

SERVICE-LEARNING IN THE CURRICULUM: REFLECTION, ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION



OUTCOMES

By the end of this chapter you should be able to:

- Acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to assess and evaluate a module with service-learning in an academic learning programme.
- Demonstrate – by implementing the reflection, assessment and evaluation activities of the curriculum model for service-learning – how service-learning can be integrated in the curriculum of a module.
- Design, implement and assess reflection activities for service-learning.
- Design appropriate mechanisms for assessment of student service-learning.
- Complete the template for the design of a module integrating service-learning in the curriculum. Use Appendix A: SECTION B: *Phase 3: Reflection and Assessment*: 1 and 2; *Phase 4: Module Evaluation*: 1 and 2. You may also find it useful to draw on the content of Chapters 3, 5, 7 and 9 to complete the template.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A review of service-learning literature identifies multiple rationales for its use in different educational settings. Service-learning may be valued, for example, because it enhances social responsibility, because it helps teach problem-solving skills, because it helps students learn more about themselves and their own capacities, because it promotes collaborative learning, and/or because it enhances relationships among HEIs, community and service agencies and different communities. Early advocates for service-learning at various HEIs in South Africa embraced many of these rationales (Bender, 2005b). In this chapter, we continue to discuss the integrated curriculum model for service-learning, focusing on phase 3: Reflection and Assessment, and phase 4: Evaluation (see figure 4.1; and Bender, 2005a; Bender, 2005b; Bender, 2006b).

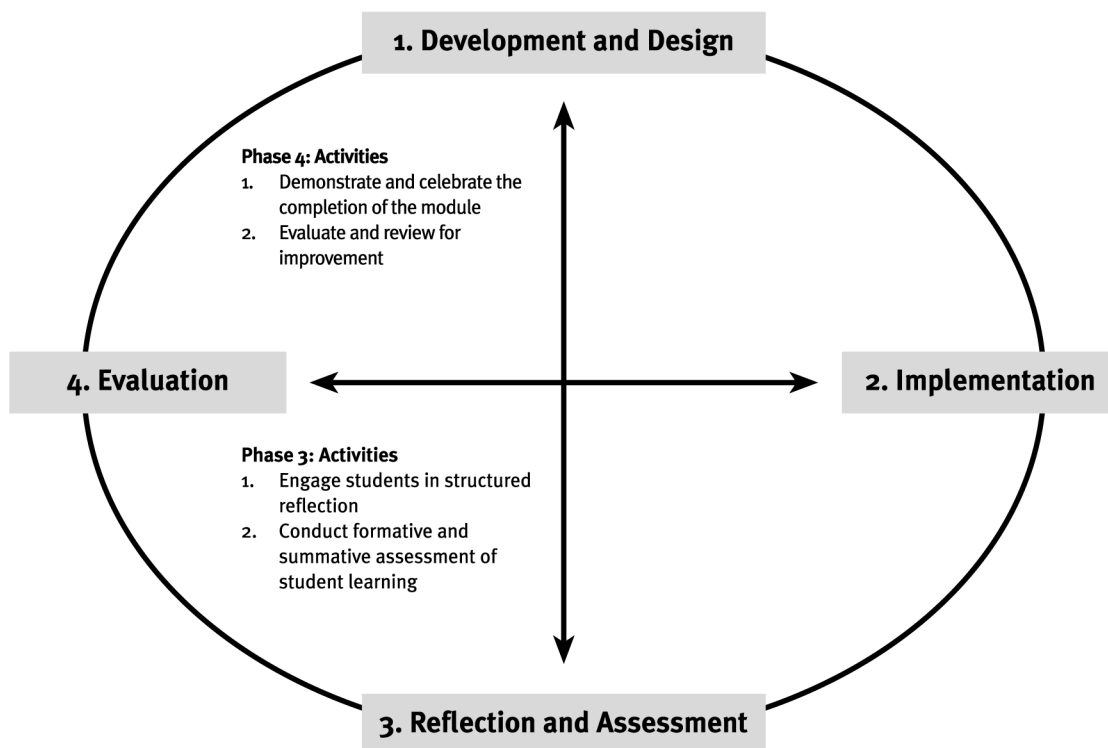
The aim in demonstrating the curriculum model for service-learning is to guide and assist academic staff and administrators in integrating service-learning in the curriculum – resulting not only in better-educated students but also in students becoming better citizens.

Jacoby and Associates (1996: 9) write:

As a pedagogy, service-learning is education that is grounded in experience as a basis for learning and on the centrality and intentionality of reflection designed to enable learning to occur.

Given the centrality of reflection in service-learning, it is an excellent pedagogy with which to model refinements of reflective processes. The focus of this chapter is mainly on using reflection to actualise *service and learning*. There should be a definite linkage between learning outcomes, reflection and assessment (refer to Chapter 3). This chapter also focuses on assessment and evaluation of service-learning. The chapter concludes with discussion of the challenges for academic staff, students and community and service agencies – and suggested strategies for meeting such challenges head-on.

Figure 4.1: An Integrated Curriculum Model for Service-Learning (Phases 3 and 4)



(Bender, 2005a; Bender, 2005b; Bender, 2006b)

4.2 PHASE 3: REFLECTION AND ASSESSMENT (*REFLECT*)

There are two basic stepwise activities in this phase:

- Engage students in structured reflection.
- Conduct formative and summative assessment of student learning.

4.2.1 *Engage students in structured reflection*

In their book, *A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning* (1996), Eyler, Giles and Schmiede refer to the value and process of reflection in service-learning. They discuss how, when something happens that we do not understand, we tend to try to explain it using information that we used before. When these old explanations don't fit, we experience 'dissonance' – a gap between what we are experiencing and what we understand. We may try to ignore the discomfort of the dissonance, or to apply the old, familiar but inadequate framework, or we can choose to explore the discomfort and learn from it. Sometimes structured opportunities for reflection can assist us in such exploration for meaning. By engaging in this questioning process we develop strategies for deeper understanding of new and challenging situations.

Reviewing approaches to service-learning, Eyler, Giles and Schmiede (1996) conclude that *reflection* is the necessary link that integrates service and learning in a mutually reinforcing relationship. In fact, as they point out, "It is critical reflection...that provides the transformative link between the action of *servicing* and the ideas and understanding of *learning*" (Eyler, Giles and Schmiede, 1996: 14).

4.2.1.1 *What is reflection and structured reflection?*

Reflection is the "intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives" (Hatcher and Bringle, 1997: 153). Reflection is a process designed to promote the examination and interpretation of experience and the promotion of cognitive learning. It is, according to Bringle and Hatcher (1999: 153),

...a process by which service-learners think critically about their experiences. It is the process of looking back on the implications of actions taken – good and bad – and determining what has been gained, lost, or achieved and connecting these conclusions to future actions and larger societal contexts.

Through reflection, students analyse concepts, evaluate experiences and postulate theory. Critical reflection provides students with the opportunity to examine and question their beliefs, opinions and values; it involves observation, asking questions, and putting together facts, ideas and experiences to derive new meaning.

The term *structured* reflection refers to a thoughtfully constructed process that challenges and guides students in:

- Examining critical issues related to their service-learning projects;
- Connecting the service experience to module content;
- Enhancing the development of social responsibility and ethical skills and values; and
- Assisting students in finding personal relevance in the work.

(RMC Research Corporation, 2003)

4.2.1.2 *What are the aims of structured reflection?*

The overall aim of service-learning as a teaching and learning strategy is to promote the development of the whole person. The overall aim in the reflection component of service-learning is to assist students to recognise and articulate their learning so that they can apply it critically towards:

- Continuous learning and personal growth beyond the service-learning experience;
- Improved learning; and
- Improved service and citizenship (social responsiveness).

Regardless of the aims of learning outcomes emphasised in a particular service-learning module, the reflection process must be structured to reinforce specific educational outcomes that academic staff have identified as critical and specific in the module. For example, if critical thinking were a specific learning outcome of a particular module, then academic staff would need to design reflective exercises that would help students understand the uncertainties inherent in the service-learning module, identify a range of possibilities for addressing such uncertainties, and examine these possibilities from the perspective of different stakeholders.

Academic staff cannot assume that the service experience will automatically result in enhanced problem-solving skills; an intentional, ongoing process is required for coaching students and helping them acquire such skills because, according to Stacey, Rice and Langer (1997: 26),

...many students do not immediately see the connection between the vivid, complex experiences in their service and the important ideas in a university module. They need help making the link through structured reflection.

4.2.1.3 *Reflection plan for effective service-learning*

In order to design an effective reflection process, academic staff must address the question: How can reflection contribute to effective service-learning? The six principles below can help academic staff in enhancing the quality of both students' service and learning through reflection (compare with Eyler, Giles and Schmiede, 1996):

- **Connected:** Effective service-learning integrates service with module content. Reflection is the means whereby academic staff can help students develop meaningful connections between the service experience and course content.

