

**SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE**  
**Dr. Edward Zlotkowski**

***COURSE REVISION PROCEDURES***

In the process of converting a traditional course into its service-learning equivalent, consider the following items. Try to address them *as specifically as possible*.

**PART I: THE COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECT AND ITS VALUE**

**Name of Course:** Political Science 1101- American Government

**Instructor:** Derek Sutton, North GA College and State Univ.

**Group:** Juliana Rosser (Roane State CC), Donna Gessell (NGCSU), Audrey Alcorn (Tulsa CC), Margot Williams (U of IL).

1. Briefly describe your course objectives as the course currently exists. Then briefly describe a community-based project (direct service, problem solving, resource creation, student research, etc.) that would complement those objectives.

**Current Course Objectives:**

- Promote a general knowledge of American government and the political process
- Promote civic participation and civic engagement
- Understand role in modern political system in the U.S.

**Complementary Community-Based Project:**

- Attend a public meeting; take notes and analyze meeting; create database of meetings for community; online wiki-web; make it bilingual to benefit all members of the community

2. Identify some specific ways in which the course's community-based project could reinforce, deepen, broaden and/or complement your current course objectives. Note: The value of the project may reveal itself in content-specific outcomes (utilization of a skill or methodology) or be related to more generic outcomes such as critical thinking, appreciation of diversity, enhanced communication skills, and leadership skills. Or it may do both.

**Course Enhancements Made Possible by Community-Based Project:**

- Involvement in local government and community
- Engagement in political process
- Analyzing meeting/topics/issues in community
- Technology to develop online database

3. What *concrete benefits* would the community-based project provide for the course's community partner(s) and/or the community in general? (Since this question should ideally be answered by your community partner(s), your answer will necessarily be provisional.)

Online database of meetings; each meeting detailed and analyzed by the student; Pros-Cons; easily accessible to community members; builds relationship between campus and community; make information accessible to as many as possible.

## PART II: COURSE DESIGN

4. What would be the best format for the course's community-based activities: (a) mandatory or elective; (b) individual or group; (c) a major or a minor course component? Explain your choices. If you believe the community-based work should be mandatory, what current assignment(s) would it replace? If you believe it should be elective, how would you make it possible for the class as a whole to benefit from it?

### **Mandatory/Elective – Rationale:**

Mandatory

- **If mandatory, what assignment(s) would the community-based work replace?**

Meets general Education/QEP goals and outcomes of the university

### **Individual/Group – Rationale:**

Individual and Group-

- One person for meeting; group assign to that board, council, etc.
- Assigned roles (editor, writer, etc.)

### **Major/Minor Part of Course – Rationale:**

Major part of the course

5. Are there any adjustments you would want to make to the course's non-community based components to integrate them better with the course's community-based work?

### **Classroom-based Adjustments:**

- Bring in Speakers from these meetings early in the semester to address what goes on in the meetings
- Use examples (online)
- Lecture on small government meetings

6. How will your students need to be prepared for their community-based work? Identify both content-related knowledge (e.g., technical skills) and areas where special attention may be called for (e.g., social stereotyping, safety considerations, personal anxieties and concerns). Should anyone else be involved in the preparation process?

### **Content-Related Preparation:**

### **Personal/Social Preparation:**

### **Possible Preparation Assistance:**

- Tech demonstrations (ITT)
- Public Speaking (Speech Prof.)
- Writing Center Preparation

### PART III: FACILITATING LEARNING

7. Identify some of the *course-related* topics and competencies your students should be asked to relate – in class discussion and/or in writing – to their community project.

#### **Topics:**

- Understand state and local government and the process by which it operates

8. What contemporary social issues could the project help students better understand? Are there “civic skills” you could use the project to develop (e.g., finding a “public voice”; providing testimony/official recommendations; communicating with non-experts; understanding public-policy issues; navigating political conflicts)?

#### **Contemporary Social Issues:**

- The way local government relates to its citizens and makes decisions

9. In what areas could the project help your students grow personally (e.g., recognizing unexamined assumptions, critically examining their judgments, learning to deal with diversity, developing time management skills, developing leadership skills)?

#### **Personal Growth Areas:**

- Public participation/ civic engagement in state and local government

10. Identify some of the more important outcomes of the community-based work that you want to be able to assess. Then identify some of the indicators you might use to measure success.

#### **Student Outcomes:**

- Continue to be active in politics/government
- Advocate participation by their peers.

#### **Project Outcomes:**

- Ongoing database on government public meeting information
- Work with language professors and students to translate into other languages

#### **Indicators of Each:**

- Survey before and after to see if there is a behavior change.