

3.3.1.5

Institutional Effectiveness: Community/Public Service

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its mission, if appropriate.

Judgment

Compliance Partial Compliance Non-Compliance Not Applicable

Narrative

Service to the community is identified as an essential component of the Tennessee Technological University (TTU) mission statement as evidenced by the opening paragraph of the mission statement, available at www.tntech.edu/flightplan/mission-statement:

*Tennessee Technological University's mission as the state's only technological university is to provide leadership and outstanding programs in engineering, the sciences, and related areas that benefit the people of Tennessee and the nation. The University also provides strong programs in the arts and sciences, business, education, agriculture and human ecology, nursing, music, art and interdisciplinary studies. Tennessee Tech serves students from throughout the state, nation, and many other countries, but it **retains a special commitment to enrich the lives of people and communities in the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee.***

The University defines community/public service as a strategy that integrates meaningful community-based activities with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen local and regional communities [1]. Service to the community allows TTU to maintain an important reciprocal engagement between TTU and the Upper Cumberland communities. Through public service, TTU students learn in the classroom and through hands-on experiences solving real-life problems within their community. Students not only learn the practical applications of their studies, they also become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform. With this commitment to public service in mind, the leadership team at TTU created the University Service Center as one focal point of contact for service learning and civic engagement.

In addition to the relationship between the University mission statement and the commitment to service, the TTU Flight Plan highlights an emphasis on service in Goal Three, bullet point three: [2]

*Enhance the learning environment to effectively support all programs and objectives. Increase the number of faculty and students (undergraduate and graduate) engaged in research, **service**, and evidence-based learning practices [3].*

The University has a long-standing commitment to the community and continues to fulfill the mission of providing leadership and outstanding programs that enrich the lives of the people and communities within the Upper Cumberland region, state-wide, across the nation, and around the world. This commitment permeates the culture of the faculty, staff, administration, and student-body of the University as evidenced by campus-wide participation. Three Centers of Excellence abound with public service activities that work towards improving manufacturing practices, water-quality, and energy usage across the state and globe [4]

The mission statement of TTU includes “*The University is engaged in scholarly activity, especially basic and applied research, creative endeavors, and public service, with special emphasis on community and economic development.*”

The public service mission is embedded within the academic units of the University and is conducted by individual faculty members. Faculty members are expected to engage in public service. Generally speaking, faculty members in collaboration with their departmental chairs define service outcomes. A service component is listed in the Agreement on Responsibilities that every faculty member negotiates and signs each academic year, in which differential percentages of service can be indicated by the faculty member in agreement with his or her supervisor. Each faculty member is then required to file annually a report on accomplishments for the year with the departmental chair to be used for evaluation of how well these agreed responsibilities have been met. Assessments for service learning are available on the Service Center's website although individual reporting of such outcomes is departmental (details available at <https://www.tntech.edu/handbooks/facultyhandbook/facultyeval>).

Service at TTU constitutes a significant commitment of time, energy, and manpower. Outreach programs at TTU are undertaken at many different levels and supported at all levels of the organization. To facilitate outreach, in 2008 University administration created the Service Center as a connection between faculty, students, staff, and community partners to address community needs through service learning and civic engagement. An internal and an external review board are in place to assure the best quality with the highest impact for all involved in service initiatives. A Service Learning Committee (internal review board), consisting of deans, departmental heads, faculty, and students, serves as a University resource to faculty and staff while the community partners serve as community resources; the Service Learning Committee convenes twice a year. The charge of the Committee is to provide direction to the Center leadership team and act as a liaison between the community partners, students, and University administration. Once a year, the University Service Center hosts the community partners (external review board). During the visit, the Service Center provides the community partners an opportunity to network with faculty and students and to discuss their volunteer needs. The University Service Center serves as a link, matching community needs with service projects involving students, faculty, and staff. The Service Center annually assesses the impact and satisfaction of students, faculty, and community partners.

The vision of the University Service Center incorporates the TTU vision of being one of the best universities in the nation through a commitment to the lifelong success of the students. Specifically, the Center's vision states:

Tennessee Tech University has a rich tradition of service and an opportunity to instill in our students an ethic of caring and a sense of responsibility for making our world better. We want to move beyond service and to transform our University and our community through sustainable partnerships.

Community/public service goals as defined by the Service Center are as follows and can be found at www.tntech.edu/studentaffairs/volunteer/aar:

- *To provide students with the opportunity to realize academic learning objectives through participation in community service, allowing them to connect theory with experience and thought with action*
Rationale of goal: This will help students to feel connected to the University and the community at large and will help them connect their college experience to civic engagement as well as recognize the relevance of the academic subject to the "real" world.
- *To build capacity in the community through reciprocal and sustainable partnerships, allow students to fill unmet needs in the community and on campus through direct and meaningful service, and empower community members to become co-facilitators of learning*
Rationale of goal: This will help the community partners feel connected to the University as well as provide them with volunteers to bring fresh ideas and energy to their agencies while helping students recognize the relevance of the academic subject to the "real" world. It will help develop an environment of collegial participation among students, faculty, and the community.
- *To expose students to social inequality and injustice, while empowering them to make a difference and increase the civic and citizenship skills and sense of duty in students*
Rationale of goal: This will better prepare students for their careers and continuing education and give students greater responsibility for their own learning.

University Service Center Activity Tracking

The Service Center provides many direct benefits to the community as it is the primary contact point at the University when a community partner has a need for human resources. The coordinators work with

the partner to provide the volunteer human resources that they need, whether those needs are for workers, educators, or builders. The following table represents a *portion* of the events hosted or co-hosted by the Service Center staff.

Table 1. Service Center Events.

Event	# of Volunteers	# of Volunteer Hours	Financial Impact
Academic & Community Success (1 st Term)	15	102	\$2,053
Academic & Community Success (2 nd Term)	45	270	\$5,435
Honors Service Retreats	71	271	\$5,475
Fall Fun Festival	45	900	\$18,117
Eat. Glow. Run. (TTU Food Pantry)	125	670	\$13,487
Pageants with Purpose	17	170	\$3,422
Blessings in a Backpack (Jackson County Schools)	40	289	\$5,817.57
TTU Campus Food Pantry	34	717	\$14,433.21
Blue Cross Bowl	700	10,500	\$211,365
Greek Week, Service Week	400	1600	\$32,208
Hidden Springs Farm Clean Up	17	102	\$2,053
Windows on the World	100	2000	\$40,260
TOTALS	1609	17,591	\$354,126

- Volunteer hours are in excess of those listed. Estimations are made.
- The Federal Agency for Service and Volunteering attributable expense per volunteer hour for the state of Tennessee (\$20.13) http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/pressroom/value_states.cfm.