- **Continuous:** Student learning is enhanced by providing multiple opportunities for reflection before, during and after the project. Project effectiveness is also enhanced by using reflection to prepare students for the service-learning experience and to guide students as they address community concerns.
- **Challenging:** Service-learning projects should challenge students to think in new ways, raise new questions and explore new ways of problem solving, including the kind of public problem solving connected to democratic civic engagement. By encouraging students to explore issues more deeply and to think about issues and solutions they may not have considered previously, academic staff can enhance students' problem-solving efforts as well as the resulting learning.
- **Coaching:** Academic staff must challenge students, while simultaneously providing support and creating a 'safe' environment – one where students are confident that their contributions and feelings will be respected. Furthermore, students need support in executing complex project tasks. Note that continuous reflection facilitates the academic staff coaching role by providing project-related information in a timely manner.
- **Contextualised:** Academic staff can enhance the effectiveness of service-learning projects by ensuring that reflection activities are appropriate for the context and setting of the project. In designing the reflection process, academic staff must consider factors such as student knowledge and attitudes, community needs, and course objectives and constraints.
- **Communication:** Structured reflection should provide opportunities for communication with peers, academic staff and community and service agencies. Communication between academic staff and community and service agencies is essential to ensuring that the project is effective in meeting community needs. Communication with academic staff, peers and community and service agencies can also enhance student learning by exposing students to multiple perspectives.

Reflection: Design decisions

Academic staff play a key role in structuring the reflection process, and need to make design decisions about the following key aspects of the reflection process:

- Learning outcomes;
- Frequency and timing of reflection;
- Form of reflection; and
- Feedback/ assessment.

- **Learning outcomes**

Establishing clearly defined learning outcomes is the key to effective reflection. Learning outcomes must drive the design of reflection activities, and the feedback and assessment process (refer to Chapter 3).

- **Frequency and timing of reflection**

Academic staff must ensure they create several opportunities for reflection before, during and after the service experience.

- **Form of reflection**

Academic staff must select appropriate forms of reflection. Different forms of reflection include journals, portfolios and integrative papers. While selecting appropriate forms of reflection, the following further issues must be addressed:

- **Degree of structure**

Regardless of the form of reflection used, academic staff need to decide how to structure the reflection. For example, in using journals academic staff must decide whether to use a free-form journal or to provide more structure to journal entries. Academic staff may seek to encourage open-ended explorations of issues; however, if little structure is provided there is a danger that students could fail to explore important issues.

- **Small group/ large group**

Students may often participate in service experiences with their peers. Academic staff must decide how to engage small groups and/or the entire class in reflection.

- **Communication with community and service agencies**

Academic staff must also explore opportunities for involving community and service agencies in reflection. Enhancing communication among students, academic staff and community and service agencies can enhance community outcomes as well as student learning.

- **Feedback/ assessment**

Regular and ongoing feedback may be required to prompt students to think further about issues, and to consider other, related issues and perspectives. Academic staff must also make decisions about how to assess and allocate marks to student reflection.

4.2.1.4 *Who is involved in structured reflection?*

Many reflection activities involve a ‘critical synthesis’ of the service experience by individual students. However, academic staff must also consider how student interactions with all the partners in the service-learning process (HEI administrators, peers and clients, staff and volunteers at community and service agencies) can and do enhance student reflection (Stacey, Rice and Langer, 1997). The following participants can be added to the list: supervisors at the community and service agencies, other members of the HEI, and students who have formerly taken the module with service-learning.

4.2.1.5 *What is the role of academic staff in structured reflection?*

Academic staff (i.e. the lecturer for the module) must:

- Design reflection;
- Coach students during reflection; and
- Monitor reflection and provide feedback.

The RMC Research Corporation (2003) provides the following guidelines concerning the role of academic staff in structured reflection:

- “A key role for faculty involves designing appropriate reflection activities at different stages of the Service-Learning project.” Academic staff must consider how such reflection activities can be structured to involve peers and the community and service agencies, and decide on appropriate ways to evaluate student reflection and measure progress towards course goals. “Finally, faculty must devise ways to integrate reflection activities with other course activities.”

“A second key role of faculty involves coaching students. Coaching during reflection can help promote effective service and enhance student learning. In addition to concepts and guidelines learned in the classroom, students need additional skills related to information gathering, problem framing, and problem-resolution. Students cannot learn such problem-solving skills simply by being ‘told’ by an instructor. These skills are better learned by active participation and by faculty coaching. Faculty can coach by modeling practice, giving suggestions and examples, providing feedback and asking questions. Faculty can also provide tips and advice to help students avoid pitfalls.”

- “Finally, the effectiveness of reflection in enhancing project quality and in promoting learning depends on continuous faculty feedback. For example, if reflection suggests that students are not considering particular constituencies’ alternative options in addressing a problem, faculty may have to assign additional exercises that facilitate student reflection in those directions. Monitoring student reflection also helps faculty in enhancing the reflection process over time. In addition, project quality and learning can be enhanced by student feedback that in turn can depend on the communication environment that the faculty member has facilitated.”

4.2.1.6 *Modes of reflection, with examples*

A variety of personal activities can be used to facilitate student reflection. In this section we offer ideas (with examples in each case) for different modes of reflection:

- Writing;
- Telling;
- Activities; and
- Multimedia.

Academic staff could require students to keep journals, could organise presentations by community leaders, could encourage students to publicly discuss their service experiences and the learning that ensued, and could require students to prepare reports to demonstrate their learning. When constructing the reflection activities academic staff should consider the following:

- Reflection activities should involve individual students and address interactions with peers, community members and staff of community and service agencies.
- Students with different learning styles may prefer different types of activities. Academic staff should select a range of reflective activities to meet the needs of different students.
- Different types of reflection activities may be appropriate at different stages of the service experience. For example, case studies and readings can help students prepare for the service experience.
- Reflection activities can involve reading, writing, doing and telling.

Examples of reflective activities are briefly described below (Hatcher and Bringle, 1997; Bringle and Hatcher, 2001).

- **Writing**

For many students in service-learning modules and projects the predominant form that their reflection takes is written. Written reflection techniques offer several unique advantages compared to other modes; they provide an opportunity to practise and refine writing skills, challenge students to organise their thoughts in order to make coherent arguments, and generate a permanent record of service experiences that can be used as part of future learning activities. Written reflection can take a variety of forms, as explored below:

Journals: Students may be asked to keep a journal as they engage in the service experience. The journals should not merely be simple inventories of events. Rather, they should address situations objectively, subjectively and analytically. Academic staff may provide questions to guide students in addressing issues and should periodically review and provide feedback on the journals. It is helpful to offer written comments, questions and feedback that will encourage, challenge and essentially provide a dialogue that deepens the students' thought processes. Taking up an entry each week or reading a weekly online posting can ameliorate problems at the service site and challenge students to rigorous intellectual enquiry.

Structured journals: Use structured journals to direct student attention to important issues/questions and to connect the service experience to module content. A structured journal provides prompts to guide the process of reflection. Some parts of the journal may focus on affective dimensions while others relate to problem-solving activities.

Analytic papers: Analytic papers provide students with an opportunity to describe their service experience, to evaluate the experience and what they have learned from it, and to integrate their experiences with course topics. If the papers are assigned at the end of the module, students can make use of ideas derived from class discussion, journals and other reflective activities provided during the course. Papers may include traditional library research, interviews or other quantitative and qualitative methods.

Portfolios and notebooks: Students may be asked to compile materials relevant to the service-learning experience and the module of which it is a part. These materials may include: journals, analytic papers, scripts/ notes for class presentations, items created or collected as part of the service, pictures, agency brochures, handbooks, time sheets, service agreement and training materials. Portfolios provide a focus for reflection on the service experience and its documentation. Introductory letters or papers addressed to the reader can help students to discover meaning through writing.

Reading responses: Students may be asked to write responses to module readings, connecting them with service experiences. Students can be allowed greater or less freedom in how they respond, by posing either general or more focused questions.

Electronic forum: Students may be asked to contribute via email or a listserv to electronic discussion on the service-learning and module study units/ course topics. Students may respond either to questions posed by the instructor, points raised by other students, or readings posted on the site. Students may prepare websites that document and reflect on their work.

- **Telling**

Reporting insights orally to others is a great way to deepen students' understanding of those insights. Examples of telling include:

Storytelling: Storytelling remains one of the most important ways that humans transmit information to one another. The benefits of storytelling, however, do not apply only to those listening to the story; the teller, too, has his/her understanding enhanced through the act of communicating it to others.

Presentations: In a formal way oral presentations can offer several advantages in service-learning modules, including providing students with opportunities to practise their public speaking skills. Students may be asked to make presentations to their classmates (and/or to broader audiences) describing their service-learning experiences, evaluating them and integrating them with the module topics. Community and service agency partners may be invited and/or students may present at the service site. Presentations may be videotaped to share with other audiences. This links to another mode of reflection – multimedia.

Case studies: Assign case studies to help students think about what to expect from the service assignment and to plan for the service activity. Use published case studies or lecturer developed case studies based on past modules with service-learning.

Group discussions: The groups may involve either the entire class or just small numbers of students. If the groups are small, the academic may allow students to choose their own group members, or s/he can set criteria for group composition (e.g. no groups composed of a single ethnicity or gender), or s/he can assign students to groups. The group members exchange ideas about the module study units/ course topics and/or the service experiences. The lecturer may pose either general or narrowly focused questions for discussion. A scribe may be assigned to submit a summary of the discussion to the lecturer or to the rest of the class.

