

FACULTY SERVICE-LEARNING ONLINE DATABASE

USER GUIDE

The Service-Learning Online Database has been developed by the Misericordia Office of Service-Learning to bring together faculty engaged in service-learning with the needs of our local community partners. The database began as a central resource for faculty to access information on potential local partners, to share best practices, and to register and track their service-learning course information. As the database took shape, it became clear that the database could provide value to faculty and staff seeking not only service-learning opportunities, but experiential learning opportunities with local community partners such as volunteering, internships, work study, clinical and field work placements, and research, as well as information on local community-based services.

It is hoped that this new resource will bring greater awareness to the incredible range of organizations working on critical issues in our local community, open up new opportunities for partnership between the University community and our community organizations, and fulfil its original purpose of providing a vehicle for community partners to highlight their needs and inspire ideas for new service-learning opportunities for our students.

The Online Database consists of four main sections:

Community Partner Database – a complete listing of local community organizations that have expressed an interest in partnering with Misericordia for experiential learning opportunities. Community organization profiles are searchable by issues addressed, population served, and academic course areas of interest. Each organization actively manages their own profile, and completes a basic needs assessment to identify areas of need and potential experiential learning opportunities for students. Organization profiles also include a history of service-learning involvement with Misericordia.

Alerts – receive email alerts when a community partner posts a new community-based experiential learning opportunity. Choose to receive alerts based on opportunity type (service project, internship, clinical, community-based research) or academic area.

Service-Learning Course Registration – online registration and tracking of your service-learning courses. This function allows faculty to register details of their service-learning courses, link courses to community partner profiles, and track previous service-learning courses and community partnerships. Course registrations are linked to the community partner database, allowing faculty searching community organization profiles to view which course(s) an organization is currently, or has previously, partnered with. **Registration of your course on the online database is a requirement for service-learning designation on the master schedule with the Registrar's Office.**

Document Management – upload documentation related to your service-learning course, such as your syllabus, risk assessment forms, site visits, photo consent, assessment details, photos, and media coverage links. Community Partners can also upload documentation such as organizational literature, volunteer forms, and waivers to their profiles that can be accessed by faculty and staff.

Key benefits

- ✓ **Simplify your search for a potential community partner**
- ✓ **Keep up-to-date with new opportunities for partnerships as they arise**
- ✓ **Broaden awareness of local community issues, needs, and the organizations tackling them**
- ✓ **Inspire new service project ideas and new experiential learning experiences for your students**
- ✓ **Reinvigorate current experiential learning through new partnerships**
- ✓ **Benefit from experiences and best practices shared by colleagues**
- ✓ **Track your service-learning course history and design**
- ✓ **Access important documentation directly from partner profiles and manage your own service-learning course documentation**

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Accessing the Online Database

Access is via the MyMU portal under Faculty > Faculty Information > Service-Learning Resources > **Faculty Online Course Manager and Community Partner Database.**

All faculty and staff are able to access the online database using the MU credentials.

Overview

Once logged in, the overview screen will be displayed. This screen provides details of your current and past service-learning courses, important updates from the Office of Service-Learning, and links to download the Faculty Service-Learning Guide.

SECTION 1: THE COMMUNITY PARTNER DATABASE

The community partner database is a listing of local nonprofits and community organizations that have expressed an interest in partnering with Misericordia. Each community partner has created an organizational profile, detailing their mission, service, issues addressed, populations served, and experiential learning opportunities available at their organization. These include service projects (individual and group), internships, clinicals/fieldwork/practicums, and community-based research opportunities.

Additionally, the database is designed to work in conjunction with the online service-learning course registrations to provide up-to-date information for faculty on past, current, and future service-learning course partnerships planned with each community partner.

There are two search functions available:

- 1) **Agency Search** – this search will return community organization profiles addressing issues, target populations, or related to academic areas matching your search criteria.
- 2) **Needs Search** – this search returns details of individual community needs and potential experiential learning opportunities matching your search criteria.

Agency Search

To search for a potential partner agency

- i. Select *community partner database* from the top menu bar
- ii. Enter your search criteria in the given fields – searches are inclusive so the more criteria you select, the more results will be generated.
- iii. Click *submit*
- iv. Search results are displayed along with the organizations ‘current status’ – details of any current or future planned service-learning projects.
- v. Click on an organization to view their profile

Organization Profiles

The overview screen for each community partner profile is similar to the Faculty overview home page. This screen details any past, current, or future service-learning courses the organization has partnered with.