Also tracked through the Service Center are campus-wide community engagement (CE) hours and participation. The Service Center established participation benchmarks based upon data requested by Campus Compact and the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) as well and the annual submission to the President’s Honor Roll. The following data are provided for the two most recent academic years available, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. These data are collected during the academic year that follows; therefore, 2014/2015 data will be collected in 2015/2016.

Table 2. Community Engagement Data

Annual Community Engagement Data Collection:	2012/2013:
Number of academic service learning students (course-affiliated)	2,705
Number of community service students (not course-affiliated)	4,342
TOTAL (all students involved in community engagement)	7,047
Number of students who engaged in 20+ hours of service	3,247
Number of students whose service was supported by CNCS - AmeriCorps VISTA Member, Kaitlin Salyer, Stationed in the University Service Center	1
Number of academic courses with service learning component (reported)	149
Number of service hours facilitated through service learning courses (reported)	375,445
Number of scholarship students (Alumni, UAS, HPEO, etc.)	1,150
Number of community engagement hours by scholarship students	72,550
Percentage of Federal Work Study students assigned to community	18%
Athletics - Number of community engagement hours	3,075
Greek Life - Number of community engagement hours	1,400
Student Organizations/Res Life - Number of community engagement hours	8,795
Student Teaching/Etc. - Number of community engagement hours	370,795

Annual Community Engagement Data Collection:	2013/2014:
Number of academic service learning students (course affiliated)	2,402
Number of community service students (not course affiliated)	2785
TOTAL (all students involved in community engagement)	5,187
Number of students who engaged in 20+ hours of service	2641
Number of students whose service was supported by CNCS	0
AmeriCorps VISTA Member CE hours	916
Number of Academic courses with service learning components	163
Number of Service hours facilitated through service learning courses	357,542
Number of faculty including service learning	89
Number of Scholarship Students (Alumni, UAS, HPEO, etc.) involved in CE	1147
Number of community engagement hours by scholarship students	70,775
Athletes involved in CE	287
Number of CE hours by athletes	3221
Greeks involved in CE	909
Number of CE hours by Greeks	13635
Student Organizations reporting CE involvement - Number of students	205
Number of CE hours by student organizations (including res life groups who reported)	2278
Student Teaching/FOED - Number of CE hours	335,534

The significant jump in numbers, shown in the above tables, should be attributed to the addition of education courses such as Foundations of Education (FOED) and Student Teaching. The President's Honor Roll for Community Engagement and Carnegie Classification requested the addition of these courses for community engagement reporting for 2013.

Campus Recognition: Distinguished Service Learning Award

Each year, the Service Center recognizes one TTU student and one TTU faculty member who best demonstrate exceptional service learning and service leadership through the University. The Distinguished Service Learning Award, sponsored by Home Instead Senior Care, is presented every spring.

Any student, faculty, administrator, or staff may nominate an individual. The recipients will be presented with a plaque and a cash award at the end of April.

Student Eligibility: Any TTU student who has demonstrated exceptional participation and leadership in service learning initiatives through the University.

Faculty Eligibility: Any faculty member, including adjuncts, who has demonstrated exceptional service learning initiatives through the University.

Eligibility for nomination and for the award is determined according to the following definition: "Service learning is defined as a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."

Awards such as this are another reason service learning assessment and evaluation are so important. The Committee members reviewing submissions look for evidence of impact on community needs and on the students who participated, as well as the impact on the faculty involved and the University as a whole.

Service Center Assessments, Modifications, and Improvement Plans

The expected outcomes, listed above as goals, for community/public service programs, are clearly defined in measurable terms and tracked through program assessment by the Service Center. The Service Center is a resource to all faculty members, assisting them in incorporating service learning projects into course material and curricula and for establishing measurable outcomes. Outcomes are reported by the Service Center in an annual report, available at www.tntech.edu/studentaffairs/volunteer/aar, and through an institutional effectiveness report.

In addition, college-level public service participation data are collected by the deans of the colleges and reported to the President in the form of annual reports on service and accomplishments. Furthermore, TTU is one of the participating 4-year universities in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data collection. The College Student Report 2014/2015 data are available on the basic college climate of student engagement. Data are provided below from the NSSE assessment on community service and engagement of TTU students as compared to peer universities and Carnegie universities. Selected data are provided below. Details are available at <https://www.tntech.edu/assessment/student-surveys>.

The two most recent data analyses (2013/2014 and 2014/2015 academic years) are demonstrated below to include assessment/impact of the above outcomes/goals and improvement plans based on assessments:

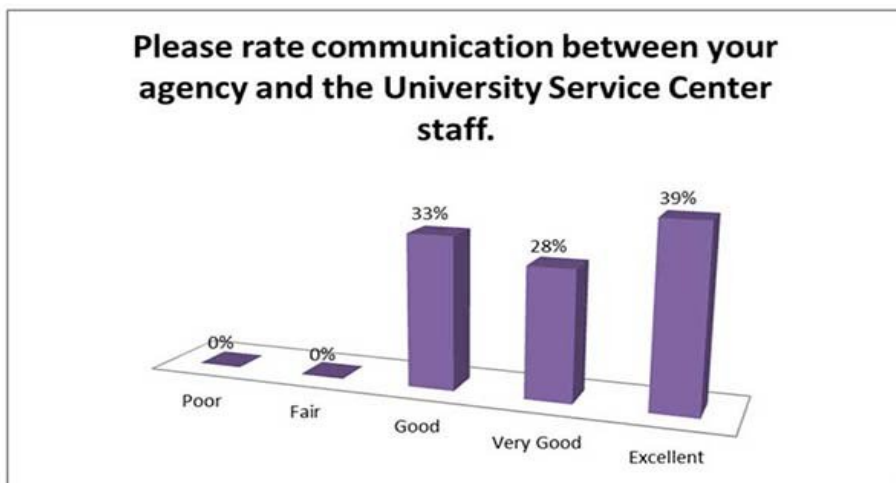
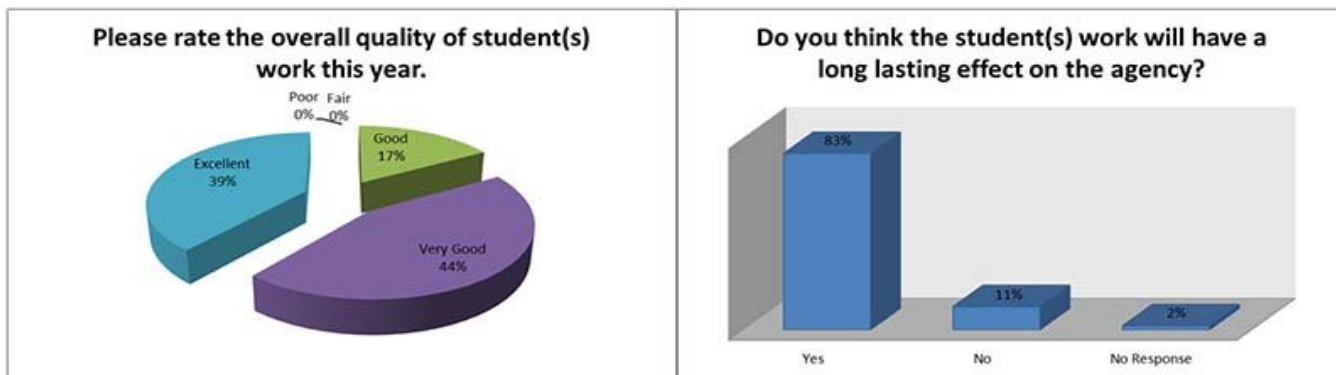


