



Questions for Reflecting on Service

Choose a few as a springboard for your reflection sessions in class, reflection journals, or other assignments that ask students to bring their service into conversation with course themes, in-class content, and the world at large.

Issue-focused questions

- Why is there a need for your service?
- What do you perceive as the underlying issue, and why does it exist?
- What social, economic, political and educational systems are maintaining and perpetuating it?
- Do you see connections to public policy at the local, state, or national level?
- What can you do with the knowledge you gained from the experience to promote change?
- How is what you study preparing you to address this issue?
- How does this [profession/field] affect this issue?
- How do your lifestyle choices affect this issue? Is there anything you are doing or are not doing that perpetuates the situations?
- What is the responsibility of a person in this field to address this issue?
- How has your orientation to or opinion about this issue changed through the service-learning experience?
- What would it take to positively impact the situation (from the level of individuals, communities, education and government)?

Client-focused questions

- What similarities do you perceive between you and the people you are serving?
- How are you perceived by the people you are serving?
- What do you think a typical day is like for the people you serve? What pressures do they confront?
- How does their situation have an impact on their life socially, educationally, politically, recreationally, etc.?
- What stereotypes are you confronting about the people you serve? Have you reconceptualized these stereotypes? What new information led you to do this?
- If you were in charge of the agency/organization in which you are serving, how would you improve the delivery of service to clients?



Self-focused questions

- In what ways are you finding your involvement with your service program difficult? What have you found that help you follow through despite the difficulties you encounter?
- What personal qualities (e.g. leadership, communication skills, compassion, etc.) have you developed through service-learning? In what ways do you anticipate these qualities will help you in the future? To help others in the future?
- How would you motivate others to become involved in service-experiences? What would you say to them?
- What happened during your service experience that made you feel you would (or would not) like to pursue this field as a career?
- What contributions can you bring to this field from your service experience?

Course-focused questions

- How does the service experience relate to class material?
- Did the experience contradict or reinforce class material?
- How did course material help you overcome obstacles or dilemmas in the service experience?
- What aspects of your learning may have been due to your service experience?

Additional reflection questions

This compilation is from the Bennion Center at the University of Utah

- Why do you do service? For self-interest or altruism?
- Describe the people you met at the service site.
- Name three things that stuck in your mind about the service experience.
- Describe the atmosphere of the service site.
- Describe some of your interactions.
- Why do you think (activity described in previous questions) happened)?
- How were you different when you left the service location compared to when you entered?
- What did the “body language” of the people tell you?
- How did the people’s responses make you feel?
- How did the service site make you feel (compared to other identifiable places)?
- What brings people to the service site (both people seeking service and the volunteers)? Are “strangers” welcomed at the service site? Why or why not?
- How are you similar/different to the others (others in your service group? others seeking service? etc.)?
- In what ways did being different help/hinder the group?
- What have you learned about yourself?



- If you were one of the people receiving services, what would you think of yourself?
- How does this experience compare to others you've had?
- What connections do you see between this experience and what you've learned in your college courses?
- How has your service contributed to your growth in any of these areas: civic responsibility, political consciousness, professional development, spiritual fulfillment, social understanding, and/or intellectual pursuit?
- What have you learned about a particular community or societal issue?
- How did this experience challenge your assumptions and stereotypes?
- Do you think these people (or situations) are unique? Why or why not?
- What public policies are involved and what are their implications? How can they be improved?
- Who determines what's best for the community?
- Describe what a typical day might be like for someone who uses the service of the organization where you worked.
- How would you do this differently if you were in charge?
- What was the best/worst/most challenging thing that happened?
- Did you feel like a part of the community in which you were working?
- How do you define community?
- Describe an internal or external conflict that has surfaced for you during your service work. Explain the factors that contribute to it and how you might resolve or cope with the conflict.
- Discuss a social problem that you have come in contact with during your service work. What do you think are the root causes of this problem? Explain how your service may or may not contribute to its alleviation.
- What could this group do to address the problems we saw at the service site?
- What could each participant do on his/her own?
- How can society better deal with the problem?
- How can this experience apply to the situations in your life?
- How can your solutions apply to the problem(s) of other groups?