- **Activities**

Activities, projects and other forms of ‘reflection through action’ can also offer specific advantages in meaning-making. Often, these sorts of exercises speak to a variety of learning styles, help to develop groups, and allow forward momentum to be built in the module. Examples are:

Simulations, role-plays and games: Students may problem-solve by acting out potential problems or issues at the service site.

Letters: Students may write letters to community partners, parents or other appropriate audiences to help them process their learning.

Engaging the community: Enrich reflection activities by inviting community and service agency partners to participate in class reflection or to suggest topics. Ask partners to share in the teaching role by reflecting informally with students on site, when the opportunity arises. Invite community and service agency partners into the classroom during the course to reflect on ongoing projects; and invite them into the classroom again at the end of the course to reflect on the events of the semester. Meet with community and service agencies once the semester is over to reflect on and discuss the service-learning partnership experience.

- **Multimedia**

Collages, drawings, photo or video essays and other forms of multimedia reflection offer additional advantages for the reflector through incorporating multiple learning styles, serving as excellent tools for capturing subtle emotional truths, and providing great opportunities for creative expression (Collier and Williams, 2005).

4.2.1.7 *When should structured reflection occur?*

Based on the kinds of design considerations discussed in previous paragraphs, academic staff should develop a plan for continuous reflection to ensure effective integration of the service activities with other module content. Academic staff might find it helpful to think in terms of the three stages of reflection: *before* experience, *during* experience, and *after* experience. Academic staff might want to address the same set of learning outcomes at each stage, but the way in which the outcomes are addressed could be very different depending on the stage of reflection. For example, academic staff might focus on helping students acquire the requisite problem-solving skills before the experience. During the service, the focus might be on coaching students in solving a complex service-learning problem. After the service, reflection activities might focus on helping students consolidate their learning and consider limitations and future extensions.

Reflection *before* experience

Design reflective activities that help students prepare for the service experience. Thus, reflective activities could be designed to:

- Help students acquire the disciplinary knowledge required for service activities;
- Provide opportunities to practise application of disciplinary knowledge;
- Help students develop the problem-solving skills required to address community concerns;
- Help students develop an understanding of community needs, and community and service agencies; and
- Help students develop information-gathering skills for collecting information required for service activities.

Reflection *during* experience

Communicating with students throughout the service project may be critical, in order to ensure that students are performing project tasks competently, and for helping students refine and develop their initial ideas. Ongoing communication can also be a starting point for understanding student problem-solving efforts and assessing the developmental levels of students as they grapple with issues. As these factors will have an impact on the service activity and student learning, they can provide useful information for refining the reflection process in subsequent semesters.

Reflection *after* experience

Use reflection to connect service experience back to disciplinary knowledge and explore future applications. Challenge students to think critically about their service experiences and the responsible application of knowledge and public problem solving.

The **three-stage reflection model** of Toole and Toole (1995), which is discussed in more detail below, illustrates the stages and questions for reflection. Examples of the goals of reflection and the design of reflection activities at each step (before, during and after) are provided.

4.2.1.8 Reflection models: How to implement structured reflection?

How to reflect, or the reflection model academic staff will implement, depends on the context, discipline, teaching and learning perspectives and strategies, learning and reflection outcomes, different learning styles of students and the preferences of the academic.

There are various reflection models but for the scope of this chapter only three models will be discussed. The models are the:

- **Three-stage** model of Toole and Toole (1995): What? (Analysis), So What? (Critical Thinking), and Now What? (Decision Making);
- **ORID** model (Colorado State University, CSU, *Service-Learning Faculty Manual*, 2005): **O**bjective, **R**eflective, **I**nterpretive and **D**ecisional; and
- **DEAL** model of Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005). In this book we propose an adaptation of the three-phase reflection model – the DEAL model – of Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005): **D**escribe the experience(s) objectively; **A**nalyse (those authors refer to **E**xamine) the experience(s) in terms of the categories of service-learning outcomes; **A**rticulate (express) the **L**earning that results.

The first two models – **Three-stage** model and **ORID** model – are easy to apply and are recommended for undergraduate service-learning modules and especially for students with limited knowledge, skills and experience with reflection. The **DEAL** model requires more knowledge and experience with reflection and is recommended for final-year students of a four-year academic programme and for postgraduate students, doing postgraduate certificates, Honours or Master’s programmes.



The following is a useful source with detailed information on reflection:

Eyler, J., Giles, Jr., D.E. and Schmiede, A. (1996). *A Practitioner’s Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning: Student Voices and Reflections*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University. The following websites are very informative and are recommended: www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/ and www.compact.org/disciplines/reflection/

- **Three-stage model of Toole and Toole (1995)**

Toole and Toole (2001) posited reflection as being a central feature of the service-learning cycle (see figure 4.2, below). In this three-stage model for reflecting upon experience the questions are, What?, So What?, and Now What? (Toole and Toole, 1995).

Stage 1: What? Reflection *before* service-learning experience (*Analysis*)

Stage 1 includes identifying the service-learning outcomes, planning and preparation. This stage asks for a statement of facts and occurrences. Asking 'What?' starts the reflection process through descriptive questions for students to answer in their reflective journals:

- What do I expect to get out of this experience (goals, outcomes, purpose, ideas)?
- What did I observe during my first visit?
- What is the mission of the community and service agencies? Their goals?
- Are there other agencies in the community that have similar goals?
- What part was the most challenging? Surprising?
- What roles am I taking on?
- What of myself did I share with others?
- What happened to me today?

Stage 2: So What? Reflection *during* service-learning experience (*Critical Thinking*)

Stage 2 includes meaningful service experience, observation and analysis, and pertains to the difference the experience makes to the student. It looks at the consequences of the day's action and questions the significance. This stage challenges students to interpret the meaning of their experiences. Questions for students to answer in their reflective journals are:

- What did this experience mean to me?
- What did I do that was effective? Why was it effective?
- What am I learning about others and myself?
- What did I do that seems to be ineffective? How could I have done it differently?
- What values, opinions, decisions have been made through this experience?

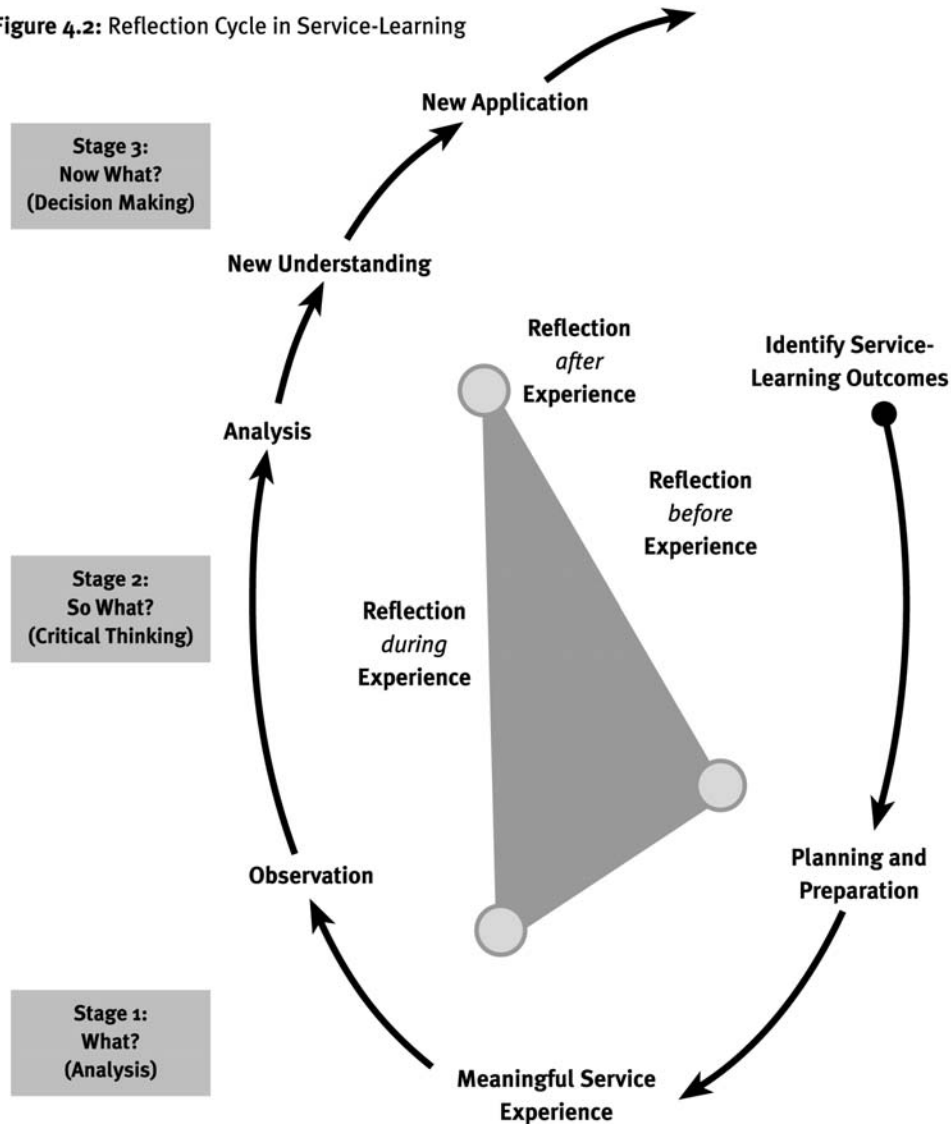
Stage 3: Now What? Reflection *after* service-learning experience (*Decision Making*)

Stage 3 is the process of applying the lessons students have learned to other situations and contexts: new understanding about student self and community issues and new application of knowledge and how learning experiences can be applied to other community engagements to produce positive results. Questions for students to answer in their reflective journals are:

- Is it important for me to stay involved in the community?
- What will the final results of my efforts be?
- How will my efforts working with these community and service agencies contribute to social change?
- How can I use what I learned in my module work or in a future career?
- What changes would I make in this experience if it were repeated?
- Will I continue to be of service? Why or why not?
- How does this experience exemplify or contradict module materials?

