Service Learning in Foreign Language Learning

(a workshop)

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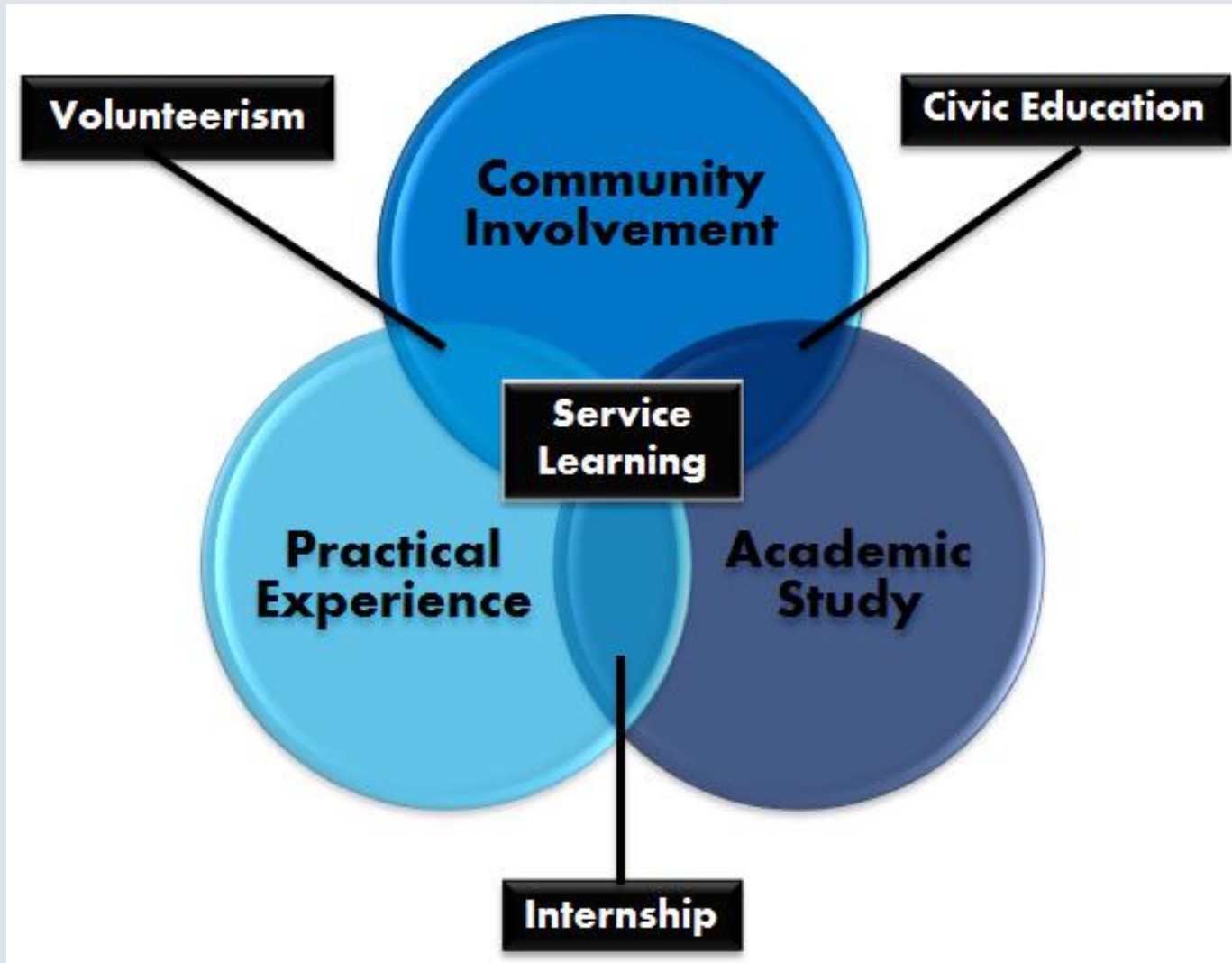
Quick review from earlier

- Service (learning) is not necessarily a "volunteer" activity

- Service (learning) can utilize skills, or develop skills, outside of what you think you came for

- Reasons for service (learning) can be diverse
  - even amongst the learners

Community Involvement

- Used to be called "good citizenship"
- Norms are different in Asia???
- Sometimes called "Community Engaged Classrooms"

Service Learning as Pedagogy

- Fits the "task-based"/"project-based" model for learning
- Not unlike an internship or practicum concept
  - Taking classroom studies to the field
  - Bringing the field to the classroom
- Works with language learning
- Extends class beyond the classroom

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(image from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts)

Service Learning as TBLL

- Similar to Pre-task / Task / Post-task models, Service Learning may fit
  - prior to language focus,
  - as a main task,
  - following language focus
- Service need not be in L2, if it is prior to or following language focus
- L2 for reflection or reporting on service? (service as "content")

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Service Learning as Inquiry

- "No right answers"
  - Unlike pre-designed laboratory work where the instructor designs student learning
  - Unlike OJT where "the way" is taught and repeated
- Learners react and reflect on spontaneous and authentic environment

Contract for Learning

- Negotiated, agreed, and managed by three (or four) parties
  - service host (institution &/or recipient)
  - teacher
  - learner
  - (the school)
- Learning objectives and time requirements specified

Challenges

1. Time
   - Identifying opportunities, setting it up
   - Allocating class time
   - Student service time availability
2. Student learning
   - Specific learning objectives tied to classroom outcomes
3. Positive community impact
   - Expectations and planning

Examples

- NOT "the survey squad"

- NOT "the 'can I help you' assailant"

- NOT menial tasks without social impact

Examples

- Tutoring project with local schools or after-school programs

- Community improvement project (even rubbish removal)

- Signs "repairs" project (fix the English)

- Recycling & Awareness

- Multicultural family support activities

National Youth Leadership Council (USA) Standards for Service Learning

1. Meaningful Service
2. Link to Curriculum
3. Reflection
4. Diversity

5. Youth Voice
6. Partnerships
7. Progress Monitoring
8. Duration & Intensity

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