



# SELF-DIRECTED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING HANDBOOK

Department of Criminal Justice, UCF

## ABSTRACT

This handbook guides students through their own self-directed learning experience to integrate their classroom knowledge with community-based activities. As part of the course, students plan and present their goals, learning objectives, experiences, and reflections.

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In this handbook, we will:

- Briefly define integrative learning and experiential learning.
- Explore some ideas for experiential learning opportunities.
- Provide a list of potential sources to find experiential learning opportunities.
- Describe ethical issues and dilemmas in the workplace.
- Outline and discuss the requirements and expectations for completing this component of the course, which include:
  - Assembling and submitting a Learning Commitment Coversheet and Worksheet,
  - Keeping a journal, and
  - Completing other course requirements, such as discussions, self-assessments, and papers.

## Integrative Learning

Undergraduate students learn through multiple forms of educational experiences. The concept of “integrative learning” refers to learning that connects your core academic knowledge inside the classroom to real-world professional and civic contexts. According to the Association of American Colleges & Universities (n.d.), integrative learning builds across courses, time, and campus and community life to develop individual goals, values, and ethics and build personal success and social responsibility (See <https://www.aacu.org/resources/integrative-learning> and <https://fctl.ucf.edu/teaching-resources/teaching-strategies/high-impact-practices/> )

## Experiential Learning

Integrative learning may be facilitated through experiences outside the classroom. Experiential education builds social skills, work ethic, and practical knowledge (<https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/power-experiential-education>). It is a complex form of active learning (CEI, n.d.) (See <https://cei.umn.edu/active-learning> ). From an academic perspective, students may gain a deeper understanding of their major outside the classroom, improve their ability to think critically in new situations, and engage in learning that extends into the workplace for a lifetime.

The experiential learning component of this course is self-directed by the student. As such, students are planning their own learning experience. This includes two important steps:

1. You will plan your learning experience by submitting a Learning Commitment and Worksheet (See Section 3 of this Handbook).
  - a. A variety of ideas about finding experiential learning opportunities are provided below. When exploring the ideas and sites provided, remember that you are not limited to the list of volunteering opportunities provided in this handbook. You may explore other options.
  - b. All experiential activities **must be approved by the course instructor.**
2. You will engage in reflective learning (See Section 4 of this Handbook).
  - a. When selecting an experiential activity the goal is - learning. Engaging in volunteer activities is not focused on the mechanics of simply “working” or reporting the functions performed. As such, you *may* be required to reflect on and document the following:
    - i. Connections between criminal justice and relevant experiences;
    - ii. Connections between criminal justice and other disciplines, fields, and/or perspectives;
    - iii. How your criminal justice knowledge, skills, theories, or methods may be adapted or applied to new situations; and
    - iv. Your development (self-assessment) as a learner and how you learned to use prior knowledge and experiences in new and challenging contexts (AACU, 2009).

## Experiential Learning Ideas

In the field of criminal justice, complex social problems such as poverty and behavioral health converge in the study of crime, offenders, victims, and society’s responses. Human rights issues, such as racial and gender discrimination, are likewise a common focus of criminal justice practitioners, academics, and community members. As you transition from an academic learning environment to a broader social environment, the relationship between criminal justice and various fields, experiences, and perspectives will become increasingly evident.

Criminal justice is an interdisciplinary field of study which draws heavily from psychology, sociology, law, and public administration. As such, criminal justice majors may explore a wide variety of related career and civic service opportunities outside the

traditional training certifications required of police officers (See <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/CJSTC/Training-Resources/Training-Resources-Home.aspx> .)

The experiential learning activity for this course requires **15 or more hours of service in the community during the semester**. The student independently explores and obtains an integrative experiential learning position, which is authorized by the instructor. Services may be performed with a variety of community-based organizations (CBOs). CBOs include, but are not limited to, non-profits, government agencies, faith-based organizations, and philanthropic arms of for-profit organizations. Examples of community integrative learning experiences may include:

- Coordinating or volunteering work on a Habitat for Humanity home
- Developing a personnel handbook for volunteer workers on behalf of a non-profit organization
- Providing food packaging or delivery assistance at the Second Harvest Food Bank
- Coordinating or participating in a charity event to support behavioral health
- Serving as a companion for an “at-risk” homebound senior
- Volunteering at an urban garden co-operative
- Volunteering for a fundraising event for a domestic violence shelter
- Volunteering in an environmental education or clean-up project

## Requirements and Expectations

This experiential learning component requires student to do the following:

1. Contact community-based organizations for the purpose of engaging in an experiential learning activity that addresses a need in the community (campus, local, regional, global)
2. Demonstrate that the activity meets one or more course objectives, as well as expressly connecting the integrative experiential activity and course content
3. Obtain the course instructor’s authorization for the planned experiential activity
4. Submit a completed and signed “Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet for Learning Commitment” (See course Schedule for due date)
5. Perform at least **15 hours** of public service to a community-based organization
6. Be prepared for the course instructor to perform a site visit or “cold call” to confirm your service work
7. Provide evidence of the completion of the experiential learning activity



8. Demonstrate an increase in civic awareness and engagement
9. Engage in assignments outlined in the Syllabus or course which may include, but are not limited to, journal entries, discussions, self-assessments, and papers (See course Syllabus or Schedule for due dates).

## Potential Sources of Experiential Learning Opportunities

While opportunities for learning through service to the community may be limitless, your instructor may limit your choices elsewhere in the course. This handbook is written generally to be used by faculty and students in a variety of courses. So, be sure to read all the course materials related to finding an experiential learning opportunity to make sure it fits within the specific criteria for your course.

### UCF's Youth Protection Program

In 2019, UCF approved University Policy 2-005 and instituted the UCF Youth Protection Program which requires formal background checks for those working with minors.

As a result, **experiential learning projects related to the care, custody, control, education, recreation, or any other services, activities, or interactions with children 17 years old or younger on UCF campuses or at UCF-affiliated off-campus programs will require background checks through the sponsoring organization.** For more information about UCF's Youth Protection Program, see the following links:

- UCF Youth Protection Plan at <https://compliance.ucf.edu/article-1-march-2019/>
- Youth Protection Program Background Checks at <https://compliance.ucf.edu/youth-protection-program/youth-protection-program-background-checks/>
- UCF Policy 2-005 at <https://policies.ucf.edu/>
- UCF Human Resources: Background Checks & Request Process at <https://hr.ucf.edu/liasons-and-managers/interviewing-and-hiring/background-checks/>

### List of Potential Places to Volunteer

As a general guideline, several organizations and websites have been identified as potential sources of experiential learning opportunities. But, be sure any placement sites you explore meet your instructor's criteria for the course.



