

CS 305: Learning Through Community Service
Alternative Assessment for Community Service

The Community Service requirement at the University of La Verne fosters the development of self-reflection, social justice, social awareness, and community responsiveness through asset based community development and reciprocal service.

Required Learning Outcomes for Community Service

1. Understand service as a component of active citizenship, community engagement, and social responsibility
2. Demonstrate reciprocity and responsiveness in service work with the community
3. Describe and analyze the social issues relevant to the community organization

Community service is understood to be a minimum of 20 hours of unpaid, active participation assisting an off-campus community organization in the achievement of its goals, not simply observing the work of the organization.

FAQ

What are the ways in which I can complete the Community Service requirement?

Students can meet this requirement in one of two ways:

CS 305 Learning Through Community Service:

Students can meet this requirement by completing a course in which "Community Service" is explicitly embedded. This option includes participating in 20 hours of volunteer service during the course of the semester or term. The course may be a stand-alone course (1-unit) or it may be embedded within another course that meets a GE, major, or minor requirement. Courses that meet this requirement are designated as UVCS in the course catalog.

Alternative Assessment:

Students who have already completed at least 20 hours of unpaid community service* within the *last year*, but not within the semester/term of the alternative assessment submission, may be eligible to meet the requirement for Community Service through the assessment process. With adequate supporting documentation, community service with the last *two years* will be accepted, but integration of the experience will have to be substantially present in the alternative assessment reflection paper. To complete an alternative assessment, you must submit a Community Service Portfolio (instructions below) demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes and satisfactory completion of at least 20 hours of unpaid community service. The 20 hours of community service must be completed at one agency. Alternative Assessment assumes that you have already attained mastery of the outcomes (listed above). Please read the learning outcomes; if you think your community service experience has lent itself toward fulfilling these outcomes, you are a good candidate for completing the alternative assessment. Students are responsible for evaluating whether or not their prior experience is acceptable for the alternative assessment.

In order to apply for the Alternative Assessment, students must complete the *Request for*

Alternative Assessment for Community Service;

http://laverne.edu/general-education/files/2012/09/CS305alt_assessment_comm_svc_092512.pdf

and pay an assessment fee of \$50.00 to Student Accounts, either in person, by mail, or online through your MyLaVerne account. Once \$50 assessment fee been received by Student Accounts, you will have three weeks from the date of payment to submit your Community Service Portfolio (instructions below) to ROC or Dean of College of Arts and Science office. Once the portfolio is received, it will be reviewed within three weeks by faculty members. The applicant will receive an email stating whether the portfolio was denied or met the University of La Verne's Community Service requirement.

Students also have the option of earning one unit of course credit by paying the course challenge fee (one semester hour of tuition). To receive course credit, payment for course credit must be completed within one semester or term after completing the certification or no course credit will be given.

** Exceptions to the unpaid requirement will be made for active duty military personnel who are not given release time but who participate in community service while on duty.*

Why do I have to take a class or do the alternative assessment if I've done community service in the past?

One of the University of La Verne's four values is community service. At the heart of the Community Service requirement is *reflection* on the experience of serving. The Community Service requirement at the University of La Verne seeks to foster the development of self-reflective, socially aware, and engaged citizens through the process of reciprocal service and learning. Students are given the opportunity for structured reflection (either in class or through the alternative assessment) in order to adequately meet the learning outcomes required for the Community Service requirement. The experience of servicing a community and academically reflecting on that service go hand-in-hand.

What counts as Community Service?

Community service is understood to be a minimum of 20 hours of unpaid, active participation assisting a community organization in the achievement of its goals, not simply observing the work of the organization. The community site must lend itself to reflection on the following three areas: 1) community engagement and social responsibility, 2) an experience of reciprocity and responsiveness to those served, and 3) engagement with the social issues relevant to the site being served.

The 20 hours of service must also be completed at one community organization within one year from the date of application for the alternative assessment. A good community service site is one in which you are building relationships with the agency and/or the clients being served. The point is to develop an engaged relationship so that you can reflect critically on community engagement, develop meaningful connections with those you are serving and begin to understand the relevant social issues faced by the community served.

