



2023-24

SERVICE LEARNING



2023-24 STUDENT NEWSLETTER

IDS 305 VIRTUAL IMMERSION EXPERIENCE

This winter, I was lucky enough to participate in the Interdisciplinary Studies 305 (IDS305) Service Learning course at St. Francis Xavier University. As a passionate traveler and global citizen myself, the course originally sounded like a fantastic learning experience, and it far exceeded my expectations. The course was a unique structure, unlike anything I'd ever seen before. Each week, a relevant issue or topic was selected, on Monday, exploring the issue, implications, and solutions in Canada with our professor, Dr. Mary Oxner. Then, on Wednesday each week, we'd meet virtually with StFX's community partner in Peru to explore the same issue in a Peruvian context. This structure allowed for an excellent comparison and understanding of these important global challenges, looking at differences and similarities between Canada and Peru. Surprisingly, the similarities often exceeded the differences, allowing us to understand that although great physical distance and cultural differences are between our two countries, we're also quite similar in many ways.

The course was a small group of like-minded students coming from different faculties and programs within StFX University, each with a unique perspective. Dr. Oxner supported our learning by providing engaging lectures and experiential learning, for example, a field trip to the Antigonish Community Food Bank to learn and see the effects of food insecurity in our rural community. In addition, our community partner in Peru, Nexos Comunitarios, specifically, Maricarmen Valdivieso were wonderful to learn with, with engaging lessons and sessions with Maricarmen, and the opportunity to meet some of her friends who are working to tackle various issues in Peru. For example, we got to meet Maricarmen's friend, a small-business owner in Peru of a family-owned, local business that sells their responsibly produced dairy products.

Overall, IDS 305 was a wonderful experience with Service Learning at StFX University, allowing our class to think about solutions to complex global issues, learn more about the challenges facing our Antigonish community, and to learn about the challenges and solutions to issues facing Peru.

- Logan Pugsley

IDS 305 is a winter term open elective.

Find out more here



STUDENT NEWSLETTER



IMMERSION SERVICE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024-25

Joining an ISL experience is an excellent way to explore a subject or career path, participate in reciprocal community service and, develop leadership and networking skills.

- Interested in **SOCIAL JUSTICE?**

Join an ISL group in **GUATEMALA** to learn about fair trade and growth in post-genocide Mayan communities.

- Have a passion for **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION?**

Travel to **ECUADOR** to learn about a cloud forest ecological reserve.

- Enrolled in **BUSINESS, HEALTH** or **DEVELOPMENT STUDIES?**

Experience **PERU** alongside an organization facilitating development and entrepreneurship projects with vulnerable communities.

- Studying **HISTORY** or **POLITICS?**

Take a journey from **GERMANY to POLAND**, to bear witness and share remembrance through learning service relating to the Holocaust.

- Are you a **BIOLOGY** or **EDUCATION** student?

Explore local flora and fauna with hands-on learning at the **BELIZE** zoo, and work with a school in a small Mayan village.

- Do you want to work in **COMMUNITY HEALTH?**

Live, work and learn with the **L'Arche OTTAWA** community, to discover the creative human potential of all people with an intellectual disability.



Online applications open September 1, 2024

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IMMERSION SERVICE LEARNING

Self-Discovery Through ISL and Nexos Comunitarios: Reflection on 10 days in Peru

Hi! My name is Griffin Gamble. I'm a 2nd year Civil Engineering student-athlete from Shad Bay, Nova Scotia. Recently, I had the privilege of participating in the ISL program in Peru! With guidance from Service Learning leaders and our amazing Nexos leaders, Maricarmen and Gabi, seven other Canadians and I began to truly understand community development from a local cultural perspective.

Immersion Service Learning gave me the opportunity to make my childhood dreams of travelling the world and chasing experiences a reality. ISL enabled me to spend parts of my first year of university with like-minded individuals who were brought together by collective interests. Anticipation grew exponentially at our in-person workshops where we learned about the adventure upon us.

For our first days, we stayed in Lima. In this big city, we started to become familiar with Peruvian history and culture. We actively participated in a myriad of activities, such as workshops with knitters within the community and in a park outside the Museum of Lima downtown (I learned two knitting techniques already). We tried different foods and began to familiarize ourselves with Lima's vibe through various types of transportation. We visited the Lugar de la Memoria and learned about Peruvian history, among many other experiences. While focused on learning and bonding with others, I unknowingly learned about myself. I discovered my likes and fears, what I can and cannot eat, and a newfound passion—a passion to join in others' growth, well-being, and success, regardless of where they live.

I cannot thank enough the opportunities and memories that StFX Service Learning and Nexos Comunitarios have given me. The courage to apply to this program has resulted in learning about myself, others and the world. I look forward to continuing with Service Learning next year!