Name of Organization	Website	Most recent date added or checked
American Red Cross of Central Florida	<a href="https://www.redcross.org/local/florida/central-florida.html">https://www.redcross.org/local/florida/central-florida.html</a>	2019, Oct. 5
American Rivers	<a href="https://www.americanrivers.org/make-an-impact/national-river-cleanup/volunteers/">https://www.americanrivers.org/make-an-impact/national-river-cleanup/volunteers/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Aspire Health Partners (The Center for Drug-Free Living, Lakeside Behavioral Healthcare & Seminole Behavioral Health)	<a href="https://aspirehealthpartners.com/join-our-team/volunteer-donate/">https://aspirehealthpartners.com/join-our-team/volunteer-donate/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida	<a href="https://www.bgccf.org/about-us/">https://www.bgccf.org/about-us/</a>	2018, Aug. 24
Catholic Charities of Central Florida	<a href="https://cflcc.org/volunteer/">https://cflcc.org/volunteer/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Central Florida: Children's Home Society of Florida	<a href="https://www.chsfl.org/locations/central-florida/">https://www.chsfl.org/locations/central-florida/</a>	2018, Aug. 24
The Children's Home Society of Florida	<a href="https://www.chsfl.org/">https://www.chsfl.org/</a>	2019, Mar. 2
Christian Service Center	<a href="https://www.christianservicecenter.org/">https://www.christianservicecenter.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Clean the World Foundation	<a href="https://cleantheworldfoundation.org/volunteer/">https://cleantheworldfoundation.org/volunteer/</a>	2020, Jan. 25
Communities in Schools	<a href="https://www.communitiesinschools.org/affiliates/">https://www.communitiesinschools.org/affiliates/</a>	2018, Nov. 30
Covenant House Florida in Orlando	<a href="http://www.covenanthousefl.org/">http://www.covenanthousefl.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Create the Good	<a href="http://createthegood.org/articles/virtualvolunteering">http://createthegood.org/articles/virtualvolunteering</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Days for Girls	<a href="https://www.daysforgirls.org/chaptersandteams">https://www.daysforgirls.org/chaptersandteams</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health	<a href="http://www.devereux.org/site/PageServer?pagename=fl_about">http://www.devereux.org/site/PageServer?pagename=fl_about</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Feeding Children Everywhere	<a href="https://www.feedingchildreneverywhere.com/">https://www.feedingchildreneverywhere.com/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Florida Department of Corrections	<a href="http://fldcjobs.com/volunteer/">http://fldcjobs.com/volunteer/</a>	2020, Jan. 25
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice	<a href="http://www.djj.state.fl.us/get-involved/volunteer">http://www.djj.state.fl.us/get-involved/volunteer</a>	
Florida School of Holistic Living	<a href="https://www.holisticlivingschool.org/about/">https://www.holisticlivingschool.org/about/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
Food Pantries [directory]	<a href="https://www.foodpantries.org/">https://www.foodpantries.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5

<b>Goodwill Industries of Central Florida, Inc.</b>	<a href="http://www.goodwillcfl.org/">http://www.goodwillcfl.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Habitat for Humanity: Greater Orlando and Osceola County</b>	<a href="https://habitorlandoosceola.org/">https://habitorlandoosceola.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Hands on Orlando: Volunteer Central</b>	<a href="https://www.handsonorlando.com/">https://www.handsonorlando.com/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Harvest Time International, Inc.</b>	<a href="https://www.harvesttime.org/volunteer">https://www.harvesttime.org/volunteer</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW)</b>	<a href="https://www.hfuw.org/">https://www.hfuw.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Help Now of Osceola, Inc.: Domestic Abuse Center</b>	<a href="https://www.helpnowshelter.org/give-help/volunteer/">https://www.helpnowshelter.org/give-help/volunteer/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Hope Helps, Inc.</b>	<a href="http://www.hopehelps.org/">http://www.hopehelps.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>LifeStream Behavioral Center, Inc.</b>	<a href="https://www.lsbcc.net/">https://www.lsbcc.net/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Mental Health Association of Central Florida</b>	<a href="https://www.mhacf.org">https://www.mhacf.org</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>National Coalition for the Homeless</b>	<a href="http://nationalhomeless.org">http://nationalhomeless.org</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida</b>	<a href="https://www.ninthcircuit.org/about/programs/volunteerintern-program">https://www.ninthcircuit.org/about/programs/volunteerintern-program</a>	2020, Jan. 25
<b>Orange County Environmental Volunteer and Internship Program</b>	<a href="http://www.orangecountyfl.net/Environment/EnvironmentalVolunteerOpportunities.aspx#.W4AoX-hKhPY">http://www.orangecountyfl.net/Environment/EnvironmentalVolunteerOpportunities.aspx#.W4AoX-hKhPY</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Orange County Public Schools</b>	<a href="https://www.ocps.net/departments/communityresources/additions/schoolvolunteers">https://www.ocps.net/departments/communityresources/additions/schoolvolunteers</a> (also see <a href="https://ocpsace.ocps.net/">https://ocpsace.ocps.net/</a> )	2018, Aug. 30
<b>Orange County Sheriff's Office</b>	<a href="https://www.ocso.com/Careers/Employment-Information/Volunteer-Services">https://www.ocso.com/Careers/Employment-Information/Volunteer-Services</a>	2020, Jan. 25
<b>Orlando Cares</b>	<a href="http://www.cityoforlando.net/oca/volunteer/">http://www.cityoforlando.net/oca/volunteer/</a> (In particular, see Orlando Police Dept. Volunteer Opportunities)	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Orlando Fisher House</b>	<a href="https://www.orlandofisherhouse.org/">https://www.orlandofisherhouse.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Reading Pals through HFUW</b>	<a href="https://www.hfuw.org/education/reading-pals/">https://www.hfuw.org/education/reading-pals/</a>	2018, Aug. 24
<b>Second Harvest Food Bank</b>	<a href="http://www.feedhopenow.org/site/PageServer">http://www.feedhopenow.org/site/PageServer</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Shelter Listings [directory]</b>	<a href="https://www.shelterlistings.org/">https://www.shelterlistings.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>The Nature Conservancy: Florida</b>	<a href="https://www.nature.org/en-us/">https://www.nature.org/en-us/</a>	2019, Oct. 5

<b>The Salvation Army</b>	<a href="https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/plugins/gdosCenterSearch?query=32816&amp;mode=query_1&amp;limit=20">https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/plugins/gdosCenterSearch?query=32816&amp;mode=query_1&amp;limit=20</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>The Salvation Army Orlando</b>	<a href="http://salvationarmyorlando.org/">http://salvationarmyorlando.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Transition House</b>	<a href="https://thetransitionhouse.org/">https://thetransitionhouse.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>UCF Arboretum</b>	<a href="https://arboretum.ucf.edu/">https://arboretum.ucf.edu/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>UCF Sustainability Initiatives</b>	<a href="http://sustainable.ucf.edu/">http://sustainable.ucf.edu/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>UCF: Knight Connect Events &amp; Organizations</b>	<a href="https://knightconnect.campuslabs.com/engage/events">https://knightconnect.campuslabs.com/engage/events</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>(use the filters at the left of both links to narrow your search)</b>	<a href="https://knightconnect.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations">https://knightconnect.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations</a>	
<b>UN Volunteers (outside U.S.)</b>	<a href="https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/opportunities">https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/opportunities</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>United Global Outreach</b>	<a href="http://www.ugo2.org/">http://www.ugo2.org/</a> (see volunteer opportunities that do not involved working directly with students)	2019, Oct. 5
<b>UP: United Against Poverty</b>	<a href="https://uporlando.org/">https://uporlando.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Veterans Justice Outreach</b>	<a href="https://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp">https://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Volunteer Florida</b>	<a href="https://www.volunteerflorida.org/">https://www.volunteerflorida.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Volunteer Match</b>	<a href="https://www.volunteermatch.org/">https://www.volunteermatch.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Volunteers for Community Impact</b>	<a href="https://volunteersforcommunityimpact.org/">https://volunteersforcommunityimpact.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Volusia County Waterway Cleanups</b>	<a href="https://www.volusia.org/services/growth-and-resource-management/environmental-management/get-involved/waterway-cleanups/">https://www.volusia.org/services/growth-and-resource-management/environmental-management/get-involved/waterway-cleanups/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>Women Shelters [directory]</b>	<a href="https://www.womenshelters.org/">https://www.womenshelters.org/</a>	2019, Oct. 5
<b>YMCA of Central Florida</b>	<a href="https://ymcacentralflorida.com/get-involved/volunteer/">https://ymcacentralflorida.com/get-involved/volunteer/</a>	2019, Oct. 5

