# Engaged Scholarship Guide for Academics

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# 1.    Introduction

The University of the Free State (UFS) is committed to collaborate with its communities to address sustainable development challenges in society, such as the well-being of people, the economy, and the environment. We do this through collaborative learning partnerships representing the service sector, our staff, and students who are committed to engaged teaching-learning and research. This handbook is meant to be a guide for academic staff who engage with partner communities through engaged scholarship. As an academic, you can contact the Directorate of Community Engagement. (see link: https://www.ufs.ac.za/supportservices/departments/community-engagement-home ).

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The Directorate: Community Engagement is available to discuss possibilities for the establishment of mutually beneficial collaborative learning partnerships to support the development of strong and sustainable partnerships, especially with a focus on engaged teaching, learning, and research and to connect you with passionate community partners who want to take action to make a difference in society.

In summary, the UFS has responded positively to the challenge of transformation in higher education over the past two decades. The community service policy of the UFS (2002; 2006) is continuously grounded on the relevant vision and mission of the UFS to be an excellent, equitable, and innovative university. This vision and mission are achieved through the pursuit of scholarship as embodied in the discovery, co-creation, integration, application, and transmission of knowledge. The vision is achieved by promoting an academic culture expressed through quality education, research, and citizenship.

# 2.    e-Community Engagement: Response to COVID-19 challenge

e-Community Engagement (e-CE) refers to an alternative online/virtual community engagement platform aimed at facilitating continuously negotiated collaborations and

partnerships between the UFS and the interest groups that it interacts with. The platform aims to build and exchange the knowledge, skills, expertise, and resources required to develop and sustain society. Such alternative engagement, utilising information communication technology, stems from adapting physical face-to-face (f2f) community engagement to an e-learning environment.

In this uncertain state of restricted f2f engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, the focus of participation, dialogue, engaged learning, and teaching by university staff and students is for citizens to actively participate in developing their own lives and that of their surrounding communities.

## 3.     What is Engaged Scholarship?

Within the context of community engagement, engaged scholarship (ES) refers to the application of academic scholarly work and professional expertise with an intended public purpose and mutual benefit that demonstrates engagement in partnership with external (and non-academic) constituencies. It aims to generate new knowledge, as well as integration, application, and mobilisation/dissemination of knowledge.

The UFS has adopted the function of community engagement to complement the traditional functions of teaching and learning and research – to implement its commitment to the development of society at large. Following an integrated model, our approach to community engagement includes, but is not limited to, the following developmental engagement:

- •      research
- •      community service-learning
- •      community service/volunteerism
- •      partnerships.

The UFS believes that engagement must be done in partnership with other stakeholders. A triad partnership model is followed, which includes

- •      staff and students from the university;
- •      community members served by a service sector; and
- •      the service sector, mostly comprising government departments, non-governmental organisations, private businesses, industry, and social enterprises.

At the UFS, we have categorised engaged scholarship into engaged teaching and learning, engaged research, and engaged citizenship. The following picture represents our model of ES:

**Figure 1: The UFS model of Engaged Scholarship**



**ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP**

| ENGAGED TEACHING AND LEARNING | ENGAGED RESEARCH | ENGAGED CITIZENSHIP |
|---|---|---|
| Community Service-Learning<br>Community-Based Learning<br>Interprofessional Learning<br>Clinical Learning | Community-Based Research (CBR)<br>Participatory Action Learning Action Research (PALAR)<br>Action Research<br>Applied Research<br><br>*'action-orientated and participatory'* | University Engaged Citizenship<br>Academic Engaged Citizenship<br>Student Engaged Citizenship |

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT**

*Engaged teaching and learning*

Engaged teaching and learning involve the transmission, transformation, and extension of knowledge, which includes learning with various audiences through either formal or informal arrangements. The focus is primarily on higher-education teaching, where students engage in collaborative learning platforms to learn with and from the communities. In this way, students learn to think and act on local as well as global issues of real importance. They also learn to integrate theory and practice for the development of praxis. In engaged teaching-learning, students are broadly prepared with in-depth knowledge and professional skills and attributes required for the world of work. They also gain a sense of existing social, political, economic, and ecological complex and dynamic challenges in greater society. Therefore, engaged teaching-learning educates students to live as socially responsible citizens, mobilising multiple forms of knowledge to make the right decisions and use their abilities to contribute to the well-being of society. To ingrain the principles of engaged scholarship, the university curricula must unify the learning of knowledge with concrete actions, so that the teaching model is anchored in a real-life situation. Engaged teaching and learning can include pedagogies such as community service learning, community-based learning, interprofessional learning, internship, and clinical learning.

*Engaged research*

Engaged research incorporates reciprocal community engagement practices into the discovery, teaching, integration, application, development, and mobilisation of knowledge to the mutual benefit of community and academic interests. Engaged research can also include creative outputs and other expressions or activities. It is essential that engaged research must be systematic and rigorous. Results must be disseminated in publications for debate and should be critiqued by peers. The relevance of engaged research is not limited to developing science based on the latest theories and methods. It also includes the integration of theory and practice, as well as the inclusion of community partners as active contributors to identify relevant goals, research questions, and methodologies. An essential element of engaged research is that it benefits the community and actively calls for appropriate research methodologies. Engaged research should be action-oriented and participatory in

nature. These methodologies may include, but are not limited to, community-based participatory research or community-based research, participatory action-learning action research (PALAR), action research or applied research.

### Engaged citizenship

Engaged citizenship is an educational platform for preparing and supporting staff and students to play a leading role through building sustainable partnerships with other stakeholders, in order to respond to pressing societal challenges by deploying intellectual, human, and other resources for the development of communities. The university will pursue the following three categories of engaged citizenship to ensure that all staff and students are offered an opportunity and support to apply active citizenship in our communities:

#### Academically engaged citizenship

Academically engaged citizenship refers to all the professional work, skills, time, and involvement of academics in professional, community, and other bodies that are rendered to the benefit of such communities outside of the standard university work. This may include

- consultancy work for policy development;
- fundraising activities;
- community leadership roles;
- training rendered to outside university organisations;
- facilitation of workshops;
- serving on professional boards and community organisations;
- serving on expert panels;
- providing expert help and advice to professional and community organisations;
- providing expert advice to government departments; and
- presentation of public lectures.

