

## Service-Learning Transcript Notation (SLTN): Instructor Guide

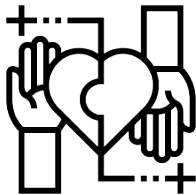
### Definitions:

**Transcript Notation:** A note added to a student's transcript to acknowledge the completion of a course with a service-learning component.

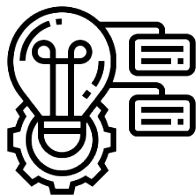
**Service-Learning:** A teaching pedagogy that utilizes critical reflection to connect course content to volunteering with a local non-profit or government agency.

**Community-Engaged & Civic Education (CECE):** A term adopted by Bellevue College in Fall 2020 to broaden the formats of community-based pedagogies supported by the RISE Learning Institute.

These six formats (and sub-formats) can be incorporated into courses that are eligible for the SLTN notation (*All icons courtesy of [Eucalyp](#) from [Flaticon](#)*):



**Direct Service-Learning:** Volunteering with a partner agency (in the community or at BC) for a certain number of hours, either at a site or remotely. Usually for 16+ hours spread over the quarter (aka "ongoing"). Volunteer activities can include direct service to clients or a product that benefits the community, a nonprofit organization, or a government agency.



**Community-Engaged Research:** Conducting research and/or analysis in partnership with, and for, a community organization. Usually lasts for multiple teaching modules.



**Community-Based Research:** Conducting research and/or analysis of community issues, with or without external inputs. May last for one module or longer.



**Civic Education and Action:** Engaging with a community or broad issue to change student and community behaviors through education, advocacy, or democratic participation, often without a partner agency. To ensure rigor, this approach needs to include a deliverable, such as reflections, research, presentation, etc.



**Community Economic Engagement:** Partnering with small or minority-run businesses to help improve their capacity as a part of a class. Often, this is framed as a form of community support or revitalization. This is the only form of CECE that can work with for-profit businesses, as long as that business serves a community need.



**Philanthropy:** Fundraising or collecting food/goods for an organization as a part of a class.

**Community:** A group of people and/or setting that is beyond the individual student. The scope of the community can be defined by the instructor and/or student. It can include one's community (neighborhood, house of worship, affiliated club or group, etc.), college community (Bellevue College), region (city and state), or larger.

**Civic Action:** An action focused on changing behaviors, educating communities, fostering dialogue, amplifying community voices, impacting policy, and more. Civic actions can provide community impact without engaging with a specific nonprofit partner. For a list of possible civic actions, see Appendix B.

**Community Dialogue:** A conversation with 5-10 members of a chosen community (beyond family) about an important issue that may impact that community. The goal is to foster a deeper understanding of community perspectives around that issue and hopefully change some beliefs and behaviors.

## The Transcript Notation within Community-Engaged & Civic Education (CECE)

### What is the Service-Learning Transcript Notation (SLTN)?

This notation demonstrates that Bellevue College understands the utility of service-learning (S-L) as a teaching methodology, particularly in helping students better understand and/or apply course content, build transferable critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and bolster their résumés and college transfer applications. When students list service-learning experiences in their résumés and transfer applications, as they should be encouraged to do, the SLTN affirms the value of those experiences. Additionally, it may help some students transfer service hours to other academic institutions.

Qualifying students will receive a special note in their transcript below the qualifying course that states: "Demonstrated excellence in community-engaged and civic education or service-learning by contributing meaningfully to the community, practicing essential skills, civic-mindedness, and learning through deep reflection."

## But service-learning is now part of “Community-Engaged & Civic Education” (CECE). How does this change the transcript notation?

This change expands the types of courses that can qualify for the SLTN. The notation will still use the term “service-learning” as it is easily recognizable. Not all CECE offerings will qualify for the transcript notation, as they must meet certain standards.

## Does a CECE course need to qualify for or offer the SLTN?

No. Instructors are strongly encouraged to offer courses with community-engaged or civic components, even if they do not meet the rigorous criteria (explained below) to qualify for the transcript notation. To qualify for the notation, the S-L/CECE component must also provide opportunities for the students to impact a community and then reflect critically on their learning experiences. Research has shown (see Appendix A) that these types of courses and pedagogy provide benefits for students that go beyond traditional community-based education.

**Instructors should contact the RISE office at [service-learning@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:service-learning@bellevuecollege.edu) if they need support to qualify for the transcript notation.**

## Qualifying for the Service-Learning Transcript Notation (SLTN)

### Do all CECE courses qualify for the SLTN?

No. Just because a course uses CECE or service-learning does not mean it automatically qualifies for the transcript notation; it must be approved by a committee consisting of one administrator, one instructor, and one student. Once approved, the course may automatically qualify for multiple quarters.

