

## SELF PLACEMENT INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS

### What is it?

Self-placements can be used to meet the service-learning requirement for a course IF students have a pre-existing volunteer relationship with a non-profit or government organization, AND the nature of their service work aligns with the learning goals of the course.

### Steps in the Process

- 1. Discussion**  
Students should have individual conversations with you about the position they would like to submit for self-placement, briefly describing their host organization, the nature of their volunteer activities and how they relate to the class. Ideally, these conversations will take place in person, after class or during office hours, though if this proves difficult, email correspondence confirming the items outlined here will suffice.
- 2. Students Complete Self-Placement Forms**  
Once you have given them the go-ahead (verbally or in writing), students must complete a self-placement form in order to use their own volunteer position for the course (instead going through the process coordinated by UW's Carlson Center).
- 3. Formal Instructor Approval**  
After students complete self-placement forms, you automatically receive an email notification. At this point, you should approve the form based on the criteria outlined below, or enter feedback/comments that indicate the student needs to revise their submission – or that this position is not well-suited for service-learning in your class.

### Reviewing Self-Placements Through EXPO

1. Log into EXPO, the Carlson Center's online system using your UW NetID:  
<https://expo.uw.edu/expo/faculty>
2. Click on "View service-learning students and evaluations for [QUARTER]"
3. On the course roster, students who have submitted a self-placement will have a "View Request" button under the Self-Placement column on the right-hand side of the course roster. Click on "View Request" to review a student's self-placement form.
4. Review the position carefully considering the learning goals and objectives of your course, as well as the criteria outlined below.
5. Making a Decision
  - a. **Approve:** If all content is good, Select "Approve this position" in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
  - b. **Decline:** If self-placement form does not meet expectations, select "Decline. Leave feedback to student." Insert comments indicating what changes you would like to see in order for the position to be approved. Or, articulate why this service-learning position will not work for your service-learning class. Your feedback will be generated to the student in an email from the Carlson Center with a link back to the online form so they can make appropriate edits.

4. **(If Needed) Touch Base with the Carlson Center**  
Feel free to communicate with Carlson Center staff about questions, suggestions or thoughts at any time, at [serve@uw.edu](mailto:serve@uw.edu).

## For Instructors

### Criteria For Approving Self-Placement Forms

- Relevance**

The service-learning self-placement should be relevant to the course content and learning goals of your service-learning course.
- Pre-Existing Volunteer Relationship**

In order to do self-placed service-learning, students must ALREADY be involved in an ongoing volunteer relationship with an organization, meaning that they should be oriented and have started their service with them prior to the start of the current academic quarter.
- The Nature of the Volunteer Work:**
  - **Unpaid:** The institution the student is volunteering with must be a non-profit, government, or education-based organization. The student must be engaged on a strictly voluntary basis (i.e. they are not getting paid).
  - **Religiously affiliated:** If the student is engaged in religiously affiliated service, they must be contributing to the provision of social services through the institution, rather than participating in religious instruction. Volunteer work must address a recognized need beyond congregational membership in the greater community.<sup>1</sup> For example, serving at a church's food bank every Saturday would meet UW's service-learning criteria, while teaching religious content at a Sunday School would not.
  - **With a campus-based organization:** Similar to religiously-affiliated service, volunteer work must entail interaction with, and/or address needs and issues relevant to the community beyond campus and the immediate UW student population (volunteer work that only allows for interaction with students on campus should not be approved). For example, volunteering weekly with an RSO that takes students to assist in building houses in different neighborhoods throughout Seattle would meet UW's service-learning criteria, while fundraising for an RSO would not.
- Deepening the relationship + impact**

Students should compellingly articulate the kinds of contributions they are making to the organization. In approving a self-placement form, look evidence of the student's investment in the mission of their organization, and a desire to deepen the impact of their volunteer efforts through this service-learning arrangement.
- Supervision**

The Carlson Center requires the name and contact information (title, phone, email) of someone that can be contacted regarding the student's involvement with the organization during the quarter (a "contact person" or site supervisor). This person should be able to both support the student in their position and submit an evaluation at the end of the term, which you and Carlson Center will review to determine that the student has met the service-learning requirement for your class.
- Completeness**

Everything included on the self-placement form should be thoroughly complete!

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/ssl/pages/faq.aspx#44>