



Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning
l'Alliance canadienne pour l'apprentissage par le service communautaire

Principles of Good Practice for Community Service-Learning

An effective and sustainable community service-learning program:

1. *Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.*
2. *Provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.*
3. *Articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.*
4. *Allows for those with needs to define those needs.*
5. *Clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.*
6. *Matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.*
7. *Expects genuine, active and sustained organizational commitment.*
8. *Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.*
9. *Insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved.*
10. *Is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.*

(Porter, Honnet and Poulsen as cited in Mintz and Hesser 1986:30)

There are essentially three partners in the community service-learning experience: the academy, the students and the community. Each brings to the partnership experiences, expectations, and attitudes. The success of this partnership and any community service-learning project to emerge from it depends upon how each of the partners view: “the genuineness of the **collaboration**, the degree of **reciprocity** in the relationship and the extent to which its inherent **differences** are acknowledged and incorporated into the process”. (Mintz and Hesser 1986:34, emphasis added)

Collaboration involves two or more partners working together equitably and respectfully towards the creation of a common goal(s) and strategies for achieving it. Reciprocity suggests that each participant in the community service-learning partnership acts as both a teacher and a learner. Reciprocity invites equitable participation in the community service-learning partnership and reduces the risk of the academy exploiting available learning opportunities in the wider community. Finally, respect for all forms of diversity—race, gender, class age, and sexual orientation, to name just a few, enriches ongoing learning as the various partners become more sensitive to a range of perspectives and life experiences (Mintz and Hesser, 1986: 34-37).

WORK CITED

Mintz, Suzanne and Gary Hesser. 1996. “Principles of Good Practice in Service-Learning”. Pp. 26-52 in *Service-Learning in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices*. Barbara Jacoby (ed.) San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

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