An S-L/CECE course must create an opportunity for students to do the following to qualify:

- Learn about social, environmental, or civic issues in a way that connects or applies course content to the course outcomes
- Participate, in-person or remotely, in the broader community (see definition above) in an action-oriented way
- Reflect critically on experiences and connections to help grow more holistically

The criteria are listed below.





## Direct Service-Learning

Volunteering with a partner agency (in the community or at BC) either at a site or remotely.

- **SLTN Requirements for Ongoing Service-Learning:**
  - 16+ hours of completed volunteering (approved by partner agency, and preferably spread across the quarter)
  - Minimum of three (3) reflections OR 2 reflections plus a deliverable such as research, a presentation, or a poster.
- **Examples:**
  - *An ESL Level 6 course requires students to volunteer for 16 hours with a community partner as a way to practice English and build a better understanding of their communities. The students complete one at-home written reflection and two discussion-based reflections. At the end of the course, the students complete the experience Post Survey, which also has reflections.*
  - *A Nutrition course requires students to volunteer at a food bank. The students also write a short reflection paper related to this shift, as well as complete the experience Post Survey, which counts as the second reflection. Students engage in a civic action of their choosing (have a community dialogue, speak at a city council meeting, comment on relevant legislation) about food insecurity and malnutrition, and complete a reflection about that experience.*



## Authentic Research

**Community-Engaged Research:** Conducting research and/or analysis in partnership with and for a community organization.

**Community-Based Research:** Conducting research and/or analysis on community issues, with or without external inputs.

- **SLTN Requirements for Community-Engaged Research:**
  - Provide end research/analysis to partner agency
  - Minimum of two (2) reflections
  - Basic training in community-based participatory research and/or field methods
  
- **SLTN Requirements for Community-Based Research:**
  - Conduct research
  - Minimum of two (2) reflections
  - Community or civic action and a specific, separate deliverable, such as a presentation or essay
  - Basic training in community-based participatory research and/or field methods
  
- **Examples:**
  - Community-Engaged Research: *Students in a Biology class partner with a local government agency to collect data for that agency as part of an ongoing project. Students complete written reflections before, during, and after the research, as well as complete the experience Post-Survey, which also has reflection questions. The students and the agency participate in the RISE Making Learning Visible showcase at the end of the quarter where they present their research.*
  - Community-Based Research: *Students in a Sociology class work in teams to research local issues. They interview local non-profits and send surveys to their friends. They compile the research into a presentation for the Making Learning Visible showcase. They participate in a reflective discussion halfway through the research process and then complete the experience Post-Survey and its reflection questions. Students also engage in a civic action of their choosing (have a community dialogue, speak at a city council meeting, comment on relevant legislation) through which they use their research to influence policy or change behavior and complete a reflection about that experience.*



## Civic Education

Engaging with a community or broad issue (often without a partner agency) to change student and community behaviors through education, advocacy, or democratic participation.

- **SLTN Requirements for Ongoing Civic Education:**
  - Multiple civic actions (or a single action with scaffolded parts)
  - Minimum of three (3) reflections
- **SLTN Requirements for One-off Civic Education:**
  - Single civic action
  - Minimum of two (2) reflections and a specific, separate deliverable, such as a reflection, presentation, or essay
  - Community or course dialogue with a specific, separate reflection
- **Examples:**
  - Ongoing Civic Education: *An English 101 class teaching composition through the topics of racial inequity and social justice requires students to attend a community organizing meeting, write a public comment on legislation highlighting systemic racism, and create a social media post about local social justice issues, before ending with a detailed letter to elected officials about racial inequity. Students complete three written reflections, as well as the experience Post-Survey, which also has reflection components.*
  - One-off Civic Education: *A microeconomics class asks students to explore the power of demand in altering supply chains by asking each student to research a company with poor environmental or human rights actions within their supply chains, and then use social media to protest or boycott that company. Students would then reflect on this activity and complete the experience Post-Survey, which has reflection components. Additionally, students would lead a short dialogue within their respective communities about using purchasing decisions to change business practices. Students would then reflect on their experiences. Students who disagree for moral or ideological reasons with the proposed action should be allowed to do so. In these cases, students should be allowed to propose an alternative activity and explain their reasons for not participating. The goal is to give students who dissent the chance to earn the SLTN notation without infringing on their academic freedom and personal beliefs.*



## Community Economic Engagement

Partnering as a part of a class with small or minority-run businesses to help improve their capacity, which in turn supports the broader community.

