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National Youth Leadership Council Service-Learning Self-Assessment Rubrics for Out of School Programs
(Developed in Partnership with the Center for Urban Initiatives & Research, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

Note on terminology used in these rubrics: The service-learning "experience" incorporates a number of facets or phases for youth involvement that are not limited to the service-learning activity itself. The term "activity," for the purpose of these rubrics, refers to the on-hands intervention that targets a group in the community. The term "project" refers to the specific service-learning experience that includes the targeted activity, as well as all other phases that support the activity. These phases include project selection, design, planning, preparation, and evaluation of the process and its impact on youth and the targeted population. The term "program" refers more broadly to service-learning as a specific area of study for youth under which projects occur.

1) Youth Voice: Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.			
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1. Although youth may be highly active in the service-learning activity, they are not typically charged with making decisions about the project. If any youth input occurs, it is usually through "opinion-gathering" vehicles such as group feedback sessions or surveying, rather than "decision making," such as youth-lead planning.	1. Youth are involved in decision making in at least one phase such as project selection, design, planning, or evaluation, but not in most areas of the project OR opportunities for youth to make decisions are generally minimal. 2. At this level, the program has a more informal mechanism to provide youth a limited role in decision-making.	1. With a consideration for age appropriateness, youth are highly involved in the decision-making process of the service-learning experience in most, but not all, phases. 2. At this level, a formal system or practice has been adopted by the program that is used as a vehicle to involve youth in making decisions in almost all phases (selection, design, planning, and evaluation) of the project.	1. Youth are primarily responsible for leading all phases of the project including selection, planning, design and lessons, goal-setting, deciding roles and responsibilities, and evaluation. 2. Youth are carefully matched to decision-making tasks by age. 3. The program has instituted a formal system where youth and adults work in partnership to ensure youth decision-making, with supportive adult input, at

			each phase of the service-learning project.

2) Duration and Intensity: Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.			
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1. The service-learning project is at least one month long with youth engaged 3 to 4 times during that month OR the project is longer but youth engagement is inconsistent or less than once per week. 2. The length of the project is sufficient for youth to be actively involved in implementation of the activity and engage in some limited reflection.	1. The project is longer than one month, but less than one semester, with youth engaged consistently at least once per week. 2. With emphasis on implementation, the project also incorporates some time for youth to prepare for the activity, as well as reflection time to process experiences.	1. The project is a minimum of one semester long with youth engaged consistently and on a weekly basis. 2. The project is carefully constructed so that youth are offered a balance of activities that include planning, preparation, implementation, reflection, and learning outcome assessment. 3. Youth typically spend the majority of time in implementation, but the other phases are also incorporated in the learning experience.	1. The project is several months long (ie: longer than one semester) with youth engaged in project-related activities multiple times per week. 2. The project's duration is sufficient to address the identified community need in a meaningful way, as well as support achievement of youth learning outcomes. 3. The project is challenging and carefully constructed so that youth have sufficient time to fully experience each phase including investigation, planning and preparation, implementation, on-going reflection, learning outcome assessment, and project evaluation.

3) **Process Monitoring:** Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.			
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1. The project may have goals and/or youth outcomes, but there is no process in place for measuring achievement.	1. The program, or project, has developed specific goals and youth outcomes, as well as some measures to monitor project implementation. 2. Some data are collected (such as performance assessments, portfolios of youths' work, project activity logs, etc.) to support monitoring, but there is no evaluation system in place for routine measurement and/or assessment of results.	1. Youth in the program and adults develop a formal evaluation plan during the planning phase of the project. The plan incorporates both outcome and process measures that will monitor the project's quality in terms of implementation, as well as achievement of learning outcomes for youth. 2. Youth are involved in data collection. 3. Results are occasionally reviewed to assess: 1) the quality of the project (Is it being implemented effectively?) and 2) the impact of the project's activities on youth learning including skill building.	1. A formal evaluation plan that includes process measures, as well as youth learning outcomes is fully implemented throughout the course of the project and after. At this level, measurement and assessment of community outcomes (impact on beneficiaries of the project) are adopted. 2. A process is incorporated in the project timeline to use results in an on-going manner to monitor the quality of program delivery, improve the program and assess the project's impact on youth learning. 3. Community outcomes are measured throughout and assessed at the end of the project. 4. Both youth in the project and adults are involved in implementing the evaluation (planning and data collection), measuring achievement of outcomes and processing information.

