

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IN ETHICS TO HUME IT MAY CONCERN ... ETHICS AS A SERVICE-LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COURSE



*The time is always right to do what is right - MLK*

## GPS 310 FALL 2020

*This white paper will detail the planning and implementation of a service learning and community engagement (SLCE) course at Wingate University in a General Education Class, Global Perspectives in Ethics (GPS 310) offered in the Religion and Philosophy Department.*

*In this report, you will learn*

- (1) What SLCE is*
- (2) What SLCE looks like in a Wingate University General Education course*
- (3) What the benefits of SLCE are for our students, faculty and community members*

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE  
COLLABORATIVE FOR THE COMMON GOOD



# WHAT IS SLCE?

## SLCE

### A WAY OF TEACHING & LEARNING

Service Learning and Community Engagement is rooted in reciprocity, community action and autonomy.

Academic  
Integrity  
(Apply Course  
Content)



Student  
Ownership  
(student  
voice)



Apprentice  
Citizenship  
(address real  
issues)

Recent research indicates that the impressive impacts of SLCE include increased student success, increased retention and persistence rates, higher levels of empathy, deepened connectedness to their community, and the development of skills desired by future employers.

SLCE courses have also been found to generate DEI outcomes such as tolerance, knowledge of others, and interactions across differences, which are a cornerstone of ethics with a global perspective

## WHY GPS 310?

### WHY NOT!

This way of teaching and learning makes a mandatory, upper level 'critical thinking' course the perfect space to implement a SLCE course.. It also is a great time to connect our Bulldogs with the gifted people and places in our local community -- to make a difference!

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IN ETHICS

## WHY IS SLCE IMPORTANT TO WINGATE? TO YOU?



*In a recently published primer (COPIL 2021, p.04), Executive Director of NC Campus Compact states that **there is an urgency for higher education to cultivate public civic life in three ways.***

- 1) Contribute to the physical, environmental and economic well-being, educational endeavors and civic health of communities.*
- 2) Leverage gifts for research, creativity, teaching, service and institutional practices to address the challenges facing society.*
- 3) Cultivate knowledge of democracies, skills, perspectives and behaviors so all can become responsible local, national and planetary citizens who share a common future.*

*The upper level general education course Global Perspectives in Ethics at Wingate specializes in asking big questions about how we should govern society, what is right and wrong or good and bad, should we pursue virtue, happiness or wealth, what is personhood, and other important questions. This course is an ideal place to cultivate the attitudes, skills and perspectives to cultivate public life and help address some of the challenges facing Wingate University and our neighbors.*

*"Because of my service learning I am thinking about new ways that I can have an impact on the world. I used to think that for any work that I do to be meaningful it had to have loads of production behind it. While working on this project I have learned that a project does not need to have bells and whistles for it to perform well. This has allowed me to reshape how I think I can make an impact on the world. As long as I listen to who I want to help instead of imposing what I believe they need, then that is what guarantees success."*

# PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION



## FAITH KNOWLEDGE & SERVICE

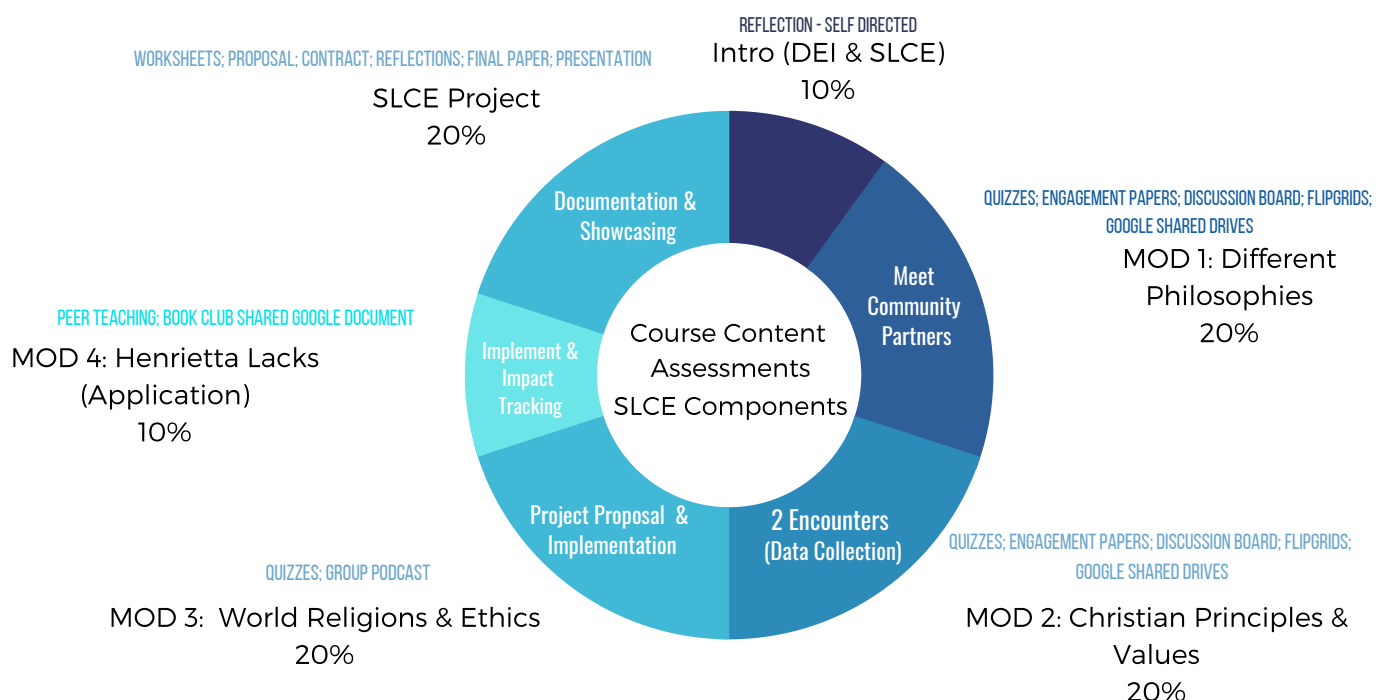


The direct goal of our WU motto, to develop educated, ethical and productive global citizens, is translated into several Student learning outcomes in the GPS 310 course

- Engaging in value making and ethical reasoning individually and collaboratively
- Critically analyzing a social issue relevant to our community from an ethical perspective
- Designing moral responses to the ethical challenges

## FIRST INGREDIENT: COURSE CONTENT

GPS 310 is divided into 6 areas -- see below for how SLCE is integrated into existing course content as a way of learning this material





## THE NEXT INGREDIENT: STUDENT VOICE

In Fall 2022, twenty Honors students (one was not in the Honors program) from a diverse set of majors participated in this semester-long SLCE course and designed five projects in collaboration with five different community partners

Companies listed on a stock exchange are also required to report at more frequent intervals.