For more ideas, see:

- Orange County Mental Health and Homelessness Division  
<https://www.orangecountyfl.net/FamiliesHealthSocialSvcs/MentalHealth.aspx#.W4Aw6OhKhPY>
- The Community Resource Guide for Orange, Osceola, Seminole & Brevard County by Florida Health Partners, Inc. at <http://osceola.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/wellness-programs/community-resources/documents/area-7-resource-guide.pdf>

## UCF's Other Types of Experiential Learning

UCF offers other forms of experiential learning, such as internships, jobs, and co-ops. These types of experiential learning demand greater time and commitment, as compared to the **15-hours** service in the community required in this course. However, if a student wishes to explore such options, please see:

- UCF's Office of Experiential Learning - <https://www.ucf.edu/services/s/office-of-experiential-learning/>
- UCF's Service Learning - <https://www.ucf.edu/services/s/service-learning/>
- UCF's Handshake - <https://explearning.ucf.edu/>
- UCF Criminal Justice Internships –
  - <https://ccie.ucf.edu/criminaljustice/internships/>
  - <https://ccie.ucf.edu/criminaljustice/internships/sites/>

For more information about identifying your civic interests, see <https://explearning.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Identifying-Your-Civic-Interests-and-Concerns-service-learning.pdf>

## Section 2: Workplace Ethical Issues and Dilemmas

During your experiential learning activities in the community, you represent UCF and its current and former students. Your professional demeanor is important to you, your CBO supervisors, course instructors, and future students who may seek an experience with the CBO you are working with. You are expected to dress appropriately, honor your work schedule, notify your field supervisor if you are unable to work, complete work to the best of your ability, follow through on commitments, and make ethical decisions.

In this section, we will address some common ethical issues and dilemmas in the workplace. However, keep in mind, that everyone's experiences are unique. Should any problems arise on the job (communication with supervisors or co-workers, conflicts between school and work, etc.), the instructor should be notified immediately by the student to help solve the problem in a timely and professional manner.

### Privacy and Confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality are challenging in today's environment. As a UCF student, you are most likely familiar with your protections to privacy in FERPA (See <http://registrar.ucf.edu/ferpa/>). However, in the case of working with a CBO, the responsibility of protecting clients' rights to privacy and confidentiality may be entrusted to you. Clients' rights may be legal or ethical in nature, so it is important that you understand your placement's rules regarding this type of information.

- Privacy - refers to the rights of your client to decide when, where, and how information about them is disclosed to others by you (UIS, 2011)
- Confidentiality – refers to the legal, professional, and ethical matter that protects the client from having information disclosed by you without explicit authorization.

Students are responsible for maintaining client privacy and confidentiality by omitting or disguising identifying data in the following situations:

- During class discussions
- Making journal entries
- Handling client/patient records, employee files, and/or contracts
- Using a CBO's computers, networks, or other resources

- Corresponding via emails, telephone calls, etc.
- Disposing of private and confidential data
- Describing your learning processes and outcomes during course assessments
- Producing evidence of the experiential learning activity as a course requirement

Should you encounter a known or suspected security violations within a CBO, consult the organization's rules and policies, as well as your field supervisor.

## Integrity Issues

Integrity refers to the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. Personal values, however, may conflict with the types of decisions made within the workplace (UIS, 2011). For example, it is not uncommon to see employees making personal phone calls or doing personal shopping online during regular working hours. In other words, employees steal company time or resources for their personal gain.

Organizations often publish their standards for behavior in documents described as guidelines, standards, regulations, policies, and codes. If you encounter a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable, these documents may provide guidance. If you are unable to locate such documents or they do not address your particular situation, you may share the dilemma with your field supervisor.

## Diversity Issues

Diversity refers to the inclusion of different types of people. You may encounter new and different ideas of diversity during your experiential learning activities (UIS, 2011). It is important to learn and respect the differences of other workers and clients. While serving the community, our personal beliefs, values, and biases may become more apparent. So, keep the following in mind:

- our values and biases impact how we interact with, or treat people, and how we are treated in turn;
- as workers we are in positions of responsibility; our decisions may make a difference in other people's lives; and
- our abilities to be sensitive to cultural issues shape the quality of our work or the services we perform (p. 18).

For more information from UCF's Experiential Learning student resources, see:

- On-the-job conduct - <https://explearning.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Service-Learning-and-on-the-job-conduct.pdf>
- Professional Skills Modules: Making Ethical Decisions - <https://explearning.ucf.edu/students/get-support/>

## Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of Discrimination

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. There are two categories of sexual harassment:

1. Quid pro quo - When sexual favors are demanded or requested as a condition of receiving some tangible benefit
2. Hostile work environment - A work environment that unreasonably interferes with the employee's job performance

UCF thoroughly addresses the issue of sexual harassment. Rather than repeating the information here, please see:

- UCF's Sexual Harassment definitions - <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu/more-information/sexual-harassment/>
- UCF's Let'sBeClear Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, and Stalking Help- <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu/>
- UCF's Golden Rule – Rules of Conduct <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>

There are other forms of discrimination, such as age, disability, race/color, and religion. To learn more about federal laws and regulations that prohibit these and other types of discrimination, please see the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's website at <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/index.cfm/>

## Safety

Each semester, students from UCF participate in several experiential learning activities. As in anything we do, there are may be some degree of uncertainty and potential risk. UCF has published a Safety Manual for Service Learning at the Experiential Learning's student resource list. Rather than repeating it here, please review:



- Safety Strategies - <https://explearning.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Safety-Manual-for-Service-Learning.pdf>

# Section 3: Setting Goals and Planned Learning: Assembling and Submitting Your Learning Commitment and Worksheet

As part of this integrative experiential learning course, students are required to articulate short- and long-term goals and develop a personalized plan of integrative learning to meet those goals. Don't worry – this section of the Handbook walks you through the process of completing the Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet (Appendix). The Learning Commitment and Worksheet facilitates the process of setting professional and civic goals, as well as planning what you want to learn to achieve those goals.

## Two Important Functions of the Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet

The Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet (See Appendix) serve two important functions. First, they are a method of organization.

- The Learning Commitment Cover Sheet - is completed by each student for the instructor's approval. It provides your instructor with information on your 15 hours of volunteer experience in the community.
- The accompanying Worksheet - requires you to explicitly state your goals, learning objectives you intend to achieve, and the way(s) in which you intend to achieve your learning objectives.

The second important function of the Learning Commitment and Worksheet is the proper completion and submission as a requirement for the completing this course (Also see Section 1: Requirements and Expectations of this handbook).

- If you do not submit the Learning Commitment and Worksheet and have it approved by your instructor as required, you will not receive credit. In other words, if the Learning Commitment and Worksheet are not submitted and approved, the experiential learning activity did not happen. If revisions to the

Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet are necessary, those changes must also be approved by the course Instructor.

## The Learning Commitment Cover Sheet: 15 Hours of Volunteer Experience

As noted above, the Learning Commitment Cover Sheet (along with the Worksheet) is to be completed and submitted for the instructor's approval. It provides your instructor with information on your 15 hours of volunteer experience in the community.