How can students on active military duty complete this requirement?

Like other students, those in active military duty must complete the community service requirement either by taking a course that meets this requirement or by completing the alternative assessment. However, because of the unique situation of military students, the following exceptions are allowed: 1) The community service requirement stipulates that students are required to complete 20 hours of *unpaid* community service. However, students on active military duty work 24 hours a day, which makes the requirement of “unpaid” work untenable. Given this reality, exceptions will be made for active duty military personnel who are not given release time but who participate in community service while on duty. The 20 hours of community service cannot be fulfilled by doing military service; rather it can be fulfilled by doing service in the community while on active duty (see list of possibilities below). 2) The community service requirement stipulates that the 20 hours of community service must be completed at one site. While this is the expectation, exceptions may be made for active military students on a case-by-case basis. 3) The expectation that the community service be completed within the past two years from the date of application for alternative assessment remains in place. Exceptions to this may be made by active military students on a case-by-case basis.

What are examples of possible Community Service sites?

- ◆ Retirement communities and nursing homes
- ◆ Schools, after school programs – mentoring/tutoring
- ◆ Youth/Community centers – YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- ◆ Juvenile centers
- ◆ Libraries
- ◆ Religious communities as related to social issues or social justice
- ◆ Homeless shelters/food banks
- ◆ Animal shelters, rescues
- ◆ Conservation and environmental organizations focused on sustainability
- ◆ Community development projects – i.e. Habitat for Humanity
- ◆ Hospitals, rehab centers, disability centers
- ◆ Specific non-profit organization focused on community sustainability

What types of service do not count?

- ◆ Military service (however, active military students often participate in community service projects. This community service may be able to count toward the minimum requirement of 20 hours of service)
- ◆ Online volunteering
- ◆ Paid work
- ◆ Observations
- ◆ Any site that does not lend itself to fulfilling the learning outcomes

What happens if I can't complete the required hours during the term or semester that I am taking the course?

A student must complete the required 20 hours of volunteer community service in order to receive credit for the course. If you are concerned that you cannot complete the hours before the semester or term concludes, you must discuss your situation with the instructor. It is the instructor's discretion to allow a student to take an incomplete.

How do I complete the Alternative Assessment process?

To complete the alternative assessment, you must submit a Community Service Portfolio demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes and satisfactory completion of at least 20 hours of unpaid community service. Instructions for the [Portfolio](#) can be found online on the GE website.

Students who have already completed 20 hours of unpaid community service within the last year or two years with substantial documentation, may be eligible to meet the requirement for Community Service through the assessment process; the service may not be completed during the semester of their alternative assessment submission. Students who have completed community service within the last two years may be eligible if extensive document is provided.

Is there a deadline for submission of the Alternative Assessment Portfolio?

Yes, the Alternative Assessment Portfolio must be submitted at least one semester prior to final semester of graduation. A student may not submit the Portfolio during the final semester or term of study. The reason for this deadline is to allow a student to register for CS 305, Learning Through Community Service, during the student's last semester or term, should the student not pass the Alternative Assessment review.

Reason for Deadline:

Should you not pass the Alternative Assessment, you would be notified of this decision with enough time to register for CS 305, Learning Through Community Service, during your last term at La Verne and thus not delaying your anticipated graduation date.

Included in the Alternative Assessment portfolio a letter of verification of anticipated graduation date, which has been verified by the Office of the Registrar or the student's academic advisor.

Anticipated Degree Completion Date (Semester/Term)	Deadline to Submit Alternative Assessment Portfolio to the Appropriate Office
Fall Term/Semester or Jan Term	July 1
Winter Term (March)	November 15
Spring Term/Semester	December 1
Summer Term/Semester	December 1

What is the fee for the Alternative Assessment?

There is a \$50 non-refundable fee for the review of this assessment.