- **SLTN Requirements for Community Economic Engagement:**
  - Provide end product to partner agency / client
  - Minimum of two (2) reflections
- **Example:** For a business course, students partner with small, minority-run businesses throughout the quarter, giving them analyses of their business processes. Students complete one written reflection, one in-class reflective discussion, and one reflection with the community partner. Students also take the Post-Survey, which has a reflective component.



## Philanthropy

Fundraising or collecting food/goods for an organization as a part of a class.

- **SLTN Requirements for Philanthropy:**
  - Confirm donation (monetary, food, or goods) with partner agency
  - Minimum of three (3) reflections
  - Prior discussion to ensure legal and ethical partner engagement
- **Example:** In a community nursing course, students research the supply challenges that small health and non-profit organizations face during an economic recession. The students organize a goods collection drive for two local agencies and complete three reflections. They also take the experience Post-Survey, which has a reflective component.

Some additional requirements for consideration:

- 1) For all partnerships, the community agencies must be **501(c)3 non-profits** or **government** offices (including Bellevue College) or non-profits that have not yet been given 501(c)3 status but plan to do so or are in the process of applying for it. The only exception would be for Community Economic Engagement, which will be taken on a case-by-case basis. Other forms of CECE are not possible with for-profit organizations. Students might be able to engage with 501(c)4 and 501(c)5 agencies on a case-by-case basis. They cannot engage with 501(c)6 and 501(c)7 agencies as a part of their course. Students may partner with or perform a project with a non-501(c)3 non-profit organization. However, they may not qualify for the notation unless that company is a women-owned, minority-owned, or B Corporation.
- 2) Service Learning or CECE must be **integrated into the course**. The syllabus must talk about the CECE component and explain why it's an integral part of the course. Community-engaged and civic education should also be seen as contributing to the overall course grade. Instructors can choose whether to use the term "CECE" or the specific format of CECE in the syllabus. While RISE prefers the CECE component to be required, it could also be one of many project options, or be given for extra credit.
- 3) The instructor must **talk with the RISE Learning Institute** before implementation. This helps to a) strengthen the depth of the SL/CECE component through the sharing of resources and best practices, b) ensure that all risk management rules and CECE processes are followed, and c) support the course in meeting the SLTN requirements, and d) to ensure the course has been approved in advance for providing SL/CECE notations on student transcripts.
- 4) The goal of service-learning is to form a **mutually beneficial relationship** with the community. Students learn while also contributing. For example, students are neither *just* volunteering nor *just* being mentored. For this reason, every CECE format described above requires a community or civic action (aka "service") and reflection assignments and/or deliverables (aka "learning").
  - a. RISE maintains a list of 84+ vetted agencies that can be utilized for service-learning and CECE
  - b. RISE has many resources for how to create and assess deep, meaningful reflections. It also has examples used in other classes. These can all be found on the [CECE Team](#) or the [Service-Learning SharePoint](#). There are also tips in Appendix A.
- 5) RISE's SL/CECE **Pre-Survey** and **Post-Survey** work with all formats of SL/CECE. Students need to complete the Pre- and Post-Surveys (or equivalent assignments) to earn the transcript notation. Instructors must offer them for the class to qualify for the SLTN.

## What is the process for getting a course approved for the SLTN?

- 1) If not previously approved, the instructor will submit the following to the committee, through [service-learning@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:service-learning@bellevuecollege.edu):
  - a. Syllabus (with clear integration and explanation of
  - b. Relevant assignments
  - c. Relevant reflections
    - i. For in-person discussion reflections, the instructor should just send the proposed questions
  - d. Any additional information about the SL/CECE plans that would help guide the committee (e.g. anything you might tell the students that helps to build the connection between the CECE and the course content).
- 2) The committee will review the material and provide feedback (see below). If approved, the instructor can then give students who are eligible the SL/CECE notation.
- 3) At the end of the quarter, RISE will send a reminder to instructors to include the notation for qualifying students as a part of grading. For students to qualify, they will have:
  - a. Fully completed the action component for their course (e.g. meet minimum hour requirements, submit end product to partner, complete the civic actions, etc.)
  - b. Submitted and given meaningful effort to at least 3 reflection assignments or 2 reflection assignments and a deliverable.
  - c. Done nothing to disqualify themselves (e.g. act poorly with partner agency, falsify signatures, etc.)

