

# Integrating Service Learning into a Companion Animal Science Course Designed for Pre-Veterinary Science Majors

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# Outline

- About Lipscomb University
- Pre-Veterinary Science Program
- Companion Animal Science Course
  - Service Learning
- Success Indicators
- Conclusions



# Lipscomb University

- Private, Faith Based Liberal Arts University in Nashville TN
- 4800 Students
  - 3000 Undergraduate Students
  - 1800 Graduate Students
- Service Learning Required for all Undergraduate Students
  - SALT Program – QEP
  - Service Project
  - Coursework



# Pre-Veterinary Science Program

- Redesigned curriculum for success
  - Animal Nutrition
  - **Companion Animal Sciences**
    - Gives an overview of the Industry
    - Highlights the human-animal body
    - Marketing course
    - Designed as a service learning course



# Why Integrate Service Learning into Companion Animal Science?

- To engage students in active learning that links academic work to their career aspirations.
- To build reciprocal partnerships with the local companion animal organizations
- To further instill an ethic of service in students



# Companion Animal Science Course

- Launched in Fall 2013
- Service Learning Requirements
  - Service learning project with a community partner organization
  - Waiver of liability
  - SALT log Sheet: (10-20 hours)
  - Reflection paper (10% of grade)
- Offered every other year



# Choosing Community Partners

- Instructor identified & recommended
  - Phone Calls
  - Guest speakers
- Students self select
- 4th week of Semester
  - Confirm community partners
  - Submit signed waiver





Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: BY 2133: Companion Animal Science

