

One Time Service Experience Checklist¹



Center for Community
Service and Learning



A one-time service experience is an activity or project that can be performed and completed within a specific block of time in a day. To help students take advantage of all that a One Time Service experience has to offer, St. Norbert College is encouraging the use of the PARE model (*Preparation, Action, Reflection, Evaluation*) when planning for these events. This checklist will take service planners through the four basic steps of PARE, as well as provide resources for the service experience.

Where do we begin?

Service planners must always start with the end in sight. Ask yourselves:

- What do we want students to walk away with?
- What's the point of doing this service?
- What will you want the students to reflect upon after the actual service?
- How will we do each step of the PARE model, including reflection and evaluation?

By spending some time with these questions and being clear on the answers, planners can not only make the service experience itself more rewarding, but can also make the planning go more smoothly.

PREPARATION

Effective preparation helps to...

- introduce new and old volunteers to the overall layout of the project and its various elements.
- encourage members to take an active role in different steps along the way thus making the project more meaningful for them and others.
- **Minimum**
 - Choose a site to do service. When choosing a site, consider the following questions:
 - Who needs us and how?
 - Where have students had a good experience in the past?
 - What sites fit the interests and gifts of the students?
 - Is the location and time convenient for students?
 - Contact the Center for Community Service and Learning (CCSL) for assistance in finding a service opportunity and to let Center know what service opportunity you have settled on (Dan Robinson – x3363 or daniel.robinson@snc.edu)

¹ This checklist was compiled from materials developed by the Program for Faith, Learning and Vocation and by the Department of Leadership, Service and Engagement. Some of the reflection questions were adapted from the Center for Community Service and Justice at Loyola University in Maryland.

- Contact the potential site and settle on the logistical details of the service opportunity:
 - Times/dates are available
 - Number of participants can the agency accommodate. Is there a minimum?
 - Types of service the agency needs, and what exactly you would you be doing
 - Length of time the site would need you
 - The contact person at the site
 - The contact person for your group
 - Someone at the site to give you an orientation to the site and its mission upon your arrival
 - Anything the group need to bring (supplies, lunch, etc.) or appropriate clothing to wear (e.g., for doing outside manual labor, playing with children in a gym, etc.)
 - Address of/directions to the site
 - Any out-of-the-normal risks associated with the service opportunity (e.g., use of pesticide or strong cleaners)
- Communicate all logistical details to the student participants prior to the service opportunity, including the time schedule for the event
- Decide on where and when you will meet for reflection and evaluation after the service opportunity and how you will lead these steps of the PARE model
- Decide on how transportation to the site will be handled (contact the CCSL if you have any questions)
 - If students are just given directions to the site and told to be there at a specific time, signed releases are not needed.
 - If transportation is provided through a bus rental, signed releases are not needed
 - If the SNC organizers of the service opportunity are arranging for carpooling, then they must be sure that all drivers have taken a defensive driving course and that all participants sign releases.
- Complete any risk management forms necessary
 - Applications, confidentiality agreements, etc., if needed for the service site
 - St. Norbert College Risk Management form (obtained from the CCSL or Kristee Becker)
- Turn in any forms needed by your particular department prior to the actual service time.
- Consider working with the CCSL in assessing the service learning experience. This often will mean having the students answer one or two questions prior to the actual service, so contact the Center as part of the preparation phase.
- **Even Better...**
 - Spend some time exploring the expectations and assumptions of the student participants. What are their hopes going into the project? Have they done anything like this before? Do they have stereotypes, assumptions, or concerns going into the project? Contact the CCSL for ideas on how to do this.
 - Become familiar with your community partner and where you will be doing your service (this could include materials available in the CCSL's public folder - J:\CCSL\public\Community

Organization Site Sheets - or provided by the community partner as well as their web site, if available)

- Consider what you will be reflecting upon after the service opportunity, and then ask the students to keep in mind a “question of the day” while they are doing the service. This question can then be used during the reflection time. (e.g., What were some of the gifts of the people you met today? How did you encounter God today?, etc.)