#### Student engaged citizenship

The student engaged citizenship category refers to all the work and involvement in community development done through professional and voluntary student organisations, residence programmes, as well as student affairs management programmes. This may include

- Gateway and Kovsie ACT;
- professional voluntary student organisations;
- student voluntary associations;
- residence programmes;
- leadership roles in student formations;
- student leadership training and development; and
- fundraising activities.

#### University engaged citizenship

University engaged citizenship refers to the university as a corporate citizen and its contribution to the development of communities. This is done in a partnership formed at institutional level to facilitate the development of communities. This may include

- broad-based black economic empowerment;

- fundraising activities;
- the higher-education sector;
- technical and vocational education training education;
- government;
- community organisations;
- religious and faith-based organisations;
- traditional leadership organisations;
- business and industry organisations;
- professional bodies;
- sports organisations; and
- cultural organisations, etc.

## 4.     Service learning – direct physical social engagement

The implementation of service learning, as we have been implementing it before the COVID-19 outbreak, was mostly applied during direct physical and social interaction. It is essential to understand and respect the basic theory and practical application of service learning in order to enable efficient transgression into a virtual environment. Therefore, the following section explains service learning as we implemented it before the COVID-19 outbreak.

As a form of engaged teaching and learning, service learning is an educational approach involving curriculum-based, credit-bearing learning experiences in which students (a) participate in contextualised, well-structured, and organised service activities aimed at addressing identified service needs in a community, and (b) reflect on the service experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the linkage between curriculum content, community dynamics, and the teaching method that combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and social responsibility. The application of service learning requires a collaborative partnership context that enhances mutual, reciprocal teaching and learning among all members of the partnership (lecturers and students, members of the communities, and representatives of the service sector).

The UFS offers credit-bearing, curriculum-based service-learning modules to its students in order to afford students the opportunity to integrate theoretical academic work with practical application in a community-based environment, where they also render a service. This leads to personal growth, a deeper understanding of development challenges in the country, and enhances students' sense of social responsibility. A partnership for service learning entails knowledge-based collaborations between the UFS, an identified community, and the service sector (organisation), where all partners contribute to the mutual search for sustainable solutions to challenges and service needs.

### *Components of service learning for effective learning*
There are three key components of service learning to enable effective learning. These include effective student preparation, service, and reflection on service to allow for learning.

### *Principles of combining service and learning*
Effective service-learning partnerships are guided by the following principles:

- *The community voice ma*tters: service responds to an actual community need that is identified by the community.
- *Reciprocity*: The partnership is mutually beneficial to both the student(s) and the community.
- *Clear goals and expectations*: Clear learning goals, service goals, and responsibilities of all involved are articulated. Structured learning experiences: The service activities are structured and well organised.
- *Continuous communication*: Clear and continuous communication between the UFS and the community partner ensures effective learning and service.
- *Reflection:* Intentional, systematic reflection takes place to establish students' connections between community experiences and the academic curriculum.
- *Preparation:* Orientation of the community organisation site is vital, along with preparation of the students by the academic lecturer in terms of professionalism and skills needed to engage in the service-learning activities.
- *Cultural diversity, social responsibility, citizenship, democracy, and social justice:* Commitment to such participation by and with diverse populations in the community is key to the philosophy of service learning, because it promotes students' responsibility to care for others and to contribute to their community.
- *Evaluation of social impact and sustainability:* All partners, including academic lecturers, students, and the leaders of community organisations, are involved in evaluating the service-learning engagement. The evaluation measures learning and service goals, social impact on the partners, and sustainability of the project.
- *Meaningful service and learning*: Service learning is worthwhile and challenging in the sense that it encourages community involvement and strengthens students' critical thinking skills.

### *Roles and expectations in partnerships*
Roles, goals, and expectations will vary depending on the partnership, who is involved, and the capacities of those individuals and groups. However, below are general understandings for service-learning partnerships. The following is suggested:

#### *Academic lecturers*
- Hold discussions with the community partner and find out about community needs and the number of students that could be accommodated.
- Balance the needs of the community partner (service) and the students (learning) and adjust their expectations as implementation progresses; also, how it can be best maintained, as well as the necessary preparations and logistics.
- Develop clear objectives for the pre-field preparation phase (theoretical component of the module). If students need to demonstrate a certain level of 'readiness' for participation in the community project, plan how this will be assessed. If possible, involve the students in their own self-assessment based on solid criteria over which they have some control.
- Pay special attention to the explanation of how the content goals or learning outcomes of the course and community service relate to each other. Then, ask the students to respond by telling you exactly what they think they will accomplish during their involvement in the community service activities of the module.

- Determine the amount of time that students will be expected to spend on completing the service component of their coursework. Give the students an estimate of the total time that the service component will take and assist them in developing realistic time frames.
- Allow enough time each week for students to participate in structured discussions about their experiences in the community, and to relate their experiences to the theoretical content and discipline-specific learning theories. Also create opportunities for them to reflect on their experiences in writing, and to apply problem-solving thinking with regard to challenges they encounter in the early stages of their community responsibilities.
- Find ways to involve students in setting their own learning outcomes (goals) and participating in the assessment of those outcomes. Requiring students to invest in this activity increases their sense of accountability to and ownership of the process and product of community service learning.
- <u>As lecturer, check in with the community partners often</u>, otherwise they might assume that you are automatically aware of certain issues that should be brought to your attention.
- Allow the students to have regular and direct contact with you; do not assume that they would just form their teams and then go out and work independently on their community service-learning project. They will need your facilitation, guidance, and support throughout.

