

PSL SYLLABUS

Course Rationale

The rationale for service learning was articulated over 2,000 years ago by the Chinese philosopher Confucius who said,

*"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember.
I do and I understand."*

Confucius recognized that deep learning occurs when interest is aroused by involvement. Unlike traditional classes that depend on teaching and telling in hopes that students recall information, service learning engages students in real world experiences designed to cultivate empathy and understanding. In the process, students develop informed opinions about issues confronting the people they serve and take meaningful action to address unmet needs in their community.

Service will also provide you with the satisfaction that comes from using your gifts and talents to advance something other than yourself. As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said,

"To leave the world a bit better. This is to have succeeded."



Each year, PSL students invest thousands of hours to improve their school and community. Since 2005, PSL students – inspired by their service experiences – initiated Shantytown, the Holiday Food Drive, the Giving Garden, the student philanthropy program, and the Pirate Power Pack program. Each year, these programs collectively grant \$6,000 to nonprofits, donate 5,000 lbs. of food to local pantries, and provide over 12,000 meals to Perry students. Many other PSL students have introduced projects to tackle issues confronting the elderly, people with special needs, the poor, immigrants, and the environment. How will you add to PSL’s legacy of improving the quality of life in Perry?

Course Description

Perry Service Learning (PSL) is a full year course that combines Social Studies and English curricula with meaningful service and thoughtful reflection to enhance student learning and promote civic responsibility. The service expectations involve students interacting with the people they serve (**direct service**), performing tasks without first-hand contact with the recipients (**indirect service**), and/or educating the public about issues/unmet needs in their community (**advocacy**). The classroom expectations are supported by a rigorous social issues curriculum that enables students to make connections between what they learn in class and experience at their service location.

Service Expectations

Students will compete for 1 of approximately 60 traditional service opportunities by preparing and sharing a resume and video introduction with 4 organizations (3 chosen by the student and 1 chosen by the PSL instructors). Students who are not able to secure a traditional position will have a menu of options to choose from each week in order to meet their service requirement. Menu options may include meal prep for Project Hope, beach clean-up, Shantytown, PSL Giving Garden, Perry Recreation, and many more. Please note, service opportunities on campus are limited this year due to the pandemic. As a result, you may need to provide your own transportation to volunteer. Moreover, the overall number of service opportunities available is smaller than ever before. Consequently, less than half of you will be selected for your first choice. If this poses a problem, you may want to consider alternative courses/pathways to get the credits you need for graduation.



Course Learning Modules

Units of study may include: Service Learning 101, Poverty & Homelessness, Philanthropy, Education Reform, Holiday Food Drive, Meaning & Purpose, Power of Relationships, Immigration, Inclusive Communities, Environmental Justice, Community Activism, Race, Pandemic Response, and the Election of 2020. In addition to the aforementioned units, opportunities for civic engagement and reflection will take place throughout the year.

Grading Policy

Please note: The Perry High School grading policy is available in the [PHS Student Handbook](#). Service (hours and evaluation), reflections, and assessment fall under academic achievement scores and represent 90% of your PSL grade. Homework and in-class assignments are considered academic practice and constitute 10% of your grade. Grades will be updated regularly under PSL English in Infinite Campus. The PSL Social Studies and Community Service grades will be entered at the end of each term and be exactly the same at your PSL English grade.

Re-Assessment Policy: Within 7 calendar days of the student's receipt of feedback on a summative:

1. The student will create (in writing) a unique individualized plan on the re-learning steps/practice that he/she will complete before re-taking a summative assessment.
2. The student will meet with the teacher and discuss the plan the student created.
3. The teacher will approve the plan with any necessary additions/changes made to the plan.
4. When the student has completed the plan, the student will arrange with the teacher when/how the re-take will occur.
5. Reassessment will occur outside of school hours.

Details

- Come to class on time and prepared every day with the following items: notebook, pen, Chromebook, charger, headphones, and lawn chair.
- Respect others and their opinions.
- Do not sleep or assume the sleeping position.
- School dress code applies in school. Agency dress code applies at volunteer placement.
- The use of cell phones/electronic devices in the classroom is a privilege, as they can be a powerful educational tool. If they become a distraction, we reserve the right to prohibit their use.

Enjoy the course and take advantage of the opportunities to make your community a better place to live.

"But recognize that he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. That's your new definition of greatness."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.