Figure 1. Community Partnership Survey 2013/2014 academic year.

Assessment improvement plans for community partnerships after 2013/2014.

- For reciprocal feedback, the Service Center will begin offering response emails to all community partner responses to the surveys.
- The Service Center will communicate more frequently with community partners as the Center now has additional staff.

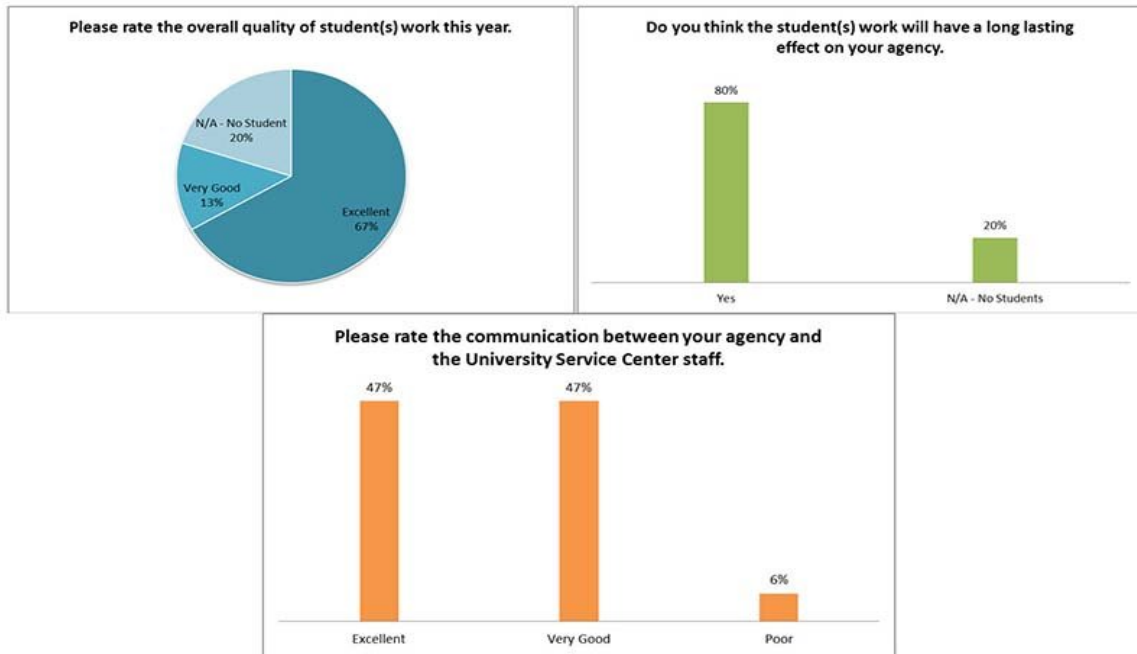


Figure 2. Community Partnership Survey 2014/2015 academic year.

- Only one community partner representative indicated “poor” communication with the SVC staff. That agency did not have a student serving with the agency this year. The other 2 agencies that did not have a student this year listed “excellent” and “very good” communication with the SVC staff.

Modifications made during 2014/2015. To offer more communication with community partners and to add one step in wrapping up annual assessment, the Service Center began, in 2015, doing follow-up calls and emails concerning survey feedback. This led to the brainstorming of more networking opportunities for students, faculty, and partners. Community partners hear from the Service Center staff at least once a month with updates as to student groups looking for service projects as well as inquiring about what sorts of needs each organization may currently have.

Assessment improvement plans for community partnerships after 2014/2015.

- To establish more networking opportunities and to provide students more information about each organization, the Service Center will begin facilitating on-campus workshops for community partners who want the opportunity to better demonstrate what they do in the

community. Students will be invited to attend these workshops at times that are convenient.

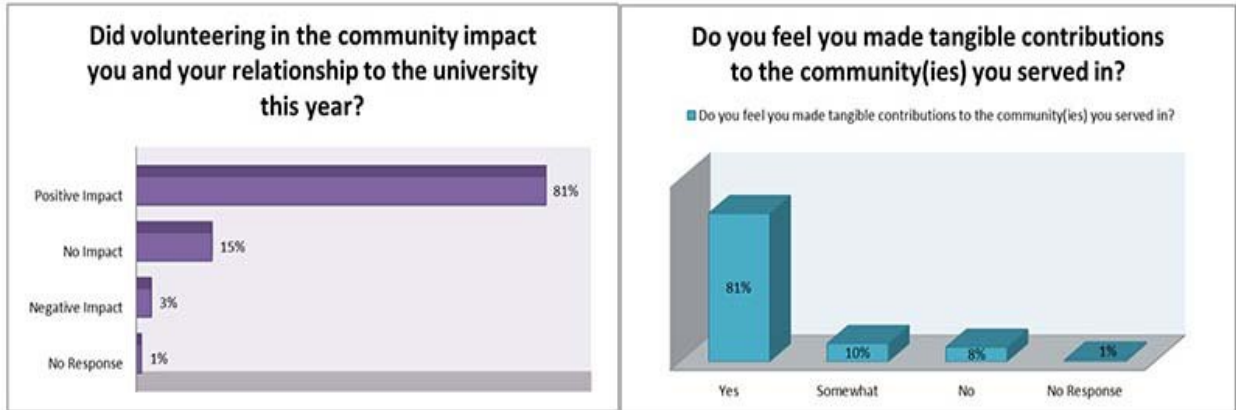


Figure 3a. First-year service scholarship student interviews/surveys 2013/2014 academic year.

