

<u>Question</u>	<u>Answer</u>
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Title of Paper	Community Service Learning in a First-Year Engineering Communication Course: Preliminary Reflections

Abstract

Engineering is a profession that holds high respect within the community, and with that respect comes the duty to serve that community. In fact, according to the ASCE, it is an engineer's obligation "to serve humanity" and share their skills "without reservation for the public good." The design, communication, research, audience analysis, and business skills that engineers build and develop throughout their careers are invaluable to not-for-profit organizations to solve their challenges. To those ends, a project was created in a first-year engineering writing course in UBC's School of Engineering APSC 176: Engineering Communication where students had the opportunity to connect the soft skills required for engineering to their obligation to serve the public through fundraising proposals for local not-for-profit organizations.

The not-for-profit community organizations were contacted through a representative of UBC's Learning Exchange. The aim was to choose organizations that were be scientific in nature, that had engineering/science-related problems that engineers can address, or that just needed the creativity and soft skills engineers possess. The project was designed to allow students to develop their ability to work on an assigned team, organize a problem-solution argument, conduct research, describe and explain a solution to a real-world problem, and write a persuasive proposal to a specific audience. Students were exposed to the challenges of being creative within real-world constraints, and the importance of being able to write a well-organized, persuasive engineering proposal to a range of audiences.

Students wrote a problem-solution proposal of a fundraising idea to a local not-for-profit organization to support an actual engineering/science-related endeavour that organization is working towards. This was followed by an oral presentation of the proposal to an audience of their peers and their clients. Finally students were asked to reflect upon their experience in this project in writing.

As the pilot for a project that could potentially be developed on a larger scale, there were some successes and challenges along the way. This presentation will outline the successes and lessons learned from this pilot project that can be applied to other community service learning opportunities for engineering students.