

Application Form for a Service Learning Designated Course

1) Describe proposed activity, including a tentative timeline and commitments.

The service learning activity for GOVT 2305 (federal government) and GOVT 2306 (state government) will be students working with and for the Washington County Democratic Party or Washington County Republican Party and/or their respective candidates to assist them in campaigning for the November 2004 general election. The student may choose to contact and work for either Republican or Democratic party. The student will contact the political party chair and schedule times during the fall semester, 2004, to work for the campaign. The chair of the party will be responsible for assigning the student tasks for the party or may allow a political party candidate to assign the tasks, if applicable. Some examples of work the student may engage in will be assisting at the party headquarters, conducting phone banks, answering phones, or distributing campaign material.

This Service Learning project will consist of a minimum of 10 hours of work to begin and complete the project. Some of this time will be used in preparation for working with the party and completing the final report to be turned in. A minimum of 5 hours will be used actually working with the party and/or candidates.

Timeline:

September, 2004:	begin project; planning with instructor and party chair.
September-November, 2004:	complete 5 hours or more of work for the party/candidate
November, 2004:	work complete for the party/candidate; prepare the final report to be turned in by the end of November Discussion in class of service learning project

2) Which learning outcomes directly relate to this activity?

Upon completing this project, student will "find answers to the central question of political science: *Who governs? For what end? By what means?* Students will become familiar with the key participants, public policies and political processes in the American political arena" (GOVT 2305 and GOVT 2306 Master Course syllabus). Specific educational objective related to this Service Learning project:

- To recognize and assume one's responsibilities as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy
- To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues

3) How is the activity reciprocal (what is it that the partner / community gain?)

The community partner, in this case the political party or candidate, will gain from this project in a number of ways. First, parties and candidates are always seeking volunteers to assist in helping distribute literature, assist in phone banking, put out flyers and bumper stickers, etc. Many times the parties do not have the resources to pay these individuals so they rely on volunteers. Second, and beyond just volunteering, parties

are interested in helping young people learn about how the process of campaigns and elections works to increase their participation rates and hopefully groom them to become party activists. Parties are not able to survive without recruiting new, and younger, members, so they can use this as a recruiting tool also. Third, the political party and candidate can work to increase voting among younger individuals by using the students to help campaign in hopes of relating to young people in order to get them out to vote.

4) **Estimated number of hours needed to complete, including preparation, action, and reflection:**

This Service Learning project will consist of a minimum of 10 hours of work to complete the project.

Preparation for this project should take about one hour. This will include contacting the political party to set up the times in which the student will work for the party and/or candidate. Additionally, appropriate class time will be spent discussing the project with the instructor so all questions can be answered prior to doing the work. I will meet with those students who chose the Service Learning project outside of class to answer any further questions and focus on the student's role. I will also ask the party chairs to attend that meeting to answer questions the students may have about the work they will be doing for the party.

Action: The student will spend a minimum of five hours working for the political party and/or candidate.

Reflection: After completing the work, the student will spend the approximately 4 hours in reflecting about the experience and preparing the final report and paper to be turned in to the instructor. During this time, the student may also choose to discuss the project with the instructor, specifically what the student did for the party and what he/she learned from the experience. This may help the student in preparing the final report.

5) **How will you prepare your students for this activity (skills needed:)**

i) **Academically**

I will spend class time during the first week of the semester explaining Service Learning and this Service Learning project (as well as presenting the optional assignments) to the students. During this time, I will explain the benefits of this Service Learning project in helping the students learn the material by doing "hands on " work. I will show how the topics we discuss in class and learning outcomes are directly related to what they will be doing for the political parties/candidates. Additionally, I will call a meeting outside of class for those students who choose to do the project to discuss any additional concerns or questions they may have.

ii) **Professionally**

What is very important for the students to understand before they go into the community is how they need to exhibit a professional attitude, appearance and work ethic. These students are essentially representing Blinn College and need to act in a way that is consistent with college policy. Additionally, the political party and candidate want to maintain an image to the public and we do not want our students negatively affecting their campaigns in any way. When I hold the outside meeting with

the Service Learning students and party chairs, I will address these concerns and ensure they understand the importance of professional decorum while doing this project. Beatriz Arnillas – SL Director and NCBI Trainer or her designee plans to meet with students regarding cultural competency and sensitivity.