- Of those reporting negative impact on their relationship to the University, they listed “added stress” and “getting in the way of studies” as their reasons for the reported negative impact.
- Of those reporting that they did not feel they made a tangible contribution, some did not have a clear enough understanding of the word “tangible.” Otherwise, they simply just did not feel the work they did was important or impactful enough to qualify as a tangible contribution.

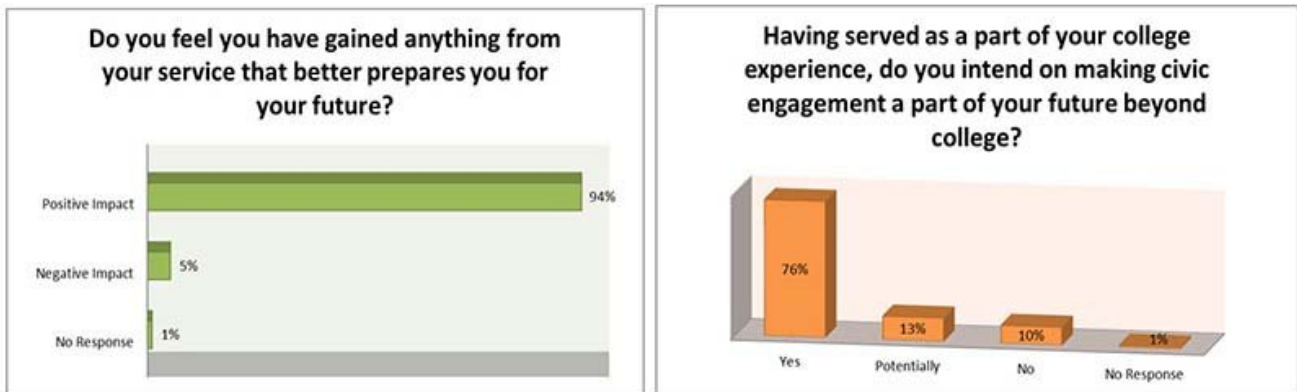


Figure 3b. First-year service scholarship student interviews/surveys 2013/2014 academic year.

- The common themes students reported about what they may have gained from their service were a sense of civic duty, awareness of needs, interpersonal skills, network building/communication skills, etc.
- No specific themes arose from the assessment of whether students would make civic engagement a part of their future.

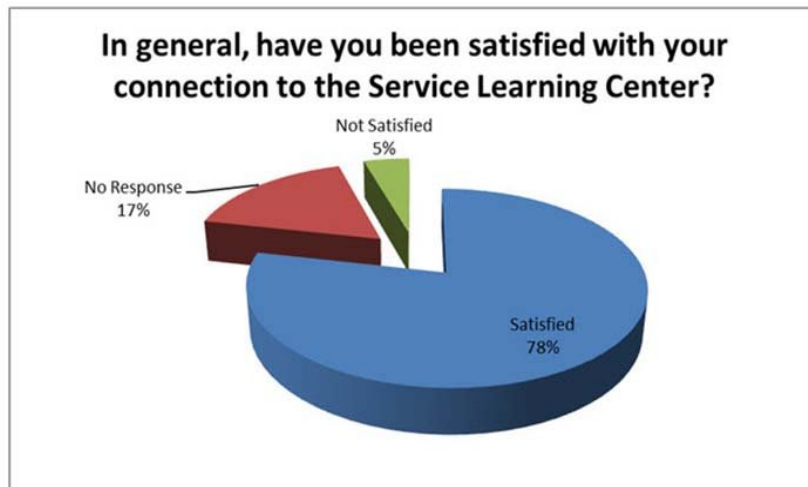


Figure 3c. First-year service scholarships student interviews/surveys 2013/2014 academic year.

- Of the 5% who reported not satisfied, they offered reasons such as the need for more volunteer opportunities for those who do not have vehicles and those from other counties, the need for processes and all communication to be electronic “since this is a technological school,” and the need for the staff to be more accessible.

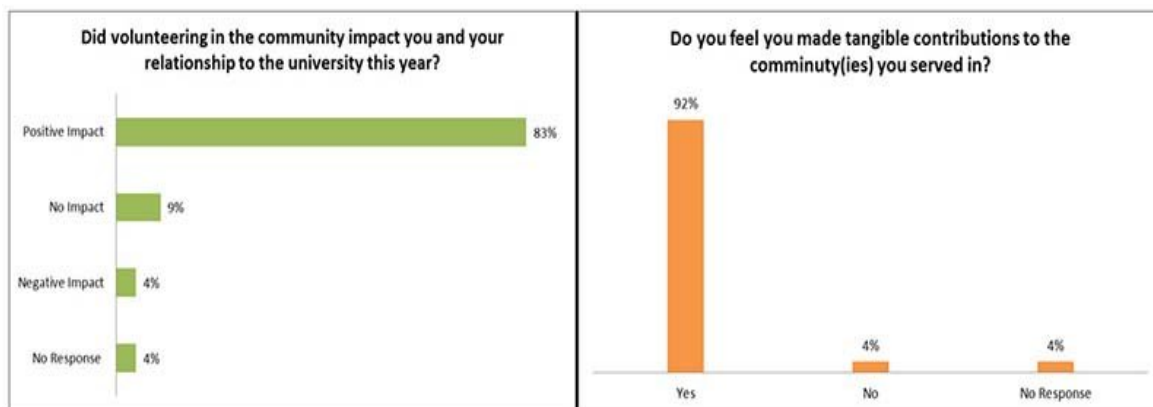


Figure 4a. First-year service scholarship student interviews/surveys 2014/2015 academic year.

- The students reporting negative impact on their relationship to the University listed “added stress” as the reason.