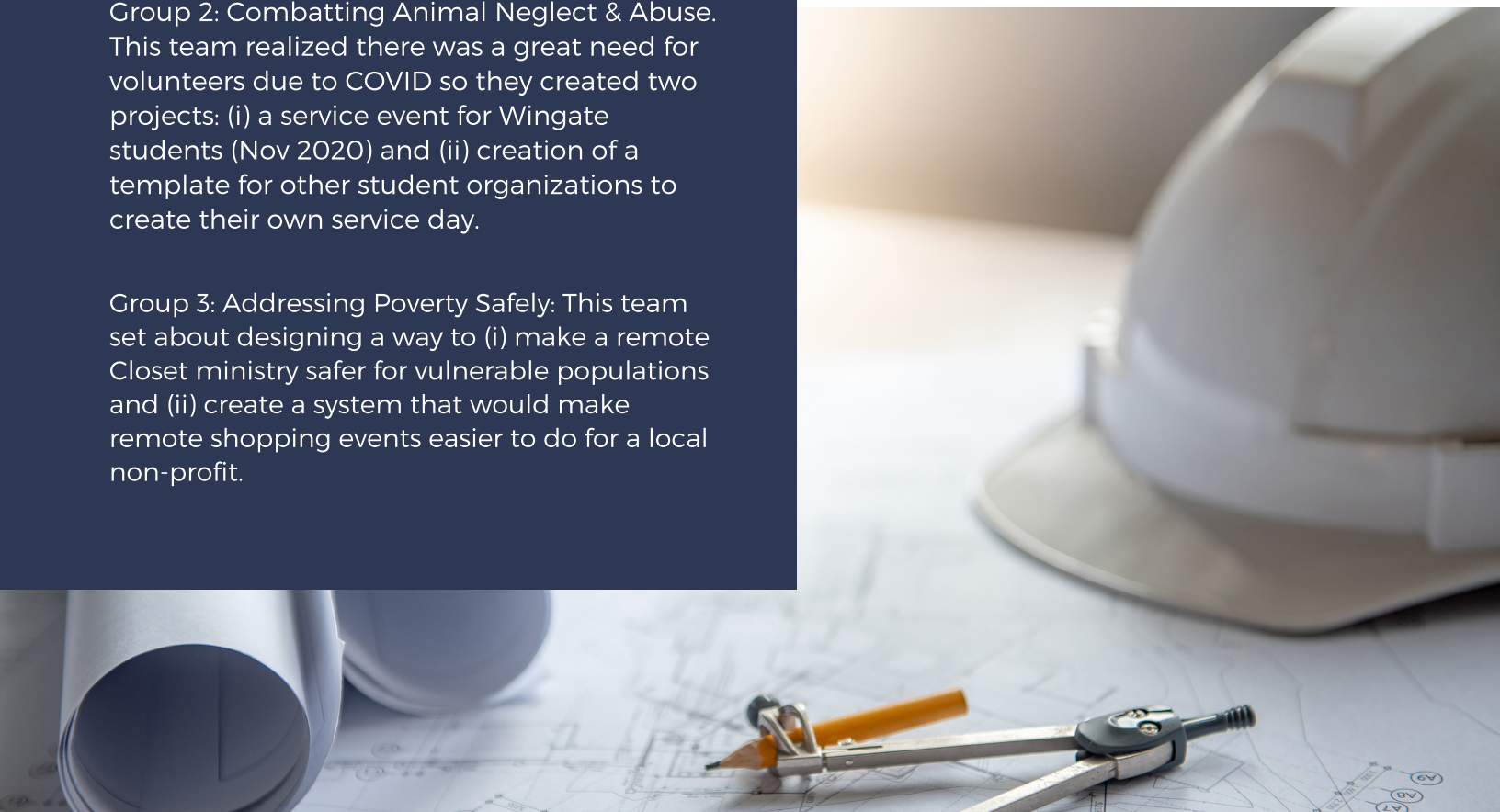
Group 1: Tackling Food Insecurity. This project had two parts i) work with new food council to create just bylaws and (ii) help develop a website to reflect the mission and vision of the new food council.

Group 2: Combatting Animal Neglect & Abuse. This team realized there was a great need for volunteers due to COVID so they created two projects: (i) a service event for Wingate students (Nov 2020) and (ii) creation of a template for other student organizations to create their own service day.

Group 3: Addressing Poverty Safely: This team set about designing a way to (i) make a remote Closet ministry safer for vulnerable populations and (ii) create a system that would make remote shopping events easier to do for a local non-profit.

Group 4: Building Communication Paths in COVID. This team helped to connect students to healthy eating options on campus and encouraging sustainable practices in the dining hall. They developed a newsletter template that would also allow for student feedback.

Group 5: Supporting local, working single moms. This team went old school and cold called businesses, non-profits, religious organizations and government entities in order to help recruit single moms for this mentoring program.



# PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

## SLCE SECRET SAUCE? COMMUNITY PARTNERS!

Thanks to the many networks cultivated by the CCG, five community partners stepped up to work with our Bulldogs: CERA, Heart for Monroe, Chartwells, NC Hunger Corp VISTA, Trinity Wellness Community Outreach

**Meaningful engagement with community partners is the key to Apprentice Citizenship -- our Bulldogs learn from community members who live and breathe the work of social, ecological and economic transformation.**



## How did this work? Effective and Regular Communication is Key!!

Regular conversations both in class and outside of class time with students and partners is important -- especially to address any bumps in the road (and there are always challenges -- that is part of the learning!). But so are data sheets, observation notes and other tools to help communicate (even when we were all virtual)

To figure out how well this pedagogy worked pre and post surveys for all involved were given as were reflection papers and focus groups (See Benefits).

