E100 Transforming Forensic Science Education With Service and Experiential Learning

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The goal of this presentation is to provide attendees with a framework for utilizing service-learning projects in the forensic science classroom.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by demonstrating how forensic science discipline knowledge can be integrated with practical applications in the community.

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2011) defines service learning as a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.[1] Service learning represents a potentially powerful form of pedagogy because it provides a means of linking the academic with the practical. There is growing evidence that when students apply theoretical material learned in the traditional classroom in a "real-world" setting, there is a positive effect on student learning and interest in the subject matter[2]. Service-learning projects also benefit the community by providing new perspectives into the work of the university and strengthening community relationships with faculty and students.

This presentation will provide a framework for incorporating service learning into course curricula. Service-learning projects completed by the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) Forensic Science Institute students that integrate forensic science discipline knowledge with practical applications in the community will be used to emphasize the efficacy of this model as a tool for transformative education. Projects that will be discussed include the application of digital forensics to assist Oklahoma tornado victims, electronic recycling, participation in the Oklahoma Innocence Project, cold case reviews, and active involvement in the federal outreach program GEAR-UP.

Service learning at the Forensic Science Institute offers a transformative learning experience to students by developing "beyond-disciplinary skills," broadening students' perspectives in relation to themselves and their community, integrating meaningful community service, and placing students at the "center of their own active and reflective learning experience."[3]

Presentation attendees will be introduced to the concept of service learning as a transformative learning tool. They will be provided with examples of how this concept has been successfully implemented at the Forensic Science Institute and will also have the opportunity to listen to student and community reflections on how service learning at the Forensic Science Institute was transformational for them.

Reference(s):

1. National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2011). Retrieved from: http://www.service learning.org /what service-learning.
2. Astin A.W., Vogelgesan L.J., Ikeda E.K.,Yee J.A. (2000). *How Service Learning Affect Students*. Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles.
3. Center for Excellence in Transformative Teaching and Learning (CETTL): The University of Central Oklahoma. (2015). *Transformative Learning*. Retrieved from http://www.uco.edu/central/.

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Forensic Science Education, Service Learning, Transformative Learning