

## **Credit for Prior Learning Service Portfolio Guide**

Southern Virginia University accepts up to twelve credits for prior learning from service and/or work-based learning. Service learning credit is awarded for skills acquired during full-time service including but not limited to religious, military, humanitarian, primary parenting service and caregiver service.

Students demonstrating college-level learning through qualifying service should compile a portfolio documenting their service hours and acquired Knight Launch-ready Competencies. While portfolios may include written, visual, or multimedia elements, they must provide comprehensive evidence of the identified competencies.

Service learning is awarded as SER 275R, a 1-12 variable credit course based on hours of service performed and a portfolio demonstrating the competencies attained through service.

Portfolios are evaluated by a committee of field specialists chosen on the basis of the Knight Launch-ready competencies attained. There is a fee for review of each portfolio and credit awarded.

Each credit awarded represents 45 hours of work. Students who have completed full-time service work of one year or longer are eligible to apply for up to 12 credits (540 hours).

To apply for service learning credit you must complete a portfolio which includes the following.

1. Service Portfolios must include a narrative description of the service experience including the type of service; the institution or organization overseeing service experience, if applicable; the number of hours or years served; and the location of service.
2. Certification or other evidence of the period of service must be included.
3. Evidence of Knight Launch-ready Competency (adapted from the [National Association of College and Employers competencies](#) and defined below) acquisition through service learning.
4. For each competency obtained, a student may earn between 1 and 3 credits, with a total possible combined value of 12 credits.
5. There is a \$50 fee for review of each portfolio.

**Knight Launch-ready Competencies:**

**Self-Development & Self-awareness:**

Proactively develop yourself through continual personal learning, centering on Christ as the ultimate model for growth. Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses with gratitude for your unique gifts, and use wisdom to pursue opportunities for accountability. Build healthy relationships that foster unity and mutual progression.

**Sample Behaviors:**

**Acknowledge Gifts with Gratitude:** Identify personal strengths and unique talents as stewardships, utilizing them to serve others rather than for self-exaltation.

**Own Personal Limitations:** Demonstrate the humility to admit weaknesses and "blind spots" without defensiveness, viewing them as opportunities for continued growth.

**Pursue Courageous Accountability:** Identify and approach trusted mentors or peers to invite honest feedback on personal performance and character.

**Seek Wisdom Early:** Ask targeted, thoughtful questions of supervisors and specialists, recognizing that "knowing what you don't know" is a mark of maturity.

**Communication:**

Identify and respond to the needs of others with love, seeking always to build unity.

Demonstrate a wise awareness of the power of language and the role it plays in building up both the self and the community in a spirit of gratitude and grace.

**Sample Behaviors:**

**Practice Empathetic Listening:** Employ active listening to understand the "heart" of a message, not just the data, to foster deeper trust and unity.

**Influence for Harmony:** Use persuasion and influencing skills not for self-interest, but to move the community toward shared goals, unity, and mutual flourishing.

**Show love:** Have difficult but necessary conversations that invite change while expressing love and providing support.

**Respond with Grace:** When receiving instruction or feedback, respond in a way that builds up the relationship, even when the information is challenging.

**Critical Thinking:**

Cultivate wisdom by analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information through a lens of truth. Centering on Christ, demonstrate the discernment to identify and reject bias, ensuring your intellectual pursuits contribute to the unity and well-being of those around you.

**Sample Behaviors:**

**Discern Beyond the Surface:** Gather information from diverse sources not just for variety, but to identify underlying truths and reject deceptive biases or "echo chambers" that hinder objective understanding.

Evaluate with Integrity: Accurately interpret data by actively identifying and surrendering personal biases, ensuring that your intellectual pursuits remain grounded in reality rather than self-interest.

Synthesize for Unity: Combine complex information into clear, actionable insights that bridge gaps between different stakeholders, seeking always to foster a spirit of "one mind and one heart."

### **Understanding of Cultures, Traditions, and Peoples:**

Treat every individual with the dignity, respect, and love befitting a child of God. With gratitude for the diverse tapestry of the human experience, engage in practices that actively relieve suffering and create unity across all backgrounds and traditions.

### **Sample Behaviors:**

Seek Communal Wisdom: Actively solicit and honor perspectives from a wide range of backgrounds, recognizing that every individual carries unique divine insights that, when incorporated into a whole, lead to more comprehensive understanding and enlightened decisions.

Engage with Gratitude: Approach cross-cultural interactions not as a task, but as a joyful opportunity to experience the "diverse tapestry" of humanity, fostering personal growth and a deeper love for all people.

Practice Humble Openness: Maintain a heart of humility toward new ideas and traditions, recognizing that an open mind is necessary to truly see and love others as they are.

Steward Influence for Others: Recognize and address systems of privilege not with guilt, but with a commitment to open doors for others, ensuring that all are able to flourish together.

### **Leadership:**

Exemplify the mission of Southern Virginia University by lifting those around you. Lead with wisdom and Christ-like love, inspiring a spirit of gratitude and fostering unity as you guide others toward a shared, noble vision.

### **Sample Behaviors:**

Build Mutual Trust: Intentionally foster an environment of trust and safety, where encouragement is the primary tool for motivating others toward excellence.

