IN THE CLASSROOM

Service-learning (SL) is one of the most widely used high-impact practices of engaged learning at Utah Valley University. Our service-learning courses are more gender balanced and more ethnically and socioeconomically diverse than average classes at UVU.

9,000+ students

450+ SL sections

370+ SL faculty

1000+ community partners

1500+ community projects

UVU SERVICE-LEARNING STUDENTS SHOW HIGHER QUALITY OF LEARNING IN THE FOLLOWING:

- **STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION**
- **REFLECTIVE & INTEGRATIVE LEARNING**
- **COLLABORATIVE LEARNING**

SERVICE-LEARNING STUDENT OUTCOMES

More positive attitudes toward school and education and a greater sense of belonging

Clearer future employment goals, increased professionalism, and higher likelihood of being employed after graduation

Increased likelihood of earning a bachelor's degree, regardless of GPA or ethnicity

Higher levels of academic engagement and enhanced learning of course content

Changed attitudes about and increased awareness of the issues affecting people with whom the students worked, increased empathy, and "social accountability"

Increased personal effectiveness, resilience, and growth

Improved grades, particularly for women, int'l, and rural students

180,000+ HOURS OF IMPACT

$6.03M
The direct immediate economic impact to the community as a result of service-learning courses.
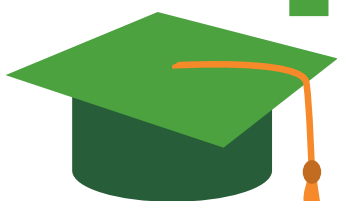
$188
The economic impact for every $1 of UVU academic service-learning budget.

$3.50
Program budget spent per student enrolled in service-learning courses.

STUDENTS WHO TAKE JUST ONE SL COURSE ARE 1

30 PERCENT MORE LIKELY TO COMPLETE THEIR DEGREE

STUDENTS WHO TAKE A SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE ARE 84% MORE LIKELY TO PERSIST TO THE NEXT SEMESTER

1 + 1 = 95 PERCENT

SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE   **UNDERGRAD RESEARCH COURSE**

MORE LIKELY TO PERSIST TO THE NEXT SEMESTER

FACULTY & PROGRAMS

374 faculty members have completed the Service-Learning Fellowship. Over 29 departments and programs have received the service-learning program distinction, demonstrating an exceptional commitment to community involvement and engaged learning.

Academic Service-Learning at Utah Valley University

Summer B. Valente and Jonathan H. Westover

At Utah Valley University (UVU), Academic Service-Learning is a joint curricular program of the Innovation Academy and the Center for Social Impact. In the classroom, service-learning is one of the most widely used high impact practices of engaged learning at UVU. As highlighted in the accompanying infographic, our service-learning courses are more gender balanced and ethnically and socioeconomically diverse than average classes at UVU. During the 2023-2024 academic year, service-learning classroom statistics included more than 9,000 students enrolled, 450 service-learning sections, 375 service-learning faculty, 1000 community partners, and 1500 community projects.

Enhanced Learning Outcomes. An internal UVU study demonstrated that UVU students who participate in service-learning courses show a higher quality of learning than their non-service-learning student counterparts in the following areas: Student-Faculty interaction; Reflective and integrative learning; Collaborative learning.

Student Benefits and Career Readiness. Extensive academic literature has consistently demonstrated a wide range of positive outcomes for students participating in this high-impact practice. Service-learning student outcomes include an increase in personal effectiveness, resilience and growth; more positive attitudes toward school and education, and a greater sense of belonging; clearer future employment goals, increased professionalism and higher likelihood of being employed after graduation; increased likelihood of earning a bachelor's degree, regardless of GPA or ethnicity; higher levels of academic engagement and enhanced learning of course content; changed attitudes about and increased awareness of the issues affecting people with whom the students worked, increased empathy and "social accountability"; and improved grades, particularly for women, international and rural students (see Conway et al., 2009; Celio et al., 2011; Warren, 2012; Yorio & Ye, 2012; Gordon et al., 2022;).

Economic and Community Impact. During the 2023-24 academic year, UVU service-learning courses generated over 180,000 hours of impact. This translates to the equivalent of at least $6,030,000 in direct, immediate economic impact to the community; slightly more than $188 in economic impact for every $1 of UVU academic service-learning budget; and only $3.50 of program budget spent per student service-learning experience, making it the most impactful, affordable, accessible, and scalable high-impact practice offered at the university.

Student Persistence and Retention. Additionally, an internal study of service-learning impact on student persistence, retention, and completion demonstrated that students who take just one service-learning course are more than 30% more likely to complete their academic degree. Students who take just one service-learning course are 84% more likely to persist to the next semester. When students who take one service-learning course also take an undergrad research course, that same metric goes up to 95%.

Faculty and Institutional Commitment. Three hundred and seventy-five faculty members across all of the seven colleges and schools have completed UVU's semester-long Service-Learning Faculty Fellowship training, which prepares them to redesign a course to include a meaningful and impactful service-learning project or immersive community experience and then successfully implement that newly designed course. Thirty academic departments and programs have received our service-learning program distinction, demonstrating an exceptional commitment to community involvement and engaged learning.

UVU's Academic Service-Learning program is a powerful, high-impact practice that enhances student learning, deepens community engagement, and strengthens student success. With demonstrated benefits—including increased academic persistence and career readiness—service-learning equips students with essential skills, delivers measurable community impact, and maximizes university resources. Expanding UVU's commitment to service-learning would strengthen its mission, providing students with meaningful educational experiences that extend beyond the classroom.

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