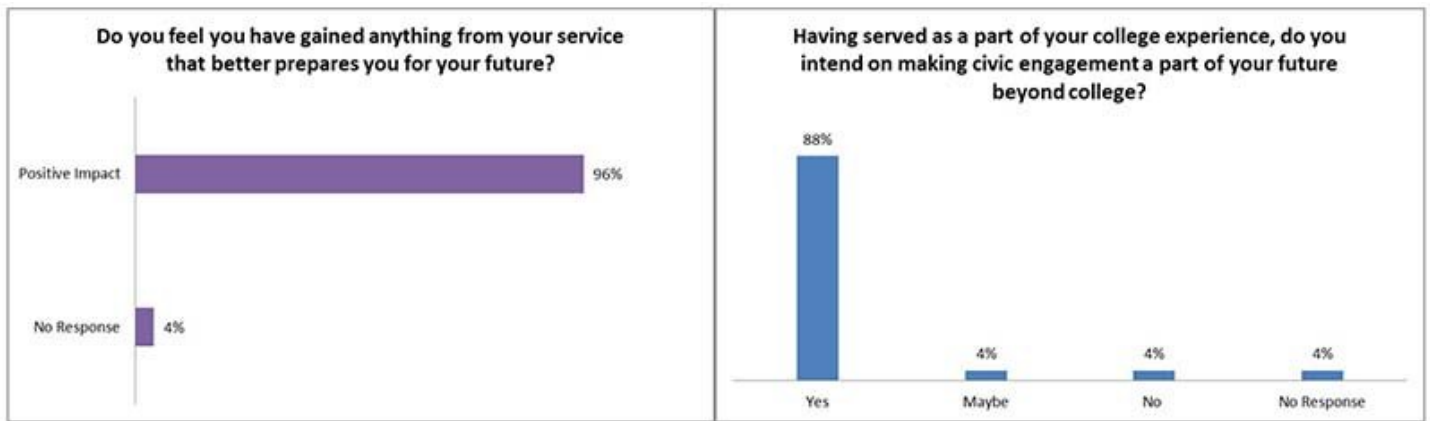


Figure 4b. First-year service scholarship student interviews/surveys 2014/2015 academic year.

- The common themes students reported about what they may have gained from their service were a sense of civic duty and improved willingness to act, awareness of needs and empathy for those *in* need, interpersonal skills, network building/communication skills, life experience, etc.
- The common themes that arose in the question concerning future civic engagement were that future civic engagement played a part in profession choice as well as the desire to raise a family that will be civic minded.

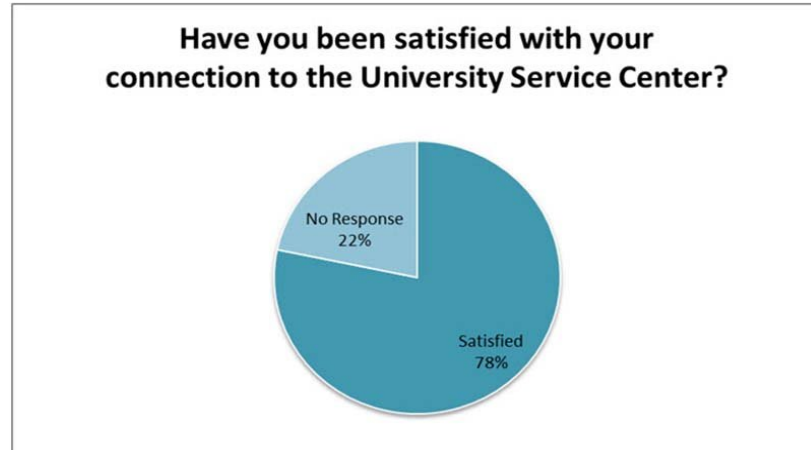


Figure 4c. First-year service scholarship student interviews/surveys 2014/2015 academic year.

- The Service Center has conveyed to the administration a need for recognizing students who serve 200+ hours throughout their college careers, through distinctions on transcripts and/or graduation cords.
- While training all incoming scholarship students, the Service Center highlights the benefits of community more through photos and testimonials.
- The Service Center has discussed either developing or purchasing a program/system to allow students to self-report service hours through pictures, letters from volunteer sites, videos, and other documentation.

What is Student Engagement?	What Does NSSE Do?	What is the Survey About?	How are Results Used?
<p>Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning.</p>	<p>Through its student survey, <i>The College Student Report</i>, NSSE annually collects information at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities about first-year and senior students' participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. NSSE provides participating institutions a variety of reports that compare their students' responses with those of students at self-selected groups of comparison institutions.</p>	<p>Survey items on <i>The College Student Report</i> represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. NSSE doesn't assess student learning directly, but survey results point to areas where colleges and universities are performing well and aspects of the undergraduate experience that could be improved.</p>	<p>Institutions use their data to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience inside and outside the classroom that can be improved through changes in policies and practices more consistent with good practices in undergraduate education. This information is also used by prospective college students, their parents, college counselors, academic advisers, institutional research officers, and researchers to learn more about how students spend their time at different colleges and universities and what they gain from their experiences.</p>

< (<http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/about.cfm>)

Figure 5a. National Survey of Student Engagement Assessment and suggested improvements.

Responses when asked the following two questions concerning community service and community engagement of students:

About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing community service or volunteer work?

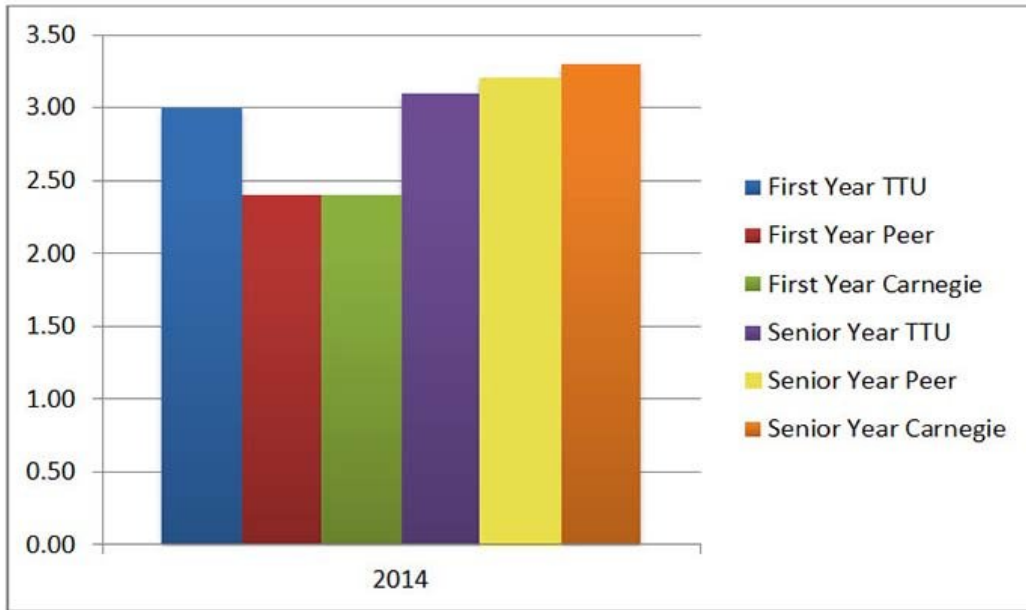


Figure 5b. National Survey of Student Engagement Assessment and Suggested Improvements.

About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community based project?

