

The Office of Mentoring and Service-Learning

The Office of Mentoring & Service-Learning (OMSL) is a unique office, established in the department of Student Affairs in the Student Development division in the spring of 2000. The mission of the OMSL at City College of San Francisco is to enhance student learning, promote teaching innovations and involvement, respond to community needs and foster civic responsibility and personal growth.

The OMSL supports two types of programs to increase student success and transfer, and enrich the college experience with hands-on application of classroom learning.

In the mentoring program, faculty members sponsor projects and recruit student mentors who have been through a course or program and know the challenges that students will face. Mentors, with the direction of a faculty sponsor, offer academic and personal support to help students succeed. We currently have faculty sponsoring peer-mentor projects in 27 academic and vocational courses or programs.

In the Service-Learning program, students enrolled in courses offering service-learning as an option are placed in the community, where they apply both their academic and practical skills for the benefit of society. Service-Learning integrates community service with academic instruction so that each strengthens the other, and provides time for reflection and critical thinking while making significant contributions to individuals, organizations, and neighborhoods. For example, students taking biology courses may contribute to habitat restoration. In Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders), students in political science, psychology, sociology, foreign languages and health science prepare elders to take the citizenship exam. We currently have 11 Service-Learning projects sponsored by the OMSL.

The role of the OMSL is to provide guidance and support to faculty and students in meeting the goals of the faculty project, to provide outreach and procedural information to community partners, and to assess and ensure the success of the programs in meeting the goals of the college. The kind of support that the office provides includes orientation and training for peer-mentors and service-learning students as appropriate, office and procedure support to faculty, project/curriculum design consultation, outreach and communication with the community, and assessment tools and reports. When possible the OMSL will provide faculty and/or students with a stipend or equivalent.

The advisory committee for The OMSL is made up of students, faculty, and administrators who meet 3-4 times a semester to address issues related to planning, implementation and assessment of service learning at CCSF. Our current members are Project SHINE Coordinator, Camilla Bixler, Dean of Student Affairs, MaryLou Leyba, Dean of Research and Planning, Robert Gabriner, Coordinator of Vocational Education, Suzanne Korey, Learning Assistance Center Chair, Nadine Rosenthal, and Philippine Studies Chair, Leo Paz. At this time, we do not have student representation, but we are happy to consider adding to our committee with interested college and community partner representatives.