

Document Assessment Techniques

Service Learning Abroad

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Assessment and service-learning have received much attention in the teaching and learning literature. When these two concepts are linked, however, the focus generally has centered on how to judge a successful program. The concern of this paper is on how the individual student participating in a service-learning exercise can be fairly yet rigorously evaluated.

The experiences of serving in the community have intrinsic rewards but in order to qualify for academic credit, something more is required of both faculty and students. Adding in the component of working in an international setting raises other significant issues.

Developing a well conceived assessment plan for service-learning courses is the goal of this paper. To accomplish this goal, the following four issues will be addressed:

1. Definitional issues of assessment.
2. International context as constraint on assessment.
3. A standard for judging effective assessment.
4. Evaluation of ten methods of assessment.
 - a. Reflection journal
 - b. Research paper placing the experience in a broader theoretical framework
 - c. Policy memorandum to be shared with the agency
 - d. Class oral presentations
 - e. Supervisor evaluation: methods and limitations
 - f. Satisfactory completion of set number of hours
 - g. Contribution level to organization
 - h. Group shared evaluation
 - i. Incorporate into class examinations
 - j. Self evaluation and grading

Conclusions

This study is based on both a literature review and the author's experience in using service-learning in both domestic and international settings for a number of years.