(Toole and Toole, 1995)

Figure 4.2: Reflection Cycle in Service-Learning



(Toole and Toole, 1995)

- **ORID model**

The **ORID** model provides a progression of question types designed to move students from reflecting on the concrete experience to analytical and subjective reasoning. It mirrors the Kolb learning cycle (1984) and may be used to create journal or discussion questions and to guide assignments and activity types. The progression may be completed within one assignment and/or over the whole semester.

- **Objective:** Begin with questions related to the concrete experience. What did students do, observe, read, and hear? Who was involved? What was said? What happened as a result of their work?
- **Reflective:** Next introduce questions that address the affective experience. How did the experience feel? What did it remind student of? How did their apprehension change or their confidence grow? Did they feel successful, effective and knowledgeable?
- **Interpretive:** Then ask questions that explore students' cognitive experience. What did the experience make them think? How did it change their thinking about...? What did they learn? What worked?
- **Decisional:** Finally, students are prepared to incorporate their experience into a new paradigm. They may have a shift in knowledge, awareness or understanding that affects how they see things and, ultimately, how they will act. What will they do differently next time? What decisions or opinions have they formed? How will the experience affect their career path, their personal life choices or their use of new information, skills or technology? (Colorado State University, 2005: 27)

- **The DEAL model of Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005)**

The authors Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005) have developed an integrated approach to reflection and the assessment of student outcomes, which supports students in achieving and demonstrating academic learning outcomes as well as outcomes with respect to personal growth and civic engagement (social responsibility) (Ash and Clayton, 2004). Interesting about this model is that the authors start with a reflection model and then proceed to the formulation of hierarchical learning objectives – Identify, Apply, Analyse and Synthesise, and Evaluate – that should guide students' thinking as they take the core idea surfaced in a reflection activity and develop it into rich or deep learning (Ash and Clayton, 2004; Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004; Ash, Clayton and Atkinson, 2005). (See Chapter 3 for the formulation of learning outcomes regarding academic learning, personal growth and social responsibility.)

The DEAL model can appropriately be adjusted for outcomes-based education. The model has six elements as described below by Ash and Clayton (2004) and we could refer to this model as best practice for reflection:

1. Reflection is **guided** (or **structured**) – by written or oral prompts provided by academic staff or lecturers, peer leaders, or the students themselves. Such guidance requires a combination of advance planning and serendipitous adaptation, is flexible but structured, and assumes a collaborative approach to learning, in which students and lecturers enter into open and honest conversation that is mutually enriching.
2. Reflection is **integrative** – of lecture hall and community, of theory and practice, of multiple perspectives and outcomes.

3. Reflection is grounded in specific **objectives** or **outcomes**. In the case of service-learning those outcomes fall into the domains of academic enhancement, personal growth and civic engagement (social responsibility). Within each domain, outcomes are structured hierarchically in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy (1956), from identifying knowledge, through application and analysis, to developing and evaluating judgments (see Chapter 3 for the formulation of learning outcomes).
4. **Reflection occurs through three stages or phases:**
 - **Phase 1: Description of experience;**
 - **Phase 2: Examining of experience; and**
 - **Phase 3: Articulation of specific learning outcomes.**
5. **Feedback** on the process of reflection is essential, and it must both challenge and support the student.
6. Reflection is a **continuous** process, occurring before, during, and after an experience.

The name DEAL derives from the three phases in the reflection model:

1. **D**escribe the experience(s) objectively;
2. **E**xamine or analyse the experience(s) in terms of the domains of service-learning outcomes:
 - Academic;
 - Personal; and
 - Civic or social responsibility.
3. **A**rticulate (express) the **L**earning that results (in written paragraphs format).

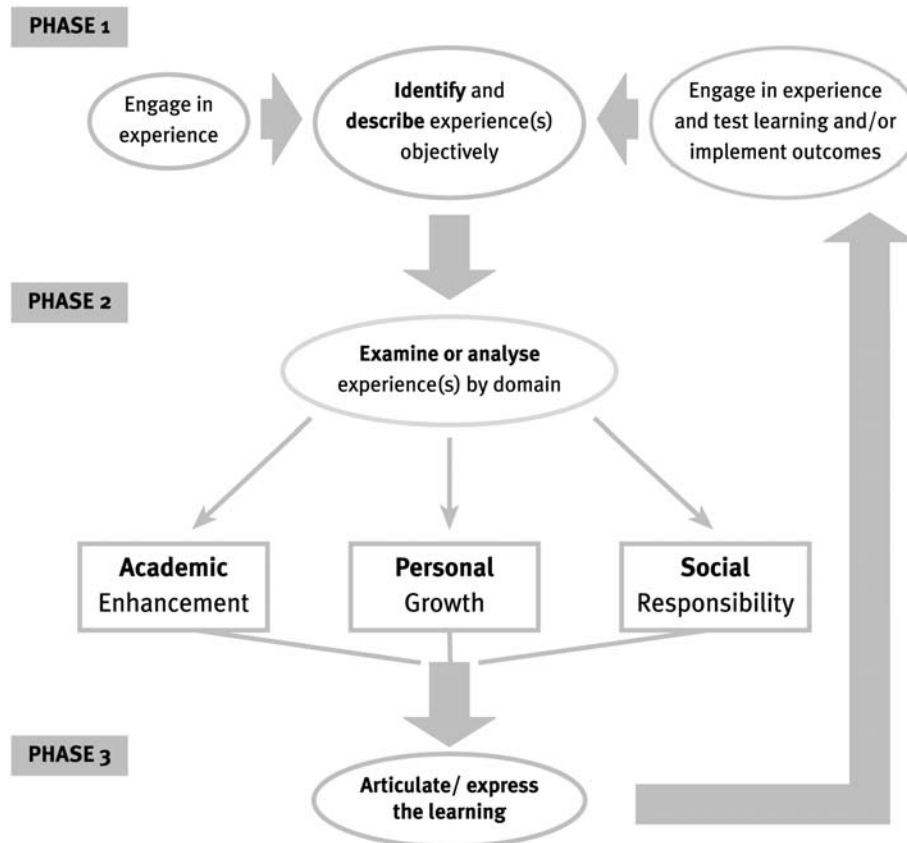
(Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004)

Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005) based this reflection model on research done at the North Carolina State University campus. In creating the reflection framework for the three-phase process, the authors, other academic staff and their students affiliated with the Service-Learning Programme at the university built on a previous model, the Integrative Processing Model of Kiser (1998). Organised as a series of questions, the reflection framework can be modified for use in a variety of settings for both written and oral reflection by either individuals or small groups. The *written* culmination of this framework as well as a variety of other reflection mechanisms, called an 'articulated learning', is a series of short paragraphs answering four questions, which in their simplest form can be summarised as:

- What did I learn?
- How, specifically, did I learn it?
- Why does this learning matter? and
- What will I do with it?

(Ash and Clayton, 2004; Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004; Ash, Clayton and Atkinson, 2005)

Figure 4.3: Schematic Overview of the DEAL Model for Structured Reflection



(Adapted from Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005)

This framework of the three-phase DEAL reflection model can be adapted for the South African outcomes-based approach. More detailed discussion follows on the three phases and associated activities (Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004).

Phase 1: Identify and describe experience(s) objectively

At the start of each reflection activity it is important to review carefully the experience(s) in question. This written and oral description can include what happened at the site itself as well as other activities, such as those associated with module and project planning.

This is a completely *objective* written description and is aided by reviewing a *structured reflective journal* the students have been keeping of their experiences (written format) (Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005). Table 4.1 provides a template with sample questions for students to identify and describe service-learning experiences objectively.

Table 4.1: Template with Questions for Students to Identify and Describe Service-Learning Experiences

IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE(S) BY ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR SERVICE-LEARNING

Where was I?

Who else was there? Who wasn't there?

When did this experience take place?

Was this:

- During a class, a pre-arranged meeting, a service activity?
- A chance occurrence?
- Other?

What was said?

What did I/ others do?

What did I/ we say or otherwise communicate e.g. through writing?

Did I/ others laugh, cry, make a face etc.?