*Students (guided by lecturers)*
- Students must take responsibility for their behaviour throughout and should arrive on time, be engaged, and complete service activities satisfactorily, representing the UFS in a positive manner.
- Provide a minimum of 48 hours' notice to the community partner's site if unavoidable changes in availability occur.
- Treat all staff and clients with respect. Ask for assistance when in doubt or when in difficult situations.
- Report service hours based on the arrangement made between the community partner and the UFS.
- Students should clearly understand the requirements of their service-learning module.
- Have a clear understanding of the expectations of both the lecturer and the community partner.
- Identify the skills needed to carry out the project and feel comfortable with those skills.
- Endeavour to understand the needs of the community partner from their perspective.
- Know what to do in case of an emergency.
- Students need the necessary documents and an awareness of legal issues.
- If students are driving, they should have a valid driver's licence and insurance.
- Should not purposefully neglect their service-learning activities, as it influences peer learning and the community.
- Understand that intentional or criminal misconduct may cause harm to an organisation or individual.
- Invasion of privacy involves confidentiality. Therefore, request and follow the confidentiality policies of the community partner and treat confidential information as privileged.

- Take responsibility for their behaviour throughout the community-based project.
- Be punctual, responsible, and reliable towards the community and the organisation.
- Respect the privacy of the community and the organisation.
- Inform the community partner, lecturer, and student team if anticipating being late or absent in case of emergency.
- Maintain a high level of awareness of the community's surroundings, and if appropriate, demonstrate respect for those with whom I work by adapting to the surroundings.
- Be flexible to changing situations, as the level or intensity of activity within a community project is not always predictable.

*Community organisation*
- If necessary/required, facilitate a thorough screening of students as with the background check for volunteers.
- Provide an appropriate environment for students, including clear expectations/orientation and a meaningful role.
- Provide students with ongoing supervision and on-site support as appropriate to the project and the students' needs.
- Maintain contact with the UFS Directorate: Community Engagement, reporting any problems, questions, or concerns in a timely manner.
- Provide feedback to the academic lecturer/project leader and students regarding the student's performance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of the community partner.
- Ensure that the work is conducted in accordance with the required safety measures and procedures.
- Complete an appropriate written collaboration agreement with academic lecturers and students, signed by the parties involved.
- Provide a minimum of 48 hours' notice to academic lecturer partner if unavoidable changes in availability occur.
- It is important to remember that UFS students are students, not volunteers. Remember that the students not only want to help meet the needs identified by the community, but also have to utilise their community experience as the basis for their understanding of the course material, and that they receive academic credit for learning through their efforts. Help students think about (reflect on) what the experience means to them and encourage them as they explore larger organisational and societal implications.
- Keep the students' full schedules in mind and provide them with specific and reliable information about the expected number of working hours, times, and days of the week that they are expected to work, as well as prior notice of schedule changes if possible. It is the responsibility of academic lecturers, students, and site staff to re-organise schedule changes well in advance, as far as possible.
- Stay involved and remember that you are truly a partner in the students' education and that students will benefit tremendously from your guidance throughout all phases of the community-based project. They will also appreciate regular feedback on their efforts and acknowledgement for work well done.
- In addition to helping meet important community needs, students are also utilising their service experience as the basis for understanding their academic

and theoretical learning material. We rely on community partners to help students reflect on their service experience and to encourage students to explore the broader societal implications of the challenges, whether it be health and well-being, social, economic or environment aspects that your organisation address.

- Keep the UFS lecturer informed of any concerns, successes, or other issues related to the service-learning activities. Concerns should be communicated immediately so that you and your university partner can resolve issues that might have a negative impact on the students or the project.
- Please make yourself available to assist the lecturer with student assessment (if required) and with the evaluation of the service-learning activities for future improvement.
- Providing orientation to students regarding your site/facility is vitally important for effective engagement. This orientation may take place at the UFS or the community site or online (provide a booklet/e-document), depending on the nature of the engagement.

*Orientation can include*

- a face-to-face (f2f)/virtual session of the facility and an introduction to the staff;
- clear descriptions that outline roles, responsibilities, tasks, and skills needed – extremely helpful for student engagement;
- a description of the 'bigger picture' of societal challenges – the organisation's mission and objectives of how students' contributions fit into that bigger picture;
- an overview of skills needed to complete the community project; and
- an overview of rules, safety regulations, policies, dress codes, time requirements, and other pertinent information.

- Stay involved. You are truly an education partner in the students' learning environment, and they will benefit tremendously from your practical wisdom and guidance throughout community-engagement initiatives. They will look up to you for regular feedback on their shared learning and service efforts.

- Appreciation. Students are often anxious to become involved due to uncertainty when engaging to make a difference in the community. Like everyone else, they want to know if their efforts are appreciated and see how their work contributes to your organisation's mission. Please acknowledge their efforts; this could range from a simple thank you, to letters of recognition for their learning portfolios.

- Communicate. Keep the engaged-learning course/module/project leader informed of any concerns, challenges, or successes, or other issues related to community-engagement initiatives. Concerns should be communicated immediately so that you and your university partner can resolve issues that might impact the students, the community you serve, or the project.

- Disruptive student behaviour at your site. The UFS values our partner communities very much. We are aware that many of our community organisations serve vulnerable populations. Therefore, we encourage our community partners who accommodate our students to employ existing risk

prevention and volunteer policies at your sites. Please inform the lecturer/leader of the course/project if you do not feel comfortable about a student entering your site due to findings putting your clients at risk. If you have any questions about the restriction of a student, please first contact the lecturer/leader of the course/project. You are fully entitled to ask any student to leave your community site for any safety reasons, but please communicate this challenge immediately to the UFS lecturer/project leader as it occurs.

