

# BENTLEY SERVICE-LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CENTER

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Community engagement outside of the classroom contributes significantly to what students learn in class and helps students develop into socially responsible professionals and informed, global citizens with the tools to create social change. Students involved in service-learning apply their academic learning to real-life settings and situations by being active in meaningful community-based projects.

For more information regarding BSLCE, visit the Center in Morison Hall 101, call 781.891.2170, or visit the BSLCE website (<https://www.bentley.edu/centers/service-learning-center/>).

## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

While earning a degree, Bentley students are able to earn a Service-Learning Certificate. The certificate is designated on the student's final university transcript. The certificate is a mark of distinction available to all Bentley students who contribute at least 120 hours of service in the community during their four years at Bentley University and participate in the Bentley Civic Leadership Program. The 120 hours of service should be evenly spread over the four years and may comprise service undertaken by students through Fourth-Credit Options and embedded service-learning course projects, along with other community civic projects. However, at least 60 hours must be academically based. For more information about the requirements for the Certificate, click here (<https://www.bentley.edu/centers/service-learning-center/service-learning-certificate/>).

## EMBEDDED COURSES

Embedded service-learning courses integrate community-based work directly into the course curriculum. A service-learning project can be embedded as a general course requirement or as a "track" — an assignment that takes the place of another, more traditional assignment. Embedded projects allow students to combine class material closely with hands-on experience.

## FOURTH-CREDIT OPTION

Professors who make use of the Fourth-Credit Option offer their students a chance to earn an additional credit for course-related work done in conjunction with service to the community. Students earn such a credit by completing 20 hours of community work and 10 hours of academic processing of that service, in addition to their usual three-credit coursework. Professors provide feedback on Fourth-Credit projects, require structured reflection, and give the Fourth-Credit work a separate grade based on the student's performance.

## NONPROFIT INTERNSHIPS

The BSLCE oversees a Nonprofit Internship Program. Each semester, students will receive an email alerting them that the application process is open, and from the applicant pool 15 students will be admitted into the program. Once admitted, the student will enroll in a 3-credit course for the following semester, which also will carry with it a stipend. Internship placements occur at a variety of organizations identified by BSLCE staff, and representing the nonprofit, government, and social enterprise sectors.

## INTERNATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING

In collaboration with the Cronin Office of International Education, the Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center offers service-learning opportunities for students studying abroad at the Quinn School of Business at University College Dublin (Ireland), the University of Manchester (UK), Bond University (Brisbane, Australia), and the Lorenzo DiMedici Institute (Florence, Italy). Students in these programs participate in projects aimed at assisting nonprofit organizations at these overseas locations. Projects have included designing marketing campaigns, developing websites, and conducting marketing research. Some projects also allow students to work directly with the clients of nonprofits. These opportunities are available during both fall and spring semesters.

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

With initial help from the Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, the University created a service-learning scholarship program. Bentley awards a number of \$7,500 scholarships each year to students who have shown an outstanding commitment to service-learning. These scholarships, which may be renewed after each academic year, encourage students to deepen their commitment to service. The selection process, which is administered by BSLCE, is highly competitive.

As scholarship students move through the program, they take on greater leadership roles on campus and within the community. They work closely with faculty, serve as Project Managers and course coordinators, and manage key initiatives of the BSLCE. They may also attend local and national conferences as representatives of BSLCE; make presentations to students, faculty, and staff; and lead reflection sessions. Scholarship students also are strongly encouraged to develop their own service-learning initiatives.

The minimum grade point average for receiving and maintaining a service scholarship is 3.0.

## Civic Engagement and Social Justice

BSLCE offers a variety of ways for students to engage in meaningful social justice work, including the annual Fair Trade Fair and BUUILD (Bentley Unities In International Livelihood and Development) events; a series of events connected to UN World Days; and other work connected to issues of social justice and the Sustainable Development Goals. Students may also participate in the Nonprofit Business Bowl, attend a Business for the Greater Good market, or travel with an Alternative Spring Break program.