

Service Learning Projects

What is service learning?

“Service learning is a form of experiential education characterized by student participation in an organized service activity that is connected to specific learning outcomes, meets identified community needs and provides structured time for student reflection and connection of the service experience to learning.”

-The Service-Learning Initiative, The Ohio State University

Why should students participate in service learning?

Through service learning, you can:

- Apply course content to real-life situations,
- advance your academic goals,
- clarify your personal and career goals,
- gain practical experience valued by employers,
- help meet real community needs,
- strengthen your sense of social responsibility,
- learn to use reflection to gain meaning from experience,
- obtain a deeper understanding of complex social issues,
- learn to understand and respect cultural differences and commonalities, and
- use your time and talents to make a difference.

What will I gain academically from participating in service learning during this course?

The projects described on the following pages will allow you to:

- Participate in and observe Jewish organizational life,
- identify Jewish values (especially *tikkum olam*) that define and guide the mission and operation of the organization, and
- critically observe the culture (behaviors, activities, debates, and struggles) of the organization and to link them to the process of defining contemporary Jewish values and identities.

What will be required of me if I participate?

- You will attend an orientation to the host site, and meet with your supervisor as needed.
- You will work the required number of hours (20), make up for any absences, and communicate absences and vacations as soon as possible to the site supervisor.
- You will abide by rules and regulations of the organization.
- You will reflect on experience through written reports and class discussion and will complete a final reflection paper and/or presentation on the experience.

Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

5801 W 115th St, Overland Park, KS

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City is an agency that can provide a brilliant view into the current state of Jewish Culture in America.

Since the mid 1800's, Jewish Community Centers have helped to support the changing needs of Jewish Americans. This began with supporting new immigrants, helping ensure Jewish continuity, and providing a place for celebration. The agencies helped in the acculturation process by teaching English and new customs. As the Jewish population moved from a primarily urban immigrant community to a more assimilated, suburban population, the Jewish Community Centers adapted to offer a greater variety of programs. JCCs offered day camps, teen programs, fine and performing arts, preschool, athletics and sports, services to the aged, Jewish education, Israel programs, and cultural events. As assimilation has become even greater, JCCs are often the primary or only agencies providing connection for Jews to other Jews. JCCs have the unique goal of serving Jews of all ages, all backgrounds, and all levels of religious observance, while keeping their services open to non-Jewish local communities.

Because Jews can choose whether or not to identify themselves as Jewish and can choose to be associated with non-Jewish instead of Jewish organizations, the Jewish Community Centers can no longer rely on a captive audience. Both assimilation and self-hatred can persuade Jews to look for services elsewhere, especially if the quality of facilities or activities is weak. JCCs must offer state-of-the-art programs and excellent services.

Jewish Arts Festival - Marketing Department - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

In this project, the student will have a chance to explore various communication venues in order to promote the 2007 Jewish Arts Festival to local churches. The purpose of the Jewish Arts Festival, held every two years outside on the Campus Grounds (under tents), is to "savor the flavor" of "arts ala carte." That truly means the flavor from the artworks to the performers and from the ethnic foods to children's activities...all encompassing Jewish culture and traditions. The student would learn how to create a marketing plan that the Publicity Committee of the Festival could use to increase the non-Jewish attendance at the Festival. In prior Festivals, more than 30 local churches have come as guests to the Festival.

Lewis and Shirley White Theatre - Marketing Department - Jewish Community Center of Greater KC

In this project, the student will create marketing campaigns for the Fall Center Season and /or the Lewis and Shirley White Theatre. A marketing campaign can include materials from brochures to ads, from posters to flyers, from press releases to email blasts, etc. The Theatre will be opening its second season and it will be important to promote this performing arts location to the secular community in and around Kansas City. The Theatre is the newest addition to the cultural life of Greater Kansas City, and its name is still somewhat unknown to the general public.

HONK! - Marketing Department - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

In this project, the student will help the marketing department and the cultural arts department market the musical presentation *Honk!* A Broadway-style musical that beat out *The Lion King* for Best New Musical in London, *Honk!* is based on the tale of the Ugly Duckling and is a show full of charm, humor, and a message of tolerance...suited for audiences of all ages. This event will take place in July in the Lewis and Shirley White Theatre, but it needs to have a marketing campaign in place by late April or early May.

Membership Department - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

In this project, the student will:

1. Learn about the variety of programs offered at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City. While learning about the programs, the student will gain knowledge about how the agency is organized and about collaboration within the agency and with other organizations. Resources will include the agency publications, website, and interviews with staff.
2. Assist the agency with its evaluation process in order to improve customer service so that the agency can fulfill its mission.
3. Conduct a project to contact new members with the goal being to establish connections and increase customer satisfaction.
4. Assist in responding to inquiries from the public.
5. Assist with an outreach project to encourage unaffiliated Jews to become involved.

