Student Directed Learning Community
Guidelines 2012-2013
Please note that before you learn anything about the Student Directed Learning Communities that you must also fill out any Residence Life applications for ILUs or Apartments while going through the SDLC application process. Please note any Residence Life deadlines regarding these applications while you are applying.
What is a SDLC?

Established in 1992, the Student Directed Learning Communities are housing opportunities within the College-owned homes along the perimeter of the campus. They offer small groups of upper class students the opportunity to create a unique, self-directed living environment, centered on a common theme, issue, or interest through which the group is expected to enrich and share with the campus community. Each resident in the home develops his/her individual learning objectives around the house theme, and all residents participate in service with a local agency. The agency’s mission ties with the house theme.

The SDLCs are awarded in the spring semester through a very selective application procedure coordinated by a committee of students faculty and staff. Residents are responsible for their own cooking, cleaning, and house management details. Optional meal plans are available.

What are the goals of the SDLC Program?

Students living in the SDLCs will:

1. Explore a theme/topic of interest as a house.
2. Develop a bibliography of five resources they will explore that connects to the theme (including one that looks at the theme in a global/international perspective).
3. Learn more about the house theme from the bibliographic resources.
4. Determine a community organization that fits within their theme with whom the residents can work.
5. Directly apply the knowledge obtained from reviewing their resources to their service project(s).
6. Reflect how their service and resources better their understanding about the house topic (places the service in more local, regional, national, and global context).

What are service learning/advocacy and civic engagement? Defining SDLC terms used in the application process

All three terms intersect at various levels within the SDLCs, but if separated, they each have distinct meanings. Service Learning/advocacy at Elizabethtown is molded by a commitment to “Educate for Service,” Elizabethtown College is a community of learners dedicated to educating students intellectually, socially, aesthetically, and ethically for lives of service and leadership as citizens of the world.

This goal is reached through the development and support of programs designed to incorporate academic or academic-related coursework with community-based learning and leadership. We believe that opportunities or learning outside the classroom deepen a student’s understanding of
complex, philosophical, economic and political issues and develop a sense of civic responsibility at Elizabethtown College.

Service Learning, in partnership with the college’s curriculum, strives to help students think critically about issues facing society today and to make these issues personally meaningful. When students work in a community setting, they are able to put a name and a face to societal issues such as homelessness, workers’ rights and environmental degradation. Students begin to define their role in the community in relation to these names and faces; they begin to define their role within the context of public service and civic responsibility.

The Service Learning Program focuses on offering public service and leadership opportunities for students in a variety of ways. Through service learning/advocacy, we help students develop meaningful academic connections with the community.

Civic Engagement is focused more on the action of being involved with an organization on a voluntary basis. The involvement may or may not have course-related class work or a service-learning component. Students in SDLCs that have a civic engagement approach must broaden their reflection beyond the actual work involved in the volunteer hours. Students must commit to studying more in-depth the types of issues that are dealt with at the organizations for whom they volunteer.

Where are the SDLCs located?

The SDLC homes are located on the perimeter of E-town’s campus. They are considered college housing, and all residents must abide by the same Residence Life and college conduct policies. There are 11 SDLC homes, most of which accommodate 4 people. One house is suitable for only 3 residents; another for up to 6. Listed below are the possible SDLC houses and occupancies. The office has the final say in SDLC housing as program, occupants, lottery numbers, and suitability play a factor in making final location determinations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDLC Name</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>Total Occupancy</th>
<th>Bedroom Breakdown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>318 Plum House</td>
<td>318 Plum Street</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 singles, 1 double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320 Plum House</td>
<td>320 Plum Street</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 singles, 1 double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar House</td>
<td>625 South Mt. Joy St.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 singles, 1 double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International House</td>
<td>604 South Mt. Joy St.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White House</td>
<td>540 South Mt. Joy St.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony House</td>
<td>530 South Mt. Joy St.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 singles, 1 double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauder House</td>
<td>520 South Mt. Joy St.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Garden</td>
<td>346 East Orange St.</td>
<td>Up to 6</td>
<td>2 singles, 3 doubles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>435 Maple House</td>
<td>435 College Ave.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 singles, 1 double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>437 Maple House</td>
<td>437 College Ave.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myer House</td>
<td>999 College Ave.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 singles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requirements for applying to live in a SDLC:

- Must be an upper classman of rising [junior] or [senior] status.
- Must be able and willing to make a time commitment to look into a particular topic of choice and choose to do a service project in that area.
- Must have and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher the entire academic year.
- Must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with the college.
- Must agree to abide by Elizabethtown College’s code of conduct.
- Must be able to maintain a full house of residents the entire academic year.
- Each resident must commit to at least 5 hours of service experience per semester (this does not include planning, preparation, and reflection of the service).
- Must have a faculty/staff learning mentor willing to work with your house and meet with you at least twice a semester in a group setting.
- Must agree to keep a reflections journal regarding their experience.
- Must agree to participate in “Into the Streets” and “MLK Day of Service” programs.
- Must meet with the SDLC advisory committee once a semester.
- Must be willing to attend all SDLC sponsored workshops and/or orientations.

