Benefits and Challenges of Service Learning

Student Benefits	Student Challenges
• Working with unfamiliar populations reduces stereotypes and promotes tolerance • Promotes personal development, self efficacy, and leadership • Increases feeling of community connection and civic responsibility • Deepens understanding of subject matter and complexity of social issues	• Lack of time given the demands of school, work, and family • Fear of working with unfamiliar populations and issues • Lack of convenient transportation • Inability to relate service with their coursework and/or the work of the organization
Faculty Benefits	Faculty Challenges
• Expands role of educator from giver of knowledge to facilitator of learning • Inspires and innovates teaching methods • Broadens areas for research and publication related to current trends and issues • Promotes democratic citizenship and leadership and expands critical thinking and problem solving • Connects the community with curriculum and increases awareness of current societal issues as they relate to academic areas of interest	• Preparation work with the community partner and coordination of service activities requires time • Fear of unknown and letting go of control of the classroom when the impact of service learning is not easy to quantify in short term • Lack of institutional and departmental support given to faculty • Lack of time to adequately revise and restructure course in order to fully integrate service learning • Viewing service learning as soft, non-rigorous, non-academic learning or as an add-on, not an integral aspect of the course
Community Benefits	Community Challenges
• Opportunity to tap under-utilized volunteer base • Students often continue to volunteer beyond the end of the quarter • Students are enthusiastic and motivated to learn and bring with them new insights, perspectives, and knowledge • Extends community organization's ability to address unmet needs • Creates opportunities for community organizations to shape student learning	• Lack of time for preparation, training and supervision • Lack of benefit or even possible detriment resulting from short term volunteers • Difficulty recruiting students to work with organization due to location or type of work needed • Difficulty defining opportunities that meet student, faculty, and community goals