- iii) Cultural competency (biases related to age, ability, gender, race, class, body image, etc.)

Given the nature of the project and the goal of political parties to turn out the votes, there should be no problems with the project and students ability to complete it. Age, gender, race, class, body image will not be a concern and given their broad range of activities they could be doing for the party, ability is not an issue either, because they will only be given responsibilities for which they have the ability to fulfill.

- 6) Level and type of supervision and input the agency will need to provide. Will you have to be involved?

Since these students are not members of the political party and many will not have experience with campaigning or working with a party, the political party will provide any needed supervision the students require during the five hours in which they are working. This is also to ensure that they are doing the work correctly and to the satisfaction of the party or candidate. It will also ensure that the students' work for the requisite time stated in the Service Learning project. The instructor may observe the students working but it would not be necessary to carry out direct supervision.

- 7) What level of skills can the partner expect from your students?

The students will only have basic knowledge of how the political system works, e.g. campaigns and elections. While they can expect the student to do the work they need them to do, they will need to spend time explaining how they see the process working and what is expect from the students. What makes this project so attractive is that parties are trying to make a sale and that sale is their party candidates to the voters. So, they will be able to teach the students the skills they need in order to fulfill the duties they are assigned and do this in a way that fits their party objectives and goals.

- 8) Will there be a final product or event?

Yes. The students choosing the service learning project will be responsible for writing a final report which will include a paper for the project grade. The report will include:

- 5 page paper (typed, double spaced, one inch margins, 12-point times new roman font) about the student's experience with the campaign. Questions/Guidelines:
 - What type of work did you do for the campaign? Be specific
 - What did you learn about campaigning for political office?
 - Reflecting on what you were taught in class about this process, what specifically did you learn that was not taught in class?

- What did you learn about the campaigning process that you believe could not be taught in a classroom?
- How did this project enhance your understanding and awareness of the political process and your role as a member of the electorate?
- How will this experience affect you in the future with campaigns, elections, or political involvement in general?
- Did you find campaigning fun/interesting? Why or why not?
- Other interesting experiences you want to share
- Letter from party/candidate verifying you volunteered 5 hours and describing what work you did for the party and their opinion of the quality of work and professionalism
- 5 pieces of campaign material (NOT 5 of the same thing)
- 8-10 pictures of the you working for the party or candidate
- Contact information for the political party and/or candidate
 - Contact information for the political party – president/chair, headquarters address, phone number, email (if available) OR
 - Name of the candidate, political party affiliation, office the candidate is seeking and contact information – address, phone number, email (if applicable)

Additionally, there will be an event at the end of the year recognizing the Service Learning students.

9) What optional activity will this SL project replace (essay, presentation, quiz, etc?)

OPTION 2: Visit a presidential museum

- Visit either the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in College Station OR visit the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum in Austin
- What students will turn for their project grade
 1. Admission ticket and museum information guide
 2. 8-10 pictures of you inside and outside the museum
 3. 5 page paper (typed, double spaced, one inch margins, 12-point times new roman font), describing their experience in the museum.
 - Requirements:
 - Overall impression of the museum
 - Five exhibits you enjoyed the most? Describe exhibits with detail and specifically what was learned about our president, history, an event, etc, that was not known before visiting the museum.
 - Three things additional things learned about the president that was not known before the visit. (these should be different than the three exhibits)
 - What you learned through this experience that they could not learn in class.
 - Any additional comments about the museum.

OPTION 3: Create a newspaper with stories/news from the day the student was born

- Using newspapers, magazines, the Internet, etc., create a newspaper from the day you were born.
 - Include national and state news, news from around the world, and any other interesting facts or information from that time.
 - Be creative – include weather, comics, sports, births/deaths, want ads, different sections, TV guide section, entertainment, interesting facts about that day in history, etc.
- What the paper must include:
 1. Date of newspaper must be birth date.