Faculty Member Name: Dr. F. N. Mhlanga

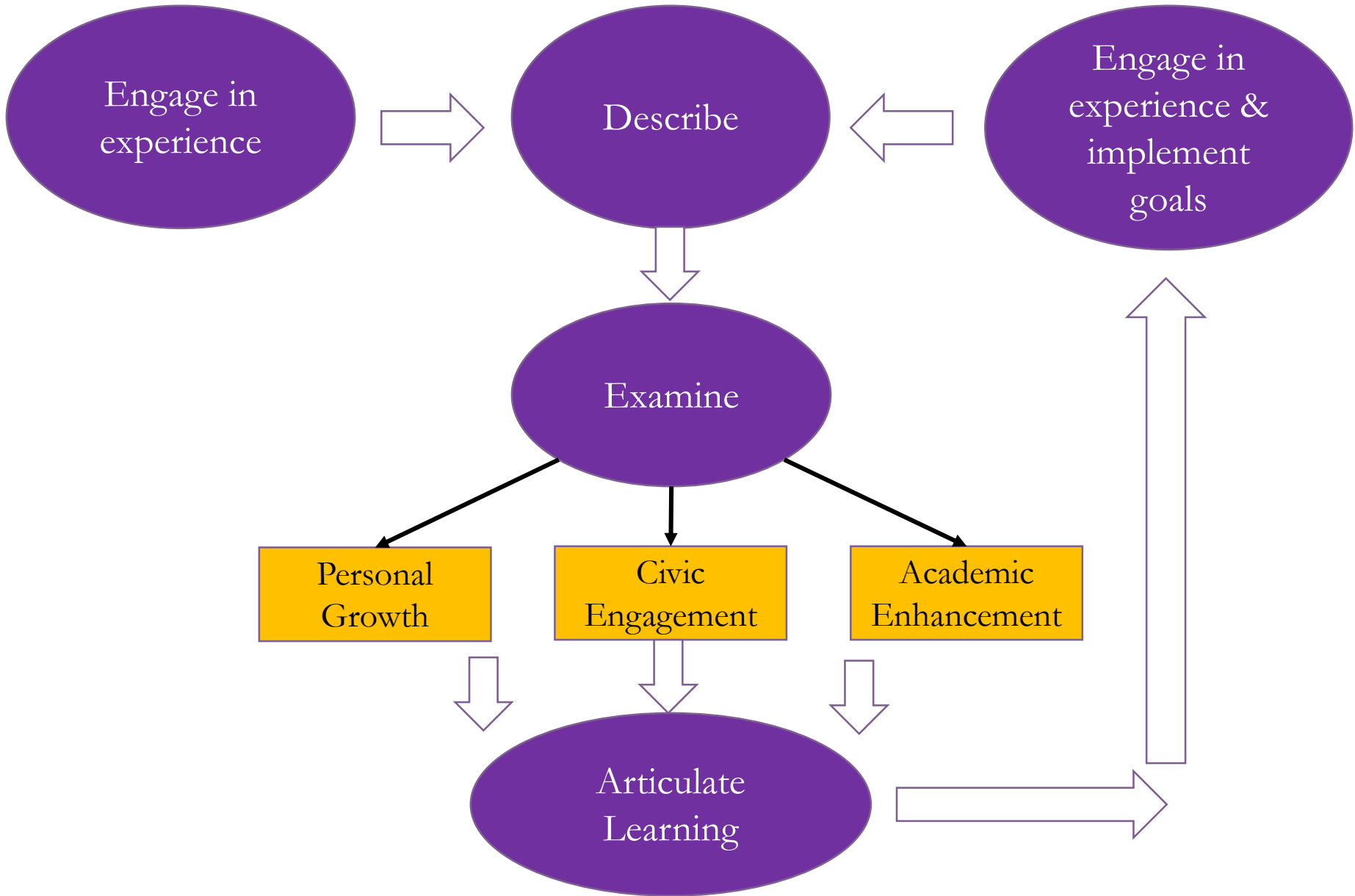
Term: \_\_\_\_\_

Date				
Time in				
Time Out				
Agency/ORG Name				
Tasks Completed				
Supervisor Name				
Supervisor Signature				



# Reflection Paper

- DEAL model for reflection (*Ash, Clayton and Moses, 2009*)



# Success Indicators

- 37 Students
- Community Organizations
  - Nashville Humane Association
  - Metro Animal Control
  - Saddle-Up!
  - Local Veterinary Clinics
  - Vanderbilt Hospital (AAT program)
  - Intermountain Therapy Dogs
  - Pet Community Center
  - Freedom Farm Animal Sanctuary
- 15 hours of service
- Positive Student Reflections

# Reflections By Students

- “... I had many positive experiences volunteering at the Nashville Humane Association. I was able to understand better some of the issues such as overpopulation that we had been discussing in class... However, the most rewarding feeling was knowing that the animals were going to go to a caring, and a loving home that would give them the attention that they would need for their entire lifetime...”*



# Reflections By Students

- *“...Through this service experience I have learned several things about myself. First and most, I learned that I definitely do not want to be a veterinarian. I love to help animals but it breaks my heart to see them in pain. I can barely witness a simple spay or neuter without wanting to run in the opposing direction...”*

# Reflections By Students

- *“... I cannot put into words the impact that this organization has had on me and I have no intentions of stopping my volunteering there...I would not have started volunteering at Saddle Up! If I had not needed the SALT credit for my class. I first heard about Saddle Up! when Dr. Sandra Zaccari came to speak to our class about her job as a hippotherapist ...”*



# Reflections By Students

- *“...I think that interacting with Saddle Up! accentuated my understanding of companion animals. I learned a lot about the external anatomy of horses such as where the withers, girth, and hock are located. I learned more about some of the nutritional requirements of horses, a topic which we have also discussed in class...”*



## Reflections By Students

- *“...The most important thing I learned at Saddle Up! Is that God does not make mistakes. One day when I was leaving Saddle Up! After volunteering for several hours, I was extremely upset. I called my mom because I did not see how it was fair that some children are born with significant disabilities while I am healthy. My mom explained that they are so pure and that they are angels on earth. While I do often still get sad after volunteering, I’m no longer angry at God for allowing them to face these challenges. Instead I’m thankful that I get to work with them...”*





# On Campus Service Learning

- Community Partner Organizations
  - READING Paws
  - Intermountain Therapy Dogs
- Objective
  - To relieve stress in students during mid-term and final exams
- Positive Student Survey Results
- Undergraduate Research Proposal underway



# Challenges...

- Transportation
- Training fees required by some of the organizations
- Procrastination

# Conclusions

- Service learning brought new life to the classroom
- Students were more engaged and motivated to do well
- Students' reflection papers indicated that the service learning component of the course had enhanced their learning and knowledge about the companion animal industry.
- Excellent course evaluations
- Community partners gained additional human resources needed to achieve organizational goals.



Thank you!