

VIP – UWindsor's Community Service Learning Experience

Career Development & Experiential Learning

Description:

Community Service Learning (CSL) students will work in partnership with community-based organizations to apply disciplinary knowledge to address identified community needs or global issues. Service learners are purposefully supported by staff to apply disciplinary knowledge relevant to their course of study (when possible) in community settings and to take part in intentional reflection on the experience.

Students will volunteer in a community setting, complete activities to develop career readiness skills, reflect on the experience, and receive recognition on their academic transcript for successful completion.

VIP positions will be offered in-person, remotely, or sometimes a combination of the two formats. The position format is determined by the community organization. You will be able to read the position descriptions to learn what the format is before the position application period (see timeline). Remote work means you will be working in your residence using your own resources (reliable internet, computer with camera, smart phone). VIP professional development activities, separate from your volunteer position, will be conducted remotely or in-person on campus (see timeline for specific details).

Contact:

- Jane Sylvester, Applied Learning Coordinator
- vip@uwindsor.ca

Communication:

You will receive minimal communication about upcoming tasks, helping you to reflect, and alerting you to upcoming activities or deadlines. It is your responsibility to read communications on the day it is sent and to follow the timeline set out at the beginning of term. Messages are generally sent as announcements on the organization's Brightspace site but may also be emailed to your student email address.

I will be available by email at vip@uwindsor.ca. Emails will be answered during business hours and usually within 1-2 business days, this may increase during busy periods. I do not respond to emails on weekends or holidays. If your matter is best discussed face to face, please contact me to set up a meeting.

Accommodation:

Communicate with me prior to group orientation to discuss any accommodations you require (requires proper documentation, see next paragraph). Please advise me in a timely fashion of any accommodation

measures which must be taken to allow you to participate in the professional development activities and within your VIP placement. This is not a course so there is no exam or mid-term test.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations in professional development activities or in a community placement must contact an Advisor in Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to complete SAS Registration and receive the necessary Letters of Accommodation. After registering with SAS, you must present your Letter of Accommodation and discuss your needs with the coordinator as early in the term as possible. Please note that deadlines for the submission of documentation and completed forms to SAS are available on their website: uwindsor.ca/studentaccessibility.

Outline of CSL Experience

It is essential that you have a relevant and well-written resume for this experience. Resume assistance is provided on Brightspace as a self-serve content module titled Resume. Review the different options available to you, identify what you can improve on, and how to make those changes. You will work on your resume in phases before you apply to VIP positions to ensure you are marketing yourself to the best of your ability.

You will review all available positions before you decide to commit to this experience. Commitment requires you to pay the \$75 administrative fee before the deadline given. This fee pays for part of the software that you will use (mysuccess) and a modest marketing budget.

There is a matching process to place students with appropriate opportunities. Students are only placed in roles that they apply to. Students will have the opportunity to read and review all positions available and then submit their preferences of the positions they have applied to. If you find yourself interested in a position that does not match your degree program, you will be asked to explain how you would be able to apply academic knowledge in this role (during your preference submission). Matches are created based on skills/experience/characteristics (on your resume), program of study (if chosen by organization), and student preferences. Actively involved students that are not matched at this time will be invited to meet with the coordinator to consider relevant remaining positions if appropriate.

Once matched, you will arrange to meet with your community supervisor and complete your placement confirmation form within one week (look at the timeline for your deadline date). Once this form is submitted and you have completed any additional requirements that the organization needs (like proof of vaccination), you can start serving your community organization!

This experience requires a 40-hour minimum commitment*. Volunteer 4-6 hours per week so you can meet the minimum number of hours, before the deadline (see timeline). Track your hours each time you volunteer on the Record of Hours form and have your supervisor initial your entry.

During the term you will be working through the professional development activities that are an integral part of this experience. Not only will you be introduced to the services we offer but you will likely meet our student and full-time staff during the semester. The content modules on Brightspace will take you through the activities listed on the timeline. This part of the experience has some flexibility so that that you can work ahead on some activities to better manage your schedule. But remember, we take deadlines seriously, mark your calendars and make sure you meet all deadlines.

It is your responsibility to meet all VIP deadlines while managing your academic courses and the rest of your busy life. This experience truly tests your multi-tasking ability, and you will improve your time

management skills! My advice is to complete items early whenever possible and try to volunteer as much as you can each week, especially in the first month (this will depend on the organizations' needs as well as your availability).