- Evaluation of social impact and sustainability. It is important to the UFS that your learning and service goals for the partnership collaboration agreement have been met. The Directorate: Community Engagement appreciates your continuous communication and additional feedback at the end of engaged learning, research, and citizenship courses/modules/projects in order to gather feedback on your experience and the impact of collaborative learning and development. Please find the form on the website to complete and send to us via email or share this information with staff and students as part of the celebration of knowledge sharing and engagement.

- Additional evaluation and strengthening of partnership collaboration may take the form of

- staff site visits;
- interviews via phone/email/other online platforms such as Zoom/WhatsApp; and
- distribution of project-specific evaluations by lecturers/staff at the Directorate: Community Engagement.

- Community partners are encouraged to have conversations with staff and students regarding their experience, in order to improve the partnership for student and community learning and development. The UFS Directorate: Community Engagement requests reflective feedback from staff about their experience at the end of an engaged learning course/module, and can, in turn, share useful and relevant information with you.

***Connecting community partners with the UFS during social distancing***
In this uncertain time, there are probably many questions that we are all trying to figure out. We want to know how we can best work together to support you as our community partners. While our campus has gone virtual in terms of teaching and our students are advised not to continue f2f community engagement during this time, our staff is still looking for ways to engage our students with partner communities. We are trying to think how engagement can still happen amid social – more specifically – physical distancing. In order to connect with you in the most appropriate and meaningful ways, we want to offer you a space to highlight what would be most useful to you right now.

We also want to share with you what we are telling our staff to consider for their community-engaged courses right now. As we support staff in making sound decisions around e-Community Engagement (e-CE), more specific e-Service Learning (e-SL), we invite you to contact us to share your insights so that we can update our engagement activities accordingly. We welcome this information from you! Please email your information to Lenie Wepener at wepenmw@ufs.ac.za

## Appendix A: Community Engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic

## Introduction

COVID-19 has affected 177 countries, with an average case fatality ratio of around 4%. As the number of cases increases, countries have adopted a variety of restrictions to try to curb the spread and 'flatten the curve' to prevent healthcare systems from being overwhelmed.

COVID-19 affects those with weakened immune systems more severely. The best way to respond is to build trust in communities and services, understand community perspectives and share information, and to work with communities to determine how to keep people safe.

This guide is intended to support community interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides general guidance on community engagement during outbreak responses, including how to support an integrated response, as well as outbreak prevention and response.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a recent event that has brought challenges to higher-education institutions (HEIs) around the world. This pandemic has posed several challenges, and at the same time, offered an opportunity for HEIs to rethink how they conduct their educational activities.

This is attributed to two main reasons. On the one hand, HEIs are microcosms of the broader society, and thus they are victims of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, HEIs are characterised by teaching and learning, research and innovation, which are capable of engaging and imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that can contribute to the prevention, and coping with the impact of pandemics in order to promote the well-being of humankind.

To continue with the current academic project, most HEIs have and are still grappling with the notion of moving to an online teaching and learning environment. Such a transition comes with uniquely complex challenges, particularly in contexts such as South Africa, given the differentiated historical nature of HEIs, coupled with inequalities in access to the internet and technology between and among students.

At the core of the COVID-19 crisis is the concern about the role of HEIs in engaging with their local surrounding milieu, given the lockdown and social distancing restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19 infection. Simply put, how can universities continue to undertake experiential pedagogical activities, such as service-learning, community-based learning, and interprofessional learning in order to engage with their external constituencies? The UFS responds to these challenges through the following programmes:

### *e-Community Engagement (e-CE): A new reality of online/virtual engagement*

e-Community Engagement (e-CE) refers to an online/virtual community engagement platform aimed at facilitating continuously negotiated collaborations and partnerships between the UFS and the interest groups that it interacts with, aimed at building and exchanging the knowledge, skills, expertise, and resources required to develop and sustain society. Such alternative engagement stems from adapting physical face-to-face (f2f) community engagement to an e-environment. During this uncertain state of restricted f2f engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, the focus of participation, dialogue, engaged learning, and teaching by university staff and students, is for citizens to take active part in developing their own lives and that of their surrounding communities.

### *e-Service Learning (e-SL)*

This new and uncertain reality of restricted f2f community engagement actively confronts the execution of engaged learning, teaching, research, and citizenship at the UFS. This challenge specifically pertains to the application of engaged learning and teaching programmes (e.g. service-learning modules, interprofessional learning, community-based learning, internships, and work-integrated learning). In addition, these f2f restrictions directly influence the co-curricular engaged citizenship initiatives of students, staff, and the institution.

It is integral to the core of community engagement that authentic engagement for experiential learning, research, and exercising of citizenship should take place in the application context of community higher-education partnerships. However, due to the current lockdown state and beyond, we need to re-imagine how our current practice of engaged scholarship (engaged teaching and learning, engaged research, and engaged citizenship) can be transformed to be implemented in a virtual space.

We know that such a transformation will place immense pressure on staff, students, and community partners. However, the UFS has already transformed teaching and learning to an online environment. In a sense, learning and teaching are currently undergoing a 'makeover' (see *Keep calm #UFSTeachOn and LearnOn guides https://www.ufs.ac.za/ufs-learn-on-campaign*).

This shift to an online learning environment provides an opportunity for academic lecturers, students, and community partners to engage likewise. To support your thoughts and actions towards such transformation, the Directorate: Community Engagement is providing a list of literature sources regarding e-Service Learning (e-SL). Such learning holds the potential to transform both service learning and online learning by freeing service learning from geographical constraints and by equipping online learning with a powerful and much-needed tool to promote engagement.

