WHEN CHOOSING A SERVICE-LEARNING SITE

1) Go to the Service-Learning Program Orientation at SCCC:
   This orientation will take place during the first two weeks of the quarter. It is scheduled by your instructor with the Service-Learning Coordinator to take place during class time. The orientation will give you a chance to ask questions about service-learning and discuss its relation to your class work.

2) Researching a Placement. The Service-Learning office (BE1140) has a number of resources to help you choose a placement:
   - Computer for students to use - Our website lists several particularly appropriate non-profit agencies with links to others. Some match volunteers with agencies according to criteria the volunteer inputs.
   - Agency "Yellow Pages"- a detailed directory (in notebook form) of agencies that welcome service-learning students.
   - Lists of resources - See the Service-Learning Coordinator to inquire about additional resources. The Service-Learning Coordinator can suggest placements related to a particular course.
   - Real, live person—The Service-Learning Coordinator would be glad to give you any help you need.

3) Confirm Your Service Site Placement:
   Once you find an agency that meets your interest, course requirements and schedule availability, call and speak with their contact person. Have a back up agency, just in case. If you have difficulty reaching an agency in the Yellow Pages, let us know.

4) When Speaking with an Agency's Contact Person:
   - Identify yourself as an SCCC service-learning student.
   - Explain what you would like to do, based on the agency's options. Some agencies are open to special projects. So suggest your ideas early on to find out if they're possible.
   - Arrange the details for your interview, orientation and training and placement at the agency. Here's a sample introduction:
     "Hi. Is this (agency contact)? I'm an SCCC student in a (philosophy, for example) class with a service-learning component. I am available 2 hours per week on Monday or Wednesday mornings this quarter—until (date). I would like to help in the soup kitchen at your shelter." (Or ask what opportunities there are that are in keeping with the learning objectives of your class).
It is important to tell them early on what your time parameters are and what the learning objectives are for your class, so they can find an appropriate service opportunity for you.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHEN CHOOSING AN AGENCY**

Many agencies work with children, students in the public schools, the criminal justice system and health services.

Washington State law requires anyone working with these agencies and the populations they serve to obtain a background check or, depending on the agency, a health-related check.

For those who choose an agency within a health field, you may be asked to have a chest x-ray taken, to answer general questions about your health or to take a tuberculosis test.

The background check may consist of filling out a form and/or having your fingerprint taken. This "check" views a person’s police record, which may cover anything from a ticket for a broken tail light, to a more serious infraction.

No need to be discouraged by this! It is a simple process that is coordinated by the agency to meet State laws. Not all agencies working with the above mentioned groups will require you to complete the "checks".

Not all agencies list this in their profile. So remember, be aware, ask questions; and if you need further assistance with this portion of your service-learning placement, speak with your instructor within the first two weeks of the quarter and/or ask for assistance in the Service-Learning Program office, Rm. BE 1140.

Note: At some agencies the background check and general screening process take a long time. Ask how long it will take so you can determine whether you will be able to get your hours in during the quarter.
SELF INVENTORY FOR CHOOSING A SERVICE-LEARNING SITE

Take a few moments to sit down and think about these questions. Writing your responses may help you consider the type of service-learning experience that will be most valuable and enjoyable for you.

This is for your benefit; it is optional. Do not turn it in.

- What values are most important to you? What do you value?
- What are your strengths? What are your best characteristics?
- Think about the things you enjoy doing. Start to list them. Consider hobbies, free time activities, things you enjoy in your work.
- What do you dislike? What kinds of activities do you avoid?
- When have you felt most successful? Most effective and powerful?
- What did you enjoy most about your favorite job?
- What has been your greatest learning experience? Why?
- What do you most want to learn in this service-learning experience?
- Would you like to push yourself beyond your comfort zone? In what ways?
- What do you expect to get out of this service-learning experience?