



Center Overview

Our Mission and Vision

The TCU Center for Community Involvement and Service-Learning works to foster social responsibility and lifelong learning through community involvement and service-learning at TCU. The Center provides and supports curricular and co-curricular opportunities that prepare students and inspire them to be engaged citizens working toward a more just world.

Our Definition and Approach

Academic Service-Learning is a *pedagogy* based on the principles of experiential education, which integrates community service with academic study. Faculty, in collaboration with representatives from community organizations, design service projects that enhance student learning and help meet community needs. Through structured reflection, students consider relationships between the service experience, the academic content of the class, and its impact on their personal values and professional goals.

Essential components:

- Community as LIVE TEXT: Students learn and develop through *active* participation in organized service that *meets community needs* and is a *coordinated* effort between community and the education institution;
- INTENTIONAL link to academic content: Service activities are connected to classroom *learning* outcomes, *enriching the quality* of the students' learning experience rather than adding to or removing from pre-determined curricular content; and
- TRANSFORMATIONAL: Learning includes structured time for *reflection* on the experience and *integration* of lessons learned to academic professional development.

Types of Academic Service-Learning

Direct Service

These activities involve students working alongside community members to produce desired outcomes. Examples: students in an English course work with residents of a nursing home to create oral histories; students in a nutrition course creating a community garden with local residents; accounting students help community members fill out their tax forms.

Indirect Service

These activities usually happen away from the community site; however, students meet with community members to assess needs and get feedback on the product being developed. Examples: students in a language course write children's books in Spanish to be donated to hospitalized Latino children; students in a journalism course develop communication materials to be used by non-profit agencies wishing to disseminate information on their services; students in a geology course conduct a greenhouse gas emission inventory for their campus.

Advocacy

These activities involve students working to raise awareness about particular issues, or seeking support to help address a particular community problem. Examples: students in a civic literacy course make a presentation to City Council in support of a specific policy; students in a nursing course launch a PR campaign about a health issue; students in an environmental studies course write a newspaper article about environmentally friendly actions that help lower pollution at a local natural resource.

Co-Curricular Service-Learning is distinguished from academic service-learning in that it is not connected to a specific course or discipline; it encompasses a variety of opportunities for participation in volunteer activities. With the goal of promoting student development, programs in this category utilize structured reflection to encourage students to learn about themselves and their communities while engaging in meaningful service experiences. Featured programs at TCU include:

- Community Action Course in partnership with the TCU Leadership Center
- TCU Leaps, an all day service drive mobilizing 500+ TCU students
- Alternative Spring Break, trips with a community service focus
- GO Center, a college preparation program at Paschal High School staffed by TCU students
- College Student for a Day, an opportunity for Fort Worth ISD students to partner with TCU students to explore college life

To ensure **ethical and effective service**, the Center utilizes a four-step approach which includes:

1. Assessment and Context – How is the need defined by the community?
2. Collaboration and Service – What will I do? What is expected of me?
3. Reflection and Critical Analysis – What have I learned? How is that significant?
4. Integration and Next Steps – How has the learning impacted my knowledge, skills and values? How will I act on what I have learned?

The Benefits of Service-Learning

- Hands-on use of skills and knowledge that increase relevance of academic skills
- Opportunities that incorporate different learning styles
- Analytical skills and social development
- Interaction with people of diverse cultures and lifestyles
- Increased sense of self-efficacy
- Valuable career guidance and experience
- Opportunities for meaningful involvement with the local community
- Increased civic responsibility

Services Offered to Faculty:

- Consultation and technical assistance
- Online searches (e.g. syllabi, awards, RFPs)
- Resource library (e.g. TCU Service-Learning Faculty Guide)
- Partnership facilitation
- Networking with peers
- Newsletter/ Website
- Faculty Steering Committee
- Professional Development (e.g. workshops, local conferences)
- Funding (e.g. TCU Faculty Grants and Undergraduate Assistantships)

Staff

Rosangela Boyd, PhD, CTRS
Director
R.Boyd@tcu.edu

Peter Thompson, MEd
Assistant Director
P.C.Thompson@tcu.edu

Terence Kennedy
Graduate Assistant
T.L.Kennedy@tcu.edu

Molly Baldwin
Americorps*VISTA
M.K.Baldwin2@tcu.edu

www.sds.tcu.edu/community