How to Become a SDLC:

- Determine roommates in groups of four (note: 3 students can apply and receive Cedar House; up to 6 students can apply for Rose Garden) – rising junior or seniors only.
- Select a house theme all residents are interested in studying (see attached proposal ideas; you may choose either service learning/advocacy or civic engagement themes).
- Determine what aspect each person in the house will study related to that theme and develop individual learning objectives.
- Find a faculty/staff learning mentor who will sponsor your SDLC and agree to meet with you twice a semester for reflection.
- You are encouraged to meet with the Assistant Director of Residence Life with a proposed theme.
- Determine 5 readings/films/lectures/plays/TV programs, etc. that housemates will reflect in the academic year related to topic. These must be submitted on your application, and one of these sources MUST deal with your theme in a global/international perspective.
  NOTE: Residents can choose to reflect on the same sources or each choose different ones, but all residents must read one common source.
• Determine which organization(s) the house will work with on service projects.
• Work with Office of Civic Engagement to establish contact with community organization(s), if applicable.
• Fill out your SDLC application (available on the Residence Life website beginning January 23, 2012).
• Interview for position
• Attend spring orientation.
• Sign an Agency/School Agreement with the organizations with whom you will be serving

Timeline for 2012-2013 SDLC application process:

• December 4 – Information Meeting
• January 22 – Second information meeting
• January 23 – SDLC applications available on-line
• February 10 – SDLC applications due
• February 20-24 – SDLC interview week
• February 27 – SDLC results announced
• April 29 – SDLC orientation
• May 15 – Agency/School Agreement with sponsoring service organizations must be signed
• August 1 – All security clearances needed for service projects (if applicable) must be completed by this time

All SDLC applications must include the following:

• Theme to study
• Mission statement
• Learning objectives for EACH resident
• Information on the service agency with whom are you plan to work and the service projects (NOTE: EACH resident needs to commit to 5 hours of service per semester, minimum
• 5 Resources -- books/articles/movies/lectures etc. -- that are related to the topic to discuss per person for the academic year
• Learning mentor Agreement (mentors must provide sign the faculty advisor agreement that confirms interaction with students)
Writing Learning Objectives:

The point of the learning objectives for each resident in the home is to allow each person a truly self-directed experience. Each resident will write 3-5 objectives describing what they wish to learn from living in the home. Listed below are tips on writing those objectives for your application.

Learning outcomes are statements which described a desired condition – that is, the knowledge, skills, or attitudes needed to fulfill the need. They represent the solution to the identified need or issue. Learning outcomes provide direction in the planning of a learning activity. They help to:

- Focus on learner's behavior that is to be changed
- Serve as guidelines for content, instruction, and evaluation
- Identify specifically what should be learned
- Convey to learners exactly what is to be accomplished

Learning objectives have three distinguishing characteristics.

- The specified action by the learners must be observable.
- The specified action by the learners must be measurable.
- The specified action must be done by the learners.

The ultimate test when writing a learning outcome is whether or not the action taken by the participants can be assessed. If not, the outcome probably does not meet all three of the characteristics:

1. who is to perform;
2. what action they are to take;
3. some result that must come from their action.

What is the importance of action verbs?

Learning outcomes should be expressed through the use of active verbs which spell out what students will be able to do. In order to achieve clarity, expressions such as 'to know', 'to understand', 'to appreciate', to be acquainted with', should be avoided, since they are too vague to convey the exact nature of the outcome being sought. More active and explicit verbs such as 'state', 'show', 'explain', 'define', 'describe', 'predict', 'recognize' and 'criticize' should be used wherever possible.
Learning Objectives Verb Bank

A number of lists of suitable vocabulary for expressing learning outcomes have been developed in other higher education institutions. The verbs are grouped as they relate to the various generic level descriptors. These are a guide only - they have to be applied to subject knowledge, understanding and skills.

i. Activities which give evidence of knowing
   Define, describe, identify, label, list, name, outline, reproduce, recall, select, state, present, extract, organize, recount, write, measure, relate, match, record. (ex. Identify the issues surrounding children and homelessness.)

ii. Activities giving evidence of comprehension
   Interpret, translate, estimate, justify, clarify, defend, distinguish, explain, generalize, exemplify, infer, predict, rewrite, summarize, discuss, perform, report, present, indicate, find, represent, formulate, contrast, classify, express, compare, recognize, account.