The integrative learning experience for this course is "self-directed." This means that each student will seek out and secure their own volunteer position in service to the community. This is meant to give you the flexibility you need to explore your own interests.

In Section 1 of this Handbook, several community-based organizations are listed that offer volunteer service positions. Keep in mind that you are required to provide a service. Observing others doing their jobs is not sufficient.

You may use the list of organizations in Section 1 of this Handbook or seek a position with other community-based organizations that serve the community. Several of the organizations listed allow students to register online for volunteering. Most have websites that provide information on volunteering for their organization. "Directories" for food banks, shelters, and the like are also provided so you may drill down to find an organization near your location.

Once you have located, secured, and received confirmation of your volunteer position, complete the Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet. The Cover Sheet is self-explanatory. See Appendix A and your [Web]course instructions for additional instructions from your instructor.

## The Worksheet: Setting Short-, Intermediate, and Long-Term Goals

Integrative experiential learning at UCF is designed to help students achieve their professional and civic goals. You will be submitting a Worksheet, along with your Learning Commitment Cover Sheet, to direct your integrative learning experience in this course.

The first part of the Worksheet is designed for you to express your goals and make connections to your education in and out of the classroom. The act of writing down our goals makes achieving them more likely! The key is to make your goals S.M.A.R.T. (See <https://www.umassd.edu/fycm/goal-setting/resources/smartgoals/> )

Chances are you have some ideas about the type of work you want to do in the future and the type of life you want to live. In this course, we want to help you achieve the future you envision by linking your college education and experiences to life after graduation. As with any journey, reaching your destination requires a plan for getting there! So, let's start mapping out your road to the future by expressing your professional and civic goals!

### **LONG-TERM GOALS**

Integrative experiential learning gives you the opportunity to develop the social skills, work ethic, and practical knowledge you'll need after graduation. It may also allow you to explore the type of work you want to do in the future, as well as working with diverse populations while serving the community.

Long-term professional and civic goals are typically 5-10 years in the future. When writing your goals, ask yourself the following questions:

- Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
- In what type of environment do you want to live and work?
- What type of people do you want to work with?
- What kind of work do you want to be doing? Do you want a career?
- Why are these goals important to you?
- How will you benefit socially, intellectually, emotionally, and economically?
- Why is the work satisfying to you?
- How can this course help you reach your goal?

### **INTERMEDIATE GOALS**

Intermediate goals within the next 2-5 years are a stepping stone to long-term goals. Most full-time college students graduate within this timeframe. Integrative experiential learning in this course helps you explore your areas of interest. When thinking about your transition from college to the next chapter of your life, consider the following:

- What can you do in the next 2-5 years to prepare for your long-term goals?
- To explore your areas of interest, what kind of information can you gather during your college career?

- What resources does UCF offer to help you make progress toward defining your goals and assisting you in your transition to life after higher education?

### SHORT-TERM ACADEMIC GOALS FOR THIS COURSE

Short-term goals are more immediate than intermediate and long-term goals. Your college career can help you develop the professional and civic skills of thinking logically, solving complex problems, influencing society, behaving ethically, being curious and innovative, and becoming a life-long learner. Consider the following when planning your academic goals for this course:

- What can you do in this course that prepares you for professional and civic life beyond the classroom?
  - Apply [SMART objectives](#) and make your goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely

## SMART Goals



S – Specific – Who, what, when, and where is your goal?



M – Measurable – How do you know when you have reached your goal? What qualitative or quantitative change will you see?



A – Attainable – Do you have the attitude, social skills, work ethic, abilities, practical knowledge, skills, and resources you need to meet your goal? If not, what do you need to do to get them?



R – Relevant – What makes the goal worthwhile or beneficial?



T- Timely – What activities are achievable by the end of this course that move you toward your goals? For longer goals, set a timeframe.

## The Worksheet: Planned Learning

Learning in higher education requires planning. We defined integrative learning and experiential learning in Section 1 of this Handbook. The first step to planned learning is similar to setting goals. By planning what we want to learn in life, we create more opportunities for ourselves and the future goals we want to achieve!

So, let's get started with a learning plan that relates to your professional and civil goals. Working toward goals and planning our learning require a backward design. That is, we

start by identifying the outcomes we should achieve (See <https://fctl.ucf.edu/teaching-resources/course-design/lesson-planning/>). After we clarify our learning objectives, we plan the activities, resources, and assessments needed to achieve our objectives (UIS, 2011).

The four basic steps to learning include:

1. Clarifying the learning objectives,
2. Selecting appropriate learning activities for achieving your learning objectives,
3. Finding resources to help you learn and complete your tasks, and
4. Assessing your progress in achieving your learning objectives (UIS, 2011, p. 68).

## Learning Step 1: Clarify Learning Objectives

The Worksheet for the Learning Commitment is found in the Appendix of this handbook. Along with providing space to list your goals, it lists the essential steps of learning outlined above. Completing the Worksheet can make the rest of the experiential learning process easier. It will set the agenda for your learning experience and clarify the relationships between learning objectives, activities, resources, and course assessments. “The more clearly your learning objectives are written, the easier it will be for you to reflect on those connections in your journal writing” (UIS, 2011, p. 68). And, the more easily you will complete any other course assessments related to your experiences.

The first step of learning is clarifying your learning objectives. When completing the Worksheet (See Appendix), you should explicitly state how the experiential activity meets one or more course learning objectives. To begin, see the course Syllabus and the objectives set forth by the instructor. Also, the instructor may designate the major learning objectives for your integrative experiential learning assignment. For example, the instructor may designate the following objectives in the Syllabus:

- Instructor’s Designated Learning Objectives –
  - Identify, describe, and apply the foundations of ethics and morality.
  - Explore the intersection of ethics in criminal justice with the broader scope of social justice.
  - Collaborate with a community-based organization and engage in 15 hours of volunteering.
  - Engage in experiential learning that builds social skills, work ethic, and practical knowledge of complex societal justice issues.

- Demonstrate the ability to connect core knowledge of ethics and justice to real-world professional and civic contexts.
- Reflect on integrative learning experiences as they apply to ongoing professional and civic goals.
- Demonstrate analytical skills and knowledge when examining complex ethical situations related to criminal justice.

Now that you have identified some of the broad learning objectives of the course, apply them to the experiential learning component of the course. It will not be enough to simply copy the learning objective(s) from the course. The Learning Commitment and Worksheet require you to also describe the activities, duties, or project you will be working on and how those experiential activities relate to the course learning objectives.

On the Worksheet's Learning Objective section, you will modify the course learning objectives to be more specific to your planned experience. For example, you might state that you want to:

A. Student's Learning Objectives –

1. Explore the social justice topic of behavioral health and how it intersects with criminal justice and ethics by volunteering for 15 hours as a Guardian Advocate in the mental health field.
2. Reflect on my experience volunteering as a Guardian Advocate and make connections to my professional and civic goals.
3. Apply one ethical theory to my examination of the social justice topic of behavioral health as it relates to the criminal justice field.
4. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the ethical theory as to how it applies to behavioral health and criminal justice. Draw conclusions as to whether the theory is effective and explaining why or why not.

