

SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

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Service-Learning Website (<https://www.walsh.edu/service-learning.html>)

Empowering Change-Makers for our Community

In collaboration with Walsh faculty and local partners, the Office of Service-Learning equips and supports students to positively impact their communities and become educated change-makers and leaders in service.

Walsh University is dedicated to educating its students to become leaders in service to others. The Office of Service-Learning furthers this commitment by connecting Walsh University students to the local and global community, enabling them to learn and work alongside partners through Service-learning courses, immersion programs, global service experiences, leadership opportunities, and regular community service to others.

Office of Service-Learning Mission Statement

The Office of Service Learning's mission is *to facilitate mutually beneficial service learning opportunities among Walsh and the local community*. This is accomplished by supporting faculty as they develop and incorporate service-learning into courses and by understanding community needs via established relationships with local organizations.

What is Service-Learning?

Service-Learning is a form of experiential learning integrated into students' academic curriculum that consists of community-based service projects that meet the needs of the community, paired with structured preparation and student reflection. Service-Learning enhances what is taught in class by extending learning into the community.

How is Service-Learning Incorporated at Walsh?

All Walsh students have the opportunity to participate in a service-learning course as part of their general education curriculum. Since 2005, Walsh University has aligned student learning with the mission of service to the community by offering high-quality academic experiences that partner students with organizations in Canton and the surrounding area.

STUDENTS (<https://www.walsh.edu/sl-for-students.html>)

Service-learning is a form of experiential education that deepens learning. Service-learning provides enhanced opportunities for learning, as well as personal and social skill development. With service-learning, students gain increased knowledge of academic materials, their communities, and themselves.

FACULTY AND THE UNIVERSITY (<https://www.walsh.edu/sl-for-faculty.html>)

Faculty can engage in this high impact practice to enhance the quality of their teaching and find opportunities for research and outlets for professional expertise through service-learning. Service-learning supports the civic engagement mission of colleges and universities and improves relationships with the local community.

COMMUNITY (<https://www.walsh.edu/sl-for-community-partners.html>)

Community partners are integral to creating service-learning opportunities. Community partners are seen as co-educators by partnering with faculty and students through service-learning courses. Working together through service-learning allows the university and partners to access additional resources and support.

How is Service-Learning Unique?

- Service-learning is not the same as community service – rather, it is the application of academic theory to community involvement, and vice-versa.
- Service-learning differs from internships because the primary beneficiary of internships and fieldwork is the student and the main focus is learning and gaining practical experience in a potential career field.
- The reflection component of service-learning transforms the experience into learning as well as adds a dimension of personal growth to service-learning.
- Ideal service-learning seamlessly incorporates and integrates coursework with assignments and service, so the service does not exist as an add-on or separate experience.
- “Service, combined with learning adds value to each and transforms both” (Porter-Honnet & Poulsen, 1990, p. 40)