Cultural Arts Department - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City can help students learn about Jewish arts and culture through hands on art management experiences. The Cultural Arts Department offers a variety of programs over the project period. These include: a community theatre production of *Angels in America*, a classical performance by acclaimed musicians, The Kansas City Jewish Film Festival, and a special event which celebrates the positive relationship between Jews and Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. In this project, the student will:

1. Help implement marketing campaigns for the various programs, particularly with creating a plan to help reach college age students.
2. Help curate a gallery exhibit, Jewish Costumes of the Ottoman Empire.
3. Help with front of house responsibilities for the new Lewis and Shirley White Theatre.
4. Assist with the Kansas City Jewish Film Festival through volunteer coordination.

Learning for Life - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

In this project, the student will work with a professional who works with Jewish youth and young adults. There is an annual event – Youth Shabbat – that is youth led and youth run. This is a program that will be on Friday, March 31, and there will be well over 200 youth and their parents attending. The student would work with the youth committee, work on the details of the evening, create marketing before and after the event, and oversee the event.

Midwest Center for Holocaust Education - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

The project involves collating, cross-referencing, and indexing the Holocaust survivor audiotapes, videotapes, and transcripts in MCHE's collections.

Heritage Center - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

The Heritage Center is a community-wide program for adults age 65 and above. The Heritage Center provides educational, spiritual, cultural, fitness, and social programs five days per week. Approximately 150 individuals participate in one or more programs per week. The Heritage Center is a grant-funded program. Each year our funders require that the Center conduct an outcomes measurement survey in order to demonstrate that the program is reaching its goals. In the past this survey was a project for KU social work students. This survey, compiled by Heritage Center staff, includes six or seven brief questions that are presented to a sampling of participants in a face-to-face, one-on-one interview. After the survey is completed, results would be tallied. The student should have the following qualities: ability to work independently, attention to detail, ability to relate to older adults, and good interpersonal skills. The project would be administered between the hours 9am and 3pm on Mondays through Thursdays and 9am to 1pm on Fridays.

Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City - Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

The project supervisor runs an initiative for young Jewish adults in the Greater Kansas City area. YPI: A Community Resource for Young Jewish Adults 21-45, enables this demographic to network socially through affinity/interest groups based on age. The supervisor is starting two new affinity/interest groups for young adults and plans on a minimum of three programming events between January and May.

- The first group is for married and single parent families who have children five years of age and younger. They have an event scheduled for February 19 during the day.
- The second group is an arts and cultural group for young adults in their 20's. They are choosing the activities and dates for their upcoming programs.
- There may be a third group of "20 something" newcomers to Kansas City.

The student would be responsible for assisting the supervisor in all aspects of preparation and planning. This would include purchasing supplies, assisting in marketing the program, creating the necessary paperwork, attending and assisting at the actual programs. This is a very hands on experience and a great way to learn the many aspects of how to plan and execute programming (which is applicable to any demographic). The student should have good people skills, be organized, be flexible, and have adequate computer skills.

NCSY (National Conference of Synagogue Youth)

9900 Antioch, Overland Park, KS

One of the largest youth groups in the Midwest and certainly Kansas City's history was the Synagogue Youth Organization (SYO). In the 50's and 60's, this youth group had 500 members. As a point of reference, Bnai Brith, currently the largest youth group, has about 200 members. SYO is planning a reunion this summer and is trying to reconnect with its alumni around the globe (see an article at <http://www.ou.org/ncsy/events/2005/reunion.htm> for more). In the late 70's SYO transitioned into what is now NCSY.

National Conference of Synagogue Youth Reunion

The project is to prepare a brief history of NCSY over the past couple decades for the reunion. This would allow the alumni to see what their childhood youth group has become. This would include:

1. Researching articles at the KC Jewish Chronicle.
2. Interviewing alumni, former staff, and community leaders.
3. Collecting/scanning pictures if time allows.
4. Compiling all this information into a rough draft of the history of KC NCSY.

Johnson County Library

9875 W. 87th St, Overland Park, KS

JCL was recently awarded a Jewish Literature Grant by the American Library Association and NextBook, an organization dedicated to the promotion of Jewish Literature. The grant calls for the hosting of 5 discussions of pre-selected books under a pre-selected theme. The theme we selected was: A Mind of Her Own: Fathers and Daughters in a Changing World.

