

NEWSLETTER

Service-Learning Centre



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING: BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

Essence of Service-Learning: Where Service Meets Learning

In the realm of education, there exists a transformative approach that transcends the conventional boundaries of classrooms and textbooks. This approach, known as service learning, is not a mere fusion of two words, but a philosophy that encompasses the very essence of 'service' and 'learning'. At its core, service learning redefines education as a dynamic and reciprocal interaction between students and their communities.

Understanding the Fabric of Service-Learning

Service-learning, often mistaken for mere volunteerism, is far more profound. It is the embodiment of applying academic theories and disciplinary knowledge to confront real-world challenges. The question echoing at the heart of service learning is: "How can one's acquired knowledge and skills be harnessed for the betterment of the community?" This query isn't just a theoretical exploration; it's the driving force behind a potent mode of experiential education.



A Two-Way Journey of Enrichment

Service-learning is not a one-sided endeavor. It's a journey with dual benefits. On one hand, it provides students with platforms to leverage their technical expertise for community upliftment. On the other hand, this process serves as a conduit for students to absorb wisdom from their immediate surroundings.

Role of Reflection

Integral to service-learning is the art of reflection. Each service engagement is an opportunity for students to practice reflective thinking, amalgamating intellectual insights with tangible community interactions. This transformative reflection isn't just about acknowledging challenges; it's about seeking solutions and fostering growth. By embracing this practice, students not only refine their critical thinking and problem-solving skills but also develop empathy, tolerance, and a profound sense of responsibility.



Dynamic Learning Experience

Nurturing this spirit of service-learning, the Center for Service-Learning at UCC stands resolute in its commitment. Collaborating with diverse educational institutions and traditional industrial units, the center offers a dynamic learning experience to students within the institution. The synergistic partnerships formed echo the center's four primary focus areas: education, environment, culture, and women empowerment.

Principal's Message

NURTURING HEARTS AND MINDS THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING

Dear Members of the UCC Community,

As we embark on the educational journey that is set for great transformative changes, I find it essential to reflect on a cornerstone of our institution's values: service-learning.

The Service-Learning Centre at UCC has evolved into a hub of transformative experiences and meaningful engagements since its inception. Our commitment to service learning is exemplified by our international linkages with the International Christian University, Japan (ICU), where our students and students from ICU engage in cross-cultural service learning experiences that broaden their horizons and deepen their sense of global citizenship. This not only enriches their academic journey but also fosters a profound understanding of diverse perspectives. These exchanges instill empathy, tolerance, and a broader outlook, nurturing well-rounded individuals poised to make a positive impact on society.

The introduction of the Service-Learning Add-On Course has been a significant milestone. This three-month course is designed to empower our students to take their classroom knowledge and apply it directly to address real-world challenges. This initiative underscores our commitment to whole-person education, where academic excellence is harmoniously integrated with practical experiences that shape character and instill values.

In our relentless pursuit of excellence, we have also expanded our community partnerships. These collaborations extend our reach and impact, allowing us to address a wider array of societal challenges.

Empowering through Knowledge and Action

Service-learning transforms students into catalysts of positive social change. With the heart of service-learning beating in harmony with the essence of 'service' and 'learning', it paves the way for compassionate, enlightened, and responsible individuals. These individuals, armed with the prowess of knowledge and the humility of service, hold the potential to shape a brighter future for our communities and the world at large.



As we look forward, our vision is clear: to make service learning an integral part of every undergraduate course at UCC. We believe that service learning not only enhances academic rigor but also cultivates compassionate, responsible, and engaged citizens. It transcends the classroom, transforming students into active agents of positive change.

In conclusion, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the entire UCC community for embracing service-learning as a cornerstone of our educational philosophy. It is through your dedication, enthusiasm, and unwavering support that we continue to expand our horizons and shape a brighter future for our students and the communities we serve.

With warm regards,
M I Punnoose
Principal

FOCUS AREAS

-  Education
-  Environment
-  Culture
-  Women Empowerment

COMMUNITY & PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

- Govt. LP School, Chamaparambu
- Govt. LP School, Kadungalloor
- School for the Blind, Keezhmaadu
- Kids Dale, UC College, Aluva
- Viveka Chandrika Sabha School, Puthelvikara
- CSI Karunalayam- Residential School for the Intellectually Challenged, Aluva
- St. Joseph's Boy's Hostel, Koonammavu
- Hand Weaving Unit, Chennamangalam
- Kudumbasree Units
 - Snack-Making Unit
 - Flower Cultivation Unit
 - Flour Mill Unit
- Housekeeping Staff on Campus
- UC Campus Biodiversity
- Mangalapuzha Seminary
- Visit to Churches and Temples
- Archaeological and Heritage Sites
- Faculty Home Visits

SERVICE-LEARNING CHRONICLES

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE IN SERVICE-LEARNING



Dr. Justin R Nayagam with Prof. Kano Yamamoto, the guiding spirit behind UCC- ICU partnership for the last two decades.