To find out more about learning objectives and assessment methods, visit

<http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/teachingandlearningresources/coursestaxonomy/>

## Learning Step 2: Selecting Appropriate Activities and Experiences

The second step of learning and completing the Worksheet is selecting appropriate activities that show how each learning objective will be met (UIS, 2011). For example, the student's learning objective above may be supported through the following:



## B. Activities and Experiences –

1. Successfully complete a four-hour training course to be certified as a Guardian Advocate.
2. Provide at least 15 hours of service of training and service volunteering as a Guardian Advocate.
3. Accompany, observe, and ask questions of staff who assess and treat involuntarily committed clients who may suffer from Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, Psychosis, or Schizoaffective disorder.
4. Meet with assigned patients 2-3 times per week to get to know them for the purpose of advocating for their rights and safety.
5. Maintain a journal of my observations, experiences, and reflections.

## Learning Step 3: Finding Resources

The third step of learning and completing the Worksheet is finding resources (UIS, 2011). Your course instructor may require a minimum number of sources, as well as criteria for the quality of the sources. As an example, the student's learning objective stated above may be facilitated by:

## C. Resources to be Consulted –

1. Course text - Souryal, S. S. (2015). Ethics in criminal justice: In search of the truth (6th ed.). New York: Routledge.
2. Discussions with treatment staff and medical personnel
3. Materials provided in certified training program
4. Florida's Baker Act and related laws
5. SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation at <https://www.samhsa.gov/gains-center>
6. Scholarly article entitled "The Iron Fist in the Latex Glove: The Intersection of Public Health and Criminal Justice" by Potter and Rosky (2012).
7. Book entitled "Crime and Mental Disorders: The Criminal Justice Response" by Denise Gosselin (2017).
8. Research report entitled "Criminal Justice Interventions for Offenders with Mental Illness: Evaluation of Mental Health Courts in Bronx and Brooklyn, New York by Rossman and associates (2012) retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/criminal-justice-interventions-offenders-mental-illness-evaluation-mental-health-courts-bronx-and-brooklyn-new-york>

## Learning Step 4: Assessing Your Progress

The final step of learning and completing the Worksheet is a plan for assessing progress. This is “where you specify how you are going to show that you have acquired or improved the skill or knowledge stated in each learning objective” (UIS, 2011, p. 73). By stating how you will demonstrate what you plan to learn, you are developing a critical skill for independent learning. Also, it permits you to show your instructor what you have learned and how you learned it.

The four basic methods of showing that you have learned are:

1. Self-assessment,
2. Assessment by others who are in a position to know and appreciate your learning,
3. Demonstration of skill or knowledge to others who are in a position to know and appreciate your learning, and
4. Documentation of skill or knowledge reviewed by others who are in a position to know and appreciate your learning (UIS, 2011, p. 73).

Each are described in more detail below.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

Self-assessment refers to an evaluation of one’s own actions, attitudes, or performance of a skill or knowledge. If possible, comparisons can be made to an objective standard (e.g., professional standards, institutional norms, in relation to others). It may also include reflections on one’s strengths and weaknesses, learning style, and information used to solve problems. Generally, self-evaluations may reveal a pattern of goals and objectives, and ways of achieving those goals.

For the purpose of this course, journal entries will be used to express one’s progress towards achieving the student’s stated professional and civic goals and learning objectives (UIS, 2011). Journaling is a common method of reflecting on the day’s activities and interactions with others. Journal entries are used to document the activities, experiences, and resources of the day and reflect on the feelings, attitudes, or understanding of what was learned and how learning transpired.

In the journal entries, a narrative form of writing is used to connect events or tell a story of what was learned, how it was learned, and how well it was learned (UIS, 2011, p. 74). (See Section 4 on Journals for more information.) Other types of course assessments,

such as discussions, papers, and presentations, may also be required by your instructor (See course Syllabus).

### **ASSESSMENT BY OTHERS**

Assessment by others occur when another person observes your performance or progress and provides oral or written feedback (UIS, 2011). If you receive oral feedback, it should be recorded and reflected upon in your journal. If it is written, then you can reflect on it in your journal and include it as an attachment.

### **DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING**

A demonstration of learning is presented by the student to be observed or reviewed by others who provide feedback (UIS, 2011). There are several ways for students to demonstrate the skills, knowledge, or integrative learning obtained outside the classroom. Like the journal entries, this type of assessment is developed by the student.

Demonstrations may occur at various times during the semester. Examples include PowerPoint or video presentations to students, academic departments, or local organizations or clubs (UIS, 2011). Other examples include maps, essays, stories, charts, tables, or graphs.

### **DOCUMENTATION OF LEARNING**

The final mode of assessment is documentation (UIS, 2011). Documentation refers to anything tangible that provides evidence of learning. If you participate in a training program, a certificate of completion is typically provided. Other examples of documented learning may include software print-outs, photos of donated goods produced or collected, copies of resources created for community-based organizations (CBOs), communications indicating social networking, copies of letters written for a campaign, and photos of items created for community partners. It is important, however, to not violate any organization's or person's right to privacy or confidentiality in the documentation.

## **Worksheet Assessment Example**

Earlier, we provided examples of the first three learning steps: 1) specifying your learning objective(s), 2) appropriate activities and experiences, and 3) resources on the Worksheet for Learning Commitment. Let's provide an example for the final step in planned learning – assessment.

Below, we continue with the example of volunteering to serve as a Guardian Advocate in the mental health field. In this example, the student's first learning objective was to

“explore behavioral health and how it relates to criminal justice ethics by volunteering as a Guardian Advocate in the mental health field.” The Assessments section of the Worksheet may include:

#### D. Methods of Assessment

1. Documentation will be used by attaching a copy of my Guardian Advocate certification
2. Self-assessment of learning will be used by recording reflections in my journal of how my academic knowledge and integrated learning experiences relate to my professional and civic goals.
3. Self-assessment of learning will be used by recording reflections in my journal as to how ethical principles and behaviors apply to the fields of mental health and criminal justice. These reflections will be informed by my knowledge learned in the classroom, my list of sources for this project, and experiences of this integrated learning project.
4. In the required course discussions, my postings on the topic of mental health and its relation to criminal justice will be informed by my knowledge learned in the classroom, my list of sources for this project, and experiences of this integrated learning project.
5. In the required course paper, learning will be demonstrated by applying and evaluating a single ethical theory to the problems of behavioral/mental health as it relates to criminal justice.

## Assembling Your Learning Commitment and Worksheet

In this section of the handbook, we have covered the basic steps of completing your Learning Commitment Cover Sheet and Worksheet form in the Appendix. Examples were provided in each of the sections above. Below, is an example of the entire Worksheet.

**LEARNING COMMITMENT\***  
**COVER SHEET**

STUDENT NAME: Ima Knight

NID: im012345

PLACEMENT INFORMATION:

ORGANIZATION NAME: Mental Health Association of Central Florida

<https://www.mhacf.org/guardian-advocate/>

LOCATION: 1525 E. Robinson St., Orlando, FL 32801

NAME OF SERVICE SUPERVISOR OR COORDINATOR FOR SITE VISIT BY  
INSTRUCTOR: Lindsey Lane, Program Coordinator

SUPERVISOR/COORDINATOR'S PHONE NUMBER: 407-898-0110

PROPOSED DATES AND LENGTH OF SERVICE:

DATE AND TIMES: Fill this in

DATE AND TIMES: Fill this in

DATE AND TIMES: Fill this in and add more lines if necessary

FOR A TOTAL OF 15 HOURS.