What did I/ we hear? See? Smell? Taste? Touch? (Don't limit your description here to what you *sensed* from other people; consider as well animals, events such as loss of electricity or falling objects or weather etc.)

What actions did I/ we take?

Who didn't speak or act?

Why were we there? Why did the situation occur?

Once students have thoroughly described what happened, they can move on in phase 2 to further examine and analyse the most interesting or significant aspects of the experience (Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004).

Phase 2: Examine or analyse the experience(s) in terms of the main domains:

- Academic learning and enhancement;
- Personal growth; and
- Civic engagement/ social responsibility.

Students working with their own written journal accounts of their experiences, and examining and analysing them in terms of the *academic domain*, better understand both the module content (module descriptors) and the experiences. They will make connections between what they read and discuss and their experiences at the community and service agencies, including the issues their partnered community and service agencies face. In so doing, students will be able to *compare and contrast* what theory suggests with what actually happens – which are not always the same (Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004; Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005). Table 4.2 provides a template with sample questions for students to examine and analyse the service-learning experiences from the academic learning and enhancement domain.

Table 4.2: Template with Questions for Students to Examine and Analyse the Service-Learning Experiences from the Academic Learning and Enhancement Domain (Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005)

What specific *academic concepts* relate to this experience?

How was I able to *apply* a skill, perspective or concept related to the academic content (module descriptors)? Note that this could be a type of application in which you *did something* based on your knowledge, or it could be a type of application in which you are able to *see/observe* aspects of a concept in the experience that you had.

What *similarities and differences* are there between the perspective on the situation offered by the academic material, and the situation as it in fact unfolded? What are the possible reasons for any differences? For example, were there possible biases/ assumptions/ agendas on the part of the author/ scientists/ lecturer or on my part? How could these be addressed?

How does this experience *enhance my knowledge* of a specific reading, theory or concept? Does it *challenge* or *reinforce* my prior understanding? In what ways?

What *questions* should I ask/ what *additional information* would I need to put myself in a better position to judge the adequacy of the module content?

Students working with their own written journal accounts of their experiences, and examining and analysing them in terms of the *personal growth domain*, get the opportunity to explore what the experience reveals about their personal characteristics: their strengths and weaknesses, their sense of identity, the assumptions they tend to make, and their beliefs and convictions, as well as personal traits. Not only should the students be able to learn something new about themselves, they should also consider why they are the way they are (as revealed in the experience) and whether they want to make any changes in themselves. In this way, service-learning becomes an important part of students' ongoing personal growth process, teaching students to engage in self-evaluation and to deliberately use their experiences to grow into the person they want to become (Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004; Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005). Table 4.3 (below) provides a template with sample questions for students to examine and analyse the service-learning experiences from the personal growth domain.

Table 4.3: Template with Questions for Students to Examine and Analyse the Service-Learning Experiences from the Personal Growth Domain (Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005)

How did this experience make me *feel* (*positively* and/or *negatively*)?

How did I handle my reactions? Should I have felt differently? Why?

Why did I, or did I not, experience *difficulty working/interacting with other people*?

What could I *do differently* next time to minimise such difficulties or further improve on such relationships?

What *assumptions or expectations* did I bring to the situation (including my assumptions about other persons involved) that affected my *actions or decisions*?

To what extent did they prove true?

If they did not prove true, why was there a discrepancy?

What *personal skills* did I draw on in handling this situation?

What *personal skills* would I like to have had in order to have handled it *better* and *how* might I develop them?

How have *past experiences* influenced the way that I acted or the decisions that I made?

Am I comfortable with the influence past experiences have on me? Why or why not?

What *personal strengths/weaknesses* of mine did the situation reveal?

In what ways did they *affect* the situation positively and negatively?

What could I do to build on strengths/overcome weaknesses?

How did this situation challenge or reinforce my *personal values, beliefs, convictions*?

Finally, students working with their own written journal accounts of their experiences, and examining and analysing them in terms of the *social responsibility domain* can deepen their understanding of citizenship. This helps students to know how individuals in a particular profession act in socially responsive ways, and to understand better why things are the way they are and how they might be changed, whether within their group, the community and service agencies where they are serving, or their society at large. Students might consider here either their own personal involvement in change-oriented processes or the undertakings of other people (in groups, organisations etc.), but in either case it is always important to understand what outcomes were at stake, what was done in order to try to accomplish them, and what might have been done differently (including, sometimes, changing the outcomes themselves). Ultimately we aim to promote long-term, sustainable improvement in the world around us; to do this we have to understand how to act as agents of change (Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004). Table 4.4 (below) provides a template with sample questions for students to examine and analyse the service-learning experiences from the social responsibility domain.

Table 4.4: Template with Questions for Students to Examine and Analyse the Service-Learning Experiences from the Social Responsibility Domain (Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005)

What was I/ someone else *trying to accomplish*?

What *roles* did each person/ group/ organisation involved in the situation play and why?

What alternative roles could each have played?

Did I/ other individuals act *unilaterally* or *collaboratively* and why?

Should I/ they have worked with others in a different way?

How did *leadership* emerge in this situation, on my part and/or on the part of others?

How was action initiated?

How were outcomes or goals established? What alternative forms of leadership were available?

In what ways did *power differentials* emerge in this experience?

What are the sources of power in this situation?

Who benefits and who is harmed by the use of power here?

Are *dependencies* created in this situation? If so, should they be eliminated and why?

How does this experience highlight the *relationship between individual choices or actions and the operation or constraints of institutions or larger systems*?

In taking action, was the focus on *symptoms* or *causes* of problems and was this appropriate to the situation?

If not, how might the focus be changed?

What is in the interest of the *common good* in this situation?

In what ways is the *individual good* (mine/ others') linked to and/or contrary to the common good?

What tradeoffs are involved in deciding between the two?

How does this experience help me understand better the *organisation's vision, mission and goals*?

What does it reveal to me about the relationship between the organisation and those it serves?

What does it suggest about how this relationship might be improved?

The examining and analysis phase of reflection serves to surface core ideas at the heart of deep learning. These ideas are then expanded on in phase 3, also written in the reflective journal, which generally takes place *after* a reflection session or other reflection activity.

Phase 3: Articulate/ express the learning

If the reflection process has been carefully guided – and if students have approached the process with a serious commitment to maximising learning – then there should be one or more core ideas that can be captured, and then taken away and built on, creating more significant and deeper learning. As mentioned earlier, the basic structure for this learning is reflected in the following questions: (a) What did I learn? (b) How, specifically, did I learn it? (c) Why does this learning matter (or why is it significant)? and (d) In what ways will I use this learning – i.e. what further goals or outcomes shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and/or the quality of my learning and/or the quality of my future experiences or service? (Ash, Clayton and Day, 2004; Zlotkowski *et al*, 2005)

Thus, the articulated learning is a series of paragraphs written as the culminating phase of reflection sessions in each of the three domains of learning outcomes: academic, personal and social responsibility. Table 4.5 (below) provides a template with questions to help students articulate or express the learning.

Table 4.5: Template with Questions to Help Students Articulate or Express the Learning

What did I learn? <i>I have learned that...</i>
How, specifically, did I learn it? <i>I learned this when...</i>
Why does this learning matter, or why is it significant? <i>This learning matters because...</i>
In what ways will I use this learning – i.e. what further goals or outcomes shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and/or the quality of my learning and/or the quality of my future experiences or service? <i>In light of this learning...</i>

Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005) believe that, by requiring students to articulate in their written work (structured reflective journal) what they have learned, they as academics are able to assess more directly what students have actually learned. This allows the authors to determine how closely that learning matches their expectations, and provides them with much more information regarding their programme’s effectiveness than, for example, the results of a survey, from which they might only know what percentage of students *think* they learned a lot more that they would have in a traditional lecture hall.

The articulated learning is designed to be a foundation for students to carry the results of the reflection process forward beyond the immediate experience, improving the quality of future learning and experience (related to service or to other aspects of their lives) (Ash, Clayton and Atkinson, 2005).

4.2.1.9 *Synthesis: The alignment of service-learning outcomes, reflection and assessment*

Academic staff must carefully consider the alignment of service-learning outcomes, reflection and assessment. As we have seen from the previous discussion in this chapter, for reflection to be effective:

- It is crucial that outcomes are specified precisely; if not, it may be difficult to devise appropriate reflection activities and to develop appropriate assessment techniques. Academic staff can use a wide range of service-learning outcomes (such as those discussed in previous paragraphs) as a starting point for establishing specific service-learning outcomes.
- Before designing reflection, academic staff must select appropriate service activities. Unless service activities are structured in a way that supports the acquisition and reinforcement of specific disciplinary or module content and desired educational outcomes, it will not be feasible to incorporate reflection to support those outcomes.
- After designing outcomes and service activities, academic staff must consider the question: How can reflection be used to enhance a particular outcome (personal, academic, social responsibility)? A key issue to consider is the timing of the reflection: reflection activities before, during and after the service activity can contribute to an outcome in different ways.

