Integrating Service Learning to the College Curriculum: An Added Value to a Meaningful Approach to Teaching

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Abstract

Service Learning (SL) refers to a teaching pedagogy where students learn and develop through active participation in organized service experiences that meet community needs. The program is integrated into the students’ academic curriculum and provides structured time for a student to think, talk or write about what he did and saw during the service activity. Students therefore are provided with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities.

This paper discusses the added-value of Service Learning and its importance to students, the community, faculty and institutions of Higher Education for possible inclusion in the curricula of Asian Schools. It also points out the differences between community service or volunteerism and Service Learning. The benefits of Service Learning are also discussed and how it can be integrated into the school’s curriculum. A proposed curriculum for Foreign Language Teaching is also presented for consideration. As in any endeavor, there are concerns and issues that are to be addressed if the school will consider adopting the SL Program.

Keywords: Service Learning, Community Service, Teaching Pedagogy, Foreign Language Teaching