SIGNATURES:

STUDENT

*Ima Knight*  
(Signature)

Oct. 15, 2018

(Date)

INSTRUCTOR \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

(Date)

- Attach evidence of your service commitment, such as email communications or website registrations. See next page for instructions.\*
- Due to UCF's Youth Protection Plan of 2019, **experiential learning projects related to the care, custody, control, education, recreation, or any other services, activities, or interactions with children 17 years old or younger on UCF campuses or at UCF-affiliated off-campus programs will require background checks through the**

**sponsoring organization.** For more information about UCF's Youth Protection Program, see <https://compliance.ucf.edu/article-1-march-2019/>

\*On this page, you must attach the evidence of your service commitment, such as email communications or website registrations. Written evidence is preferred.

- It is likely that **you** need to send the volunteer coordinator an email to confirm your service. Be sure to include the following:
  - The dates and times of your service
  - A brief description of your duties
  - Ask the coordinator to reply with a confirmation and include the reply as your evidence
- If you made an appointment online through the organization's website, insert a picture of the commitment you made online.

If you are unable to obtain any kind of written evidence of your commitment, you need to provide photographic evidence later, in your Reflection Journal.

- For now, on this Learning Commitment:
  - You will need to explain why you are unable to use written evidence of your service.
  - You will need to explain how you will include several photos throughout the 15-hours of service to be included in your Journal

Please delete the instructions on this page for your Learning Commitment submission. – Thank you!



## WORKSHEET FOR LEARNING COMMITMENT

STUDENT NAME: Ima Knight

NID: im012345

### Goals

#### 1. Long-Term Goals

My career goal is to become a probation officer. According to my job search at Florida's People First website, probation officers are required to have three years of criminal justice experience, which can be substituted with college coursework from an accredited institution. One of the duties of a probation officer is to coordinate the initial and pre-release programs of offenders, as well as developing, coordinating, and monitoring offender community service work activities.

#### 2. Intermediate Goals

To prepare for a professional career as a probation officer, I will need my bachelor's degree to substitute for work experience. I have been focusing my elective courses on corrections and specialty courses like psychology, mental health, and drug use.

#### 3. Short-Term Academic Goals for this Court

Since I don't have any work experience in my field of interest, I can use the integrative learning experience in this course as a way of working with a population that has some of the same characteristics as offenders. Criminal offenders tend to have higher rates of poverty, behavioral health problems, and less access to community resources. As a probation officer charged with coordinating rehabilitative programs and offender community service, I want to better understand offenders and the types of resources available in my community that may improve offenders' successful completion of probation and avoiding future criminal activity and incarceration.

### Learning Plan

#### A. Learning Objectives

1. Explore the social justice topic of behavioral health and how it intersects with criminal justice and ethics by volunteering for 15 hours as a Guardian Advocate in the mental health field.
2. Reflect on my experience volunteering as a Guardian Advocate and make connections to my professional and civic goals.

3. Apply one ethical theory to my examination of the social justice topic of behavioral health as it relates to the criminal justice field.
4. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the ethical theory as it applies to behavioral health and criminal justice. Draw conclusions as to whether the theory is effective and explaining why or why not.

#### B. Activities and Experiences

1. Successfully complete a four-hour training course to be certified as a Guardian Advocate.
2. Provide at least 15 hours of service of training and service volunteering as a Guardian Advocate.
3. Accompany, observe, and ask questions of staff who assess and treat involuntarily committed clients who may suffer from Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, Psychosis, or Schizoaffective disorder.
4. Meet with assigned patients 2-3 times per week to get to know them for the purpose of advocating for their rights and safety.
5. Maintain a journal of my observations, experiences, and reflections.

#### C. Resources to be Consulted

1. Course text - Souryal, S. S. (2015). Ethics in criminal justice: In search of the truth (6th ed.). New York: Routledge.
2. Discussions with treatment staff and medical personnel
3. Materials provided in certified training program
4. Florida's Baker Act and related laws
5. SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation at <https://www.samhsa.gov/gains-center>
6. Scholarly article entitled "The Iron Fist in the Latex Glove: The Intersection of Public Health and Criminal Justice" by Potter and Rosky (2012).
7. Book entitled "Crime and Mental Disorders: The Criminal Justice Response" by Denise Gosselin (2017).
8. Research report entitled "Criminal Justice Interventions for Offenders with Mental Illness: Evaluation of Mental Health Courts in Bronx and Brooklyn, New York by Rossman and associates (2012) retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/criminal-justice-interventions-offenders-mental-illness-evaluation-mental-health-courts-bronx-and-brooklyn-new-york>

#### D. Method for Assessing Progress

1. Documentation will be used by attaching a copy of my Guardian Advocate certification
2. Self-assessment of learning will be used by recording reflections in my journal of how my academic knowledge and integrated learning experiences relate to the fields of criminal justice and mental health
3. Self-assessment of learning will be used by recording reflections in my journal as to how ethical principles and behaviors may be similar or different in the fields of mental health and criminal justice. These reflections will be informed by my knowledge learned in the classroom, my list of sources for this project, and experiences of this integrated learning project.
4. In the required course discussions, my postings on the topic of mental health and its relation to criminal justice will be informed by my knowledge learned in the classroom, my list of sources for this project, and experiences of this integrated learning project.
5. In the required course paper, learning will be demonstrated by applying and evaluating a single ethical theory to the problems of behavioral/mental health as it relates to criminal justice

\* The Learning Commitment Cover sheet and Worksheet is your **plan** for experiential learning and consulting other resources.

- Your plan must be submitted and approved by the instructor **prior** to performing your experiential learning.
- If your plan is not approved prior to performing your experiential learning, you risk performing services that will not be approved by the instructor.

\* Once your Learning Commitment is approved by your instructor, you may begin and complete your experiential learning activities.

\* Your experiential learning services are to be performed and completed for the “Reflective Journal Entries”.

- The purpose of the journal entries is to facilitate your learning experiences and reflections.
- If your Learning Commitment plan requires photographic evidence of your service, as approved by the instructor, you will need to include several photos throughout the experiential learning process. The photos are then included in the Journal entries.

## Consult your CBO Volunteer Coordinator and Get Instructor Approval

The assembly of your Worksheet should be done in consultation with your CBO's supervisor or volunteer coordinator. Your course instructor will then decide whether or not the Learning Commitment and Worksheet are acceptable. It is possible that you may need to make revisions prior to the instructor accepting your submission.

**Remember, you cannot receive credit for the experiential learning assignments in this course without a completed Learning Commitment and Worksheet that has been approved by the instructor.**

## Section 4: Keeping Your Journal

Your integrative learning experience will be facilitated by keeping a journal of your experiences and reflections. Journaling should be done for every hour of experiential learning outside the classroom. Entries may also be made when resources (including, but not limited to, those listed on the Worksheet) are consulted. The purpose of journal writing is to make you and your instructor more aware of your cognitive and affective development throughout the course (UIS, 2011).

Journaling can feel overwhelming if not approached correctly. Productive journaling requires frequent, thoughtful writing about experiences and reflections on what was learned. Here are some important tips:

- You cannot write a journal all at once (UIS, 2011). “If you do, it is not a journal” (p. 24). Ideally, journaling should be done every hour of experiential learning outside the classroom.
- Entries may also be made whenever resources (including, but not limited to, those listed on the Worksheet) are consulted.
- For the purposes of this course component, you will need to set aside at least 15-20 minutes to write in your journal on those days you spend working on your experiential learning activities.
- Entries should be thoughtful and reflective, using your own words. The journal entries do not require you to learn and use the intellectual jargon of somebody else. That being said, definitions, ideas, concepts, theories, etc. from other sources must be cited appropriately (See UCF’s APA Guides for citation at <http://guides.ucf.edu/APA>).
- Entries should reflect your understanding of how your experiences may relate to your short-, intermediate, and long-term goals.
- Journal entries should also include a self-assessment as to whether you are meeting your learning objectives, so be thorough.
- Journal entries must be submitted according to your instructor’s directions.