Full profile view

The full profile view details the following for each organization

- **Contact details** of organization, website address, and main contact person
- **Organizational information** – mission, services provided, issues addressed, populations targeted, and relevant academic areas
- **Organizational needs** – specific needs and experiential learning opportunities identified by the organization
- **Other opportunities available** – interest in offering internships, work study, clinical/field placements, and research
- **Documents** – volunteer forms, flyers, info sheets, and other documentation uploaded by the organization
- **Faculty comments on this agency**

The Office of Service-Learning can assist you in reaching out to a community partner to discuss possible service-learning opportunities with their organization.

Needs Search

The needs search functionality allows you to search for individual community needs or project ideas entered by community partners. The purpose of this functionality is to account for the multiple diverse needs within a single partner organization.

For example:

Agency ABC provides afterschool childcare to low income families. Agency ABC has selected ‘Teacher Education’ and ‘Social Work’ as their relevant academic areas for the agency. The **agency search results** will return Agency ABC if ‘Teacher Education’ and/or ‘Social Work’ are selected as the search criteria. An **agency search** under ‘Marketing’ or ‘Communications’ will not return Agency ABC as a possible partner.

However, Agency ABC has two different needs. They have a need for homework tutors after school, and would also like help with getting their promotional flyers updated.

Each need is entered into the database as a separate project opportunity. For the first service project opportunity, homework tutors, Agency ABC choose to select ‘teacher education’, ‘social work’, or perhaps ‘English’ and ‘math’ as the relevant academic areas. For the second opportunity, updating their flyers, they choose to select ‘marketing’ and ‘communications’ as the relevant academic areas. Agencies can select as many academic areas as apply and are encouraged to do so.

When ‘teacher education’ and/or ‘social work’ are entered into the **needs search**, the tutoring opportunity will display in the search results. However, if you search needs under ‘Marketing’ or ‘Communications’, the flyer update project will display in the search results.

Searching by academic area is only one of the three main search criteria. You can also search by target population, such as agencies that work with children, veterans, or individuals with disabilities, by issues addressed, such as homelessness, animals, crisis support, or arts & culture, or by opportunity type (service project, internship, clinical/fieldwork/practicum, or research).

Needs are also categorized as **direct service**, **indirect service**, or **advocacy** needs.

Direct service projects are those in which students interact directly with clients from the community partner organization, such as tutoring children, or working with the elderly.

Indirect service projects are those in which service is not provided directly to individuals but the service benefits the community/organization, such as updating marketing materials, or renovating a community center.

Advocacy projects are those in which students create an awareness of a community issue or cause, such as holding a fundraiser or educational event.

To search for a community need or potential project idea:

- i. Select *Community partner database* from the top menu bar
- ii. Click *Search for a need* to access the needs search criteria
- iii. Enter your search criteria in the given fields – searches are inclusive so the more criteria you select, the more results will be generated.
- iv. Click *submit*
- v. On the results page:
 - a. Click on a *need title* to display a description of the community need or project idea
 - b. Click on *organization name* to view their profile and contact details

Faculty comments section

This section allows you to add comments on your experiences and best practices for working with a particular community partner to their profile. **This section is not visible to the community partner.**

For example, you may discover that the spring semester is the best time to work with this particular agency, that parking is problematic, that the organization will not allow photos, or that communication via email is more effective than by telephone.

The purpose of this section is to share the benefit of your experience with colleagues considering a partnership with the organization. It will also help to ensure the continuity and consistency of the organization's partnership with Misericordia University as a whole.

To add a comment:

- i. Locate the community partner via the agency search
- ii. Click *view full profile* to open the community partner profile
- iii. Click *add faculty comment*
- iv. Enter your comments and click *submit*

Updating community partner profiles

Please contact Louise Keller, Service-Learning Specialist at 570 674 6203 or lkeller@misericordia.edu, or use the **Contact Us** form to make updates to community partner profiles.

