

2016

## UNO Website-SLA-Impact

UNO Service Learning Academy  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

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# Impact

- Impact
- Service Learning Academy
- Service Learning Awards



**UNO Wins Presidential Engagement Award**

The University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) is the recipient of the Presidential Award for the Economic Opportunity category of the 2014 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. Read more about this exceptional honor here.

- Additional Resources
- Information For Students
- Information For Educators
- P-16 Initiative
- Community Partners

For more information about statistics and assessment, please contact Samantha Kanouse, Service Learning Research Specialist, at [skanouse@unomaha.edu](mailto:skanouse@unomaha.edu) or 402.554.3656

UNO / Service Learning Academy / Impact

Service learning is not only beneficial to the community, research shows positive student outcomes, both in academics and as citizens. Educators also find great opportunities for scholarship and publications.

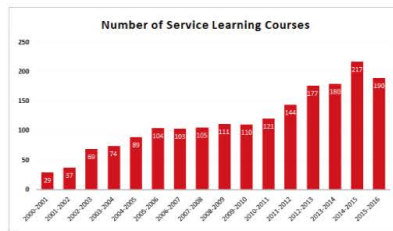
Explore the areas below for more information:

- Context & statistics
- Assessment
- Faculty and Student Awards
- Civic Participation Faculty Scholarship

## Context & Statistics

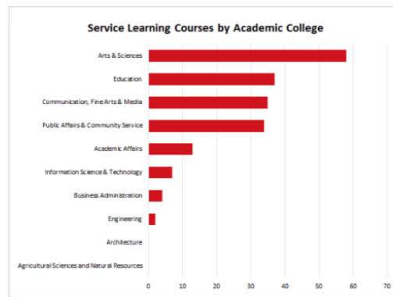
### Number of Service Learning Courses

The Service Learning Academy has supported 1,860 service learning courses over the past fifteen years. Since 2005 there have been over 100 service learning courses offered each academic year. Overall, the total number of service learning courses has shown considerable growth across the years.



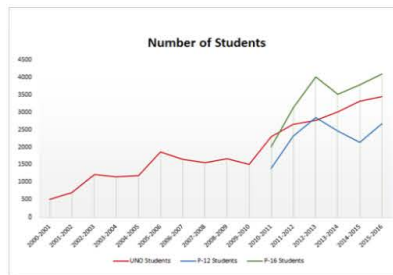
### Service Learning Courses by Academic College

During the 2015-2016 academic year, there were 190 service learning courses across seven academic colleges and academic affairs. This breadth provides students the opportunity to participate in service learning within their chosen field.



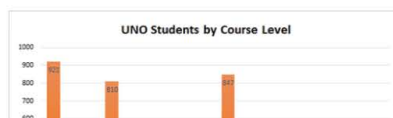
### Number of Service Learning Students

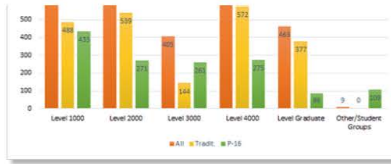
Over 13,000 P-12 students have actively participated in service learning projects supported by the P-16 Initiative. During the 2015-2016 school year, the P-16 service learners provided over 38,000 hours of service to the community. There were over 100 P-12 campus visits which provided the P-12 students with a glimpse of how their future might include college.



### Number of UNO Students by Course Level

During the 2015-2016 academic year, there were over 3,000 UNO students participating in service learning courses. Both upper and lower level courses, including graduate courses, are offered. This allows students to actively participate in service learning throughout their college experience.





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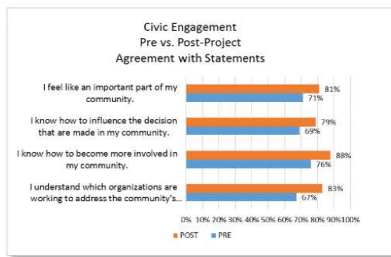
## Assessment

UNO students who participate in service learning courses are offered the opportunity to participate in a research study focused on the impact of service learning. Some of the results from that survey data from the 2013-14 academic year is shared in the "civic engagement," "academic engagement," "personal growth" and "project relevance" sections that follow. Along with documenting the impact of service learning, the data collected from this research is used to:

- Develop more effective service learning training and support
- Inform outreach to PK-12 schools and nonprofit organizations in the Omaha community
- Encourage faculty participation and promote scholarship

## Civic Engagement

Service learning helps students learn about their community and understand the role they can play. When comparing their opinions before and after their involvement in an academic service learning project, students gained a better understanding of the organizations serving their community, as well as how they can become more involved and influence community decisions. This heightened sense of civic engagement will continue to benefit these students and their communities into the future.