Regularly writing reflections on your learning processes and observations will enable you to be explicitly target your learning objective(s) and goals. The systematic process is like that of a scientist who keeps laboratory or field notes (UIS, 2011). In addition to recording your observations, conversations, experiences, readings, and the like, journal

entries should include your thoughts of how they relate to your Goals and Learning Objective(s) stated in your Learning Commitment and Worksheet.

Since experiential learning is used to facilitate integrative learning, self-assessments like journal entries are enhanced by incorporating themes of:

- Connections between your experiences and stated professional and civic goals;
- Connections between your experiences and stated learning objectives;
- Connections between criminal justice and relevant experiences;
- Connections between criminal justice and other disciplines, fields, and/or perspectives;
- How your criminal justice knowledge, skills, theories, or methods may be adapted or applied to new situations; and
- Your development (self-assessment) as a learner and how you learned to use prior knowledge and experiences in new and challenging contexts (AACU, 2009).

## Structuring your Journal

Your Learning Commitment Worksheet included a section on assessing progress. One method of assessing progress in learning is self-assessment. One method of self-assessment is journaling.

Each journal entry should have three sections:

1. A heading that records the date of the entry, the amount of time worked that day, and a running total of hours worked for the entire project.
2. An activities section where you record the activities and resources used that day.
3. A reflection section where you reflect on what was done that day and how they relate to your stated goals and learning objectives.

## Reflections

Reflections in the journal entries allow you to be the center of your learning experience. Your writings should reflect how you feel and what you learn from new experiences, as well as everyday experiences (UIS, 2011). “Reflection should involve comparison, change and growth” (p. 26).

Another recommended format for structuring your journal's entry and reflections includes all of the following:

- What happened?
- How do I feel about it?
- What did I learn?
- How does this relate to my goals?

The journal can be creative (UIS, 2011). You may want to include drawings, diagrams of large concepts and their relationships or processes (using Word SmartArt), photos or selfies, or links to websites or videos you use or create. Keep in mind, however, others' rights to privacy and confidentiality.

Other ideas for reflection in your journal include:

- Are there any theories or concepts learned in your classes that you see applied in practice?
- How does your field of study relate to your experience?
- What types of people did you work with? How did they make you feel?
- Did you encounter a new experience? Were you able to apply past knowledge and experience to the new situation?
- Did you feel any tensions, uncertainties, or frustrations? What do you think caused you to feel that way?
- Did you have any experiences that motivated you?
- Did you learn about a community-based organization's procedures and practices? How did they relate to your field of study? Did you think they could be improved upon? If so, how?
- What kinds of decisions were made by others? By you? What were the results? Did you think those decisions could have been improved upon? If so, how?
- Did anything happen that may have changed your perspective or viewpoint? Did it affect your career goals or behavior?
- How do you think your experiences will affect you in the future?



## Journal Entry and Reflections Example

Keep in mind that your integrative experiential learning is connected to your stated goals and learning objectives. In this example, we'll use the learning objectives and journal entries of a student volunteering at Good Neighbor Village, a group that serves victims of domestic violence. In this case, the student's learning objectives were threefold:

1. Explore the social justice topic of behavioral health and how it intersects with criminal justice by volunteering at Good Neighbor Village, a group that serves victims of domestic violence.
2. Apply one ethical theory to examine my chosen social justice topic of behavioral health and discuss the implications for criminal justice.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the ethical theory as it applies to behavioral health and criminal justice. Drawing conclusions as to whether the theory is effective and explaining why or why not.

To give you a little more background, the student's planned activities and experiences for experiential learning included passing a background check, assisting with fundraising tasks, volunteering in the service provider's facility and store, , and journaling about his/her observations, experiences, and reflections.

Also, his/her resources to be consulted include the course text, discussions with staff, organizational brochures, and scholarly articles that address behavioral health problems in victims of domestic violence.

Here is an example journal entries and reflections:

### **JOURNAL SHEETS**

**Monday, August 23, 2004**

**3 hours today**

**3 hours total**

### **Entry**

I began my experiential learning by sorting through donations and making a spreadsheet of all the donors from the annual fundraising event (Annual Vision luncheon) that Good Neighbor Village hosts. The spreadsheet contained the donors' names, addresses, phone numbers, and email. I logged over 100 donors' information.

I had some free time while volunteering, so I reviewed the peer-reviewed, scholarly article by Karakurt and associates (2017) entitled Mining Electronic Health Records Data: Domestic Violence and Adverse Health Effects. I wanted to see how health

effects relate to the crime of domestic violence. The researchers found that victims of domestic violence are significantly more likely to be diagnosed with problems in substance abuse, mental health, pregnancy-related issues, and heart problems (p. 83). Several other problems were listed too.

## **Reflection**

I was surprised by how many women from the community chose to spend their time serving victims of domestic violence, even though the volunteers have no relationship with the clients. I was also surprised by how long it takes to log this information. The number of donors who came out to this event and how much money was raised is impressive. I wish I could have attended the event. Entering the information took some time, not the best with Excel so it took me a little bit to figure at first how my coordinator wanted the spreadsheet. I enjoyed the first day of volunteering here. Karen, the women I report to, was very kind and easy to work with.

When I reviewed the article, I was also surprised about the physical and mental health problems victims of domestic violence face. I learned about “acute symptoms,” such as lacerations and fractures, and the damage physical force does to the body. They also talk about “chronic” problems that are long-term. There seems to be a relationship between persistent emotional and psychological distress victims of intimate-partner violence (IPV) experience due to trauma, which leads to “higher rates of cardiovascular, respiratory, musculoskeletal, and neurological symptoms” (p. 84).

The most important thing the article discussed was “mental and behavioral health issues” (p. 85). They said 90 percent of IPV victims exhibit PTSD within weeks of being attacked. Their mental health problems include depression, PTSD, and panic attacks. Their physical health problems include substance abuse, heart attacks, and higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases. They cope by using substances, such as cigarettes and alcohol. This section of the article is most relevant to my topic.

## **JOURNAL SHEETS**

**Tuesday, August 24, 2004**

**6 hours today**

**9 hours total**

## **Entry**

Second day of volunteering. I am in charge of writing thank you notes to all the donors from the annual fund raising event. This is another time-consuming task. Karen and I wrote up a templet for the letter. Working on writing these letter, took a short break to eat and got to talk to Karen a bit. We talked about how she ended up doing non-profit work. After a while, I ended up with a hand cramp, so I am taking a break from that and going to sort through the items people donated, like toiletries and other items residents need to live in the facility for a year or two. Finished with the physical donations, organized and labeled them in a separate closet. Got to meet a few other women who

work at Good Neighbor Village. One of them was in charge of the organization and the other was a public speaker who normally attends events held by or for Good Neighbor Village. Finished over 100 letters and now I get to give my hand a break! Overall, I feel like I got a lot done today, even if most of it was the same project.

## Reflection

Have been writing letters for an hour so far. I forgot how tedious handwriting letters repeatedly can be. It was nice that Karen incorporated my ideas into the letter. I understand a little more how important volunteers are because this is such a time consuming task. I'm sure it was a relief that a full-time staff member didn't have to take the time to do this. The thank you notes are a big deal because we do want these donors to come to our events again, and it's because of them that we can make a difference in the lives of the survivors of domestic violence.