# IMPACT



Due to COVID, many projects were designed as resources to be implemented at another time. However one group (working safely outside) had an 'in-person event. All five projects generated significant impact for our local community

- *15 volunteers spent 5 hours total cleaning stalls, filling and cleaning water buckets, cleaning out sheds, hanging Christmas decorations, feeding the animals, yard maintenance, and reorganizing the supplies for CERA*
- *Sample bylaws created and website material compiled for newly created Food Council of Union County - went live early in 2021. See: <https://www.foodcouncilofunioncounty.com/>*
- *750 masks donated by Atrium health to Heart for Monroe remote shopping events; list of grants and funding opportunities for purchasing Remote shopping equipment (eg., bins) as well as a template for hosting a safe remote shopping day; template for a clothing drive event at WU*
- *Increased the profile of TWCO in Union County and in New York by over 50 cold calls to organizations serving single mothers*
- *Students were polled about dining experiences and from this data a template for a student newsletter was created to augment communication channels with all students on Wingate campus and help educate about sustainability*

"My initial expectations regarding Trinity Wellness were that I would have to complete some sort of "project" for Trinity Wellness that would involve my group working with the organization to physically create a useful resource for them. Upon learning more about Trinity Wellness and their needs, I have come to realize that I underestimated the value that myself and my group held as a resource in and of ourselves.... What we did instead was to help the group achieve some new goals in terms of growth and outreach."



# FAITH KNOWLEDGE & SERVICE

Despite a global pandemic 99% of GPS 310 students indicated that they would take a SLCE course again if offered! From pre and post surveys, we learned that our students became much better at...

- **Civic Engagement** (a desire to work to make their community better)
- **Civic Skills** such as teamwork, problem solving, communication (e.g., skills and attitudes that made them better at engaging within their community)
- **Civic Efficacy** (confidence that they can make a difference!)
- **21st century skills** (skills and attitudes that help them navigate the world successfully)

"Our SLCE project aims to bridge communication between Chartwells and the rest of the campus community to ensure cohesion. Our newsletters will allow Chartwells to give information to students regarding Chartwells's goals and healthy, sustainable eating. On the other side, the newsletter would provide easy access to how students might leave feedback for Chartwells to ensure that Chartwells is continually working toward the good of the community. Additionally, giving students easier access to Chartwells's goals may promote a sense of caring about their global community. A richer understanding of what fair trade means, for example, may make the term more than something seen on a few items at the dining hall. We may be able to foster a change in habit and perspective that will serve people long after they leave Wingate."

**GPS 310 Student, Fall 2020**



## BENEFITS



# FAITH KNOWLEDGE & SERVICE

In addition to this quantitative data, student reflections and papers also told us about what students learned or became much better at...

- **Empathy:** Students in this class reported high feelings of concern for people and animals experiencing hardship in our community. This suggests that learning about ethics via SLCE pedagogy may increase empathy and the ability to express their values constructively.
- **Connection to Others:** Many students felt a deeper connection to each other and to those they encountered in our local community
- **Academic Engagement:** From past experience, students in this SLCE class reported somewhat higher engagement in class than in previous non-service-learning class taught by this instructor. This means that students were more interested in class and learning course content.



## BENEFITS



“The work that Trinity Wellness does gives these women that power back to create something for themselves they may have forgotten how to dream about. My opinion of this is heavily influenced by the fact that I was raised by a single mother for most of my childhood and seeing the work that they do and speaking with one of Trinity Wellness’s success stories fills me with happiness. The stigma around single mothers can at times weigh down on women, so the mentorship program is an exceptional example of recognition of a problem in society and the execution of a solution.

**GPS 310 Student, Fall 2020**

“ I have also acquired new skills during the course of this project. Some of these skills include creativity skills, organization skills, and critical thinking skills. We had to take something that was already established and basically perfect and make it more perfect, but safe during these times of COVID. It was fun to think outside the box and come up with ways to help the community while keeping them safe during this Pandemic. I had to create a poster, which was something different for me since I don’t consider myself very artistic, so I learned how to be creative. These qualities will be helpful in the future because these are the qualities that employers look for in their employees. Everyone knows how to think, we do it every day; however, it is a gift to know how to think critically. It is always safest to do what is already done, but it is unique to be creative and be original especially when it comes to business. Nobody likes clutter and organization is always preferred. These qualities have set me on a path to make my mark on my career field in the future.

**GPS 310 Student, Fall 2020**

# STUDENT VOICES & ARTIFACTS

## BENEFITS

"Through the course of my life, I have been someone who has loved all types of animals, especially horses. I firmly

believe that my endearment for them developed throughout my childhood years because my grandfather worked at a ranch raising cattle and horses. He would often take my brother and me to see what his job consisted of and would allow us to ride the horses with him, which I believe slowly evolved my love for them. Although I have not ridden a horse or tamed one in many years, I always stare at them in awe when I drive past a ranch filled with them because they

are beautiful creatures that live to fill us with love and joy. ... Considering that I have not seen my grandfather in over 16 years since my family immigrated to the US, grooming these horses will allow me to relive one of the few memories that I have with my grandfather.