To remain relevant, service learning should move to an online environment. How do we transition service learning from physical f2f engagement to a technology-driven environment? e-Service Learning provides the answer. Armed with best practices from literature, as well as innovative rethinking and replanning, we call on our academic staff to integrate e-SL into their modules. *In addition, this is a time to reflect on and*

*study the outcomes of such efforts for sharing lessons learned through publication, in order to build the body of knowledge for engaged scholarship.*

### Can the principles of e-SL be applied to engaged research and citizenship?

The practice of e-SL likewise applies to the practice of all the above-mentioned categories of engaged scholarship. To complement the accessibility to virtual engagement, we highlight the use of printed knowledge documents, e.g. pamphlets and posters, as well as the use of community newspapers and radio stations.

e-Service Learning is defined "as an electronic form of experiential education and incorporates electronically supported service learning. It is delivered online and uses the Internet and state-of-the-art technologies that permit students, faculty, and community partners to collaborate at a distance in an organised, focused, experiential service-learning activity, which simultaneously promotes civic responsibility and meets community needs." (Malvey et al. 2006: p. 187). Similarly, Dailey-Hebert, Donelli-Salee and DiPadova (2008) use the concept of service e-learning, wherein either the service or instruction occurs partially or fully online, often in a hybrid format.

### The rationale for online service learning:

- Adult learners often prefer online learning because it engages their life experiences and their ability to learn from hands-on tasks.
- e-Service Learning may compensate for the lack of interaction that can occur in traditional distance-learning courses.
- Combining service learning with internet instruction may introduce a new motivation for e-learning while applying knowledge in a real-world setting.
- Service learning itself must go online in order to remain relevant and viable.
- e-Service Learning courses open up the world of service learning to students who would otherwise have limited access due to disabilities, rural location, or work or family schedule conflicts.

### Adapting to a New Reality: e-Service Learning in times of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the reasons for service learning to transition to an online platform, because on-site service-learning experiences cannot stop due to lockdown and social distancing. Moving to online service-learning platforms is a step that the UFS is taking through the Directorate of Community Engagement. e-Service Learning can take place on a continuum (see Figure 1).
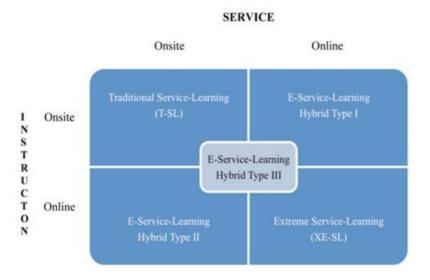
**SERVICE**

**Figure 1 Types of e-Service Learning (**Source: Waldner, McGorry and Widener)

*Principles of e-Service Learning*

Nordyek (2015) proposes nine practical steps that are essential for creating e-Service-Learning modules and programmes. These include:

- Determine how the module/programme is intended to be delivered. This includes questions such as:

  ▪ Will the instruction be online, and the service on site (Hybrid I)?
  ▪ Will the instruction be on site, and the service online (Hybrid II)?
  ▪ Will the course be a blended course where the instruction and the service are both online and on site (Hybrid III)?
  ▪ Will the course offer Extreme Service Learning where both the course and the service are offered online (XE-SL)?

- Examine the module/programme course goals and objectives, along with the course's service-learning outcomes and goals.
- Consider what skills, knowledge, abilities, and values you want your students and external communities to achieve and determine how students can apply those skills and abilities to engage with community-based problem solving or addressing social justice issues.
- Select community partner(s).
- Consider how your students can meet the community partners' need, as well as how the course/programme content and the knowledge that your students will bring to the table, will work in a reciprocal manner. This may include the accessibility of online platforms for both students and external community partners.
- Identify the number of e-Service-Learning hours required. The determination of hours must consider institutional guidelines.

- Understanding the required number of hours for the e-Service-Learning experience will assist in developing the expectation of your students and community partners.
- Determine geographic locations of and implications for potential students and community partners. This involves whether service learning can be direct or indirect, depending on the accessibility of community partners.
- Assess and evaluate available institutional resources and choose items that match the needs of your e-Service Learning. This institution-specific teaching and learning tools/systems may include, but are not limited to, Blackboard, Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype, Vidyo. These are useful in portfolios, reflection and discussions boards, journals, grade administration, assignment posts, team/group projects, etc. Typically, the course delivery is a blended synchronous/asynchronous format with frequent use of discussion boards, live chat, and email.
- Assess and evaluate the final product for students. This may include ensuring that students meet the institution's academic integrity and plagiarism requirements. When developing reflection assignments, consider assignments that focus on critical thinking and encourage completion of e-Portfolios of their e-Service Learning experience.
- Identify the professional standards required for the course or service-learning experience. For example, what professional standards are required for those pursuing careers in social work, nursing or accounting? This makes it possible to determine the kind of activities, the standard, and weight attached to the course or programme.
- Review what you have created for academic rigour, reflection activities, and grading criteria.

In making the case for the development and implementation of an e-Service-Learning course and programme for university students, there is much to consider. An e-Service-Learning course would allow motivated students to independently investigate needs and issues within their community, create a plan for invoking change, and possibly leading other youth into positive action. This course and programme would allow students and external communities to participate in service learning through accessible and affordable online platforms. The development of an e-Service-Learning course and programme would allow students to develop as leaders in the 21st Century, learn in times of crisis, and work with communities to find alternative solutions to addressing impact brought by advents such as COVID-19.

*Case study/possible scenario*
A 2005 case study explored a service-learning pedagogy delivered in an online format, specifically describing the way in which one institution, the University of Illinois at Springfield, successfully uses the internet to provide such instruction. In 2010, Guthrie and McCracken released the study in which a qualitative methodology was used "to identify the philosophical intersection at which multiple pedagogies meet: social justice, service-learning, civic engagement, and leadership as instructed in a web-based environment". This Guthrie and McCracken study illustrates the capacity for intentionally constructed online educational experiences focused on social justice, civic engagement, and leadership to affect learning and to provide educators with pedagogical best practices to facilitate requisite change in teaching practice. The data

indicated that students studying social justice though a combined approach using online classrooms and on-site experiences did indeed report a positive impact on their learning. Specifically, three main themes emerged as having the most impact: learning new concepts or theories about social justice, engaging in critical discourse with peers related to social justice, and participating in opportunities for structured reflection on course material and activities as well as on-site experiences.

