

COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING

STUDENT GUIDEBOOK

WHAT IS COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING?

- Community Service-Learning (CSL) makes learning come alive. We link academic coursework to community-based experiences.
- Students bring their time and talents to community organizations as part of their studies, challenging them to engage with their learning in fresh new ways and to explore relationships between theory and practice.
- CSL gives students the opportunity to participate in the activities of a community agency or social action group as part of a university course. By taking part, students are connecting their education to what matters in their local communities.
- Students who participate in CSL agree that reflecting on the process is key to both their learning and service. Instructors provide opportunities, through assignments and class activities, for students to critically explore the relationships between community placements, course material, and broader social issues. Students are also encouraged to seek out other ways to reflect on their CSL experiences (e.g., talk to your community supervisor, keep a journal, write creative prose, discuss your experience with friends, hang out at the host organization).

WHY PARTICIPATE IN CSL?

- Gain invaluable experience and develop personal, professional, and intellectual skills through participating in CSL;
- Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills;
- Improve ability to handle ambiguity (and be open to change);
- Develop or enhance other skills – notably in communication, collaboration and leadership;
- Increase understanding of course material and learn to apply course content to new situations;
- Gain hands-on experience in the not-for-profit sector;
- Learn more about social issues and their root causes.

HOW TO GET STARTED?

1

CHOOSE A PLACEMENT

At the start of term, you will be provided with a list of placement options. These will be available to look at on the CSL Portal. Select one most suitable to your interests and carefully consider the following questions:

- What issues or causes really concern you?
- What time restrictions do you have (particular days/evenings/weekends)?
- What transportation arrangements can you make (bus, car pool, car)?
- What talents, skills, or abilities can you share with others? Which would you like to develop?
- What type of environment would you like to work in (indoor/outdoor; structured/unstructured)?
- What type of commitment would you prefer (once a week; intense several day event)?
- Do you prefer to work with any particular age group?
- Do you prefer working independently, one-on-one, or with a group?

NOTE ABOUT OUR EVALUATION PROGRAM *

At the end of each semester we ask all participants for feedback about your CSL experience. We appreciate your co-operation in filling out a 15-minute survey.

2

SECURITY CHECKS

Some community organizations require that you pass a Police Information Check and/or Youth Intervention Check before you can begin working with clients at the organization. Refer to your placement list on the CSL portal, or confirm with your instructor, for any required security checks.

REQUIRED ID

TWO pieces of valid ID that meet the following criteria:

- One piece of ID **MUST** be photo ID
- ID **MUST** be issued by the federal or provincial government
- **MUST** have your **FULL** name + date of birth

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ID

- Alberta Health Care (with **FULL** name, **NOT** initials)
- Birth Certificate
- Citizenship Card
- Driver's License
- Firearms Card
- Immigration ID Card
- Indian Status Card
- Passport
- Permanent Residence Card
- National Defense Card
- Student Visa

WHEN + WHERE

You **MUST** visit the CSL Office between 9AM – 4PM to complete these forms during the scheduled times as posted on the CSL website *(Checks cannot be processed after these dates).

ADDITIONAL INFO ABOUT SECURITY CHECKS

- Fees for Police Information Checks are covered by the CSL Program.
- Security checks are normally completed within a week to ten days.
- Instructors will be notified when clearances have been processed and will inform you. You must notify your community supervisors in order to begin your service activities. Completed checks are kept at the CSL Office; a photocopy is available upon request.
- Additional clearances or agreements may be required by organizations due to the nature of their work and the clients they serve. Students need to be aware of any additional requirements.

3

STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS

The CSL Student Placement Process is fundamental to CSL and is required for your placement. This process includes two forms - an online sign-up and a completion form, which allows you, your community partner and your instructor to verify that you have completed the your placement.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Visit the CSL Student Site and fill out the online form. This form identifies you as a CSL Student and informs CSL which Community Partner you will be working with during your course.

Complete this form *after* your Instructor has confirmed your placement.

2. Set up a meeting with your Community Partner to discuss your placement, scheduling, communication, learning activities and ethics guidelines. Discuss if there are any final projects, products or deliverables that are required by the Community Partner and set deadlines for these to be completed by. Throughout the semester, CSL will check in with you via email to make sure you are on track with your placement.

3. Near the end of the semester, you need to fill out the Completion Form. Set up a meeting with your Community Partner to complete this form. Fill out the Student section of the form prior to the meeting and then have your Community Partner complete their section. Return the completed form to your Instructor by the deadline set in your course.

WHEN DO I BEGIN? - TIMELINE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

FIRST TWO WEEKS OF CLASSES

Choose Your Placement

Follow your Instructor's protocol to select an organization based on your interests, availability, and strengths. A list of placements and their requirements is available on the CSL Portal.

**Remember to pick a second placement as a back-up option, in case your first choice is full or unavailable. You will be receiving emails from CSL throughout the term to help guide your CSL progress.*

BEFORE, OR BY, THE THIRD WEEK OF CLASSES

***(PLEASE CHECK THE CSL WEBSITE FOR EXACT DATE)**

Sign Up for Your Placement on the CSL Student Site

1. Follow the link to the CSL Student Site:
<https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/csl-student-site/>
2. From the Student Site, follow the link to the CSL Portal
3. Sign in with CCID + password
4. Find your course + assigned placement (make a note of the organization name + the project title)
5. Complete form on the Student Site + submit
6. Print off + follow the checklist that appears after you submit your form

THIRD WEEK OF CLASSES (9AM-4PM)

Visit CSL Office for Security Checks ***(PLEASE CHECK THE CSL WEBSITE FOR EXACT DATES)**

Refer to your placement list, or confirm with your Instructor for any required checks.

**Remember late forms will not be accepted*

DURING TERM

Complete Your CSL Placement

Make a list of the dates when you are to complete placement activities. Check-in with your community supervisor throughout the semester as required. Contact your Community Supervisor if you have questions.

**Remember supervisors are just as busy as you are.*

DUE TO INSTRUCTORS BY THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES

Complete Your Placement Completion Form

Schedule a time near the end of your placement to meet with your community supervisor and fill out your Student Completion Form. Filling out this form with your Community Supervisor is necessary to demonstrate the fulfillment of your CSL placement (including hours and project). Discuss if and how you might continue, share copies of your work with your Community Supervisor and consider inviting them to a class presentation.

Remember the **CSLebration is in April at the end of the Winter term. This is an annual event for Students, Instructors and Community Partners where students can display their CSL class projects.*

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CSL OPPORTUNITIES?

Our website (ualberta.ca/community-service-learning) is your best resource to find out more about:

- The Certificate in Community Engagement + Service-Learning
- Pathways Program
- CSL-Designated Courses
- Non-Profit Board Student Internship

CSL DOs AND DON'Ts



QUESTIONS?

We welcome you to drop by the CSL Office anytime during office hours.

- **Questions about your placement?**

Speak to your Community Supervisor first

- **Questions about your course?**

Speak to your Instructor first

DON'T



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