- **Top of the line**

- Examine the broader issues surrounding the project. Provide information about the population with whom you will work and the issues affecting them.
- Contact the following people for sources of information to assist you in looking at the broader issues:
 - The community agency where you will be working
 - The Center for Community Service and Learning
 - Paul Waelchli, reference librarian at the SNC Mulva Library
- Complete the “One Time Project Co-Curricular Service-Learning Partnership Agreement” in order to formalize the details of the service opportunity (contact the CCSL for this agreement form)

ACTION

- **Follow through on your commitment with a positive attitude.** Not only does your community partner depend on your service, but your service reflects on the St. Norbert community.
- Communicate with your community partner if the unforeseen happens and you are unable to fulfill your service commitment. Sometimes things happen, and plans fall through, but through preparation, our hope is that this is *rare*. However, if it does happen, please let your community partner know as SOON AS POSSIBLE. This allows them to make other arrangements, and perhaps will make it possible for you to re-schedule.

REFLECTION

Service is an integral part of the learning experience at St. Norbert College, and reflection is a necessary part of that experience for two reasons. First, learning and growth are not an automatic outcome of service. The service experience must include an opportunity to *reflect* on the service in order to connect that experience with learning and growth in a person’s life. Second, studies have shown the “reflection has a *some* positive impact on the attitudes of the volunteers regarding service. However, the lack of reflection has a STRONG NEGATIVE impact on the volunteers’ attitudes about service and the service activity.”²

- Arrange ahead of time for the reflection portion of the service experience, including:
 - Be creative about getting people to participate (e.g., include food)
 - Consider meeting somewhere off campus before you return to the College. Often it is hard to get students to stay together once they’re back on campus.

² “Service Reflection Toolkit;” Northwest Service Academy; Metro Center; Portland, OR.

- At a minimum, consider discussing the service experience while traveling back to St. Norbert
- Participate in the reflection as a peer with the participants. You DO NOT need the answers to the questions that come up during the reflection.
- Be conscious of the stereotypes coming through in people's comments and how reflection might address those.
- Consider including a spiritual/religious perspective in the reflection process
- Decide on a format for the reflection. Some formats to consider are:
 - "What? So What? Now What?"
 - WHAT
 - What happened at the event to you and to others? What were the uplifting moments or the challenging moments?
 - Did you encounter any unplanned events? How did you deal with them?
 - What moments stand out to you the most?
 - What feelings came up for you while you were at the site? (Perhaps invite them to use one word to describe how they felt.)
 - SO WHAT?
 - Interpretive
 - Try and connect the service experience to yourself and your own life
 - How have your feelings or ideas changed?
 - How, if at all, does service (in general or in this particular experience) connect with your faith?
 - Where did you feel God present today?
 - How did the service experience affect your values and priorities in life?
 - How were you different when you left the service location compared to when you arrived?
 - NOW WHAT?
 - How did this experience change your assumptions or stereotypes?
 - Do you think that this service experience will change your actions in the future? How so?
 - In what ways are you going to continue to be involved and encourage others to be active?
 - What have you learned about a particular community or societal issue or problem?
 - What do you think are the root causes of this problem? Explain how your service may or may not contribute to its alleviation.
 - What could St. Norbert, this group, or each individual do to address the problems you saw at the service site?
 - What goals do you plan to set in order to continue your involvement?
 - *Reflection circle:* The group is divided in two. One half forms a tight circle in the center facing outward. The remaining people then pair up with someone in the circle, forming an outside circle. A facilitator (or member of the group) may present a question for

each pair to answer. Then, one of the circles is asked to rotate “x” spaces to a different partner. A new question is asked and the pair discusses it.