It was interesting because I was supposed to categorize and organize all the donations, but we made a separate pile for the miniature-sized toiletries because we donate them to other organizations because we do not use these. It also made me realize the importance of keeping donors and the public informed of the specific needs of the organization. It was very nice to meet some of the women who help make this organization happen. They were there for a business meeting, so I tried to stay out of the way, but both were very polite and genuine. Even though I have been writing the same letters with the same template, I hope the donors feel the impact of their donations are making on this organization. Extremely happy I finished the letters – I was hoping to not do them again on Friday!

So glad I chose Good Neighbor Village to volunteer. It is related to criminal justice in more than one way because they serve people who are victims of violent crime and address other issues like substance abuse. I could have connected this to gender justice or poverty, or education, too. In November, they have a fashion show with the models being domestic violence survivors, which is cool. Good Neighbor Village uses their events and communications to tell about important information: what donations go towards, how to volunteer, other donations we need, and upcoming events. I will be volunteering in the future, and hope to go over to the residential center where the women live to see how all these smaller efforts come together. I also want to see how the store is run.

## Journal Privacy & Online Formats

Your journal will be read by your instructor for assessing completion of the course requirement. The journal is confidential. It will not be shared by the instructor with anyone else. The journal is a personal expression of thoughts about other people and experiences. It permits the writer to express themselves about relationships with supervisors, co-workers, or others that may be of a sensitive nature. It is up to each student's discretion to decide what goes into the journal (UIS, 2011). "Those who value

security highly will say the same thing differently from those who value expression” (p. 29).

Blog journals or journals through an online media will not be accepted.

# Section 5: The Site Visit or Conference Call

As you may recall, the Requirements and Expectations in Section 1 of this handbook stated that you should be prepared for the course instructor to perform a site visit or “cold call” to confirm your service work. This would happen subsequent to the instructor approving your Learning Commitment documents.

It is anticipated that most experiential learning placements will occur under the direction, coordination, or supervision of a representative of a community-based organization (CBO). CBOs include, but are not limited to, non-profits, government agencies, faith-based organizations, and philanthropic arms of for-profit organizations. The name and contact information for the service supervisor or coordinator should be included on the Learning Commitment Cover Sheet (See Appendix).

The method by which the instructor will contact the CBO’s supervisor or coordinator is at the instructor’s discretion. Methods of contact may include, but are not limited to, visiting the CBO’s site of your placement or a telephone conference. If the instructor requires a site visit, you may be required to facilitate the visit or conference by finding dates and times that would be convenient for both the instructor and placement site supervisor/coordinator. If the instructor requires a conference call, s/he may require that it be at his/her discretion, with or without prior notice<sup>1</sup>.

The instructor reserves the option of randomly selecting CBOs for site visits or telephone conferences with or without prior notice.

It is possible that some students may not be able to perform experiential learning under the direction of a CBO. If that is the case, the student’s learning experience plan will have to be approved by the instructor in the Learning Commitment. And, alternative methods of confirming work performed in service to the community would be arranged.

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<sup>1</sup> **Should the instructor use a random selection process without notice, s/he will make three (3) attempts to reach the CBO supervisor/coordinator listed on the student’s Learning Commitment Cover Sheet. Should the instructor be unsuccessful in reaching the CBO supervisor/coordinator, the student will be notified and the instructor reserves discretion about course credit.**

There are several purposes for the site visit or telephone conference. They include:

- Confirming that the service work described in the “Activities and Experiences” section of the Learning Commitment Worksheet is correct and agreeable to everyone.
- Making certain that the student will be permitted to complete the service as planned.
- Making changes to the plan for service work, if necessary.
- Reporting on any progress in the service.
- Asking the CBO supervisor/coordinator if they have any questions about the program.

Like the Learning Commitment and Worksheet, any requirements by the instructor to complete a site visit or telephone conference must be completed during the semester for the student to receive credit in the course.

## Section 6: Other Course Assessments

Pursuant to Section 1's Course Requirements and Expectations, this experiential learning component requires student to:

- Engage in assignments outlined in the Syllabus or course which may include, but are not limited to, journal entries, discussions, self-assessments, papers, and presentations.

This requires you to understand your instructor's requirements and directions for any other assessments which incorporate your experiential learning experience. Those assessments may not be described in this handbook.

# References

Association of American Colleges and Universities [AACU]. (2009). *Integrative and Applied Learning VALUE Rubric*. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/integrative-learning>

Center for Educational Innovation [CEI]. (n.d.). *Active Learning*. University of Minnesota. Retrieved from <https://cei.umn.edu/active-learning>

University of Illinois Springfield [UIS]. (2011). *The Applied Study Term Handbook* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). University of Illinois Springfield: Springfield, IL.



# Appendix

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**LEARNING COMMITMENT  
COVER SHEET\***

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

NID: \_\_\_\_\_

PLACEMENT INFORMATION:

ORGANIZATION NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SERVICE SUPERVISOR OR COORDINATOR FOR SITE VISIT BY  
INSTRUCTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR/COORDINATOR'S PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED DATES AND LENGTH OF SERVICE:

DATE AND TIMES: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE AND TIMES: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE AND TIMES: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR A TOTAL OF \_\_\_\_\_ HOURS.

SIGNATURES:

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

INSTRUCTOR \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

- Attach evidence of your service commitment, such as email communications or website registrations.

Due to UCF's Youth Protection Plan of 2019, **experiential learning projects related to the care, custody, control, education, recreation, or any other services, activities, or interactions with children 17 years old or younger on UCF campuses or at UCF-affiliated off-campus programs will require background checks through the sponsoring organization.** For more information about UCF's Youth Protection Program, see <https://compliance.ucf.edu/article-1-march-2019/>

On this page, you must attach the evidence of your service commitment. Written evidence is preferred.

- It is likely that **you** need to send the volunteer coordinator an email to confirm your service. Be sure to include the following:
  - The dates and times of your service
  - A brief description of your duties
  - Ask the coordinator to reply with a confirmation and include the reply as your evidence
- If you made an appointment online through the organization's website, insert a picture of the commitment you made online.

If you are unable to obtain any kind of written evidence of your commitment, you need to provide photographic evidence.

- On this Learning Commitment:
  - You will need to explain why you are unable to use written evidence of your service.
  - You will need to explain how you will include several photos throughout the 15-hours of service to be included in your Journal

Please delete the instructions on this page for your Learning Commitment submission. – Thank you!

## WORKSHEET FOR LEARNING COMMITMENT\*

STUDENT NAME:

NID:

### Goals

1. Long-Term Goals

2. Intermediate Goals

3. Short-Term Academic Goals for this Course

### Learning Plan

A. Learning Objectives

B. Activities and Experiences

## C. Resources to be Consulted

## D. Method for Assessing Progress

\* The Learning Commitment Cover sheet and Worksheet is your *plan* for experiential learning and consulting other resources.

- Your plan must be submitted and approved by the instructor *prior* to performing your experiential learning.
- If your plan is not approved prior to performing your experiential learning, you risk performing services that will not be approved by the instructor.

\* Once your Learning Commitment is approved by your instructor, you may begin and complete your experiential learning activities.

\* Your experiential learning services are to be performed and completed for the “Reflective Journal Entries”.

- The purpose of the journal entries is to facilitate your learning experiences and reflections.

If your Learning Commitment plan requires photographic evidence of your service, as approved by the instructor, you will need to include several photos throughout the experiential learning process. The photos are then included in the Journal entries.