***If you are an international student, it is your responsibility to confirm your study permit states that you have permission accept employment. VIP-CSL roles are unpaid but may be considered as work by Canadian immigration authorities. If you have questions about your study permit, please contact the International Student Advisors at the International Student Centre before you commit.**

Content:

Brightspace will be utilized to share content and discuss your experience with your peers in small groups. Content modules will guide you through finding and starting your placements and the professional development activities. The deadlines for the entire term are under the Timeline section. To help you manage your schedule, some modules will be open more than one week in advance. Otherwise, modules will become available as needed.

One on one and group meetings will be held in-person or on Microsoft Teams. Watch for information in announcements and when you register for events and appointments to see if it is in-person, online, or if you have a choice of format.

Learning Module Summary:

- Timeline
- Manual & Contract
- Resume Preparation
- Pre-Orientation
- Police Clearance Information and Additional Requirements
- Find a Service Learning Position & Submit Preferences
- Meet Your Supervisor – next steps after matching
- Cover Letter Worksheet & Cover letter
- Career Development Workshop
- Reflection Discussion and Interview Prep
- VIP Presentations
- Final Documentation

Learning Objectives:

1. Apply discipline specific knowledge and/or skills in a practical community setting and/or gain transferable skills
2. Demonstrate the importance of your Community Service Learning experience in relation to the local or global community
3. Compose a targeted resume and cover letter
4. Articulate how career competencies or transferable skills were gained or enhanced through your experience
5. Evaluate how your Community Service Learning experience has impacted your career planning process

Learning Resources:

The Brightspace site for VIP Community Service Learning contains the resources you need to have a successful experience. Some of the resources were created by staff and others are open resources.

The office of Career Development and Experiential Learning provides many more resources for you at any point during this experience or afterwards. Visit us online for a full list of our services

(<https://www.uwindsor.ca/career-development-experiential/>).

Evaluation Scheme

This experience consists of multiple components: volunteering, workshops, assignments, discussion, and reflection. Look at the timeline (left menu on BS) to see each component and its deadline. Deadlines are very important in this professional development program.

1. Your volunteer hours will be verified **each time you volunteer** by your supervisor at the community organization on the record of hours form. You must complete at least 40 hours and receive a satisfactory or better performance evaluation.
2. You will reflect on your experience in group discussions, independently, in your presentation, and final documentation. Your effort will be assessed, and you must achieve at minimum, a satisfactory level.
3. You will track your career development workshop attendance on Brightspace and our staff will verify it. Attendance only counts if you **arrive before it begins** and stay for the duration.
4. Each assignment will provide you with feedback and must be completed to at least a satisfactory level.

There is no letter or number grade for VIP, this is not like a course. Once you have completed all components within the timeline provided, you will have successfully completed this experience!

Recognition

Students who successfully meet all deadlines and complete all experiential components for VIP will receive a notation on their academic transcript and a certificate of participation. If you anticipate missing a deadline, get in touch with VIP staff as soon as possible to see if we can help. You may be asked to provide documentation of your situation to receive an accommodation to miss a deadline (e.g. medical note). Transcript notation will appear during the first month of the following term for students with >80% GPA. All other students will see the notation after the Academic Standing Committee has released grades (they meet twice per year in January and May).

Timeline

The specific timeline for the semester is available on Brightspace (menu on left) and lists every deadline.

Student Expectations:

As a participant in the University of Windsor VIP-CSL experience, I agree to:

- Pay my administration fee and abide by the withdrawal policy communicated to me; I understand that this fee is non-refundable and that I will not be matched with a placement or allowed to participate in the experience if this fee is not paid.

- Accept the placement assigned to me by the staff or make alternate arrangements and find my own placement within a non-profit or publicly funded organization that has not posted a VIP-CSL position this term, subject to the approval of the coordinator.
- Create and upload an acceptable resume on *mySuccess* and authorize Career Development & Experiential Learning to share it with potential supervisors.
- Complete at least 40 hours of volunteer work; I will complete this by the deadline set for the term that I participate in and provide proof of the number of hours completed (signed by my supervisor weekly) to Career Development & Experiential Learning at the end of my placement.
- Participate in all professional development workshops and reflection activities as scheduled; I understand that a component of these activities may require that I share personal information, such as the activities I was involved in at my placement, with my peers and/or member(s) of Career Development & Experiential Learning staff for purposes of skill development and/or reflection on my experiences.
- Complete and/or submit assignments and exercises as directed and on-time.
- Check the Brightspace site and my e-mail regularly and maintain contact with Career Development & Experiential Learning via email (vip@uwindsor.ca) and/or scheduling an appointment with the appropriate staff member as directed.
- Contact the VIP staff in advance to negotiate an extension or other alternative and provide appropriate supporting documentation of medical reasons in the event of an unavoidable emergency which prevents me from meeting an assignment deadline, attending a required activity, or fulfilling the duties of my placement.
- Authorize Career Development & Experiential Learning to contact me via email and/or mailing addresses I have provided with information about additional learning and volunteer opportunities.
- Successfully complete all VIP-CSL requirements; if I choose not to, I am aware that I will not receive recognition on my official University of Windsor transcript nor will I receive a certificate of completion.
- Comply with rules and regulations outlined on this contract and deadlines outlined in the Timeline provided; I understand that failure to do so may prevent me from completing this experience or result in my removal from this opportunity.