A few other points:

- a. Instructors are encouraged to check-in with the partner agencies throughout the quarter. However, the results of partner final evaluations (as organized by RISE) will not count towards SLTN eligibility.
- b. If a student completes the hours/deliverable and submits the reflections, but the instructor feels that the student did not make a significant or meaningful effort to either/both, the instructor is encouraged to talk with RISE before deciding whether that student earns the SLTN.
- c. If the student does not complete the required hours/deliverables, but does a separate civic action, the instructor can decide whether this qualifies for earning the SLTN.
- d. The instructor ultimately decides whether or not a student receives the transcript

notation.

### What is the timeline for this process?

- 1) **Middle of previous quarter** – Meet with RISE to discuss options and ensure an understanding of policies and procedures
- 2) Does not need to be repeated if approval was received during the past 3 quarters and the course has not changed. If you do not teach the course each quarter, you may wait until after you have taught the course for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time before needing to have it re-approved.
- 3) **End of previous quarter or first 2 weeks of the new quarter** – Submit syllabus and supporting documents to RISE for review by the committee
  - a. A previously-approved course may need to be resubmitted (see below)
  - b. RISE encourages instructors to submit before the previous quarter ends in order to utilize the SLTN the next quarter to get student buy-in for service-learning
- 4) **During grading** – Add the notation in the Notes section to qualifying students

### What is the process for adding the notation during grading?

Due to ctcLink, **it falls to you to add the notation while you're submitting your grades.**

- 1) Log into ctcLink.
- 2) Click Faculty Center.
- 3) Click My Schedule and make sure you're on the current quarter.
- 4) Click the Grade Roster icon next to the class (should be the second icon from the left). Make sure that the Grade Roster Status is "Not Reviewed."
- 5) Scroll to the bottom and click the "Transcript Note" tab.
- 6) If a student qualifies for the notation (see below), click the "Note" link associated with them.
- 7) In the "Note ID" box for the student, enter "SLEX".
- 8) It should automatically populate the note with this language: "Demonstrated excellence in service-learning by contributing meaningfully to the community, practicing essential skills and civic-mindedness, and learning through deep reflection."
- 9) If it does **not** automatically add this note, please copy and paste this language into the Note box for that student.
- 10) Click "Add."
- 11) Do this for all qualifying students.

- 12) Click "Save" at the bottom.
- 13) When you're fully ready to submit the grades and notes, go to "Grade Roster Action," choose "Approved" in the drop-down menu and click Save.

Do **not** use this Note ID or this note for other classes. Qualifying sections are passed on to Evaluations, which will audit and remove any notes for sections that did not qualify.

### Do I really need to resubmit my course to the SLTN Committee every time I offer it?

The short answer is – it depends on the feedback from the committee:

- 1) **Approval** – The feedback is good and the committee has determined that the course provides meaningful CECE opportunities with community / civic action and critical reflection. The committee might provide suggestions for improving future iterations of the course but agrees that the course is already strong. **Courses with Approval are approved for 3 quarters**, including the quarter seeking approval, with the assumption that the course will not change significantly over that time. Instructors are encouraged to submit the latest versions of altered courses as an update.
  - a. Example: if the course is offered 3 quarters per year, resubmission will occur yearly.
  - b. Example: if the course is offered once per year, resubmission will occur after the third year.
  - c. Example: multiple sections offered in the same quarter will not be considered separate, and will be seen as one quarter.
- 2) **Request for Resubmission** – The committee has determined, based on the material given, that either the application for approval does not provide enough information to make a decision or the course has not met the criteria described in this guide. Depending on when the instructor initially submits the material, the committee may be able to approve a resubmission for that quarter. **Courses in this category will be considered rejected until a resubmission is approved.** RISE hopes that a Request for Resubmission will not dissuade an instructor from continuing to offer CECE experiences during that and future quarters.
  - a. Example: A course initially submitted before the end of the previous quarter has been resubmitted with meaningful alterations before the second week of the new quarter – it is then Approved or Rejected for that quarter.
  - b. Example: A course is initially submitted midway in the quarter the class is offered – there is no time for a resubmission to be considered this quarter, and any approval will be applied for the next offering.

## Anything else to know?

If the instructor approves, submitted materials for qualifying courses may be uploaded to the Service-Learning SharePoint as support for other BC faculty. RISE will contact the qualified instructors for approval before doing so.

**Please note:** Instructors may use S-L and CECE in their courses without approval from the SLTN committee. However, only courses that the SLTN committee has approved can use the transcript notation.