### *Suggested readings*

Dailey-Hebert, A, Donelli-Salee, E, and DiPadova. (2008). *Service E-Learning: Educating for Citizenship.* Charlotte NC: Information Age Publishing.

Malvey, DM, Hamby, EF, and Fottler, MD. (2006). E-Service Learning: A Pedagogic Innovation for Healthcare Management Education. *Journal of Health Administration Education,* 181-198.

Strait, JR and Nordyke, K. eds., 2015. *EService-learning: Creating experiential learning and civic engagement through online and hybrid courses*. Stylus Publishing.

Waldner, L, McGorry, S, and Widener, M. (2010). Extreme e-service learning (XE-SL): E-service learning in the 100% online course. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, *6*(4), 839-851.

Waldner, LS, Widener, MC, and McGorry, SY. (2012). E-service learning: The evolution of service learning to engage a growing online student population. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 123-150.

# Appendix A: A guide for academic staff and student interaction during COVID-19

*Working safely*
To reduce the risk to communities and staff, there must be changes in the way we interact with communities.

*Adapting to the new context*
The COVID-19 pandemic is a fast-changing situation, and access to communities is limited due to restrictive measures. Start planning now how to communicate with different groups; document the contact details for relevant stakeholders; discuss the key perceptions, risks, and challenges with communities to determine solutions for challenges created by the new context of social distancing.

Review communication and information chains. In most communities there will be individuals with a mobile phone or a radio – they could become key information providers when physical access becomes limited. Remember to assess who has access to 'what' information and how trusted they are, especially by the most vulnerable and marginalised people.

Review/conduct a rapid risk assessment. You must identify risks and prevention/mitigation measures in collaboration with communities, monitor them, and continually adapt what you are doing as the situation continues to change. This includes identifying specific risks for different groups in the community, and risks associated with remote communication methods, such as digital spaces.

Review any existing analyses you have conducted. Make use of any gender analyses; food security and livelihood assessments; water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure mapping; and/or data relating to vulnerable groups. Data should inform targeted responses, appropriately tailored to the distinct needs and capacities of the community. Use these documents and data to track how the context is changing over time and modify responses appropriately.

Make sure that you have links with healthcare facilities and/or health coordination bodies. Follow regularly updated epidemiological data and work with facilities to access data to look for patterns that may indicate higher risks for different groups in the community.

Review contact lists related to relevant government authorities, including any referral pathways for those affected by COVID-19. Make sure that you keep up to date with relevant services in case referral pathways change due to the evolving context.

Review or undertake stakeholder mapping, and work with existing community leadership and structures. Community leaders, traditional healers, religious figures, women's groups, and youth groups are in an influential position, able to connect different people within and beyond each community and provide a focal point to reach others when remote management is necessary.

### *Lockdowns and self-isolation*
To control the spread of COVID-19, the government has put restrictions on movement, and have asked those who are more vulnerable to infection to self-isolate (i.e. remain at home). If this affects communities you are working with, discuss it with affected groups – particularly those at higher risk, e.g. the elderly, and people living with chronic diseases.

### *Physical distancing*
Consider the effects of physical distancing during interaction to ensure communities can still access essential supplies. Consider providing hand-washing stations in places convenient for the community.

### *Information sharing and communication*

There are a number of key considerations when communicating about COVID-19:

### *Information needs of different groups*
Communities are composed of women, men, girls, and boys; children, adults, and the elderly; persons with disabilities; people who cannot read; people of different nationalities, cultures, and religions, and so on. Each individual will understand the information in relation to themselves, so it is important to tailor messages to the target groups for each communication.

### *Preferred communication channels*
Preferences for channels and trusted sources will vary between individuals and groups, as will the levels of access to radios, mobile phones, smartphones, and the internet. For example, some women may not be able to access the household phone, and some elderly people will not have access to the internet or may be unsure about how to use it. Consider the barriers to using each channel for different groups and use a mix of channels for best effect.

### *Literacy and understanding*
Information should be presented in the most accessible format and language possible, adapted to literacy levels within each group. It should also be adapted for those with visual or hearing impairments. For example, consider using pictures, simulated dialogues, and radio.

### *Reaching everyone*
Engage all groups within a community in environments where each group would feel comfortable to speak up. When working with refugees and IDPs, communicate with both host and displaced communities.

### *Influencers and local capacities*
Recognise who has power and influence in communities, networks, grassroots, women's rights, youth groups, or local organisations that already exist. Work with them to pass on information, as people are more likely to follow the example of leaders and trusted groups embedded in their community. Work with both men and women influencers.

*Two-way communication*

Make sure that there is space to listen to concerns, feedback, myths, and rumours about COVID-19, as well as communicating information about the virus. Adapt your responses based on what you hear from communities, including correcting misinformation, changing the way you work, and closing the feedback loop.

*Build on what you have*

Use any existing mechanisms to engage communities remotely – for example telephones, internet channels, radio, etc. Consider how your methods can be improved and/or expanded and tailored better for each group in the community.

Stay connected. The internet has the potential to allow easy exchanges between teams and communities, and between community members themselves. Consider supporting connectivity and ensuring that the data rights of individuals are respected, and that access is increased for groups without access.

# Community-engaged teaching during COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, community-engaged learning courses require a shift towards a virtual environment. While partner communities and UFS staff and students continue to work through the evolving nature of the impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), we at the Directorate: Community Engagement are providing basic guidelines for community-engaged learning and teaching for the rest of the academic year.