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EXCHANGE—GLOBALIZE YOUR DEGREE

NORD UNIVERSITY IN BODØ, NORWAY

I'm Rory Jakubec, and I just finished my third year in the Public Policy and Governance program. I decided to go on exchange because I wanted to experience a different culture, as well as learn different perspectives on world issues. I studied at Nord University in Bodø, Norway. This meant that I lived above the Arctic circle for five months! Studying abroad was an absolutely incredible experience and I loved every second of it. A few of my favourite things were dog sledding, seeing the northern lights and even participating in a conference. Throughout my exchange, the daylight hours went from less than four a day to the sun never setting which in itself was an experience that I will never forget. I traveled to many different parts of Norway, including the Lofoten Islands. I would definitely encourage other students to apply for an exchange opportunity because I made lifelong friends and had so many wonderful experiences.



INTERESTED IN TRAVELING ABROAD FOR THE
2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR?

Book an appointment with
Education Abroad Advisor, Nate Taylor

Application Deadline is
January 15th 2025



STUDENT NEWSLETTER

COURSE BASED SERVICE LEARNING

Alexa Burry SL Experience



My name is Alexa and I participated in Service Learning as part of the Disability, Health, and Community Rehabilitation course (HKIN 395). The lab section of this course was tasked with running weekly practices for the Bulldogs sledge hockey team through the MAX (Motor Activities @ X) Program. This allowed our class to gain valuable experience working with members of the community with a variety of disabilities, predominantly disabled youth. From socialization, to running adapted sledge hockey activities, to researching, writing and implementing a tailored physical activity program for the player we were partnered with, this opportunity provided unique and fun-filled practical experience that enhanced the concepts learned in the lectures. On a personal level, Service Learning combined my prior work with disabled populations and coaching youth ringette, and my love for ice sports into an experience that will serve me well in my pursuit of becoming a teacher.



The community rehabilitation lab utilized a sledge hockey medium to provide community-based rehabilitation to residents of Antigonish and the surrounding community varying in age and disability. The lab was run by Professor Tara Artibello in conjunction with Doctor Amanda Casey's Human Kinetics 395 course at St. Francis Xavier University. The class was tasked with conducting single-subject research using the participant they were paired with, then created a rehabilitation plan for future use by applying evidence-based research and their findings during their lab. The lab used an abilities-based approach, determining success of the rehabilitation from the participants' improvements in sledge hockey.

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COURSE BASED SERVICE LEARNING

Isabella Tascona SL Experience

When I began my Service Learning experience, I was unaware of the relationship between StFX University and organizations such as L'Arche. I gained a new understanding of the broadness of Antigonish's community and of the value of said broadness. Dar Willams describes this phenomenon as positive proximity: when the state of living in proximity to other community members leads to beneficial outcomes within that community (What I Found in a Thousand Towns, x-xi). Service Learning helps promote positive proximity within Antigonish, and its effects on the town are obvious when we look at the relationship between StFX students and programs such as L'Arche. Before L'Arche I was fearful of meeting new people and of being thrust into a new social position. Yet as my visits carried on, my comfort level and social skills gradually increased. I learned a lot about friendship from the core members, who spared no time in making me feel comfortable and wanted in their space. Overcoming challenges through a growth of social skills, Service Learning has helped transform me as a person. L'Arche exemplify the profound potential for positive change when individuals come together with openness, compassion, and a shared commitment to inclusion.

Ryan Francis SL Experience

For my Service Learning experience, I opted for the KC Blades placement. This placement is aimed at assisting children with how to skate. I employed discipline, leadership, kindness, and compassion throughout my Service Learning experience. I observed many traits that directly connect to religious studies, these religious values have qualities that I have observed that correlate with teaching children how to skate. When looking at Buddhist Traditions regarding skating, children may benefit from the Buddhist concept of mindfulness by being encouraged to stay in the present and pay attention to their balance and skating technique. In my introduction to the class, I spoke on the value of community and support. I realized that my introduction emphasized Jewish traditions, which can be applied to learning to skate, like emphasizing the importance of helping and encouraging fellow skaters of fostering a sense of community on the ice. While speaking of gratitude, I am thankful I could teach these amazing kids. Overall, Service Learning is an experience I will never forget, and I will do it again. I would recommend this program to everyone who likes being around kids. Many aspects of teaching children how to skate can be found in various religions worldwide. Although I study business and hope to major in finance for my degree, teaching children will always have a place in my heart.

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2024-25 STUDENT LEADERS



Emma Grube is a 4th-year Health student from Barrie, Ontario. She has been with service learning since the start of the 2022-2023 school year. Emma also is involved with the StFX pool and teaches swimming lessons to children in the community of all ages. She loves volunteering and being a part of the Antigonish community!

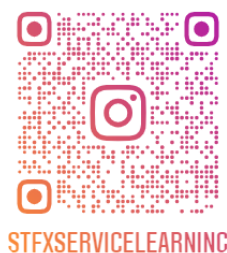


Hayley Allan— Hello! My name is Hayley Allan, and I am a fourth-year Climate and Environment student. I am thrilled to be a part of the wonderful Service Learning team for the 2024/25 school year! Previously, I participated in Service Learning by volunteering for the Baby Storytime program at the Antigonish Library and as a recreation aide at the R.K. MacDonald Nursing Home. I loved being active in the community and am excited to help and guide students through their placements this year. I can't wait to start Service Learning in the fall, but I'm also hoping for a long summer.