Foster Unity through Persuasion: Use wisdom and Christ-like love to build consensus, ensuring that influence is used to bring people together rather than to exert power.

Model the SVU Mission: Serve as a Christ-like role model by approaching every task with confidence, grace, and a positive attitude that invites others to do the same.

Lead with Noble Purpose: Inspire and motivate yourself and others by centering work on a shared, noble vision that lifts all.

### **Professionalism:**

Develop effective work and study habits with gratitude for the opportunity to serve and learn. Act with wisdom in the interest of the larger community, ensuring your conduct is centered on Christ and reflects a commitment to integrity and unity.

**Sample Behaviors:**

Steward the SVU Mission: Develop and maintain a personal brand that reflects the values of the university, ensuring your reputation serves to build trust and unity.

Honor Others Through Dependability: Demonstrate consistent dependability and presence as a way of respecting the time and efforts of others, recognizing that "showing up" is a foundational act of service.

Work with a Grateful Heart: Approach tasks and studies with a high level of dedication, viewing the work not as a burden but as an opportunity to develop your talents.

Prioritize the Larger Good: Organize and complete tasks by prioritizing those that best serve the "larger community" and your long-term goals over short-term convenience.

Honor Others through Dependability: Manage complex family schedules, community commitments, and the needs of others with integrity and love.

**Teamwork:**

Develop collaborative skills and work effectively toward common goals with love for your colleagues. Appreciate diverse viewpoints as a path to greater wisdom, and foster unity by fulfilling shared responsibilities with a heart of gratitude.

**Sample Behaviors:**

Listen with a Heart of Understanding: Practice patience and active listening to fully grasp the perspectives of others, asking thoughtful questions that seek to uncover the wisdom in their diverse viewpoints.

Navigate Conflict with Grace: Manage disagreements and ambiguity with resilience and wisdom, seeking resolutions that prioritize relationships and shared values.

Serve with Gratitude: Approach shared responsibilities with a thankful heart, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to work alongside others toward a noble and common purpose.

Pursue Collective Success: Actively collaborate with others not just to "finish the job," but to ensure every member of the team is supported, lifted, and successful in their own right.

**Digital Literacy:**

Understand and leverage technologies ethically, applying those skills with wisdom to uplift humanity. Centering on Christ, use modern tools to build unity, solve complex problems, and express gratitude for the resources that allow us to connect and create.

**Sample Behavior:**

**Adapt for Connection and Unity:** Quickly learn and embrace new tools with the specific intent of fostering unity and bridging gaps between people in an ever-changing digital landscape.

**Steward Learning as Growth:** View the mastery of new technologies as a form of personal development that prepares you to better serve and lead in a modern world.

**Optimize for Service:** Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity, recognizing that saved time and resources are opportunities to further invest in developing yourself and supporting others.

**Select Tools with Discernment:** Exercise wisdom in choosing the "right tool for the right task," ensuring that technology enhances human connection rather than replacing it.

### **Portfolio Directions:**

1. Choose your competencies
2. Prove your learning
3. Submit your portfolio

Choose your competencies from the list of eight Knight Career-ready competencies above by reviewing the descriptions and sample behaviors, contemplating your service experience, and determining which competencies you obtained through full-time service.

Prove your learning by creating your portfolio. Your portfolio should have an introduction, documentation, and sections for each competency.

## **The Portfolio**

### **The introduction:**

The introduction includes a narrative description of your service experience including the type of service; the institution or organization overseeing the service experience, if applicable; the number of hours or years you served; and the location of your service.

### **Certification:**

If your service was undertaken under the direction of an organization (for example, a church, the government, or a humanitarian organization), please provide official documentation of your service. If your service was as a primary full-time parent or full-time caregiver, please include a letter of recommendation from someone who can speak to your service.

### **Competencies:**

To ensure the committee can evaluate whether or not you have achieved college-level learning in a competency, this section of your portfolio should be the most detailed. The

committee is looking for evidence that you didn't just perform tasks, but that you learned transferable skills.

### **Step-by-Step Instructions for Each Competency:**

1. **The Claim:** A brief statement identifying which competency you are claiming and how many credits (1–3) you are requesting for it.
2. **Describe the Context:** Describe a specific instance or "Critical Incident" where you demonstrated this competency. What was the specific challenge or responsibility you faced? *Example:* Don't just say "I was a leader." Describe a specific meeting, interaction, or project during which you fostered unity and resolved a conflict.
3. **Explain the Action:** What did you do to accomplish the outcome? How do your actions show that you gained the identified competency?
4. **Show the Impact:** What was the result of your actions for you, the community, the organization, or the individuals you served?
5. **Reflect on Growth:** How did this experience prepare you for your education, future career, and/or a life of meaningful service? Explain how this experience changed your worldview and how it aligns with the "Knight Launch-ready" competencies definition.
6. **Additional evidence:** Adding additional evidence will strengthen your case. This evidence might take the form of additional examples that follow the pattern above (3 examples would be ideal). The additional evidence could also be in the form of training materials you produced, journal entries that discuss the experience, lesson plans, or other similar documents.