4) Link to Curriculum: Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.			
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	youth.	*service-learning experience for youth.*	*programming.*
1. The project has been developed independently from other formal learning experiences in which youth are engaged (i.e.: academic or civic curriculum).	1. The project has established learning goals for youth that are specific to the service-learning program. 2. The program is generally supportive of service-learning , but the does not intentionally coordinate activities and/or academic, SEL or other learning goals with the program.	1. The service-learning project's learning goals are somewhat consistent with other academic content and/or program curriculum. 2. Youth in the program are made aware of service-learning learning goals, as well as how to achieve them. 3. Reflection is used to help youth understand the relationship between their work in the project and achievement of learning goals. 4. Specific skills have been identified as supportive to achieving learning goals. Activities in the project phases are carefully constructed so that youth have on-hands experiences using these skills.	1. Service-learning goals are intricately connected to broader supporting program goals; goals have been developed that support academic and/or program curriculum. 2. Learning goals are clearly articulated to youth and reinforced throughout the project using multiple messages (ie: visual media, reflection exercises, instruction, etc.) 3. The project maximizes reflection, adult feedback and on-hands experiences to help youth transfer knowledge and skills from one setting to another. 4. Service-learning that takes place in programs is formally recognized in board policies. 5. Youth participation in service-learning is recognized through documentation.

5) Partnerships: Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial and address community needs.

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1. The program functions independently from the community. The program may connect with community agencies or groups on occasion, but does so only periodically to access resources for service learning projects.	1. The service-learning program has functional partnerships in the community based on overlapping interests where resources are shared as needed. These partnerships enable the program to provide a rich experience for youth in service-learning. 2. The functional partnerships typically end at the conclusion of service-learning projects.	1. The service-learning program collaborates with key stakeholders/ partners in the community to achieve service and learning goals. 2. The partners engage in some collective goal setting and coordinate program activities across agencies, including the service-learning experiences for youth. 3. The partnership arrangement extends beyond the completion of one service-learning project.	1. The program is part of a diverse collaborative partnership that includes youth, educators, families, community members, community based organizations, and/or businesses. 2. The partnership has adopted formal policies and practices, as well as a shared vision and set of common goals. 3. The partnership engages in joint decision-making for the community programs and shares resources for activities. 4. A formal advisory group of partnership members is in place whose purpose is to oversee roles and responsibilities and plan for future collaborations and service-learning projects. 5. The partnership has developed and implemented an action plan to meet specified goals.

6) Reflection: Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.

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1. Reflection is not a primary part of the service-learning project and, if incorporated, resembles more of a feedback function between youth and adults as a means to process experiences of youth during the project.	1. Reflection is mainly concentrated at the end of the project to evaluate quality and impact. 2. One or two methods are used to facilitate the reflection experience, such as group discussion or written journals. 3. Youth begin to reflect past the "what happened" question to those in which they more closely examine their personal experiences.	1. Reflection occurs before, during and after the project is completed. 2. It is used as both a method for self-examination for youth to understand personal growth and civic responsibility development, as well as a means for adults to gauge the progress of youths' experience. 3. Youth are intentionally encouraged to examine their own assumptions, values and beliefs in the context of their service experience. 4. Multiple methods are used to help youth fully engage in reflection activities (visual, verbal, written).	1. Reflection is incorporated throughout the planning, preparation, design, implementation, and evaluation phases of the project. 2. Multiple reflection methods are used (verbal, written, artistic, and nonverbal activities) to address all learning styles. 3. Youth are challenged to use critical thinking skills to question their personal belief systems and assumptions about the service experience, as well as those of others. 4. At this level, youth are also engaged in active reflection that help them better understand the broader social context within which the community need lies and begin to plan to address broader social issues that impact their specific service issue.

7) Meaningful Service: Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.			
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1. Selection of the service project is mainly based on an interest of one or a few stakeholders.	1. The project involves youth from a range of ages and developmental abilities; youth are matched to activities and/or phases as appropriate. 2. The project is selected by the program staff and/or stakeholders with minimal involvement by participating youth, but consideration may be given to projects where youth have expressed interest.	1. The project is age-appropriate for the majority of youth in the program. 2. A majority of youth are involved in project selection. 3. Youth are introduced to the underlying cause of the problem being addressed by the project (through reflection, group instruction, etc.) 4. Some activities are included that help youth understand the potential impact of the project on those it serves.	1. The service-learning project is carefully chosen AND planned based on ages of youth involved, as well as developmental abilities; the project is suited for each individual youth involved. 2. All youth participants have worked in partnership to complete a needs assessment using available data to identify the service intervention. 3. All youth participants have been actively involved in choosing the project. 4. Youth are engaged in multiple structured activities throughout the project period to help them understand the potential impact of the project AND underlying social causal issues. 5. Outcomes have been established for those receiving the project service and activities occur with the youth to monitor the achievement of those outcomes.

