University of Massachusetts Lowell
Service-Learning Course Attribute Policy

In order for students to make more informed choices when selecting courses, courses and/or sections can now have a “service-learning” attribute in the course catalog or in the course Topics section in ISIS. This attribute will also allow students to have this noted on their transcript.

**Service-Learning Course Attribute Criteria**
For an undergraduate course to bear the Service-Learning attribute, service and learning must be integrated in order to enhance both. The following are the baseline criteria to be designated as a service-learning course. Individual colleges/schools may have additional criteria.

- **Service**: Students will provide a needed service to educational institutions, governmental agencies, community-based non-profit entities or individuals who are directly or indirectly collaborating with one of the fore mentioned parties.

- **Clear linkage between the service and course learning goals**: The service will be related to the subject matter of the course. Knowledge from the discipline or program will inform the service experiences.

- **Preparation for service**: Students will be prepared for the roles they will occupy, including preparation to respectfully engage with a community that may not be their own and to work with people who may differ from them significantly in terms of race, class, or other elements of social identity.

- **Structured reflection/analysis**: Students will engage in systematic reflection or analysis on their experience in the community—through talking, writing, or other means—in order to think about what they have learned through the service experience and how these experiences relate to the subject matter of the course.

- **Assessment**: The course will offer a method to assess the learning derived from the experience. Credit will be given for the learning and its relation to the course, NOT for the service alone.

- **Evaluation of the service, the learning and the partnership**: There will be an opportunity for the service recipients (educational institutions, community-based non-profit entities or individuals) to provide feedback on the overall service-learning experience. The evaluation will inform how the service-learning experience will be adapted in subsequent semesters.

**Process for having the attribute added** (below assumes course offering & size has been approved by the department chair)

1. Faculty member fills out the Service-Learning Course Attribute Form and submits with the following to a Service-Learning Coordinator (listed below):
   a. Course syllabus outlining course objectives and service-learning project details (including percentage of overall grade)
b. Check list showing that the course meets the baseline criteria for the service-learning attribute, plus any college/school specific criteria

c. List of proposed/secured community partners with contact information from each, or information on how students will self-select partners.

2) Service-Learning Coordinators review to ensure course/section is meeting baseline criteria, and is meeting any additional criteria designated by the specific college/school of the course.

3) Service-Learning Coordinators submit recommendations to the UPC (Undergraduate Policy Committee) for their review and approval.

4) After determining if the course meets the criteria, the course is approved and submitted to the registrar’s office by the UPC. Depending on the course sections, one of the below next steps will occur:

   a. If a course does NOT vary by section (all sections offered are service-learning) - courses will be listed in the catalog as service-learning courses and will have a course description that specifies the service-learning components.

   b. If a course does vary by section (meaning some sections have a service-learning component and some do not) – the sections with a service-learning component will have this noted in the “Topics” section of ISIS and will be visible on the registrar’s website.

   c. If the service-learning component is optional to students in a course – this will be noted as an option in the Topics section of ISIS and will be visible as an option on the registrar’s website. For “Service-Learning” to appear on the transcript for students, the instructors will approve the service-learning identification for individual students, unlike a. and b. where this will be automatic.

5) A Service-Learning attribute will remain year to year if there are no (or minimal) changes to the syllabus. A syllabus will be requested by the Service-Learning Coordinators every year, with a form. The form will identify the following:

   a. The course has no significant changes from prior year

   b. The course has minor changes from prior year (faculty list changes)

   c. The course had significant changes (faculty resubmit a new Service-Learning Course Attribute Form)