In addition to the above considerations, for reflection to be effective it is crucial that academic staff consider how the outcomes of the module with service-learning activities will be *assessed*. Assessment is a fundamental aspect of teaching and learning, and a potentially powerful means of driving continuous improvement of teaching practices. While assessment is often seen as having the main purposes of determining students' progression and their fitness to graduate, it has equally important roles as an instrument of learning, as a means of providing students with information about their learning, and as a means of providing feedback about the quality of curricula and teaching. When conceived, designed and implemented well, assessment achieves all these purposes. It can be a potent stimulus and guide to learning. To achieve this, assessment must be a *systematic* process that provides directions to what should be learned, and provides evidence of how well that learning has been achieved.

4.3. CONDUCT FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

There are many models, instruments and internationally published documents to assist academic staff with assessment of student learning and of whether students have attained or achieved the specific learning outcomes. Assessment methods and strategies should comply with the assessment policy of the department/ faculty and institution. For the purpose of this book only a few guidelines on assessment are provided.

Academic staff should consider how the outcomes of the module with service-learning activities will be assessed. Several resources are available on service-learning assessment (see Roufs, 2000, for a bibliography of service-learning assessment resources). While a detailed discussion of service-learning assessment is beyond the scope of this chapter, a key issue to consider in designing service-learning is the *link between reflection and assessment*.

Assessment can have multiple purposes. One important purpose is to provide feedback to students on what is expected of them, what they have done well, and what they need to improve on and how. Reflection is a key part of such assessment. Structured reflection activities, conducted on an ongoing basis, provide a means for assessing student progress towards service-learning outcomes and for providing feedback. Since academic staff may not be able to observe directly and in detail the service activities of their students, reflection may also be the key to the assessment of service-learning for allocation of marks purposes. For example, service-learning may be assessed on the basis of a presentation and/or articulated learning products.

4.3.1 Guidelines for student assessment

In order to ensure academic integrity, it is essential that service-learning be used in conjunction with rigorous assessment. Assessment should be based not on actual service performed but, rather, on students' demonstration of how they are integrating the service experience with module content. The following recommendations can guide academics in conducting assessment of students' service-learning:

- An assignment or activity, such as a reflective journal, is needed to provide evidence of how the student connects the service to the module content.
- By helping students to distinguish between description and analysis, between emotional reactions and cognitive observations, academic staff help students to transform service experiences into learning experiences.
- Evaluation of service-learning occasionally makes use of subjective evaluation in the same way that more traditional modules sometimes make use of subjective evaluation.
- There is not a one-to-one correspondence between hours served and knowledge gained or credit earned. Nevertheless, a certain minimum of service hours may be needed to provide an experience of significant depth. Therefore, staff should require that students document their 'service-learning time'.
- Effective credit programmes require a component that explicitly links the service to the module; for example, a learning contract/ agreement and/or a journal assignment.
- To preserve the academic integrity of service-learning, credit is not awarded for hours of service but rather for demonstrated learning based on service. Extra hours of service should not necessarily yield extra credit.

(Troppe, 1995)

Giving early and regular extended feedback on students' journal entries or articulated learning products is a critical part of teaching students how to develop their reflection skills.

4.3.2 *Formative and summative assessment*

In terms of their purpose, assessment events may be of two broad kinds – formative and summative.

Formative assessment: Is used to monitor students’ progress during a module. Its main purpose is to provide feedback to students to reinforce their successful learning and to highlight areas where improvements are needed. Formative assessment also provides information to academics that will help them to modify their teaching to better encourage, challenge, stimulate and support their students. Ideally, all assessment events should be used formatively, but some may also have a summative role. Examples of formative assessment in a module with service-learning outcomes are: self-assessment (e.g. weekly reflection reports); peer evaluation (e.g. weekly feedback on ‘presentations’); feedback during reflection sessions; feedback from community and service agencies (according to a provided assessment sheet/ form); and quarterly or semester evaluation of a project.

Summative assessment: Is used primarily for determining the extent to which students have achieved the module outcomes. Summative assessment usually results in the allocation of marks or grades, which are then used to inform decisions about progression, promotion or awards. Examples of summative assessment in a module with service-learning outcomes are: presentations at a faculty community engagement day or seminar or conference; a research indaba; an integrated reflective assignment; a written quarter/ semester test; and a written or oral examination.

Both forms of assessment serve the primary purpose of motivating, directing and enhancing learning, but they also serve other purposes, such as: helping to ensure that educational standards are maintained; allowing certification that programme requirements have been completed; and providing feedback that can guide module and programme improvement.

Assessing students’ performance on non-traditional academic work can be challenging. One way to do so is to create rubrics, with specific descriptions of different levels of achievement, for the various skills and activities required as part of the service-learning assignment. A rubric is a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics divide an assignment into its component parts and provide a detailed description of what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable levels of performance for each of these parts (Stevens and Levi, 2005).

In tables 4.6 and 4.7 we include sample rubrics for common service-learning assignments. In table 4.6 the academic outcome could be: ‘Student is able to demonstrate how s/he accesses information on an identified issue or community need’. In table 4.7 we provide an exemplar of a rubric for community engagement through service-learning and the learning outcomes are related to the cognitive, affective, behavioural and social responsiveness domains.

Table 4.6: Rubric for Assignment: Research a Community Need or Issue and Develop a Project to Address That Need

PERFORMANCE	CRITERIA
4. Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows extensive accessing of information and varied perspectives, using relevant materials and a variety of resources. Consistently and purposefully uses technology to access information.
3. Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows thorough accessing of information and perspective, using relevant materials from more than one resource. Consistently uses technology to access information.
2. Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows partial accessing of information and limited perspectives, using useful materials and limited resources. May or may not use technology to access information.
1. Needs work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows incomplete accessing of information and/or inaccurate information. Does not use technology to access information.
Total marks:	Comments:

Table 4.7: Rubric for Assignment: Community Engagement through Service-Learning and Related Learning Outcomes in Different Domains

CATEGORY	4. EXCELLENT	3. ACCEPTABLE	2. INADEQUATE	1. POOR	TOTAL MARKS %
Cognitive Domain	The student demonstrates a full understanding of the purpose of the project and its relation to the curriculum.	The student demonstrates a good understanding of the purpose of the project and its relation to the curriculum.	The student struggles to demonstrate understanding of the purpose of the project and its relation to the curriculum.	The student is unable to demonstrate understanding of the purpose of the project and its relation to the curriculum.	
Affective Domain	The student clearly communicates a sense of pride and satisfaction in working in service to others.	The student generally communicates a positive attitude about the project and working in service to others.	The student occasionally communicates ineffective attitudes and is unco-operative in service to others.	The student does not communicate a co-operative attitude towards the project and working together in service to others.	
Behavioural Domain	The student completes all assigned tasks and demonstrates leadership skills in working with others.	The student generally completes all assigned tasks and co-operated with others.	The student rarely completes all assigned tasks and only occasionally co-operates with others.	The student does not complete the assigned tasks and does not co-operate with others.	
Social Responsiveness Domain	The student communicates a strong understanding of the significance of the project to the community.	The student generally recognises the significance of the project to the community.	The student expresses a limited degree of understanding of the significance of the project to the community.	The student is unable to thoughtfully explain the significance of the project to the community.	

Just as we have proposed an adaptation of the three-phase reflection model (the DEAL model) of Ash, Clayton and Atkinson (2005), we are also proposing a rubric to assess the oral or written assignment that students must complete: four written paragraphs regarding each domain (academic learning and enhancement; personal growth; and social responsibility) and answering the questions: What did I learn? How, specifically, did I learn it? Why does it matter? And what will I do with it? The authors are using standards of critical thinking – i.e. accuracy, relevance, depth, breath, logic and significance (Paul and Elder, 2001) – as a series of ‘checks against your thinking’ that run through each of the levels (one to four, i.e. Identify and Describe; Apply; Analyse and Synthesise; and Evaluate) to further strengthen and improve the overall learning.

To make the assessment or grading more comprehensible, we have compiled a framework for a rubric (table 4.8, below). This rubric could be completed by the academic depending on the module content and assignments.

Table 4.8: Rubric for the Assessment of a Structured Reflection Journal

LEARNING OUTCOMES	EXEMPLARY 5	ACCOMPLISHED 4	DEVELOPING 3	BEGINNING 2	MARKS
Academic learning and enhancement					
Paragraph 1 Identify and describe					
Paragraph 2 Apply					
Paragraph 3 Analyse and synthesise					
Paragraph 4 Evaluate					
LEARNING OUTCOMES	EXEMPLARY	ACCOMPLISHED	DEVELOPING	BEGINNING	
Personal growth					
Paragraph 1 Identify and describe					
Paragraph 2 Apply					
Paragraph 3 Analyse and synthesise					
Paragraph 4 Evaluate					
LEARNING OUTCOMES	EXEMPLARY	ACCOMPLISHED	DEVELOPING	BEGINNING	
Social responsibility					
Paragraph 1 Identify and describe					
Paragraph 2 Apply					
Paragraph 3 Analyse and synthesise					
Paragraph 4 Evaluate					

4.4 PHASE 4: MODULE EVALUATION (EVALUATE)

There are two basic stepwise activities in the module evaluation phase:

- Demonstrate and celebrate the completion of the module.
- Evaluate and review the module for improvement.

