



Teaching and Assessing Service Learning: Capitol and Community Scholars

MICHAEL CRESPIN

DIRECTOR AND CURATOR | CARL ALBERT CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH AND STUDIES CENTER

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

CRESPIN@OU.EDU

OU Community Engagement, Office of the Provost

Develop resources for teaching, research, and outreach.

PAC SL (Provost Advisory Committee on Service-learning) established criteria for designating service-learning courses

- Designation will be visible in the enrollment process and on the student transcripts, making it easier for students to locate service-learning opportunities and for the university to track student and faculty participation.

Capitol and Community Scholars

- Internship service learning based classes
 - Semester long 16-hour a week internships
 - Once a week seminar style class with frequent guest speakers
- Community Scholars: Fall
 - Local non-profits and city government
- Capitol Scholars: Spring
 - Oklahoma legislature, lobbyists and interest groups, executive branch legislative liaison offices

Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the legislative process in Oklahoma
- Demonstrate an understanding of how external interests groups can influence the legislative process.
- Be able to discuss how state politics in Oklahoma compare to other states

Capitol Scholars Assignments: Policy Papers

- Four policy-analysis papers
 1. Start of semester: Discuss upcoming legislative agenda
 - Students prepare themselves for the semester by learning about the important issues for the session
 2. Internship specific: Discuss one piece of legislation important to internship
 - Students prepare themselves for their internships
 3. Kansas Legislature: Discuss main policy agenda for Kansas
 - Learn about another state and prep for Kansas Intern Exchange
 4. Summary Paper: Reflect back on policy agenda semester
 - Mirror first assignment but backward looking

Critical Reflection Essays

- Ten journal entries over the course of the semester
- First – Expectations and goals
- Last – Reflect back on goals
- Others – Summary of events, major tasks, observations, meetings
 - Students frequently talk about committee hearings, floor debate, interest group involvement, etc.
- Lots of class discussion about events at the Capitol (graded)