Abby McElhinney — Hello! My name is Abby and I am going into my fourth year at StFX with a major in Sociology and a minor in English. I am going to be one of your Service Learning Leaders for the 2024-25 school year! I am excited to meet new faces and help students have the best experience with Servicing Learning! I took the Social Justice Colloquium in my first year but unfortunately could not participate in SL because of COVID. But, this past April I was able to experience Immersion Service Learning and travel to Belize! I enjoyed my experience so, so much and highly recommend getting involved in Service Learning whether it's locally or globally.

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



STUDENT NEWSLETTER

2024 SERVICE LEARNING AWARD

Kathleen Dolan

Bachelor of Arts and Science in Health



Community Based Research Award

We want to congratulate Bachelor of Arts and Science in Health Student, Kathleen Dolan for being awarded the 2024 Students Research Award. This Service Learning prize is awarded annually to the best community engaged project presented at Student Research Day.

Primary Care Providers Perceptions on Social Prescribing in Rural and Urban Nova Scotia

Kathleen had this to say about her Research Project:

Social Prescribing (SP) is an approach to health where healthcare-workers connect patients to a range of nonclinical community services to support the social determinants of health (SDH). Around 20% of patients seek physicians for social-related issues. And while 90% of Canadian physicians screen their patients for social needs, 36% are unaware of what services are available in their community. Evidence of SP in other countries found that it reduces physician and emergency room visits, and hospital and secondary care referrals, demonstrating the effectiveness of SP in enhancing patient health and reducing health-system pressures.

Through qualitative methodology and phenomenological design, this study aims to identify the perceptions of primary care providers of SP and explore general knowledge of and perceived barriers and facilitators to implementing SP in Nova Scotia through semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis.

Understanding perceived challenges and facilitators may help to better inform future SP models in NS and help improve the uptake and satisfaction of these models among PCPs.

We asked Kathleen: What does Community mean to you?

“Volunteering and engaging with the community goes without question. I have been privileged enough to have had so many opportunities to get involved with community organizations and engage with community members. It has truly become part of who I am today. My community here has taught me to learn from and listen to others. Being involved in the community can allow you to expand your perspective, but also to reconnect with feelings of empathy and compassion towards others, something that is lost in the stressful and competitive university environment. Community is so valuable and being part of this community has taught me the power of people when you bring them together and what impact people can have by simply sharing their voices. It has truly taught me that an interconnected community has the power to do great things”.

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2023-2024 PATHY FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

Congratulations to the 2023-2024 Graduates of the Pathy Foundation Fellowship.

Nine new graduates were awarded \$40,000 to spend the year implementing a change initiative in their communities. These Pathy Fellows received personal, professional, and leadership coaching and benefitted from training and support from the Coady Institute.



This 12-month, intensive experiential learning Fellowship is designed for graduating students who have:

- The **capacity and potential** to develop as effective leaders
- A **meaningful connection with a community** of their choosing anywhere in the world
- An **innovative idea** of how much this community could be strengthened.

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE 2025-2026 COHORT?

Applications open September 1st, 2024.



Apply here!

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WHO WAS INVOLVED IN SERVICE LEARNING 2023-24?

Thank you to our Community Partners

Antigonish County Adult Learning Association (ACALA)	L'Arche Antigonish Life.School.House
Antigonish Community Foodbank & Community Fridge	Martha's Justice Ministry
Antigonish Early Years Committee	Make Your Move Antigonish
Antigonish Education Centre	Motor Activities at X
Antigonish Public Library	Naomi Society
Antigonish Therapeutic Riding	Nova Scotia Health Authority
Antigonish Women's Resource Centre	Nourish Nova Scotia
Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL)	Palliative Care Society
Community Mental Health	Red Apple Children's Care
Fit for Life/Fit for Tots	RK MacDonald Nursing Home
Adult Friendship Corner	School Plus
Gender and Diversity	Social Justice Radio
Girl Guides	St. James United Church
Heatherton Group Home	StFX Bloomfield Hub
Highland Crest Home	StFX Diversity Engagement
KC Blades Skating	United for Literacy
Keep Well Antigonish	VON Antigonish & Pictou
Kids First	World University of Canada
	X-Oceans
	X-Project

- **596** Student Experiences
 - **65** Community Partners
 - **36** Professors
-
- **40** Courses
 - **16** Disciplines

- **7.55%** Dip Engr
- **6.88%** BBA
- **31.89%** BSc
- **33.72%** BA
- **19.97%** BASc Health

-
- **20.97%** 1st year students
 - **11.41%** 2nd year students
 - **27.85%** 3rd year students
 - **39.77%** 4th year students

- **47%** Course Based SL
- **45.1%** Class Projects



and all our other local and global partners. —Thank you

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