

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	COMP3911 / COMP3S03
Subject Title	Service Learning and Civic Engagement in the Information Age
Credit Value	3
Level	3
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	COMP1011 or ENG2002
Objectives	<p>The objectives of this subject are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. introduce the concept and practice of learning through community service to our students; 2. introduce students to the impact and role of computing and information technology on society; 3. acquaint students with significant issues of social needs and the potential of computing and information technologies to address these needs; 4. facilitate students to apply their computing and technology skills to address societal needs; 5. enhance students' generic competencies of innovative problem solving, communication and teamwork; and 6. nurture students' sense of social awareness, empathy, responsibility and engagement.
Intended Learning Outcomes	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) articulate the impact of computing technology in social contexts and its potential contribution in addressing the needs of the underprivileged; (b) demonstrate awareness of the impact of social privilege on technology adoption and usage; (c) analyse complex issues in the service setting and design, implement and apply appropriate technological solutions to meet the needs of the target recipients; (d) work effectively in teams to solve problems encountered in planning and delivering the service; (e) communicate effectively with clients, partners and/or other stakeholders; (f) demonstrate empathy for people in need and a sense of civic responsibility, especially pertaining to the use, deployment and impact of technology; and (g) reflect on their role and responsibilities, both as professionals and as responsible citizens.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	<p>1. Concept and Practice of Service-Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles, concepts and myths of service-learning • Benefits of service-learning to students and the community • Ethical issues in service-learning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper attitudes and behaviours in service delivery • Reflection as a tool for learning <p>2. Discipline-specific Concepts, Issues and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential ethical, environmental and societal impacts of technology. Possible harm created by technology. Ethical and moral concerns raised by technology. Proper use of technology. Appropriate and sustainable technology. • Possible solutions to societal needs through technology. Potential factors impacting the effective use of technology by underprivileged communities. Usability, interaction and accessible technology. <p>3. Project-Specific Concepts, Issues and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the background and needs of the identified target group in the community • Health, safety, privacy, moral and ethical concerns and other issues relevant to the service project and beneficiaries • Project planning and development skills (e.g. human psychology and interaction, game programming, hardware development, cost, manpower and other resource estimation, budgeting, etc.) relevant to the projects.
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p>	<p>1. e-Learning Module</p> <p>The e-learning module is developed and delivered by the Service-Learning and Leadership Office at PolyU, consisting of readings, exercises and assessments that are designed to introduce students to the basic concept and practice of service-learning.</p> <p>Students are required to successfully complete the e-learning module <u>within the first four weeks</u> of the semester in which they are taking the subject.</p> <p>2. Discipline-Specific Lectures, Tutorials, Seminars and/or Workshops</p> <p>These activities will cover computing-related topics such as computing accessibility, appropriate technology, and/or information and digital ethics. They will also cover specific computing skills that may be needed by the students to carry out their service-learning projects. There will be opportunities for small group discussions, assignments, and presentations – to explore these issues in greater depth.</p>

3. Project-Specific Seminars, Tutorials and/or Workshops

The project-specific seminars, tutorials and/or workshops are designed to: (a) develop students' understanding of the targeted clients/ underprivileged community, as well as other issues relating to the service-learning project, (b) provide training for students in generic skills in planning and delivering the service project. Guest experts and speakers will be invited to contribute to some of these sessions as appropriate. Where possible, a hands-on interactive format will be used.

Students are required to attend all of the discipline-specific and project-specific lectures, seminars and workshops and successfully complete all of the required assignments/learning tasks prior to participation in the service-learning project.

4. Service-Learning Project

The service-learning projects are designed to develop students' generic competencies of innovative problem-solving, teamwork and communication, and enhance students' sense of social awareness, responsibilities and engagement.

Projects may be either local or offshore. The projects will emphasise *hands-on* tasks. They will involve team as well as individual work. Students will be encouraged to research on specific problems. They will also be challenged to design and implement solutions, applying their knowledge in information technology to solving social problems.

Typical projects in this class are development and infrastructure projects, where students will design and develop an IT solution for an underprivileged community or an NGO. Examples are designing VR and AR games to facilitate physical and mental therapy for children with severe disabilities or to facilitate mental therapy for elders with dementia. In addition to development, the projects will involve around 40 hours of frontline service necessitating interaction with the community.

Some projects (such as some particularly challenging or off-shore projects) may necessitate specific selection requirements on participating students. The teaching team will make the final decisions on project allocation, but efforts will be made to accommodate student preferences on their choice of project. For overseas projects, students may also be asked to shoulder a portion of their incurred costs.