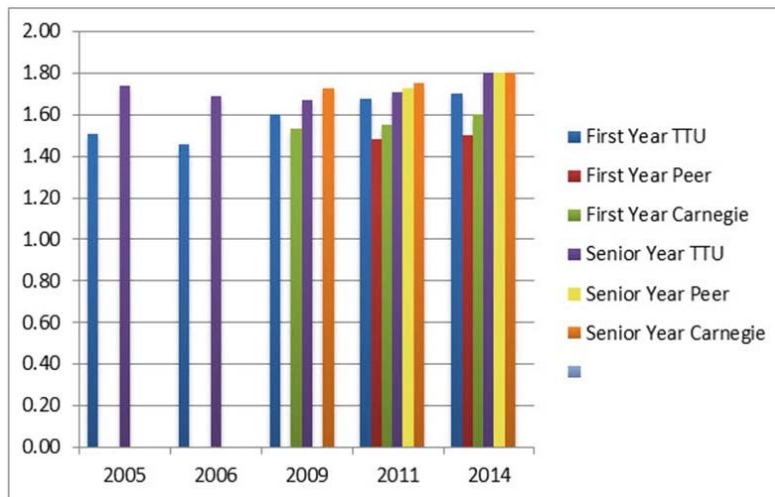


Figure 5c. National Survey of Student Engagement Assessment and Suggested Improvements.

Overall Modification and Improvements Necessary

Based on Service Center analysis.

- An online database has been built to help students find volunteer opportunities that fit their skill level and career paths. This online database, which is found at helpfirsttn.org, also allows community partners to update their information, put a call out for volunteers, and highlight special events and successful projects. This database has resulted in significant improvement in placing students in appropriate volunteer opportunities as well as just letting them know about community issues they can get involved in.
- A volunteer or staff member calls each agency listed on this site 1-2 times a year to update the agency's pages.
- Additional staff members have been hired into the Service Center to increase the awareness of the Service Center and the resources offered to the campus in regard to service learning and civic engagement. More presentations are now made in classrooms; in addition, more marketing materials are going out campus-wide to promote service learning. Programs such as the QEP have created platforms for faculty currently incorporating service learning to train and promote other faculty in doing the same. Staff members also serve as mentors to new service learning faculty.

Based on the National Survey of Student Engagement Analysis.

- More focus must be placed on engaging seniors in community service and community-based courses.
- Service projects and service learning courses must be coordinated and designed to fit within the busy schedules of our seniors if TTU wants to be competitive with peer universities and Carnegie universities.

Campus Assessment

To ensure academic integrity, service learning programs undergo rigorous evaluation. Assessment is based on students' demonstration of how they are integrating the service experience to course content. The following are the TTU guidelines of service learning within academic programs which are reported on a departmental level. Resources are available through the Service Center [5]:

- An assignment or activity, such as a journal, is needed to provide evidence of how the student connects the service to the course content.
- By helping students to distinguish between description and analysis, between emotional reactions and cognitive observations, faculty members help them transform service experiences into learning experiences.
- Evaluation of service learning occasionally makes use of subjective evaluation in the same way that traditional courses sometimes make use of subjective evaluation.
- There is not a one-on-one correspondence between hours served and knowledge gained or credit earned. Nevertheless, a certain minimum of service hours may be needed to provide an experience of significant depth.
- To preserve the academic integrity of service learning, credit is not awarded for hours of service but rather for demonstrated learning based on that service.
- Extra hours of service should not necessarily yield extra credit.
- Giving early and regular feedback on students' journal entries is a critical part of teaching students how to develop their reflection skills.

Program evaluation and assessment are systematic processes that permeate the leadership of the organization and apply to the institutional effectiveness of community/public service. The mission of the University's defined service involvement, goals, and objectives are contained in the Flight Plan; departments and the Service Center implement the objectives, measure objectives, assess results, evaluate, and implement improvements.

Within the programming of the Service Center, faculty members are provided with assessment tools to ensure that course-related service learning assessment is being planned and conducted. The following

tools (that also include instructions) are provided for service learning assessment and evaluation:

Table 3. Service Learning Assessment and Evaluation Tools.

Authentic Assessment Toolkit Through the Service Center	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre/Post Surveys• Oral Interviews• Stories• Journal Writing• Project Presentations• Exhibitions• Exams on Theory in Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constructed Response Items• Observation in the Field• Portfolios• Movies• Picture Slide Shows• Other Multimedia Projects

Service learning assessment is also being conducted through tools implemented at a college level. For instance, more than 1100 students participate in an academic scholarship program that has a service component. Each student is required to complete 25-75 hours of service each semester. At the end of the academic year, each first-year student, coordinated through the Service Center, is asked to complete a survey, and each community partner is asked to complete a satisfaction evaluation. The Service Center then assesses and reports the evaluation findings and modifies/adjusts for program improvement as demonstrated in the above results.

Evaluation of service learning is also being conducted through an international service learning component whereby students that participate in international service and academic experience are evaluated upon return to the university. This data are collected by the office of International Education, and program modifications are made as needed.

A course evaluation procedure has been developed in order for faculty, across disciplines, to assess service learning. It is recommended that faculty use the course evaluation procedure to assess the impact that service learning has on students and report the results to their departments. The procedure includes a faculty survey, in-depth pre- and post-service student surveys, and a community partner survey. Assessment surveys may be found on the University Service Center website [5].

Through course integration, faculty members have the opportunity to develop civic responsibility through active community involvement and broaden active learning experiences. An example of an experiential service learning course with an international dimension involved students from different disciplines at TTU who went to Celal Bayar University in Turkey to collaborate with their counterparts to develop and exchange business ideas and launch Turkish products in the U.S. This was followed by a visit to TTU by the students from Celal Bayar University who did a service learning project here. An article about this is available at www.tntech.edu/news/releases/students-from-ttu-and-turkey-travel-to-exchange-business-ideas-serve-others.

As a result of the successes with the above mentioned project and after partnering with the White House Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Center, the National Department of Education, and the Interfaith Youth Core in 2011, TTU was, again, invited in September 2013 to Washington, D.C., to participate in a panel along with four other universities (Stanford University, Berea College, University of Pennsylvania, and Georgetown University) on Interfaith Service efforts being employed at TTU [6]. It was the implementation of the TTU Food Pantry, Blessings in a Backpack, and the Interfaith Awareness Program that resulted in the invitation by the White House. As one of the first 250 universities nation-wide to partner with the White House during the inaugural year of this on-going project, TTU also participated in panel discussions with students from Howard University, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the University of Illinois, and Georgetown University in 2012.