We advise a step-by-step process as follows:

| **Step One:** Reach out to community partners to jointly determine how to move forward for the rest of the academic year. | **#Reach out and enquire to inspire** How will social-distancing measures and online teaching affect service delivery for the rest of the semester? How will community agencies want to interact with volunteers and interns moving forward over the next two months? Is there a way for service delivery to continue virtually? What does the partner see as most critical to address during the interruption period? Keep in mind that even if the UFS' suspension is lifted, the partner agencies may have their own protocol regarding students coming into their facilities. Learning from other institutions (Minnesota Campus Compact): Recommendations and ideas for talking to community partners, as well as potential virtual engagement ideas. <ul><li>Talk to your students.</li><li>Be transparent with your students regarding new expectations around the service requirement of the course.</li><li>Let students know that they will not be expected to complete service hours or requirements per the original course plan if those requirements can no longer be completed in light of the current lockdown restrictions.</li><li>Whenever you can, share as much as possible  about how the requirements for the course will change in light of the</li></ul> |
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| | virtual teaching environment, including how these changes can shift quickly, given the uncertainty and fluidity of what is happening. |
| **Step Two:**<br>Be creative and plan forward. | • **#PlanToEngageOnline**<br><br>Ideas for teaching and learning activities when 'in-person' community engagement is restricted:<br>    • Focus on integrating balance between appreciative (https://www.slideshare.net/reflectivelearninguk/appreciative-reflection) and critical reflection. Remember where the learning lies in service learning?  … in reflection on service experiences and connecting that to issues of relevance and responsiveness related to societal challenges. During times of challenge, rich learning opportunities emerge at the heart of holistic humanity (being, believing, doing, feeling, knowing, and thinking), economy, and ecology.<br><br>Links for the following resources are available on this link (https://csl.iupui.edu/resources-support/covid-19-resources/faculty-staff-resources/index.html)<br><br>    • Focus on integrating critical reflection.<br><br>    • Use one of these previously created reflective discussion guides.<br><br>    • Research social issues and examine the impact of COVID-19 from a public health lens.<br><br>    • Discuss advocacy as a social impact tool.<br><br>    • Translate what students typically do in/with community partners into course goal-oriented statements.<br><br>    • Use civic-minded online games.<br><br>    • Adopt a classroom social-justice simulation.<br><br>    • Create a plan of action utilising a community organising toolkit.<br><br>    • Use TED talks or podcasts as texts. |

## Food for thought

Have patience. Don't try to force 'service' in order to ensure completion of hours as part of the courses presented. Like the UFS, community organisations are also exploring how to respond to the pandemic right now. They may identify ways in which partners, such as UFS staff and students, can help them. If you are already working with an organisation and they identify something you and your students can do to protect the health and safety of everyone, and if this is something your class can reasonably do, then go for it. Do not assume that you know what organisations need right now. Do not create your own project without first consulting our partner communities. Also, understand that an organisation might not have an answer right now, but may have something in a week or two, as they are also exploring their own plan of action. We are all in this together, trying to explore this new and uncertain

environment right now. We need to accommodate an unknown timetable. This may mean that a certain project gets suspended for the semester. This may mean that students do not complete a certain set of hours at an organisation. This may mean that assignments get adjusted in terms of new expectations.

***Consult other resources for innovative plans. On this provided link, again find links to the following listed resources:***
([https://csl.iupui.edu/resources-support/covid-19-resources/faculty-staff-resources/index.html](https://csl.iupui.edu/resources-support/covid-19-resources/faculty-staff-resources/index.html))

***Resources and responses from other engaged campuses and support organisations:***

1. Portland State University

2. Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at IU Bloomington

3. Iowa Campus Compact

4. Global Service Learning Blog: Campus Compact

5. Imagining America: Collective Response and Support in the Time of COVID-19

6. American Political Science Association's Civic Action Projects for Your 100% Online Course

***Resources for teaching and supporting students during this ever-changing time:***

1. IUPUI Center for Teaching and Learning

2. IU Knowledge Base: Keep Teaching

3. Accessible Teaching in the Time of COVID-19

4. Teaching in Times of Crisis

5. Going Online in a Hurry (Chronicle of Higher Education)

6. Indianapolis Area Community Resources During COVID-19

*NB: The Directorate: Community Engagement is available for virtual consultations should you want to reach out to us for consultation. We can set up a Skype for Business call, phone call, or Zoom meeting to best assist you.*

**Contact details:**

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Also see link: https://www.ufs.ac.za/supportservices/departments/community-engagement-home/directorate/staff

# Appendix B: Guide for interaction during COVID-19

## Basic principles to reduce the risk or transmission of COVID-19 infection

### Physical distancing

Where interaction with communities is still possible, adopt physical distancing measures to avoid inhaling or other contact with liquid droplets that may contain the virus. COVID-19 can be transmitted through sneezing and coughing. Using a tissue or a flexed elbow (not your hands) to cover coughs and sneezes can limit transmission.

# Coronavirus and the 'New Normal' at a glance

# Coronavirus and the 'New Normal': What you need to know

## What is coronavirus?

- COVID-19 is similar to flu, causing cough, difficulty breathing, fever and a sore throat.
- More often than flu, it causes pneumonia with difficulty breathing.
- There is no vaccine or cure for COVID-19. A vaccine is only expected in 2021.
- Most people who get it have a mild illness and recover without hospital care.
- Those over 60 years or with a chronic condition like HIV, TB, heart or lung disease are more at risk of severe COVID-19.

## Coronavirus spreads easily

- When a person with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes, they leave the virus on surfaces and in the air. You can catch COVID-19 if:
  – You touch these surfaces and then touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth or
  – You have close contact (1,5 metres) with a person who has coronavirus.
- Most people who spread coronavirus have symptoms, but some people can pass on the virus before symptoms start.