Overseas projects will involve approximately one week of intensive frontline service, while local projects may be conducted during evenings and weekends.

5. Review Sessions, Reflective Journals and Report

Students will be required to write reflective journals and reports both during and after the service-learning project to demonstrate their ability to: (a) link their service-learning experiences with the academic focus/discipline-specific content of the subject, (b) reflect on their service-learning experience to identify their learning gains, as well as areas for future improvements, (c) reflect on their roles and social responsibilities. Class presentations of their reflections and activities will also be required.

To guide students in using reflection as a tool for learning, and to assess their ability in achieving the above learning objectives, reflection and review sessions will also be held both during and after the service-learning project.

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes	Specific assessment methods/ tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed							
			a	b	c	d	e	f	g	
	e-Learning Module (individual)	Pass/fail*								✓
	Attitude, discipline and contribution during preparation (individual)	10%			✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Plans/proposals for service (group)	20%			✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Performance in rendering service (individual & group)	40%			✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Reflective journal/report (individual)	30%	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
	Total	100%								

*Failure to complete before the deadline will incur a grade penalty

	<p><i>Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:</i></p> <p>The e-Learning Module will include <u>assignments and learning tasks</u> that are designed to introduce the concept and practice of service-learning to students, and to help them to begin to reflect on their role and responsibility as professionals and citizens (ILO g).</p> <p>The preparation process will require students to come up with <u>proposals or plans</u> for the service projects. They will need to analyse the situation and the needs of the recipients. This will require them to demonstrate their awareness of potential solutions and to apply classroom-learned skills to deal with complex issues and problems in the service settings (ILO c), their ability to function effectively as a team to solve complex problems (ILO d), and their ability to communicate effectively with different stakeholders with understanding and empathy (ILO e and f). These ILOs can be demonstrated both at the individual (attitude, discipline and contribution) as well as group (plans/proposals for service) levels during the preparation.</p> <p>The students' <u>attitude and performance</u> in the rendering of service, their degree of <u>engagement</u> with the service recipients, their <u>collaboration</u> with other students, and <u>interactions</u> with the service recipients and/or collaborating NGOs are obvious indicators of their ability to communicate effectively with clients and stakeholders (ILO e), their sense of civic responsibility, professional ethics and their empathy for people in need (ILO f), and their ability to work collaboratively to apply their knowledge and skills to deal with real problems in the service setting (ILO c, d and e).</p> <p>Students' reflective journals and report will testify to the students' <u>reflection</u> on their learning experience, and the breadth and depth of their learning. This assesses their ability to link service-learning and the academic content of the subject (ILO a), their awareness of the impact of social privilege on technology adoption and usage (ILO b), their ability to apply their knowledge to the service project (ILO c), their empathy for the less fortunate people in the society (ILO f), and their ability to reflect on their role and responsibilities in the society (ILO g).</p> <p>The class discussions and assignments are designed to help the students to learn and to gauge the students' understanding of the issues discussed. The students will be asked to write proposals for the projects, as preparation for service as well as assessment of their understanding of social needs.</p> <p>The students' attitude in the rendering of service, their degree of engagement with service recipients, their collaboration with other</p>
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	<p>students, and relationship with collaborating NGOs are obvious indicators of their sense of civic responsibility.</p> <p>Students' reflective journals on their experience, and reflective term reports testify to the students' reflection on their learning experience, and the breadth and depth of their learning.</p>	
Student Study Effort Expected	E-Learning Module	10 Hrs.
	Class Contact:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline-related Lectures, Tutorials, Seminars and/or Workshops 	12 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-Specific Seminars, Tutorials and/or Workshops 	13 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection and review tutorials and sessions 	10 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	Planning and preparation of project	25 Hrs.
	Rendering of service	40 Hrs.
	Reflection and review	25 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	135 Hrs.
Reading List and References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Warschauer, <i>Technology and Social Inclusion – Rethinking the Digital Divide</i>, The MIT Press, 2003. 2. Barbara Jacoby and Associates, <i>Civic Engagement in Higher Education</i>, Jossey-Bass, 2009. 3. Cathryn Berger Kaye, <i>The Complete Guide to Service Learning</i>, Free Spirit Publishing, 2004. 4. Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrich, Elizabeth Beaumont, Jason Stephens, <i>Educating Citizens – Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility</i>, Jossey-Bass, 2003. 5. Christine M. Cress, Peter J. Collier, Vicki L. Reitenauer and Associates, <i>Learning Through Serving – A Student Guidebook for Service-Learning Across the Disciplines</i>, Sterling, Virginia, 2005. 6. Dan Butin, <i>Service-Learning in Theory and Practice – The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education</i>, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. 	