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8) Diversity: Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.			
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1. Although youth may have opportunities to reflect on differing opinions among their own service project group (youth-to-youth or staff-to-youth, for instance), there are little or no opportunities to experience working with people from backgrounds different from their own.	1. While not necessarily a stated goal of the project, diversity is valued by staff and there is some effort to incorporate opportunities for youth to experience different people and points of view. 2. The program incorporates some skill-building activities intended to help youth appreciate diverse perspectives.	1. Creating an open environment for welcoming diversity is intentionally incorporated in the program, and supported through some curricular and reflection activities. 2. Youth are offered opportunities to experience people from diverse backgrounds and differing opinions. 3. Program adults provide feedback and guidance to youth during activities to enhance their tolerance and respect for differing points of view.	1. Promoting diversity in backgrounds and perspectives is a stated goal of the project. 2. Intentional and well-planned choices are made in program activities so that youth will have opportunities to experience diverse people and perspectives through the service-learning project. 3. Youth are exposed to both diverse service providers and beneficiaries through the service-learning experience. 4. Opportunities for eliciting diverse perspectives from both youth and stakeholders about the service learning project and connecting social issues are incorporated in reflection activities and curricular activities. 5. Reflection activities are carefully guided so that youth can learn to appreciate the value of differing points of view, as well as the value of overcoming stereotypes.

9) Mission, Beliefs and Goals: Service-learning is promoted and systematically practiced as central to the program's mission, beliefs and goals.			
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1. Service-learning occurs as a single program or special activity, but is generally not part of a broader system-wide strategy for instruction. 2. The service-learning program operates under existing policies (there are no special policies that focus on service-learning).	1. Service-learning is publicly supported by some administrators as an important part of young people's learning. 2. Service-learning occurs in more than one instructional program. 3. Goals and/or policies mention service-learning, but the method is not specifically part of the a system-wide strategy for instruction.	1. Service-learning is intentionally incorporated in a number of instructional programs. 2. The mission statement and/or goals refer broadly to service learning as a strategy for effective instruction. 3. The program's policies are written in a way that supports service-learning as a method of delivering programming.	1. Service-learning as a method of providing enriched learning experiences for youth is specifically included in the program's mission statement. 2. A specific set of goals relating to service-learning have been created. 3. The program institutionalizes service-learning through its policies and practices; these specifically declare service-learning as a method of instruction across a wide range of instructional programs. 4. Policies and practices are continuously reviewed and altered as needed to accommodate growth in service-learning across instructional programs.

10) Organizational Support - Resources: The supporting program administration dedicates sufficient resources to the service-learning efforts to ensure youth have opportunities in service-learning.			
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1. Funding for the service-learning efforts are irregular, but the program manages to implement activities by juggling resources. 2. At times, important activities must be eliminated or reduced due to lack of funds and/or resources.	1. The service-learning efforts are partially funded by supporting program, but also relies on some external funding sources, such as grants and/or community donations. 2. The supporting effort provides some additional resources for service-learning experiences such as transportation and supplies, but resources are generally scarce. (I.e.: adults/youth workers sometimes must transport youth due to lack of buses; adults/youth workers frequently provide materials for the projects themselves.)	1. The service-learning efforts are funded by the supporting program, as a part of its general budget. 2. There is adequate funding for the regular program, but "extra" activities (such as field trips) must be funded through external sources. 3. The supporting program generally provides most of the resources needed by the program such as transportation and supplies. adults/youth workers may, but rarely need to supplement resources themselves.	The service-learning program(s) is provided with ample resources to operate a quality service-learning program(s). In viewing service-learning as a priority… 1. The supporting program fully and adequately funds, and provides all other resources for, all service learning projects and/or activities. 2. The supporting program fully funds occasional activities that are not part of the base budget. 3. Transportation is provided by the supporting program consistently and reliably.

11) Professional Development: Individuals involved in implementing service-learning projects are provided with strong training in the philosophy and pedagogy of service-learning, and are offered on-going opportunities to network, observe and problem solve with others in the service-learning community.			
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1. Adults/youth workers and other staff generally provide their own service-learning training; service-learning training is not paid by the supporting program. 2. Adults/youth workers and staff seek out their own networking opportunities.	1. Some service-learning-specific training is required and funded by the supporting program; it is typically offered once or twice a year. 2. Adults/youth workers and staff are mainly responsible for researching their own service-learning training opportunities and gaining approval for funds from the supporting program. 3. Networking is informal and generated by adults/youth workers and staff rather than sponsored by the supporting program.	1. The supporting program has a fully funded service-learning training program for adults/youth workers and staff in programs that include multiple opportunities each year. 2. Adults/youth workers and staff research training opportunities, but administration also seeks out opportunities and presents them to staff for participation. 3. Networking occurs both informally and formally through supporting program sponsored events and provides opportunities for staff to travel to other service-learning programs and/or conferences/workshops, etc.	1. Service-learning training is a fully funded, integrated feature of professional development and is available at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. 2. Service-learning training concentrates on staff delivering service-learning programming, but is offered to adults/youth workers on a system wide basis as a way to promote integration of service-learning. 3. Administrators work with adults/youth workers and staff to create a professional development plan that will enhance adults/youth workers and staff skills, as well as the service-learning program. 4. Networking is considered an essential part of program development by the administration, which is highly proactive in creating opportunities for adults/youth workers and staff to work with other service-learning professionals.