

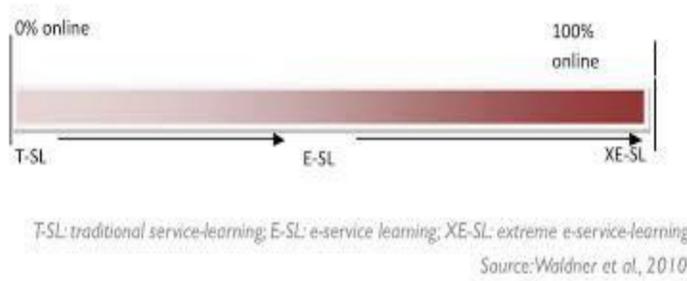


Changing a Hands-On Service-Learning Course to Virtual

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Introduction

- There are copious benefits that service-learning extends to the quality of a student's academic experience, which includes: furthering clinical skills, developing cultural humility and competence, understanding health care disparities and inequities, and fostering relationships with community partners. (Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020).
- Currently, due to the unique challenges 2020 has brought to service-learning courses, there has been a shift from an in-person, hands-on experience to an entirely virtual experience.
- A fully online service-learning course could lead to hesitancy of instructors who previously practiced this pedagogy in-person, however, there is clear evidence to support the benefits that the inclusion of service-learning brings to CSD curriculums, regardless of the method of delivery (in-person, virtual, hybrid). (Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020).
- While re-imagining what service-learning looks like amidst the "new normal", it is important for students and faculty to maintain flexibility and adaptability through changing societal and community environments in order to best address pressing issues and needs of community partners. (UCA, 2021).
- Service-learning is a continuum of typologies, where projects and outcomes are manifested in unique ways depending on how instruction and service is delivered. (Waldner et. al, 2010).
- The goals and objectives of a typical service-learning syllabus (e.g. application of problem solving and clinical skills, expanding cultural competence and teamwork, creation and presentation of prevention materials, and developing a deeper understanding of the individual's role in contributing to the improvement of wider social issues) are consistently applicable through the typology spectrum.



Techniques to Engage Students Virtually

- Use tools like chat boxes and discussion boards to monitor student questions, commentary, and understanding of various topics.
- Provide visuals when applicable.
- Actively engage students through surveys, polls, and online learning games (Kahoot).
- Incorporate self-reflection, teamwork, goal-setting, and exploration of resources into projects and assignments in order to maximize learning opportunities and successes. (Waldner et. al, 2010).
- Provide community engagement opportunities in combination with real-world application tasks to promote a comprehensive online experience. (Waldner et. al, 2010)

Methods/Alternatives-Steps to Providing

	Direct:	Indirect:	Research-Based:	Advocacy and Public Awareness:
Defined:	Students focus on addressing and meeting needs that directly benefit populations/ community partners.	Students focus on addressing and meeting needs that indirectly benefit populations/ community partners.	Students focus on researching and presenting information that addresses the needs of populations/ community partners.	Students educate about specific topics relevant to public interest.
In-Person:	Providing supervised speech, language, and hearing screenings at local elementary schools.	Supporting an advocacy organization presenting at a local pre-school for individuals who are deaf and hard-of-hearing by engaging with children, planning fun activities, and providing any other needed support.	Choosing a research topic related to improving child speech and language development and presenting this at a "Parent Academy" night to caregivers with children of different cultures and backgrounds.	Students organize an on-campus forum that addresses the challenges and disparities that students with disabilities face throughout their college education.
Virtual:	Having zoom meetings with individuals at a local aphasia center to initiate back-and-forth conversations, discussions of life-experiences, and fun activities in order to improve and practice communication skills.	Creating an online fundraiser campaign to support an organization's "walk-a-thon" event that is raising awareness about childhood apraxia.	Creating narrated and easily-accessible presentations on chosen research topics relating to improving child speech and language development and sharing this information with caregivers and organizations through various online platforms.	Students share factual information and stories that encourage education about the systemic inequities and challenges that people of color in speech language pathology and other related professions face.

Required Technology

- A computer with Windows, Mac, or Linux operating system
- Webcam and microphone
- Speakers or headphones
- Meeting software (Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet)
- High-speed internet access

Pros of Virtual Service-Learning

- Provides the opportunity for students to gain knowledge on application of clinical skills in tech-savvy environments.
- Offers more accessibility to populations compared to the limitations of in-person, place-based access and geographical constraints. (Waldner et. al, 2010).
- Offers more flexibility for students who may be balancing work, school, athletics, or other extracurricular activities. (Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020).
- Service-learning courses promote student interaction, faculty engagement, and a sense of belonging, which are challenges seen in typical online coursework. (Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020).

Cons of Virtual Service-Learning

- Uncertainties, confusion, and stress may result, which could negatively impact academic success.
- Students who prefer hands-on learning might experience challenges, discomfort, and feel unprepared to conduct face-to-face services.
- In order to be completely efficient, reliable internet access is crucial, and technology issues could pose significant challenges for entirely virtual courses.
- Students could miss out on spontaneity and excitement of events by not being physically onsite. (Waldner et. al, 2010).

Future Directions

- Future studies could lead to a better understanding of learning outcomes and best practice methods for virtual service-learning courses.
- Infuse technology in training sessions to better prepare students for ever-changing systems .
- There is great potential for more opportunities to be created for teaching, learning, and providing services virtually.

References

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