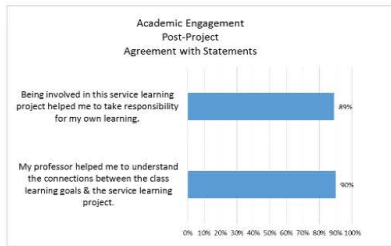


The following student survey comments reiterate this increased civic engagement:

- It was a great experience that reminded me how important it is to stay active in the community.
- I feel like this was a good learning experience. I realized my privilege. I felt energized and empowered through my service, which was inspiring. I realized how my civic actions contribute to the community in which I live.
- The service learning experience provided great opportunities to learn more about the community.

## Academic Engagement

The service learning students also observed that the experience enhanced the relevance of their course work. With the support of their professors, 9 out of 10 students came to understand the connections between their project and course objectives. These students also credited service learning with helping them take responsibility for their own learning, confirming the value of service learning as an educational pedagogy.



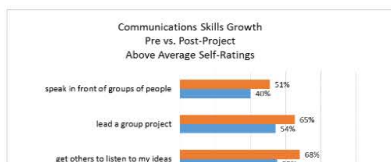
Students confirmed their academic engagement with the following service learning survey comments:

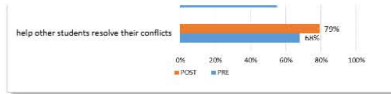
- The service learning component was a rewarding experience which allowed us to apply skills learned from the curriculum into more of a hands-on approach.
- Service learning experiences never fail to be the best part of my entire learning experience at UNO. Actually doing things makes more sense than reading a textbook.
- This class goes way outside my realm of thinking so it was interesting and I learned things I would normally not think about.

## Personal Growth

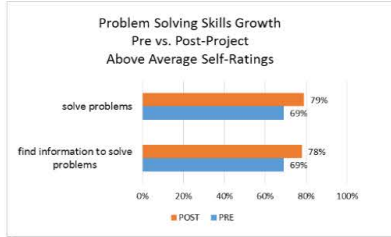
As UNO students look toward completing their studies and pursuing their careers, they recognize that their service learning experience has helped to prepare them for this transition. The service learners report gains in communication and problem solving skills.

When comparing student self-ratings before and after their service learning experience, there is at least a 10% increase in "excellent" and "above average" ratings of giving speeches, leading group projects, getting others to listen to their ideas, and helping others resolve conflicts.





Problem-solving is another category of personal skills that revealed growth between the pre- and post-project surveys. An increasing percentage of service learners rated themselves as "excellent" or "above average" in finding information and solving problems.

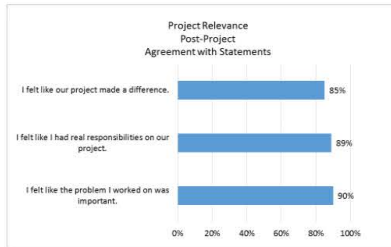


Student comments on the service learning survey confirmed their recognition of the personal skills built during their service learning experiences:

- Thank you for such an awesome learning and skill-building semester!
- I learned a great deal about myself and what type of teacher I want to be.
- Great class, different than any class that I've ever taken, a lot more collaboration.

### Project Relevance

Students in service learning courses understand the relevancy of their projects to themselves and their communities. Almost 9 out of 10 service learners acknowledge a personal engagement in their projects. They consider their project's community issue as important and its impact as significant.



Students summed up their project's relevance with the following comments from the service learning survey:

- This experience was by far the most rewarding experience I've ever had, not just from an educational aspect, but a humanistic one as well. I am a non-traditional student, 47 years old, and have a bit of 'life experience' under my belt, so I am in no way easily impressed.
- I felt like I made a difference in the life of those kids. It is an experience that I will carry with me!
- This was the most meaningful experience that I have had through my educational career!

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