4.4.1 *Demonstrate and celebrate the completion of the module*

Celebrate accomplishments

Parties, ceremonies and other acts of care, appreciation and recognition are an important part of any successful service-learning experience. When planning the celebration, remember to seek input from the agency representative or site supervisor and your students. They should be involved in planning the celebration. Also, if your students worked directly with clients (for example, learners in an after-school tutoring programme), some type of celebration or closure event with your students and the community participants can be held (Stacey, Rice and Langer, 2001: 34-35). The following are recommended:

- Celebrate the students' accomplishments with a party, press release, photo sessions or a letter from the community and service agencies. Be sure to involve the agency representative in these celebrations. These types of celebrations provide a valuable sense of closure for the students, agency representatives and you.
- Send a thank-you letter to the community and service agency site supervisor(s) and/or agency representative(s). It is important to recognise and reward, through some token of appreciation, the hard work of site supervisors. Also, send thank-you letters to others at the agency who assisted your students.
- Students could send thank-you notes with information about what their experiences with the community and service agencies have given them.
- Have a formal presentation of the project(s) to community and service agency representative(s). If your students' service-learning experience was an in-class project, then you may want your students to invite the agency representatives to class. With the community and service agency representatives present, the students could give an oral presentation, after which they present their finished project. This format allows students to share with their peers what they have been working on all quarter/ semester. It also brings closure to all participants.
- Talk to the site supervisor and/or community representative to celebrate, share evaluation results and plan needed revisions. It is beneficial to build ongoing relationships with your agencies. You can do this in person or by telephone. It is wise to get together after you have had some time to reflect, to discuss what went well and what did not. This is the time to make revisions that will improve the partnership next time. The site supervisor or

community representative is an excellent source of information about how to improve the service-learning experience for your students in the future.

- Write up your learning experiences and your students' responses and publish them. (Stacey, Rice and Langer, 2001: 34-35)

Remember, there are many others who would like to read about your experience using service-learning, so write it up and present it at a conference or in an article for a journal on educational issues.

4.4.2 Evaluate and review the module for improvement

Refer to Chapter 9: *Managing and Enhancing the Quality of Service-Learning*; and Appendices **K-S**.

In this final phase, conduct module evaluation. Assessing the impact of service-learning modules at all levels is critical. The lecturer needs to determine what indicators and methods might be used to measure impact (Gelmon *et al*, 2001). The evaluation and review process is an ongoing one and therefore takes place annually. At many South African HEIs it is a requirement that modules be evaluated annually, as this would assist with the 5/6 year review cycle (self-evaluation of HEIs as required by the HEQC, 2004).

In this section we focus on evaluating components of the module, and refer the reader to Chapter 9 for more detailed discussion of managing and enhancing the quality of service-learning more generally.

Internationally, there are many models, instruments and published documents to assist academic staff with evaluation. A survey using Likert-type response formats is a relatively easy quantitative method to gather mean ratings on various aspects and components of the service-learning experience. This type of survey can be used with both students and community and service agencies. Focus groups and interviews are qualitative approaches that demand slightly more time and energy but provide rich information. Action research, which is a cyclical iterative process of action and reflection on and in action (plan → act → observe → reflect; and then → plan etc.) is also a valuable research design to adopt, as it is a form of educational research wherein a professional – actively involved in practice – engages in systematic, intentional enquiry into some aspect of that practice for the purpose of understanding and improvement (Bender and Du Toit, 2005). Finally, examination of students' written reflection journals is another useful, qualitative method for assessing the impact of the module on students.

The evaluation process includes assessing impact on students, academic staff, department and professional disciplines and community and service agencies (adapted from Stephenson, Wechsler and Welch, 2003).

4.4.2.1 Impact of the service-learning on students

Students' cognitive understanding of module content, personal growth and civic behaviour are essential factors to consider in assessing the complete service-learning experience. Most lecturers use departmental or institutional module evaluation instruments to assess their modules. These instruments can serve a useful purpose; however, it is important to consider whether the existing evaluation tool can target the impact of service-learning on students. Consequently, lecturers are encouraged also to use the module evaluation tool developed by the service-learning/ community engagement office on their campus. It is possible that the staff of this office distribute, collect and analyse the instruments, and provide the results of these evaluations, so please communicate with them in this regard.

4.4.2.2 Impact of the service-learning on academic staff

Lecturers should revisit their motivation and determine if the module did, in fact, accomplish the intended outcomes that they expressed in their module curriculum. Similarly, lecturers should consider what professional skills they acquired or developed. This might include gaining new insight into community issues and needs or new knowledge about various agencies. Recognising that the service-learning module contributed to their teaching skills, or to other aspects of their scholarly work, is paramount. The impact of the service-learning on academic staff members can be documented within the personal statements of their professional portfolios during staff retention, performance management and promotion review.

4.4.2.3 Impact of the service-learning on department, HEI and the profession

Many departments, and perhaps the institution at large, have new initiatives focusing on various goals that are related to service-learning; for example, 'hands-on learning' expands the learning experience from traditional approaches, or 'civic engagement' addresses community needs. Similarly, many professional associations or learned societies within a discipline focus on experiential learning for accreditation purposes. Academic staff should determine to what extent the service-learning module accomplishes these departmental goals.

4.4.2.4 Impact of the service-learning on community and service agencies

The levels of satisfaction of the community and service agencies with the service-learning module should not be neglected. The community service/ service-learning centre on your campus may provide a mechanism to gather information from them to determine if their needs were met. Such information includes the number of contact hours and specific services provided by the students. At the same time, the academic staff member should determine if the community site is an effective setting for the class. Students are the best source of this information, either during class discussions or individual conversations.

4.4.2.5 *Community appreciation and recognition*

Finally, academic staff members are reminded to thank community and service agencies and to exchange valuable information among all the participants, possibly by hosting an informal gathering near the end of the module.

4.4.2.6 *Other ways to determine the success of the module*

Refer to Chapter 9: *Managing and Enhancing the Quality of Service-Learning*; and to Appendices **K-R**, which provide a range of review and feedback templates covering the various service-learning module participants.

How to determine if the module is going well and how to evaluate if the module is beneficial to all participants? The former is usually referred to as ‘formative’ evaluation; it allows you to form decisions about where to go next and how to modify programme elements. The latter is known as ‘summative’ evaluation; it answers the question, Did it have the intended effect? (Stacey, Rice and Langer, 2001: 36-39).

4.4.2.7 *Plan modifications*

You have now completed your study of the participants’ reactions to the service-learning experience and the effectiveness of this kind of learning. You will want to use this information to make the service-learning experience even better the next time around. (Refer to Chapter 9: *Managing and Enhancing the Quality of Service-Learning*.)

At this time, ask yourself the following questions and include the answers in your improvement plan (see Appendix **S** for additional information):

- What does the service agency representative (supervisor) think needs to be changed?
- What does the community agency representative think needs to be changed?
- What do the students think needs to be changed?
- What logistical procedures need to be changed?
- What forms need to be clarified/ updated?
- What needs to be changed in my curriculum?
- What needs to be changed in the student assignments?
- How can the communication with my community service/ service-learning centre on campus be improved?

4.5 CONCLUSION: CHALLENGES FOR ACADEMIC STAFF, STUDENTS, COMMUNITY AND SERVICE AGENCIES, AND MEETING THE CHALLENGES

The following are challenges of service-learning according to Satterlund (2002: 18-21) and Stacey, Rice and Langer (2001: 45-46):

Challenges for academic staff

- Meeting student needs and expectations can be difficult when you have students of various ages, some students without transportation, students with unrealistic expectations, and so on.
- There is only so much time available to cover specific module content, assess, develop lessons and reflection activities, research, mentor, publish, sit on committees, work out placement problems, eat, sleep, commute, care for partners or children, participate in sport, and so on...Academic staff have limited time.
- If you haven't visited your service sites you will be at a disadvantage as you will not know exactly what your students are experiencing.
- Your expectations for the service site may be unrealistic and can leave you with service sites that are not ideal or are at best mediocre in providing your students with more specific and direct linkages to course content and course goals.
- The relationship among HEI and community and service agencies is a tenuous one with complications. Issues can run deep, creating complex social and racial constraints on many interactions among your students, service partners and community members.
- The possible tensions mentioned above can add a dimension to the service experience for which some of your students might be unprepared – yet you must deal with such challenges.
- Quality of student experience comes down to every student's investment and participation, making it difficult to assess 'success' or 'failure' in academic terms.
- Quarter/ semester schedule constraints keep many potential community partners out of reach as potential placements.
- Lack of control over agency needs and realities creates unexpected problems for your students (and you) over the semester.
- Community and service agencies, though they have good intentions when partnering with us, are focused on meeting the needs of the clients they serve. This means that sometimes your requests must wait until more pressing client needs have been met. It can take time to get information from partners, and your students must learn to be assertive (but not demanding!) with voicing their questions and needs.

Challenges for students

- Transportation issues keep many students away from the really needy communities.
- Lecturer/ class schedules may conflict with community and service partner availability.
- Personal interests may not be reflected in the available placements for the module.

