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Cast a Net: Meshing Libraries with Service Learning

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Cast a Net: Meshing Libraries with Service Learning

Common Missions & Goals

Local
• Goal 3: The University Library Instruction Program provides resources and services to meet the campus, distance learner, and community needs. - Criss Library Mission Statement and Goals

Community
• Develop partnerships between the university and the metropolitan community
• To enhance student learning, advance community service and initiatives and foster engaged citizenship. - UNO Service-Learning Academy (2008 Presidential Honor Roll for Community Service)

National
• “Finally, we need to integrate service into education, so that young Americans are called upon and prepared to be active citizens. …and for all college students to perform 100 hours of service a year.” - Barack Obama, June 22, 2008, Colorado Springs, CO

Tying UNO Faculty, Students and Community Partners Together

Sociology: Boys and Girls Clubs
Teachers Education: Girls, Inc.
Construction Engineering: North High School
Communications: Hope Skate

Students Participating in Service Learning

Service Learning (SL) Defined
“Students not only address community needs but also enrich their own education by experiencing the real-world application of academic subjects and developing the habit of active citizenship.” - Paul Sather, Director of UNO’s Service Learning Academy
February 9, 2009

Where is the Library in Service Learning?
“There is simply a research void abutting these two areas of higher education scholarship (service learning and information literacy), each pursuing separate paths of pedagogical justification, virtually oblivious to the other.” - John Riddle, Where’s the Library in Service Learning? 2004

Service Learning Projects at the Criss Library
• Library Science Collection Development Class.
• Created collection development bibliographies for non-profit organizations.
• Library Instruction for an English class.
• Students wrote position papers regarding the homeless population in Omaha, NE.
• Papers used by non-profit organizations to design homeless population programs.
• Douglas County Corrections – “Read me a Story” Program.
• Create, develop and maintain a working library for Girls, Inc. of Omaha, NE.

Mesh Your Library with Service Learning
• Work with the Service Learning Director at your university.
  ▪ Be part of the agenda and program planning from the beginning.
  ▪ Develop policies concerning retention and disposition of project’s materials.
  ▪ Collect and organize information that will help shape future research.
  ▪ Work with public librarians who have found success in community-building efforts.
  ▪ Identify Service Learning projects and mesh with library services.
  ▪ Promote your library services with Service Learning faculty, students and community organization partners.

What can the Library Offer SL Projects?
• Mesh Information Research Skills with Service Learning needs:
  ▪ Offer information about the community organization.
  ▪ Budgets, organizational charts, program descriptions.
  ▪ Help the student become familiar with the problems the community agency tries to solve.
  ▪ Assist in finding information for reflection.
  ▪ Information regarding local, national and international social problems.
  ▪ Incorporate critical-information thinking skills.
  ▪ Find materials on the pros/cons on a particular problem.
  ▪ How do other communities address the social problem?
  ▪ Access demographic and census information to make comparisons across communities.

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