As mentioned earlier, two programs received national recognition for the program-planning and evaluation processes developed by the Service Center. The TTU Food Pantry served approximately 175 students, faculty, and staff during the 2013-2014 academic year as well as 282 students, faculty, and staff during the

2014-2015 academic year. The campus has been highly supportive of the Food Pantry. Departments such as Exercise Science, Sociology and Political Science, and Human Ecology and other units of the University such as the Volpe Library, Tech Village, the Service and Leadership Village, and many others collect on a continual basis for the Food Pantry. The second program, the TTU Backpack Program, started in response to the 2012 Common Book *Breaking Night: Homeless to Harvard* by Liz Murray. The program has sent out over 850 backpacks to students from Jackson County. TTU distributes to three of the four schools in Jackson County (a county adjacent to TTU): Dodson Branch K-8, Gainesboro Elementary, and Gainesboro Middle. Community partners such as Gainesboro First Baptist help deliver backpacks and play a significant role in the success of this program.

Another example of a public service initiative involves the College of Business Media Center in collaboration with the Governor’s Highway Safety Office [7]. Several years ago, the State of Tennessee implemented the Ollie Otter’s Seatbelt and Booster Seat Safety Program which now impacts over 329,986 children from 17,390 classrooms in schools representing all 95 counties in Tennessee. TTU has been instrumental in making this program successful by delivering what the Governor’s office needed in regard to community awareness and safety. The Business Media Center has been and continues to be involved in many public service initiatives such as developing education toolkits for the prevention of methamphetamine abuse, providing small business owner education, and assisting with Tennessee teacher education redesign. Many such public service projects have received external funding. These public service initiatives are assessed by the number of proposals funded and the award amounts (see table below and www.tntech.edu/research/reports/annual-reports).

Table 4. Number of Proposals Funded and Award Amounts.

Fiscal Year	Research		Public Service		Instruction	
	No. of Proposals Funded	Award Amount	No.	Award Amount	No.	Award Amount
2009/10	99	\$11,619,395	29	\$2,572,610	11	\$1,003,794
2010/11	83	\$8,869,731	34	\$3,667,760	9	\$652,526
2011/12	75	\$7,779,893	35	\$2,932,169	17	\$2,245,626
2012/13	67	\$7,436,337	34	\$3,013,522	8	\$1,037,411
2013/14	84	\$8,345,113	25	\$2,439,103	12	\$681,632

Since 2000, TTU has hosted annually a major community and public service event, Window on the World (WOW). WOW is an international festival that celebrates diversity and global harmony. It includes a symposium on a current topic, cultural events and entertainment, international cuisines, and an award that recognizes outstanding community service. A steering committee consisting of students and faculty members plans and evaluates this event.

Program Evaluation

TTU provides evidence of the assessment and evaluation of service learning through the reporting functions of the Service Center. As service becomes integrated into curricula, assessment of service learning becomes essential across campus. The Center’s website features a toolbox to assist faculty and students

in establishing measurable objectives and course evaluation procedures to be reported to their departments. Detailed information may be found at the website [5].

The evidence of the implementation of assessment and evaluation is found in the Center's comprehensive reporting of activities and participation as well as within individual departments' reporting outlets. The Center provides an annual report on results reported to the Center; it includes activities, involvement, volunteer hours, and financial impact [8].

In addition to this reporting information, Greek Life provides an annual report of volunteer efforts and hours, and the Office of Extended Programs and Regional Development issues an annual report on community-based programs as well [9] [10].

It is also important to note that each academic college reports public service results/data in its annual report which is ultimately reported to the President of the University [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16]. For example, the Center for Manufacturing Research reported in 2012 on results of energy audits for 130 external businesses. The Center conducted an audit of businesses and found that many of them did not have the staff or expertise to conduct these studies. Based on this information, the Center implemented a program and evaluated its effectiveness following the completion of the audits within a seven year time frame. Another example of a college implementing program evaluation is the College of Business which conducted a career fair for accounting majors. The college determined a need by surveying employers and following the event, surveyed the employers again to determine its effectiveness. As a result of this process, the college has offered this event on an annual basis for the last 10 years.

Overall, the University Service Center is responsible for the program evaluation piece of assessment by soliciting feedback from community partners, volunteers, and faculty. This data are received via survey and summarized and incorporated into program planning. The survey evaluation form may be found on the Center's website. Evidence of "closing the loop" is found on the website with activity and availability of service opportunities by semester including TTU's Counseling Center and the Peer Educator program, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, and the Cookeville Rescue Mission [17]. Each semester's program offerings (conveyed across campus through the Active Service Projects link) is a result of the incorporation of feedback from constituents.

Additionally, Institutional Effectiveness (IE) reporting for the Service Center contains management reports on goals, results, and assessment of current year activities and is reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs each year. The Service Committee meets each semester to evaluate outcomes reports and provide strategic vision for the Center. Annually, an external review is implemented by the Community Advisory Board to assess goals, objectives, and outcomes and to implement change as needed.

The Service Committee reviews the report from the Service Center to determine program effectiveness and strategic alignment. The Committee meets regularly to monitor and review partner feedback. Changes are made as a result of program evaluation including in 2014 implementing a community partner training session that provided instruction on using the website [18], hiring additional staff to support the Center, and using participant testimonials and website pictures to highlight the benefits of community service participation.

In addition to in-house review, the Service Center maintains national affiliations in service learning. TTU's commitment to public service is found in its strategic partnerships and alliances with Campus Compact, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Learn and Serve America. TTU is an active member of these credible organizations which allow TTU to participate at a national level in volunteer and service opportunities supported by President Obama's call to service.

In coordination and cooperation with the Service Center, the Greek student organizations at TTU provide services to more than just members of fraternities and sororities. The campus and surrounding areas are constantly reaping the benefits of the Greek students' dedication to serving others. The commitment found of fraternities and sororities can be seen in the enthusiasm they have in giving back to the community in the forms of hands-on community service and raising money to meet the needs of the immediate community.

Examples of the community service that TTU Greek students participate in are the Teens Need Training (TNT) after school tutoring program, Highway Clean-Up (sponsored by the Cookeville Clean Commission),

and at the Putnam County Humane Society. The Cookeville Rescue Mission recently recognized the TTU fraternities and sororities as the largest contributors of canned food for their supply closet to help members of the community in need.

Greek organizations also sponsor fundraisers for philanthropies to benefit national organizations such as the Children's Miracle Network or local organizations like the Boys and Girls Clubs. They can involve members from one organization or even include everyone on campus. What is most important is that fraternities and sororities often work side by side to help local or national charitable organizations.

- Greek organizations contributed over **\$92,000** to charitable causes and organizations during the year 2012.
- During Greek Week 2013, Greeks donated over **\$17,000** to the American Cancer Society through TTU's Relay for Life.
- Greeks donated over **19,000 pounds** of canned food to area food banks during Homecoming 2012.
- Greeks sponsored or participated in **165 community service projects** benefiting 78 different causes, charities, or agencies during the 2012-2013 academic year.