Jewish Literature Book Discussions – Johnson County Library

The discussion will be held this fall, and these are the titles:

Tevey the Dairyman, by Sholem Aleichem; Bread Givers, by Anzia Yezierska; 1185 Park Avenue: A Memoir, by Anne Roiphe; American Pastoral, by Philip Roth; and Bee Season, by Myla Goldberg

We would like the student to:

- Read the books
- Research the books and authors as much as possible
- Help with the creation of discussion questions and preparation of the discussions
- Provide the information in a format that is adaptable to our Web Page
- Possibly work with the Jewish Community Center on promotion ideas as well as assist with some initial preparation of their Book Fair in the fall (since this will take place next semester, you will not be required to do this for grading purposes. However, you are encouraged to participate.)

Kehilath Israel Synagogue

10501 Conser, Overland Park, KS

Work with Hedy Shron, Program Director at the Kehilath Israel Synagogue, to plan and coordinate programs for two Jewish holidays that occur in February and March and at the same time observe and gain the knowledge and awareness of enjoyable Jewish cultures and customs.

- TuB'Shvat is a holiday of trees in Israel, which will be celebrated with a seder, a meal consisting of readings, explanations, songs and the sampling of many fruits from various trees. Sunday, February 12, at approximately 12 noon to 2 p.m.
- Purim is a festive holiday, which will be celebrated with a carnival. People come in costumes, and we read the Megillah story, play games of chance, compete for prizes, and enjoy a variety of rides, slides and refreshments. Monday evening, March 13.

Congregation Ohev Sholom

5311 W 75th St, Prairie Village, KS

In this project, the student will:

1. Receive a preliminary 1-hour telephone briefing from Rabbi White about the history and culture of Ohev Sholom.
2. Attend the Board Retreat from 9 am to 3 pm on Sunday, February 19th, at Truman Library.
3. Attend two subsequent (evening) board meetings at Ohev Sholom in March and April.
4. Analyze and summarize selected organizational goals, action plans, and the board's progress toward meeting its goals.

KU Hillel

940 Mississippi, Lawrence, KS

PR/Marketing

The responsibilities of the PR/Marketing person would include writing press releases, articles, and captions to pictures for the Kansas City Jewish Chronicle and other news sources. In addition, the PR/Marketing person would develop materials to market major Hillel events to the KU Jewish community.

Program Development

Hillel needs a student to identify a programming need within the KU Jewish community and then to design a program that fills this need. A successfully planned program includes: identifying a programming need, analyzing the required components of the program (location, cost, advertising, etc), implementing the program, and evaluating the program following its conclusion. The student will meet with the Program Director during the first two weeks of the semester and then biweekly until the completion of the program (or more frequently as dictated by the needs of the student and the program).

Lawrence Jewish Community Center

37080 Stetson Dr, Lawrence, KS

The student will attend various meetings, classes, events, etc. at the Lawrence Jewish Community Center for the purpose of taking candid photographs evocative of the spirit of the activities attended. These photographs would be used as file photographs for various periodicals, as well as the Center's directory. The students will be responsible for selecting which images to present to the supervisor for use. Existing photographs will also be made available to the volunteer to review for the above purposes. The student will be responsible for sending the images to publications designated by the supervisor. This project will allow the student to experience the working processes of a smaller synagogue, including community activities, and religious instruction and celebration, as well as administrative concerns.

Service Learning Writing Requirements.

The three short papers leading up to your final paper should be 3-5 pages long. The final papers (draft and revision) should be 9-11 pages long, including the works cited page.

In paper one, you should explain which service learning opportunity you have selected. Explain your responsibilities, your qualifications to undertake them, and how you plan to accomplish your goals. Include a timeline as well as a copy of your service learning contract. Note the end date of your service obligations.

In paper two, describe the setting of your work and the materials or people with which or with whom you are working. Consider how the activities and interests of the people in this setting position them vis a vis Jewish American life. Discuss an incident, observation, problem, or relationship from this setting that has reinforced or challenged your own relation to Jewish American life. Attach your time sheets and supervisor evaluation forms.

In paper three, place your service learning experience in the context of materials we have read and to issues we have discussed in class. Explain how your service learning experience enriches or has been enriched by class readings and/or discussions and suggest ways to strengthen the connections. Would you recommend this opportunity to other students? Why? How does it fit in with and what does it contribute to the course readings and how does it fulfill the goals of the course? Has this experience had an impact on your academic, profession, or community service goals? Do you wish to continue working with this organization or with another community organization?

The draft of the final paper should pull your material together, incorporating revisions based on earlier responses to your short papers. The revision of the final paper should incorporate revisions based on responses from me and your peers (and any other readers you may have) to the draft and oral presentation. Final time sheets and supervisor evaluation forms are due on 2 May.

AVOID PLAGIARISM! CITE EVERY PRINT OR INTERNET SOURCE CONSULTED.