Mission

The Office of Service-Learning’s mission is to engage regional communities, the university, and its’ student body in a mutually beneficial, innovative learning and service enterprise for the purpose of mobilizing knowledge, talents, and energies to benefit the greater community.

We strive to accomplish the following:

- Serve as a campus resource to facilitate the implementation of service-learning and community-based learning.
- Effectively match academic and professional development with needs identified by community stakeholders for the purpose of transitioning classroom learning into practical, professional experience.
- Advocate for the incorporation of service-learning into every curriculum campus-wide.
- Coordinate activities between, and build community among, service-learning stakeholders.
- Provide students with opportunities to engage with nonprofit and for-profit sites to stimulate service-learning and workforce development.
- Create reflection structures that provide a contextual framework to challenge and interrogate theories, stereotypes, and preconceptions as students experience their community.

Student opportunities (See Appendix A):
• **Service-Learning Scholars Corps:**

Students will work with the Office of Service-Learning, supervising service-learning projects at various locations in Kalamazoo. Students will serve as liaisons among service-learning students, site supervisors, and the Office of Service-learning. Additionally, students may conduct in-person surveys during fall semester, and may be asked to assist with reflection exercises.

**Internships:**

Interns will engage at all levels of project development and provide training and supervision for service-learning student scholars. Interns will also work with the Office of Service-Learning, supervising service-learning projects at various locations in Kalamazoo. Interns will serve as liaisons among service-learning students, site supervisors, and the Office of Service-learning. Additionally, interns will coordinate data collection efforts during the fall semester and may conduct in-person surveys. May also be asked to provide training in reflection and assist with reflection exercises.
**Definition of service-learning:**

Service-learning is a mutually beneficial endeavor in which course learning objectives are met by addressing community-identified needs—putting academics into practice.*

*Criteria for service-learning designation:*

- Service project must enhance understanding of course learning objectives
- Students provide at least 15 hours of service during the semester with some exceptions, including project-based service that often take more hours to complete
- Must include critical reflection of student’s experiences
- Projects must serve a community-identified need
- Must be a reciprocal partnership among community partners, students, and university instructors
- Best practices suggest that service-learning be a transformative experience

**Example:** If students collect trash out of an urban streambed, they are providing a valued service to the community as volunteers. If students collect trash from an urban streambed, analyze their findings to determine the possible sources of pollution, and share the results with residents of the neighborhood, they are engaging in service-learning.

**Online service-learning:** E-service-learning is a form of instruction that delivers instruction or service or both through an online format.

**Types of e-service-learning:**

- Hybrid Type I (fully online instruction with service fully on site)
- Hybrid Type II (fully onsite instruction with fully online service)
- Hybrid Type III (a hybrid format with instruction and service partially delivered online and partially delivered on site),
- Extreme E-Service-Learning (100% of the instruction and service online).
- Client Based Courses (a particular client is incorporated throughout the course content and the entire class engages in project(s) for that client).

In addition to the best practices found in all service-learning, E-service-learning instructors should educate the instructional design team about the philosophical underpinnings of service-learning to increase buy in and technological support. Community partners can engage with the class through online instructional tools. Instructors using totally online content must be actively engaged throughout the course to support the service-learning.

*See Appendix B for complete list of experiential learning terms, definitions, and criteria.