



## Guiding Students Through the Reflection Process

Reflection is an important element of service learning. Reflection allows participants of service learning to pause and consider the experience itself including what occurred, what was learned, and how that learning will be transferred to other areas in a student's life. This reflection will also assist in the student's understanding of how academic knowledge fits into the social environment. Student reflection should take place

- before the service learning in order to determine what questions are being considered and hopefully answered during the experience. Students should ask who will benefit from the service learning, what issues and needs will be addressed through the service learning, and how those issues and needs will be addressed.
- during the service learning through interaction with other participants and discussions that may take place. Students should ask how this service is helping individuals or communities and what skills and thought processes are being used to solve problems as they arise.
- after the service learning when participants critically view their successes and examine how the service learning could have been better. Students may ask how might the service learning be enhanced if repeated and what impact the service had on the community.

Reflection may take many forms. Some of the most common reflection tools include the following:

- E-mail or Web-based discussion groups, including wikis
- Discussions
- Displays
- Essays
- Journals
- Portfolios
- Presentations

A list and description of other reflection ideas can be found at the Web site **Service Learning Reflection Activities** <[www.wartburg.edu/cce/cce/assessment%20and%20reflection/SL-Reflection%20Activities.pdf](http://www.wartburg.edu/cce/cce/assessment%20and%20reflection/SL-Reflection%20Activities.pdf)>.