

# REFLECTION

## 3 BASIC QUESTIONS OF REFLECTION

## COMPONENTS OF REFLECTION

### 1. *WHAT?*

What will / are / have you been doing?

### ANALYSIS

### 2. *SO WHAT?*

What will / are / have you been learning?

### CRITICAL THINKING

Why is your service work needed?

### 3. *NOW WHAT?*

What should you do about it?

### DECISION MAKING

What are you going to do about it?

Virginia Campus Outreach Opportunity League. (1995). *Reflections - A Resource Book*.

### How are Students in Service-Learning Courses Graded?

The Service-Learning research discourages the granting of credit or grading for hours of service performed. A student would not expect to receive credit for reading a book or attending a lecture; rather, he or she would expect to have some assessment of the learning derived from these activities. A similar approach makes sense for performance of service.

Faculty can use a variety of reflective assessment tools and assignments (these are discussed in Appendices E and F, samples are also available from the Service Learning Center) to evaluate the learning students have gained through their service. While predetermined learning goals can help with assessment, valuable spontaneous learning can and will occur in a less-structured, non-classroom setting. Utilizing a method that allows students to process such experiences and articulate their learning will facilitate the grading process. Service-learning faculty typically assign a percentage of the grade to one or more assignments that enable students to assess this learning. For instance, some faculty use "Learner Outcome" worksheets for students to initially identify the specific learner outcomes they desire. At the completion of the service experience students then complete a "Learner Outcome Assessment" worksheet and complete a written assignment discussing the outcomes they desired, the extent to which the outcomes were achieved, and how the service experience related to the desired and realized outcomes.

### **Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning**

- The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
- Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated and revealed in performance over time.
- Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
- Assessment requires attention to outcomes, but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
- Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.
- Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.
- Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.
- Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
- Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

The American Association for Higher Education Assessment Forum, "Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning" (Washington, DC: AAHE, 1992)

### **Recommendations for Student Assessment**

*In order to ensure academic integrity, it is essential that service-learning be used in conjunction with rigorous evaluation. Assessment should be based on students' demonstration of how they are integrating the service experience to course content--not for service performed. The following recommendations are guidelines for how to conduct assessment of service-learners.*

- An assignment or activity, such as a journal, is needed to provide evidence of how the student connects the service to the course content.
- By helping students to distinguish between description and analysis, between emotional reactions and cognitive observations, faculty help them to transform service experiences into learning experiences.
- Evaluation of service-learning occasionally makes use of subjective evaluation in the same way that traditional courses sometimes make use of subjective evaluation.
- There is not a one-to-one correspondence between hours served and

knowledge gained or credit earned.

- Nevertheless, a certain minimum of service hours may be needed to provide an experience of significant depth.
- To preserve the academic integrity of service-learning, credit is not awarded for hours of service but rather for demonstrated learning based on service.
- Extra hours of service should not necessarily yield extra credit.
- Giving early and regular extended feedback on students' journal entries is a critical part of teaching students how to develop their reflection skills.

Troppe, Marie. (1995). Common Cases: Philosophy of Evaluation in Service-Learning Courses, *Connecting Cognition and Action: Evaluation of Student Performance in Service-Learning Courses*, Campus Compact's Project on Integrating Service With Academic Study.