## Send all materials to, arrange meetings with, and ask questions to:

[service-learning@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:service-learning@bellevuecollege.edu)

## Appendix A: Tips for making more meaningful or critical reflections

- 1) The assignment should be focused on or dedicated to reflection. It can be a part of another assignment, but should still be distinguishable from the rest of the assignment.
- 2) For ongoing or scaffolded community-engaged and civic education, it is useful to have one reflection before the experience, one to three during it, and one after it. While 2 is the minimum, RISE recommends 5 for the best effect.
- 3) For single or short CECE experiences, you can use the Post-Survey as a reflection.
- 4) To provide the greatest accessibility to reflection, a variety of modalities or activities is best. These include written and spoken, in-class and online/Canvas, individual and group-based. Reflecting with community partners is considered best practice, though it is not always easy to arrange.
- 5) Reflections should help students build connections to the 8 Cs:
  - a. Coursework – How does the experience help students meet the course outcomes and/or contextualize the course content?
  - b. Community – How does the experience engage with a social or environmental issue, improve the capacity of the partner agency, and/or make a positive impact on the community?
  - c. Character – What has the student learned about themselves through this experience? What can they contribute?
  - d. Capabilities – How has this experience contributed to growth in enduring skills such as professional behavior, teamwork, conflict management, leadership, critical thinking, etc.
  - e. Career – How does the experience impact their future plans and/or careers?
  - f. Change – What in the community or world needs to change? What do the

- students plan to change in themselves?
- g. Commitment – Based on the experience, how will the student choose to make an ongoing impact in the community?
  - h. Culture – What has the student learned about American culture through the experience?
- 6) A way to plan out a good mix of reflections is through "Reflection Mapping." Within the different boxes, place the learning outcomes, modality, and connections, and then develop the reflection and its questions accordingly. *Adapted from Eyler (2002)*

	Before Experience	During Experience	After Experience
Reflect Alone / At Home			
Reflect with Classmates / In Class			
Reflect with Community			

- 7) There are many ways to scaffold critical reflection. Some of them are:
- a. DEAL – Describe-Explain-Articulate Learning
  - b. DIGA – Describe-Interpret-Generalize-Apply
  - c. 5Rs – Report-Respond-Relate-Reason-Reconstruct
  - d. Kolb – Describe the experience, reflect on the experience, apply to learning, determine next steps
  - e. Bloom's Taxonomy – Reflections move up Identify-Examine-Apply-Analyze-Synthesize-Evaluate
  - f. ABCs – Affect-Behavior-Cognition/Content
- 8) Some possible reflection topics are (*NOTE: If using these examples, please adapt them to the specifics of your class rather than reproducing them verbatim.*):
- a. Beginning Reflection
    - i. Why are you being asked to do this activity, so you can have a particular community-engaged experience?
    - ii. Take a *temperature check* (e.g. What are you excited about? Nervous about?)
    - iii. How do you plan to manage their time/project over the course of the quarter? How will you address challenges along the way?
  - b. Mid-term Reflection
    - i. How can the material being learned in class benefit the world around you, and in particular, the issue being addressed through your community partnership?

- ii. How does the coursework relate to what you're doing for this CECE component?
  - iii. What is something you have observed or experienced as part of CECE, what was your reaction to it, and how does it relate to your coursework?
  - iv. What are some challenges and/or discomfort you have been feeling as part of CECE, and how have you been dealing with them?
- c. End Reflection
- i. How was the CECE experience useful in helping you better understand or make sense of the course material?
  - ii. What impact did the course material make on communities, agencies, or local issues? How did your work impact the communities, agencies, or local issues you worked with this quarter?
  - iii. How have you personally changed because of the CECE experience?
  - iv. What will you do in the future? What changes will you make in how you do or see things? How can you use your new knowledge or skills to become more civically engaged or help address the issues you experienced?

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## Appendix B: Examples of Civic Actions

Below are examples of different types of civic actions that are possible as a part of the class. This is not an exhaustive list. All students, no matter their age or citizenship status, should be able to participate.

- Volunteering in a non-profit organization or government agency
- Participating in fundraising run/walk/ride
- Raising funds for an organization
- Collecting and donating food or goods
- Designing buttons, signs, or stickers for a particular issue
- Persuading others to register to vote and/or to vote
- Registering voters
- Joining demonstrations or ongoing protests
- Boycotting a product or service
- Creating art as a form of protest
- Organizing or educating the community about a specific issue
- Holding dialogues with members of own communities about specific issues
- Attending Lobby Days
- Attending and/or participating in city council, city committees, or school board meetings
- Signing and/or supporting signature gathering for petitions (online or paper)
- Commenting on legislation
- Contacting government officials
- Contacting media

Other civic actions, such as voting or donating to organizations, simply cannot be required as part of a class. Moreover, it is important that students not be pressured to vote or adopt a particular position or perspective, or take a particular action on an issue.

A larger list of possible civic actions is on RISE's [Civic Action website](#).