**GPS 310 Student, Fall 2020**

### Carolina Equine Rescue & Assistance (CERA) Volunteer Opportunity



Show Your Love For These Beautiful Creatures on Nov 21<sup>st</sup> from 9am - 12pm!

#### COVID-19 GUIDELINES

- 1) SOCIAL DISTANCING
- 2) MASKS MUST BE WORN
- 3) MUST SHOW WINGATE COVID-19 TRACKER RESULTS



#### Some Activities Include:

- ❖ Horse Grooming
- ❖ Basic Barn Maintenance
- ❖ Property Cleanup
- ❖ Spontaneous Activities the Day-of



### Chartwells- Dining at Wingate University

#### Healthy Eating and Seasonal Produce



##### What's in Season?

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| • Apples      | • Mustard Greens |
| • Beets       | • Napa           |
| • Bokchoy     | • Peanuts        |
| • Cabbage     | • Pecans         |
| • Collards    | • Spinach        |
| • Indian corn | • Sweet potatoes |
| • Kale        | • Turnips        |
| • Mushrooms   |                  |

##### Produce in Season Associated with Cognitive Benefits

Beets are shown to improve performance in serial subtractions up to 90 min post-consumption

Mushrooms are shown to improve cognitive function in dementia patients

Peanuts/Pecans are associated with better average cognitive status, specifically for women

##### Produce not in Season Associated with Cognitive Benefits

Blueberries are associated with improved word-list recall.

Blackberries improve motor performance and working memory performance

Blackcurrant & Cranberry offer enhanced neuronal signal transduction

Mulberries are associated with enhanced memory and neuroprotective effects

#### What's Happening at W.T. Harris?



"VISITING THE LIGHT IT UP MONROE EVENT AND THE OFFICIAL LOCATION OF THE CLOSET, I SAW A LOT OF HISPANIC FAMILIES. GOING TO THESE LOCATIONS, I REALIZED I HAD FORGOTTEN HOW DISCONNECTED I FELT FROM MY HISPANIC ROOTS. IMMIGRATING TO THE UNITED STATES AT A YOUNG AGE, I QUICKLY LEARNED ENGLISH. HOWEVER, I DID NOT REALIZE THAT I WAS ALSO LOSING MY ABILITY TO SPEAK SPANISH FLUENTLY. MY INABILITY TO SPEAK FLUENT SPANISH, AN EXPECTATION I HAD SUBCONSCIOUSLY SET FOR MYSELF, AFFECTED MY CONFIDENCE. I PRIMARILY USE ENGLISH TO COMMUNICATE WITH EVERYONE. THERE ARE A FEW EXCEPTIONS BEING MY MOM IN MY IMMEDIATE HOUSEHOLD. GPS 310 STUDENT, FALL 2020





"Based on Wadell's elaboration of who and what is encompassed in God's love, I have realized that God loves more than just humans, as it is often believed. Wadell claims that in Genesis 1:31, not only does God's love include the humans that are built in his image, but it also favors all of God's creations that fall outside of the human species. Reading this enlightened my understanding of just how powerful and inclusive God's love is because I was never taught that God's love included more than just humans. Knowing this, I feel more responsible for sharing the love that God has shown me to the creation that God created beside humans such as animals. With this knowledge, working with CERA to care and give their horses the love that they failed to receive with the previous owners that mistreated them becomes more purposeful because it gives me joy in serving them, but also it delights God.

**GPS 310 Student, Fall 2020**



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**GPS 310 Student, Fall 2020**

# FINAL THOUGHTS



We learned that WU students show interest and excitement in engaging in a service-learning approach to learning and that it has the potential to help students integrate their personal experiences, course work and ethical principles.

These students engaged in value making and moral reasoning in a variety of contexts and thoughtfully and creatively designed projects to address the issues in our community.

Community partners were very satisfied with their experiences and are open and excited to work with Wingate students in the future. They found this SLCE experience mutually beneficial (and fun!).

Importantly, the preliminary data collected adds to the significant body of literature which already demonstrates that SLCE is an impactful pedagogical tool that empowers students, improves learning, and improves communities.

It is my hope that more general education courses can be re-imagined into SLCE courses to attract and retain more students at Wingate, engage more experiential learners on our campus, embed our students in our local community more and help cultivate educated, ethical and productive global citizens in accordance with Wingate University's mission.