Placement Expectations

- Always conduct myself in a professional manner and do my best to ensure that I represent the University of Windsor positively.
- Arrive at my placement on time and remain for scheduled hours. I will notify my placement supervisor as early as possible in the case of illness or personal emergency during which I am unable to volunteer during previously scheduled or agreed upon hours.
- Maintain regular contact with my placement supervisor via email, telephone and/or video meetings. I will respond to email and voicemail messages in a timely manner and plan in advance if it is necessary to change regularly scheduled hours or previously agreed upon days of work.
- Perform the tasks assigned by my placement supervisor to the best of my ability.
- Abide by the code of conduct, dress code, health & safety guidelines and any other policies set forth by my placement organization.
- Maintain confidentiality of the placement organization and any of its clients that I may encounter.

- Discuss any questions, concerns, or problems that I encounter in the performance of my duties with my placement supervisor.
- Notify the VIP-CSL staff of problems or concerns related to my participation as soon as they arise.
- Receive satisfactory or better evaluation from my supervisor on the *Employer Evaluation of the Student* form. I understand that if I receive a less than satisfactory rating, I will not successfully complete the experience.

Withdrawal Policy

The administrative fee is non-refundable. If you pay the fee and then decide not to continue, your fee is non-refundable. We **do not** allow postponement to another term. If you are questioning whether you wish to withdraw, please seek a conversation with the coordinator to clearly understand the consequences to yourself, the community partner, and your peers. Students that quit their placements may negatively impact the reputation of VIP and the University in our local community. This can lead to fewer available placements for students in the next term.

Students who have been accepted in the past but did not complete the experience, may not be invited to a future admission interview. If there may be extenuating circumstances, the coordinator may offer to meet with the student to hear new information that, if compelling, may be considered by the Manager of Career Development & Experiential Learning. This policy recognizes the importance of our external relationships with our community partners, our internal reputation as a high-quality student experience, and our expectations of students that are accepted.

The University of Windsor Bylaw 31: Academic Integrity

http://www.uwindsor.ca/secretariat/sites/uwindsor.ca.secretariat/files/bylaw_31_-_academic_integrity_amended_150313.pdf

Bylaw 31 states that there are 32 types of misconduct, from Appendix A:

1. **Plagiarism:** the act of copying, reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material (from any source, including the internet), without proper acknowledgement. Plagiarism applies to all intellectual endeavours: creation and presentation of music, drawings, designs, dance, photography and other artistic and technical works. In the case of oral presentations, the use of material that is not one's own, without proper acknowledgment or attribution, constitutes plagiarism and, hence, academic dishonesty. (Students have the responsibility to learn and use the conventions of documentation as accepted in their area of study.)

2. **Dishonesty**, such as cheating, in academic activities.

3. **Furnishing false information** to the University: falsifying/altering, withholding or concocting medical records, correspondence, academic documents, research results, references, sources; forging or using University documents, records or instruments of identification with intent to defraud.

"Where a student has been found to have acted with misconduct, as defined in this bylaw, one or more of the following sanctions may be imposed": admonition, letter of apology, mark reduction, repeat work for assessment, censure, no credit – discipline, recommendation to deny registration, denial of registration, community service, etc. (Bylaw 31, section 2.3).

Feeling Overwhelmed?

University students face obstacles from time to time that can affect academic performance. If you face difficulties and need help, it is important to reach out to someone. Discuss your situation with your instructor or an academic advisor.

For help addressing mental or physical health concerns, contact: (519) 253-3000:

Health Services at ext. 7002

Student Counselling Centre at ext. 4616

Peer Support Centre at ext. 4551

Or visit: <https://www.uwindsor.ca/emergency-services>

Another source for help is Good2Talk, a 24/7 helpline for Ontario college and university students (not affiliated with University of Windsor): 1-866-925-5454

Excerpt above is from CTL resources for Syllabus Design - <http://www1.uwindsor.ca/ctl/links-sd>