- Module expectations may be such that students feel overwhelmed by the addition of a service requirement or unsure what is expected of them by their lecturers, the service site, assignments or class discussions.
- Personal comfort zones are just that – personal and diverse. Some students are eager to work with the unfamiliar, different and ambiguous; others are not.
- Lack of experience with community needs can lead students to focus entirely on their own needs and neglect those of the community.
- Expectations of the service placement, or their own capabilities or those of community members students are working with, may be unrealistic.
- A sense of entitlement some students may feel can cloud their perceptions of clients or the organisation; in such cases, students might simply focus on ‘serving their time’.
- Community and service agencies work with constant staff changes, changing needs, their own set of expectations about the students, limited staffing to supervise and mentor students, and limited time for effective and ongoing communication.
- Stereotypes held of community members, current service etc. – if not addressed – get in the way of learning and effective service.
- Students might feel unsafe working at community and service agencies.

Challenges for community and service agencies

- Community and service agencies have real, practical needs in terms of supporting the community, and often they need more support than they can actually get or give.
- Attitudes of entitlement among some of the students, and student inexperience in general, can make it difficult to work with students in meaningful ways.
- Semester schedule constraints are becoming less and less feasible for many of our partners as they face higher costs to screen, train and supervise students.
- Limited knowledge of module outcomes and specific student needs have left some agencies ill-prepared to work with students in ways that would be more meaningful to them.
- Student expectations may not be met because of organisational change, client needs or budget cuts. At the same time, poor student follow-through in the past might have created stereotypes about such students, and such low expectations in some cases create low quality volunteer assignments for students.
- Community and service agency needs do not always match with module needs or expectations, yet the agencies are often reluctant to pass up the opportunity to work with students who may commit.
- In many community and service agencies, the mission is client-based rather than volunteer-based or volunteer-driven, and this can make accommodating students (i.e. volunteers) challenging.
- Poor communication of needs, student expectation or capabilities can leave agencies disappointed in student volunteers.
- Agencies need resources to maintain ongoing contact/ supervision with student volunteers, yet often lack them; thus they rely on students to be autonomous.

- Understaffed, overworked, underpaid staff members have limited energy for handling challenges.
- Community and service agencies are impacted directly by unanticipated client needs. They are there to serve clients first, and that means that we – the HEI and students – come second, third or sometimes even last.

Problem solving: Meeting the challenges head-on

In anticipating the challenges that can accompany any service-learning module, here are a few points to keep in mind:

- Effective communication is everything.
 - At the beginning of the class and throughout the entire process, communicate with your students regarding your goals (and outcomes) for the service and the learning.
 - Communicate with the service-learning staff as often as you like. Ask questions, share information, make suggestions and visit your service sites.
 - Communicate with the community and service agencies; call or email once a month.
- Have a back-up plan in case a placement falls through. Consider how such problems will impact students' projects, discussions or grades.
- Develop a protocol for anticipated problems and share it with your students, community and service agencies and the service-learning staff.
- Clarify and integrate your reflective assignments with your module.

Thank you for using service-learning in your modules and academic learning programmes. We know that it is not always a smooth 'journey' but, as a pedagogy, when put into practice and when well supported, service-learning is a powerful learning experience for both you and your students. You are making a great contribution to your students, your HEI and the community and service agencies.



SELF-STUDY ACTIVITY

Compile a **study guide** for students for the module with service-learning that you are teaching. This study guide should meet the requirements of your institution; if compiled taking the essential components and activities of Chapters 3 and 4 into consideration, it could be considered as a learning contract/ agreement with the students. In table 4.9 you will find an exemplar or checklist for compiling a study guide for a module integrating service-learning.

Table 4.9: Checklist for the Compilation of a Study Guide for a Module Integrating Service-Learning in the Curriculum

This checklist is designed to guide you in compiling your study guide. The items suggested provide detailed guidelines as to the possible structure and composition of a study guide.

A ORGANISATIONAL COMPONENT

Please note that some of the aspects of the organisational component might be included in a departmental information booklet that is also distributed to students. If this is the case it is important that the study guide refers to this document and relevant paragraph numbers.

It is important that all the resources of a module form an integrated package.

1 General premise and educational approach	✓
The guide contains the name of the author, date of compilation and copyright statement.	
The guide contains a table of contents and page numbers.	
The module title and module code are provided.	
The guide contains a word of welcome.	
The significance of the module is highlighted, stating clearly the community service-learning component.	
A clear overview of the module is provided (schematically or in words), indicating the community service-learning component.	
The educational approach is highlighted.	
Expectations in terms of self-directed learning/ flexible learning/ service-learning are clarified.	
The roles of the students and the lecturer (and the community and service agencies) are described.	
Instructions for the use of study materials are clear (e.g. textbook, WebCT course, multimedia).	
Difficult terminology used in the guide is clearly described (e.g. action words of outcomes).	
2 Contact information	✓
Contact information of lecturer(s)	
Name	
Building and office number	
Telephone and fax numbers	
Email address	
Consulting hours	
For WebCT module: digital photograph of lecturer and brief CV (both optional)	
Contact information of other relevant individuals	
Secretary	
Teaching assistants/ tutors	
Community and service agency	
Service-learning/ community engagement office and staff support on campus	
Other (e.g. support person for the online environment)	

3 Administrative arrangements	✓
Timetable and/or schedule(s): lectures and service-learning hours	
Venues	
Due dates for assignments, tasks, reflection documents, portfolios (if available)	
Dates of community service-learning/ formal tests/ examinations/ presentations (if available)	
Arrangements for communication (e.g. notice boards; telephone; email; WebCT tools)	
Arrangements for submission of assignments (e.g. hand in, post, fax, email; WebCT tools)	
4 Study materials	✓
References to the prescribed textbook and other additional study materials are provided.	
A detailed bibliography/ list of references is provided.	
For a WebCT module, links to relevant Internet sites, PowerPoint slideshows, electronic journal articles and scanned articles or chapters in textbooks may be provided (in consultation with the instructional designer and information specialist).	
5 Learning activities	✓
The number of contact sessions that will take place is stipulated.	
The number of community service-learning hours that will take place is stipulated (time record form).	
The distribution of the available notional hours between various learning activities is stipulated.	
The description and purpose of learning activities is given (e.g. service-learning, tutorials, interactive television, quizzes, discussions, chat sessions, student presentations etc.).	
Expectations regarding all learning activities are clearly stated.	
Specifications and guidelines for individual assignments are given.	
Specifications and guidelines for group assignments are given.	
Specifications and guidelines for reflecting/ reporting on the service-learning are provided.	
6 Assessment	✓
The following aspects regarding regulations and policy are clearly stated:	
Pass requirements	
Formula for calculating semester and year marks	
Policy on absence from service-learning site or tests, or late submission of assignments/ research papers is provided.	
Policy on academic dishonesty/ plagiarism is provided or referenced.	
Assessment methods and strategies	
Assessment methods are aligned with the specific learning outcomes and the main outcome of the module.	
Clear guidelines and assessment criteria regarding each of the assessment methods are provided.	
An indication is given of grading for participation in learning activities, where applicable.	
Clear information regarding format and mark allocation is provided.	
B. STUDY COMPONENT	
7 Module specifications	✓
The purpose of the module is clearly described.	
The competence that is required of students after completion of the module is clearly defined.	
The knowledge, skills and understanding required for competent performance that will support the achievement of the outcomes of the module are clearly stated (learning presumed to be in place).	

It is made clear (schematically or in words) how this module articulates and interrelates with other modules.	
The critical cross-field outcomes that are addressed in the module are clear and have been contextualised.	
The service-learning component is clearly described.	
8 Study units/ study themes	✓
Specific learning outcomes are provided.	
Outcomes focus not only on lower-order knowledge but also provide for integration of higher-order knowledge, skills and attitudes.	
The outcomes contain active verbs.	
The specific learning outcomes of all the study units sustain the broader module outcome.	
The assessment criteria are clearly defined and have been contextualised within the assessment strategies.	
The knowledge base required for the competent performance in the module (embedded knowledge) is clearly described.	
9 Criteria for service-learning module designation	✓
The module should	
... have a service-learning component described in the module descriptors.	
... integrate community issues and lecture hall learning.	
... include preparation of students for the community environment (such as tours, presentations and/or readings).	
... provide structured opportunities, such as writing assignments and group discussion, for students to reflect on the connections between their service experience and module outcomes.	
... include an assessment of student ability to integrate the academic and community experience.	
...take place at sites evaluated and approved by the lecturer in partnership with the community.	
...be evaluated by the student, community and service agencies and the lecturer.	
The service-learning component and its relative weighting in the final module mark allocation are explicitly listed in module descriptors of the module using a service-learning pedagogy.	
C GENERAL CRITERIA FOR STUDY GUIDES	
The guide has been edited for correct language usage.	
Provision of the guide in both English and Afrikaans has been considered.	
The writing style is relaxed and students are directly addressed.	
The guide is thorough, logical and complete but not complex.	
Numbering is correct and complete.	
Appropriate referencing techniques are used.	
Copyright requirements have been adhered to.	
The structure, layout, language usage and content of the guide comply with the needs of the target group.	
The study guide provides for opportunities for interaction with the material and other students.	
Student support, including technology support where applicable, is provided.	

(Adapted from the University of Pretoria, 2005)