The Office of Extended Programs and Regional Development collaborates with campus colleges and departments as well as community partners to offer credit and non-credit special events. The Office works in partnership with the Service Center and many community partners that include the State Department of Education; the Upper Cumberland Study Councils for School Directors, Principals, and Supervisors; the State Department of Economic Development; the Upper Cumberland Chamber Executive Association; the Highlands Initiative; and numerous other Upper Cumberland community service agencies. Each public service program is developed with key outcomes in mind and followed with assessment and evaluation to ensure effective programming.

TTU's Extended Programs and Regional Development Office created a Leadership Development Program for community members, which works to build collaborative relationships among public and private community organizations to address critical community needs. The program is dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents of all ages by empowering community members to actively develop processes within their own communities to counter social challenges, and ultimately, increase their quality of life. The program's goal is to help shape strong and healthy communities not only in the Upper Cumberland but also across the State of Tennessee. In this era of shrinking resources, community agencies face unprecedented challenges in meeting existing needs, making it extremely difficult for them to devote time or energy toward planning for better futures. The Leadership Development Program serves as a facilitator of collaborations, partnerships, ideas, and strategic initiatives. This program helps build connections that can turn into successful partnerships and coalitions for solutions.

TTU's non-credit programs include a wide range of short and long-term courses and programs. Community members may choose online or on-ground non-credit courses including personal enrichment and professional development topics.

Table 5. Examples of Non-Credit Programming.

2013-2014 Non-Credit Programming

1. ACT Test Prep
2. Motorcycle Riders Program
3. PLC ControlLogix Workshop
4. Non-Credit Language
5. Leadership Development Program
6. Register for Smoking Cessation Class
7. 8th Grade Career Fair
8. P-16 Workshop
9. Safe and Accountable Schools
10. School Law Seminar
11. Education Leadership Institute at Fall Creek Falls
12. REDI for Action Economic Development Conference
13. Governor's School
14. Photoshop Workshop
15. Business Tax Seminar
16. Grant Writing Workshop
17. TREEDC International Conference

The assessment and evaluation result in improvements of public service programming. Community service deliverables are enriched as a result of assessment and program evaluation. New initiatives are undertaken as a result of volunteer feedback and partner feedback. Participation numbers are growing, which is a reflection of improvements in the program. Improvement in the community takes place as more community partners reach out to TTU with requests for assistance and involvement. For instance, the Center for Manufacturing Research conducted 130 energy assessments for small and medium-sized companies in the past seven years. Over 800 energy improvement recommendations were provided to these companies that were too small to conduct the assessments themselves. Industry representatives surveyed following the audits were able to reduce energy consumption at their facilities, which improves their business results along with a benefit of energy reduction in the state.

The Center for the Management, Utilization, and Protection of Water Resources has developed a strategic action plan aligned with its mission to address the increasing demands on water resources in Tennessee, the surrounding region, and the nation. Built into the plan are assessment milestones to ensure that the action plan is on target and meets anticipated outcomes. Included in the assessment and program evaluation are annual meetings with the Center director and partners and annual faculty achievement reports.

TTU conducts periodic reviews of program planning and evaluation methods to ensure program improvements are implemented. As stated earlier, in 2011, TTU established the Service Committee of faculty and staff to review and monitor the University's community/public service program. The Committee consists of representatives from the Living and Learning Villages, all academic colleges, Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, administration, and student support services. This 29-member committee established goals and objectives that include

- Emphasize service as one of our three primary functions with teaching and research
- Recognize and reward service activities
- Seek new and innovative service opportunities
- Seek funding from various sources to support SL events
- Participate in partnerships and collaborate with other institutions and community partners
- Establish and support campus-wide infrastructure
- Provide all students with opportunities to participate in service learning activities
- Conduct research related to service learning
- Share knowledge gained through publications and presentations
- Effectively communicate the impact of service provided by TTU to the institution and throughout the region

Assessment Instruments

Multiple assessment instruments were selected and implemented across the TTU campus. A highly structured needs assessment is defined as a systematic way for identifying problems, issues, needs, strengths, and weaknesses. The techniques chosen for assessment data collection of community service at TTU include written and web-based surveys, focus groups with key participants, and review of printed and computer-based materials and documents. Respondents identified for the needs assessment include those who volunteer, faculty who coordinate the academic course program, and community partners.

Three assessment methods employed by TTU annually were selected by the Service Learning Committee and coordinator of the Service Center: Community Partnership Survey; Service Scholarship Student Surveys at the completion of the first year, and a campus-wide Survey. Methodology considerations included demographics of the volunteers and accessibility of partners. Web-based surveys were the primary method of assessment selected for the volunteers who are younger and more technically adept at working on the Web. Occasional focus groups and one-on-one interviews were selected as a secondary method for the constituent group of community partners as a way to provide rich data in understanding needs and areas for improvement through the process of exploring open-ended questions. The surveys may be found at the Service Center website [8].

Sampling methods were not employed because all participants were encouraged to provide assessment data after participating in the program during their first year. Additionally, each college developed its assessment and evaluation strategy in order to comply with its accrediting body and to maintain the integrity of the programming of each unit.

Conclusion

It is evident TTU has a rich tradition of community/public service. The infrastructure and capacity building that have taken place over the past five years confirm the University's commitment in the area. The development of a sustained program to facilitate and track campus-wide service and provide resources for service initiatives across campus only strengthens that commitment. Student assessment that has been recently implemented shows that students understand the benefits of participating in service as part of their college careers. They report having gained a sense of civic duty, awareness of community needs, interpersonal skills needed in the work force, network building and communication skills, as well as other benefits. TTU, therefore, is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.5.

Sources

-  [01] What is Service Learning
-  [02] Flight Plan Overview
-  [03] Goal Three
-  [04] Research Vision
-  [05] Faculty Toolkit
-  [06] White House Highlights Interfaith Service
-  [07] Business Media Center
-  [08] Assessments and Annual Reporting
-  [09] Greek Life
-  [10] Office of Extended Programs
-  [11] College of Interdisciplinary Studies Annual Reports
-  [12] College of Agriculture and Human Ecology Annual Reports

-  [13] College of Graduate Studies Annual Reports
-  [14] Research and Economic Development Annual Reports
-  [15] College of Engineering Strategic Plan
-  [16] Research and Economic Development News and Publications
-  [17] Student Affairs Active Service Projects
-  [18] Help First TN
-  SACSCOC Institutional Effectiveness
-  TTU Assessment