- *Small Groups:* The members of the group can break up into smaller units and sections. They can discuss the experience and events based on a variety of questions placed by a facilitator.
 - *Pile:* Using a variety of objects (cotton balls, light bulbs, candies, pens, papers, play dough, rubber band, ribbons, toys, etc.) members can select them and describe how the object relates to, what they have learned from, or how they reacted to the project
 - *Journal writing:* drawings, free writings, responses to reflection questions, pictures, poems, song lyrics, paintings etc.
 - *Role playing:* Participating individuals can act out a variety of people that were a part of the service project. They can act out what really did happen or something that could have happened but didn’t. There can be other members of the group who are watching. After the skit the entire group can talk about their reactions and opinions.
- Contact the CCSL for more resources and/or assistance with reflection.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of each service experience is important in determining what extent the goals and learning objectives of the project were met, as well as planning for future service opportunities.

- Evaluate the service opportunity from several perspectives:
 - How successful was the project for volunteers?
 - How successful was the project for the group as a whole?
 - What changes could be made to improve the overall success of the project?
 - How successful was the project for the agency?
- If you’re working with the CCSL on service assessment, include the post-service assessment question(s) in your evaluation
- Questions you can ask participants to respond to in writing and then in small groups:
 - To what extent did the experience meet your expectations?
 - What might have helped make your experience better?
 - What community needs did your service fulfill?
 - What community needs were not addressed?
- Complete the post-service reporting form.** This form is available on *Knightline*. Simply enter the secure area, click on “Personal Information” and then “Community Service and Learning.” You’ll be directed to answer just a few basic questions about your service-learning project. Completing this step is very important in helping the College demonstrate the impact it is having on the local community.
- Contact the CCSL if you need further help with evaluation, and be sure to share with the CCSL your evaluation results.

"PARE" MODEL PLANNING SHEET

A place for you to keep notes on your service experience planning

Preparation

Action

Reflection

Evaluation

One Time Service Checklist - Short Form³



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PREPARATION

• First Level

- Choose a site to do service.
- Contact the Center for Community Service and Learning (CCSL) for assistance in finding a service opportunity and to let Center know what you have settled on.
- Contact the potential site and settle on the logistical details of the service opportunity (see full checklist for details to be covered).
- Communicate all logistical details to the student participants prior to the service opportunity, including the time schedule for the event
- Decide on where and when you will meet for reflection and evaluation after the service opportunity and how you will lead these steps of the PARE model
- Decide on how transportation to the site will be handled (contact the CCSL if you have any questions)
- Complete any risk management forms necessary (see full checklist for information).
- Turn in any forms needed by your particular department prior to the actual service time.
- Consider working with the CCSL in assessing the service learning experience. This often will mean having the students answer one or two questions prior to the actual service, so contact the Center as part of the preparation phase.

• Second Level

- Spend some time exploring the expectations and assumptions of the participants.
- Become familiar with your community partner and where you will be doing your service
- Consider what you will be reflecting upon after the service opportunity, and then ask the students to keep in mind a “question of the day” while they are doing the service.

• Third Level

- Examine the broader issues surrounding the project. Provide information about the population with whom you will work and the issues affecting them.
- Look at the broader issues associated with your service.

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- Complete the “One Time Project Co-Curricular Service-Learning Partnership Agreement” in order to formalize the details of the service opportunity (contact the CCSL for this)

ACTION

- Follow through on your commitment with a positive attitude.***
- Communicate with your community partner if the unforeseen happens and you are unable to fulfill your service commitment.

REFLECTION

- Arrange ahead of time for the reflection portion of the service experience.
- Participate in the reflection as a peer with the participants.
- Be conscious of the stereotypes coming through in people’s comments and how reflection might address those.
- Consider including a spiritual/religious perspective in the reflection process
- Decide on a format for the reflection.
- Contact the CCSL for more resources and/or assistance with reflection.

EVALUATION

- Evaluate the service opportunity from several perspectives.
- If you’re working with the CCSL on service assessment, include the post-service assessment question(s) in your evaluation
- Consider using the questions provided in the full check list for small group evaluation.
- Complete the post-service reporting form on Knightline and any other forms needed by your department.***
- Contact the CCSL if you need further help with evaluation, and be sure to share with the CCSL your evaluation results.