82%	88%	85%
Ethical Leadership	4.52	4.49	4.54	4.54	4.62	98%	96%	96%	97%	96%

Goals for the AY 20-21

In the wake of COVID-19 and with the University's efforts to practice social distancing, our goals for this academic year will focus on:

- Developing resources to assist faculty and our community learning site partners with the tools they need to move service-learning forward in a variety of nationally recognized service-learning platforms (direct; indirect; advocacy-based; research-based) and that academic rigor is maintained in service-learning courses
- Developing protocol and resources necessary to move Service-Learning Orientation and one-on-one advising to a virtual environment to ensure
- Ensuring that all associated service-learning forms are created as online fillable formats that accept electronic signatures, including, but not limited to, Student Time Sheets, Information and Release Forms, Course Enrollment Forms, and, MOU's between community Partner Learning Sites and Students
- Enhancing the CASL website
- Producing video service-learning presentations that can be shown in classrooms

Additionally, based on the results of the assessment data, CASL will:

- Continue to meet with learning sites to improve meaningful service-learning opportunities to enhance student learning, foster active citizenship, meet career competencies, general education goals, and support the pillars of the Public Affairs mission.
- Review the current survey to adjust language within questions to be more user friendly for students (Example: I understand the root cause of the problem I am addressing).

Additional goals for the 2020-2021

- Continue work with the NACE Career Core Competencies and the General Education goals as part of service-learning coursework.
- Continue work with faculty to increase service-learning course offerings.
- Continue to identify ways to host mini workshops or “Brown Bag Lunches” for faculty and community to learn more about the teaching pedagogy of service-learning, what service-learning looks like in the indirect, advocacy-based and research-based environment, how service-learning meets NACE Career Core Competencies and General Education goals.
- Continue to develop new signature service-learning programs and featured initiatives and expand opportunities for high-impact practices.
- Continue to expand service-learning opportunities for diverse student populations across campus and community in the areas of business, healthcare, and agriculture.
- Work with the Office of Public Affairs Support to increase citizenship engagement efforts through voter education by serving as a voter registration and resource location and providing services as Deputy Registrars.
- Work on the development and implementation of a certificate program in Leadership and Community Engagement.