Adding a new community partner profile

Community partner profile are set up and managed by a representative from the partner organization. If you would like to have an organization added to the database you can either contact Louise Keller with the name and contact details of the organization, or direct the organization to the Misericordia website service-learning pages to access the database and set up a profile.

The service-learning pages can be found at <http://www.misericordia.edu/page.cfm?p=714> or by following www.misericordia.edu > Academics > Office of Service-Learning

SECTION 2: EMAIL ALERTS

The second section allows you to register to receive email alerts when a community partner posts a new experiential learning opportunity.

How to register for alerts:

- 1) Access the community partner database via the MyMU portal. Go to Faculty > Faculty Information > Service-Learning Resources > **Faculty Service-Learning Course Manager and Community Partner Database**
- 2) Select *Alerts* from the top menu bar
- 3) Select which opportunities you would like to receive alerts for. You can choose to receive alerts for specific opportunity types (service projects, internships, clinical, community-based research) or for opportunities associated with specific academic areas.
- 4) Click *submit* to save your alert settings. You can return at any time to amend your selections.

When a community partner posts a new experiential learning opportunity matching your alert criteria you will receive an email notification. You can then access the community partner's database profile for more information and contact details for the opportunity.

SECTION 3: REGISTERING YOUR SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE

The online course registration allows you to input your requirements for service-learning and to track your service-learning course history. Registered courses are also linked to community partner profiles, so that each partner profile displays a record of past, current, and future service-learning course partnerships.

Registration of your course in the database is required for the official designation and recognition of your course as service-learning.

The Office of Service-Learning will be using the new database as our primary tracking system for all service-learning activities from Spring 2017 onwards. Therefore, courses that **are not registered** with the new system **will not** receive service-learning designation on the master schedule.

For questions or concerns regarding the designation of your course as service-learning, please contact Kevin Feifer, Director of Service-Learning on ext. 6322 or kfeifer@misericordia.edu

Registering your course

To register a new course as service-learning:

- i. Select *Register a course* from the top menu bar
- ii. Enter your course information
- iii. Enter the **project description** – learning objectives, service objectives, and a description of the service activities
- iv. Enter your **community partner requirements** – number of partners required and distribution of students. Please refer to the Community Partner Database to search for possible partners and/or project ideas.
- v. Enter your **project requirements** – please give details of any resources or special requirements your service-learning will need. For example, access to a specific target population, equipment needed, geographic location, or any known timing/schedule constraints
- vi. Enter any possible **transportation requirements**
- vii. Enter your plans for **orientation and evaluation** – briefly outline your orientation plans for your students, and how you plan to evaluate the outcomes of service-learning. The Office of Service-Learning can provide assistance with orientation planning.
- viii. Click *submit* to submit your course to the Office of Service-Learning for review and designation as service-learning with the Registrar's Office.

A note on transportation

*The Office of Service-Learning has only **limited access** to transportation for students to and from partner sites. If transportation is likely to be required, please discuss scheduling with the Office of Service-Learning during initial planning stages, as this may impact the feasibility of some experiences.*

Once your submission has been received by the Office of Service-Learning, service-learning staff will reach out to you to schedule a review meeting to go over your course requirements if needed, and provide assistance with planning, risk/liability, and logistical arrangements.

Service-Learning Course Status

Once submitted, your courses will display on your overview page. All newly registered courses will initially display as 'under review'. Service-Learning staff will then arrange for service-learning designation with the Registrar's Office and update course status to 'current'. Service-Learning staff will also add the community partner information once the partnership has been confirmed. On completion, service-learning staff update the course status to display as a 'Past Course' on the overview page.

Viewing and editing a course registration

To view a course registration, click on the course name on your overview page. **You can return to edit and update the information at any time.**

Changes to community partners

To make changes to the community partner(s) associated with your course, please contact Louise Keller, Service-Learning Specialist at ext. 6203 or lkeller@misericordia.edu, or via the **Contact Us** form.

Adding site addresses for liability waivers

All students are required to complete a **mandatory** online service-learning liability waiver prior to beginning any service-learning project with a community partner. Liability waivers are specific to each community partner; our online waiver system uses community partner names and site addresses entered onto the registration form to identify which community partner(s) each student is required to complete a waiver for.