iii. Activities giving evidence of application of knowledge/understanding
   Apply, solve, demonstrate, change, compute, manipulate, use, employ, modify, operate, predict, produce, relate, show, select, choose, assess, operate, illustrate, verify. (ex. Assess children's organized activities in a homeless shelter.)

iv. Activities giving evidence of analysis
   Recognize, distinguish between, evaluate, analyze, break down, differentiate, identify, illustrate how, infer, outline, point out, relate, select, separate, divide, compare, contrast, justify, resolve, examine, conclude, criticize, question, diagnose, categorize, elucidate. (ex. Analyze, through resources, the variety of ways agencies work with children who are homeless.)

v. Activities giving evidence of synthesis
   Arrange, assemble, organize, plan, prepare, design, formulate, construct, propose, present, explain, modify, reconstruct, relate, re-organize, revise, write, summarize, account for, report, alter, argue, order, select, manage, generalize, derive, synthesize, enlarge, suggest. (ex. Organize a hunger walk to raise awareness about homeless children in Lancaster County.)

vi. Activities giving evidence of creativity
   Originate, image, begin, design, invent, initiate, state, create, pattern, elaborate, develop, devise, generate, engender (ex. Create activities to utilize at a children’s program at a local homeless shelter.)

vii. Activities giving evidence of evaluation
    judge, evaluate, assess, discriminate, appraise, conclude, compare, contrast, criticize, justify, defend, rate, determine, choose, value, question, measure. (ex. Assess how the resources read and my service applies to a greater understanding of the issues surrounding children and homelessness.)
## List of Sample Themes and Service Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Related Service Org.</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Related Service Org.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Poverty        | Hope Within Community Health Center  
Bethren Housing Association  
Meals on Wheels  
Habitat for Humanity  
Water Street Rescue Mission | Physical Disability | Shriiber Pediatric Rehabilitation Center  
Best Buddies |
| Aging          | Lick Towers Senior Center  
Masonic Village Health Care Center  
Meals-on-Wheels  
Rheems Nursing and Rehabilitation Center  
Willow Valley Retirement Community  
United Zion Retirement Community  
Salvation Army Senior Program  
Brethren Housing Association | Community Service | Any organization with whom they want to work:  
Children (local or National)  
Adult (local or national)  
Advocacy (local or national) |
| Substance Abuse| Compass Mark  
Communities that Care | Immunology/Disease |  |
| Sustainability | Garden at college  
Joshua Farm market  
Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative | Domestic Violence | Milagro House |
| Animal Therapy | Equine Therapy  
K-9 Therapy group | Non-Profit Management | Lancaster Science Factory  
Main Street Mount Joy  
Elizabethtown Child Care Center  
Girl Scouts  
Winters Heritage House museum |
| Music Therapy  | Masonic Village  
Children’s homeless shelter  
Resource center/therapy place for children with ASD  
Children’s Playroom  
Masonic Children’s Home | Diversity |  |
| Mental Disability | Celebrate Down Syndrome  
Best Buddies | Health and Nutrition | Etown School District  
United Way |


Frequently Asked Questions

1. What if I don’t have a full house of students? All SDLCs are required to maintain a full roster of students for consideration. Should a student leave for any reason after the semester, then housemates will have a limited time in finding a replacement before the Office of Residence Life office fills the spot.

2. What if the theme I am interested in exploring is something that overlaps with a class I am taking? Great! There is no problem in class overlap. It adds to the service learning experience. If you wish to receive independent study credit, however, you can check with your professor.

3. What if I am an Americorp Scholar and already have service projects? That is fine, too. Americorps Scholars can propose to live in a SDLC that has a theme related to their service work. It is ok to receive Americorps Scholar credit for SDLC work.

4. What if I am interested in becoming an Americorps Scholar? Great! Check with the Office of Civic Engagement to see how to qualify. Applications are usually due in April of the Spring semester.

5. Which comes first the theme or the organization with whom you work? Either, although ideally you and your housemates would be interested in exploring a topic further, and then we can work to find you an applicable organization with whom to work.

6. What if I want to work more hours or times with my organization than the SDLC application requires? That is OK, too, as long as you meet the other learning components of the program as well.

7. Are there co-ed houses? Sorry the SDLCs are not set up to accommodate co-ed residents.

8. What do the SDLC homes include? All SDLCs are fully furnished homes and come with standard appliances (washer, dryer, stove, refrigerator). The campus supplies trash bags, recycle bins, and large trash bins. Students are responsible for all other cleaning materials.

9. What campus regulations are the SDLCs required to adhere? All SDLC residents are subject to the same residential policies, including break closings, as on-campus students.

10. Do I have to have a meal plan if I live in a SDLC? No, but you can purchase one if you wish.

11. What are the residential costs of a SDLC? The cost of living in a SDLC is the same as living in any of the ILUs (Independent Living Units).
Want more information?

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