When will I know if my Alternative Assessment Portfolio has been approved?

Decisions will be made approximately 45 days from the date of submission. You will be notified by email whether or not you have successfully completed the assessment. If your Alternative Assessment is approved you will have met the Community Service requirement. No academic units are awarded for this certification.

Can I resubmit my Alternative Assessment Portfolio if I do not pass the review?

No. The decision of the Alternative Assessment review is final. No revision of the portfolio or appeal of the decision will be accepted.

What is included in the Alternative Assessment Portfolio?

- **Verification of Service**
 1. A copy of the organization's mission or vision statement and relevant brochures.
 2. Verification of 20 hours of community service. On official non-profit letterhead, the organization's supervisor needs to write a letter verifying the number of hours you served. The letter must state in specific detail how you actively assisted the off-campus, non-profit organization in the achievement of its goals, not simply observing the work of the organization. The letter must include supervisor's signature and business card; these materials must be in a sealed envelope with the supervisors' signature across the envelope.

- **Reflection on Experience of Serving a Community Organization**
 3. A eight page double spaced, academically well integrated, reflection paper, that addresses:
 - a.) reflection on your engaged experience of serving a non-profit organization
 - b.) the three learning outcomes for Community Service
 - c.) a clear understanding of asset based community development

Reading materials related to asset based community development approach and supportive materials related to the value of community service may be found on the Office of Civic and Community Engagement website.

Below, you will find questions to guide your reflection. Each question must be answered thoroughly and thoughtfully. Use the [rubric](#) as a guide to assist you in meeting the requirements. The questions and rubric provide guidance for the type of content that should be incorporated in your paper.

The following components/questions must be addressed:

- A description of the organization.
- State the ways the community organization addressed a social justice issue.
- Identify how you have **grown** personally and/or professionally through your experience.
 - What two or three key experiences contributed to your understanding of the organizations strengths, values, and ways of addressing diversity and inclusivity issues? How? Why?
 - What was the most personally meaningful moment or activity that took place during your service activity?
- How did your understanding of community engagement changed or expanded as a result of serving at this organization?
- How, if at all, did you step out of your comfort zone? What did you learn?
- Identify how you plan to **apply** what you have learned.
- Will you continue to make service a part of your life? Why or why not?

Outcome 1: Critically reflect on service as a component of active citizenship, community engagement, and social responsibility

The following components/questions must be addressed:

- Describe active citizenship, community engagement, asset based community development and social responsibility?
- How does your service work invite you to be engaged with social responsibility?
- What has community service taught you about citizenship, community engagement, and being a socially responsible citizen? Give one example of each.

Outcome 2: Analyze and articulate your experience with reciprocity and responsiveness at the non-profit organization.

The following components/questions must be addressed:

- What is reciprocity and how does this relate to community engagement?
- What is responsiveness and how does this relate to community engagement?
- Give two examples of how you were responsive at your service site.
- Give two examples of when you took part in a reciprocal relationship at your service site.
- What did you learn from the community you were serving? How was your approach to service affected by this new understanding?

Outcome 3: Demonstrate knowledge about the social issues relevant to the community organization in which you served

The following components/questions must be addressed:

- In brief describe the community organization and how it's addressing the social issues.
- What are two of the most important social issues facing the community you served?
- How is your community organization addressing both of these issues?
- What are the most pressing challenges and struggles relevant to your population?
- If you were attempting to address both of these issues, how would you go about it, given what you have learned working at your community organization?

NOTE: Correct application of grammar/Standard American English and spelling are required for a passing score. A works cited page must be included with the paper and does not count toward the total number of pages.

Where do I submit my Alternative Assessment Portfolio?

Regional Campus students should mail their Alternative Assessment Portfolio to:

University of La Verne
Regional & Online Campuses
CS Alternative Assessment
1950 Third Street, La Verne, CA 91750

Traditional-age undergraduate students and CAPA students should submit their portfolios to:

The Hanawalt House; Office of Civic and Community Engagement – 2nd Floor