To add a community partner site location:

- i. Complete the online registration form above to register your course as service-learning and submit. This will create the course registration record in the system.
- ii. From the overview screen, click on the course you wish to add site addresses for

- iii. Under the course information, you will see a section entitled **Site Location: STUDENT LIABILITY WAIVERS**
- iv. Click *add new site* to enter the name and address of your community partner.
PLEASE NOTE: The site address must be the location at which your students will be performing their service, not a head office or other location address. Please reach out to Louise Keller, lkeller@misericordia.edu if you are unsure which address to list.
- v. After adding all community partner site locations, please click *submit* on the bottom of your registration form to save the information.

SECTION 4: DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

The fourth section of the online service-learning system allows faculty to upload and store documentation related to their service-learning courses. Faculty can also access documents uploaded by community partners via their profiles, and keep track of any media coverage of the projects.

What kind of documents can I store?

You are encouraged to upload any documentation relevant for your service-learning course. This could include (but is not limited to)

- Partnership agreements or MOUs
- Liability waivers and participation agreements
- Risk assessment documents
- Confidentiality documents
- Outlines of budgetary proposals
- Assessment and evaluation reports
- Any other documentation relevant for your service-learning

Uploading documents

Please note: files for upload must not contain spaces or special characters in the file name.

To upload a document

- i. Click *Documents* on the top menu bar
- ii. Assign a title to your document
- iii. Assign the relevant course from the dropdown menu
- iv. Browse your computer for the document and click *upload*

Accessing community partner documents

Community partners are encouraged to upload any documentation that needs to be shared with faculty to their profile. This could include (but is not limited to)

- Volunteer forms
- Liability waivers
- Confidentiality agreements
- Copies of insurances and risk assessments

- Informational literature
- Directions to facility
- Instructions for volunteers

To access community partner documents:

- i. Click *Community partner database* from the top menu bar
- ii. Enter the community partner name into the search box and scroll down to click *submit*
- iii. In the search results, click on the partner to view their profile.
- iv. Document download links are displayed at the bottom of the community partner profile

Media links

The online system also provides faculty with a way to keep track of any online media coverage of their service-learning.

To add a media coverage link:

- i. Click 'media' from the top menu bar
- ii. Enter the article or video title
- iii. Copy and paste the link into the *website link* box
- iv. Enter the publication name and date
- v. Click *submit*

FAQs

There's a glitch/broken link/problem with the database

Please contact Louise Keller, Service-Learning Specialist on 6203 or lkeller@misericordia.edu, or via the *Contact Office of Service-Learning* link within the database with details of the problem.

The community partner I want to work with isn't listed in the database

You can still register your course as service-learning if your chosen community partner does not yet have a profile in the database. Please provide their details in the 'suggested partners' box under the course registration, and service-learning staff will reach out to them to create a profile for the database.

I do the same service-learning component every year. Do I need to register my course every time?

One of the benefits of the new system is the ability to track your service-learning courses, plans, and documentation over time. In order to offer this functionality, you will need to register your course each semester you are planning on offering service-learning. The registration form is equipped with a **duplicate function**, which will complete the form for you using data from a previous course registration form. This will mean that faculty will not need to re-enter all of the required information and will just need to enter the new dates, student numbers, and any other new information.

I want to add a new community organization to the database

Community partner profiles are created and managed by the community organization themselves. This gives them control over their information and allows them to communicate their most important needs to the Misericordia community directly. If you would like to refer a potential community partner to the database, please encourage them to visit the service-learning pages on www.misericordia.edu and set up a profile for their organization. You can also encourage them to download a copy of the Community Partner Service-Learning Guide for more information on service-learning and the community partner database. The service-learning pages can be found at www.misericordia.edu > academics > office of service-learning.

I've identified a community partner I would like to work with from the database. How do I set up the partnership and link it to my course registration?

Once you have identified a potential partner organization, the next steps are to reach out to the contact person at the organization and discuss possible service-learning projects. Contact details for each community partner are available in their full profile, and the Office of Service-Learning is happy to assist in making the connection if required. Once the community organization has agreed to partner with your course, service-learning staff will assign the community partner to the course in the database.

GETTING HELP

If you have any questions regarding the database or require assistance with your course registration, please contact Louise Keller, Service-Learning Specialist at lkeller@misericordia.edu or 570 674 6203.