## Get screened

The Western Cape Government aims to detect, isolate and care for every person with COVID-19. There are several options:
- Screen yourself using our online tool: coronavirus.westerncape.gov.za/risk-assessment-covid-19
- Trained fieldworkers will come door-to-door. If they think you have coronavirus they will ask you to visit the nearest testing point.
- 18 Testing and Triage centres throughout the Province.
- Screening and testing available at Primary Care Clinics.
- Coming soon: Workplace testing.

Our fieldworkers have ID tags and identifiable clothing. Please support the fight against coronavirus and allow our workers to screen you.

## Not moving around reduces spread

**Physical Distancing Social Solidarity**

The total lockdown slowed the spread of coronavirus and allowed our health services to prepare for thousands who will need care in the coming months. It has also caused social distress and hunger. As restrictions ease, responsibility for slowing the spread lies with individuals. We need to change our daily behaviour to a 'new normal' until a vaccine is available.

## Follow the 5 Golden Rules of Good Hygiene

**1** Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.

**2** Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.

**3** Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Safely throw away the tissue.

**4** Keep 1,5 metres apart from others.

1,5 metres

**5** Stay home if unwell. Contact a hotline or your health worker.

## Protect those most at risk of severe COVID-19

If you are over 60 years or have a chronic condition like HIV, TB, heart or lung disease you are more at risk of severe COVID-19.
- Follow strictly the 5 Golden Rules of Good Hygiene.
- Stay home as much as you can. Limit the number of people you interact with.
- Ask someone to do your shopping and collect your grant/ pension.
- Adhere to your chronic condition treatment. Restart it if you stopped it.

## Be kind

- COVID-19 affects us all. It may infect many of us. If you don't know someone with COVID-19 yet, you will soon.
- Be kind to others. Everyone is suffering and the measures to limit the spread are not easy to do.
- Social distancing should not mean social isolation. Stay connected and reach out to others.
- Words matter – don't spread fake news or messages that cause panic and fear.
- Appreciate those who are helping whether health workers, shop workers or community members.

Western Cape Government

LET'S STOP THE SPREAD

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.westerncape.gov.za

## Going out? Here's how to do so safely.

Every time we leave home, there is a chance we may catch coronavirus:
- By being in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or
- By touching a surface with coronavirus on it and then touching our eyes, nose or mouth.

Follow these rules when you leave home:

**1 Think twice**
Only go out if you have to and your local COVID-19 risk level allows. Reduce trips to the shops. Avoid crowded places. If sick, stay home. If at risk, please stay home.

**2 Follow the 5 Golden Rules of Good Hygiene**

**5 Golden Rules**
1. Wash hands
2. Don't touch face
3. Keep apart
4. Cover your cough
5. Sick? Stay home

**3 Wear a cloth mask**
- Put a clean mask on before you leave home.
- On returning home, remove the mask with the straps and set aside until you can wash it.
- Wash your hands before you touch anything.
- Under no circumstances share cloth masks.

**4 Use hand sanitizer before and after touching items while out.**

**5 On returning home,** safely remove your mask, wash your hands, disinfect any objects you touched like keys before touching anything or anyone in your home.
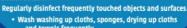
## Look after your health

Check yourself every day for COVID-19 symptoms. If you develop new cough, difficulty breathing, fever or sore throat contact your health facility or the coronavirus hotline and follow their advice.

Seek healthcare if sick or needing essential care (pregnancy, baby checks, immunisation or family planning).

Exercise regularly.

Look after your mental health: talk to family and friends and take time to relax. Seek help if you are struggling with depression, mental illness or domestic violence.

Limit alcohol and avoid drugs.

Eat healthy food. If you do not have enough money for food, seek help.

## Get the help you need

### COVID-19 symptoms?
- Western Cape Provincial Health Hotline 021 928 4102
- National Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health Hotline 0800 029 999 (tollfree)

### Need a food parcel?
**Western Cape Government**
- 0800 220 250 (tollfree)
- Send a 'please call me' to 079 769 1207 (tollfree)
- service@westerncape.gov.za

**SASSA**
- 0800 60 10 11 (tollfree)
- 021 469 0235
- grantenquiries@sassa.gov.za

### Suffering domestic violence?
- Gender Based Violence Command Centre 0800 428 428 or *120*7867# from a cell phone
- Childline SA (ages 0-16 years) 0800 055 555 (24 hour - tollfree)

### Reliable COVID-19 information:
- www.westerncape.gov.za/coronavirus
- www.sacoronavirus.co.za
- www.who.int

See separate advice if you have COVID-19 or are caring for someone with COVID-19 at home.

## Keep your home coronavirus-free

- On returning home, remove your mask and avoid touching objects or surfaces until you have washed your hands.
- Disinfect any object you have touched like door handles, keys and cell phones with a bleach solution.

6x teaspoons Bleach + Water 1L

- Regularly disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Wash washing up cloths, sponges, drying up cloths and towels frequently.

Western Cape Government

LET'S STOP THE SPREAD

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.westerncape.gov.za

### Working safely

To reduce the risk to communities, students, and staff, there will have to be changes in the way we interact.

### Feeling ill

If you or someone in your organisation is feeling ill, or if you have had contact with someone who has confirmed COVID-19 symptoms, stay at home, isolate, and take care of yourself. If you show symptoms of the virus, seek medical attention immediately by calling your medical provider and following your local health authority's guidance. Your local health authorities will have the most up-to-date information on how they will treat patients, while making sure that you do not expose others.

*What to do when you are sick?*

### *Practise good respiratory and hand hygiene*

Hands can transmit COVID-19 if these guidelines are not followed. Therefore, wash your hands with soap and water whenever feasible, especially before and after interacting with others. If this is not possible, use a hand sanitiser.

*Hand washing*

## *Wearing of masks*

This document has been adapted from the following sources:

References:

- Oxfam Community Engagement during COVID, online:
- https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/gd-covid-19-oxfam-community-engagement-guide-270420-en.pdf

- Western Cape Government, online:
  https://coronavirus.westerncape.gov.za/resources