2. ORIGINAL NAME of the newspaper.
3. Five news stories written by you
 - o One story about the president (at least 300 words) who was in office when you were born
 - This should be a short biography including issues important to the president, scandals/news making events, or other pertinent information about the president (be sure to only include things from your birth date and before – NOT anything that happened later in his presidency).
 - o Four stories (at least 300 words EACH) about news making events related to government
 - important bill being debated, tax cuts or the budget, the economy, education, foreign policy, situations where military was used, elections, etc.
4. Creative inclusions
5. MAKE IT LOOK LIKE A REAL NEWSPAPER.

10) What percentage of the total grade in the course will this activity be?

This project will count for 16.6 percent of the course grade or worth 100 points since I use a point system for grades. The project counts the same as an exam grade in my course.

11) Specify the criteria or rubric that you will use to evaluate the student for this activity.

Be as specific as possible. E.g.:

- i) Attendance and punctuality
- ii) Teamwork / attitude
- iii) Organizational skills
- iv) Professional services, quality of work, dress code, etc.
- v) Integrative paper, reflection, etc.

I described in question 8 the final project will consist of a report with a paper. The specific grading is as follows:

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| 75% | Paper (answering all questions – see list in question 8) |
| 15% | Letter included from party, pictures, and campaign literature |
| 10% | Assessment of quality of work, professionalism, and interaction with community partner as determined by instructor with input by the party chairman in a letter about each Service Learning participant. |

12) What reflection method appropriate to your discipline and relevant to the activity will you use? E.g.: Journal writing, informal presentation, dialogue, prompts for written or verbal reflections, portfolio, integrative papers (combined information from text-book and experience,) video, art work, poster, etc.

As stated before, after completing the work, the student will spend the approximately 4 hours in reflecting about the experience and preparing the final report and paper to be turned in to the instructor. During this time, the student may also choose to discuss the project with the instructor, specifically what the student did for the party and what he/she learned from the experience. This may help the student in preparing the final report.

SL Project Evaluation:

Please attach a copy of your proposed CIS, including evaluation criteria. CIS must be in compliance with Blinn's master syllabus. Some examples of evaluation options:

a) Questions in the pre- and post-test, which help you, assess if students learned the desired outcome equally or more effectively than those who did not choose to participate in the SL project.

b) Design your own open-ended feedback questions for students and partner(s.)

1. What was helpful?
2. What was least helpful?
3. Is there anything I could have done as faculty, which would have helped you do a better job?
4. A SL pre- and post-test questions that specifically gauge civic engagement.

I will ask the students who participated in the Service Learning project to fill out a separate evaluation of the project. I will ask the students open-ended questions about how well the project related to the class. Some of the questions that I am considering are listed below:

1. I will ask them for their positive impressions and negative impressions about the project.
2. I will ask them about their positive and negative reaction to the community partner.
3. I will ask them if they would recommend this project to future students and why.
4. I would ask for their opinion about their overall experience on the project.
5. I would ask for what they thought could be done to improve the project.
6. I would ask the students to evaluate my part of the Service Learning Project.

I will ask the party chairman to evaluate the student's performance and skills. This information will help me provide an improved service to the community partner in the future as well as address any community partners concerns.

Faculty (Formative) Self-Evaluation

In a separate sheet, describe what you will use as self-assessment

Examples:

1. How does my teaching affect my student's ability to become responsibly engaged in the community?
2. How much information did I give my students before sending them to the community activity?
3. What ethical standards guided my design?

I will also have the Party Chairs or Campaign Officials fill out an evaluation of the Service Learning Project. I will ask them similar questions that I asked the students.

I will evaluate my own impressions of the Service Learning Project in regard to it meeting the learning outcomes, the positives and negatives about the project. I will evaluate my expectations and time frame for the project.

I will meet with the Service Learning Campus Coordinator and discuss my impressions in order to improve the Service Learning Project.