Since 2012, Union Christian College, Aluva, has collaborated with International Christian University, Japan, to foster a remarkable student exchange program rooted in Service Learning. This initiative has been a beacon of cross-cultural understanding and community enrichment.

In the spirit of Service-Learning, our students have engaged in a diverse array of activities aimed at uplifting both local and global communities. They have dedicated their time and skills to education, environmental preservation, cultural preservation, and women's empowerment.

From volunteering in local schools to nurture young minds, participating in ecological conservation projects, to preserving the rich tapestry of our cultural heritage, and championing the cause of women's empowerment, our students have demonstrated unwavering commitment.

This partnership has not only facilitated academic growth but has also nurtured global citizens with a profound sense of responsibility and empathy. Together, Union Christian College and International Christian University continue to shape a better world through the transformative power of Service Learning.

INTERNATIONAL LINKAGES

MoU with International Christian University, Japan

Union Christian College, Aluva in partnership with International Christian University, Japan has been conducting students' exchange programme in Service-Learning since 2012.

SL with Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

UC College also hosted faculty and students of FuJen Catholic University Taiwan as part of service-learning in 2018.



Ms. Hitomi Yokote, faculty, Service-Learning Centre, International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan, visited UCC during July 21 to 24, 2019. Her visit strengthened UCC- ICU international partnership.

2023-2024

From ICU to UCC



The International Service Learning (ISL) 2023 started on a high note this year as we had five students from International Christian University, Japan visiting our campus. This is the highest number from ICU thus far opting to do SL at UCC. The prospect was encouraging and exciting for the SLC. The five students from ICU were Mena Kawakara, Misaki Kachi, Momoko Mori Han, Suyeon and Haruka Ishisha. However, one student had to return to Japan after a week due to health reasons and programme continued with the other four students. The programme was held from 24 July to 23 August, 2023.



ICU Students at Govt. LP School, Chamaparambu, Govt UP School, Kandugallur, School for the Blind Keezhmadu, Viveka Chandrika Sabha School, Puthenvelikara



ICU Students with Kudumbasree



ICU Students with Housekeeping Staff



ICU Students with Handweaving Unit



Cultural Exchange



Visit to Temple, Boy's Hostel and Interaction with Canteen Staff

From UCC to ICU

Ms. Ayushi Sabu and Ms. Uthara Menon of first year BSc Psychology attended the Japan Summer-Service Learning Programme (JSSL) from 4 July to 26 July 2023. Along with 19 students from other universities, their service-learning included learning waste segregation, scavenger hunting, visit to Higashi elementary school and Tenryu elementary school, documentation of the history of Tenryu, visit to eggplant field, cooking with village mothers in Sakabe and cooking party.



2022-2023

From ICU to UCC

The International Service Learning (ISL) 2022 was held offline from 20 July to 17 August 2022. Two students from International Christina University, Japan: Ms. Endo Mirai and Ms. Okuno Megumi attended the programme.



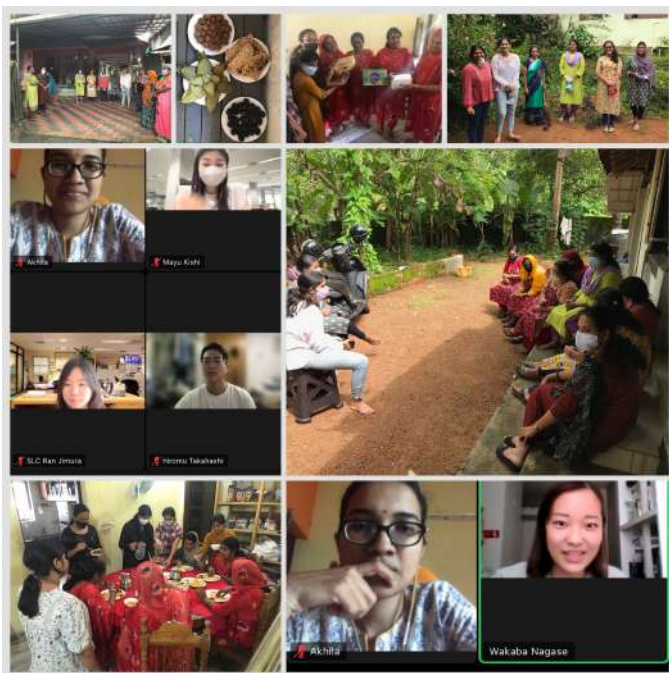
2021-2022

From ICU to UCC

The International Service Learning (ISL) 2021 was held online due to the COVID pandemic based on the theme "Tread to the New Normal". Three students from ICU: Ms. Mayu Kishi, Ms. Wakabe Nagase, and Mr. Hiromu Takahashi attended the programme held from 28 July 2021 to 2 August 2021.

From UCC to ICU

Due to the COVID pandemic, the JSSL 2021 was conducted online. Two students from UC College, Joyal Basil (BA English) and Rose Pinky (BA Malayalam) attended the programme from 26 June to 27 July 2021. They were joined by 17 students from various international universities.



From ICU to UCC

Mr. Keita Ichikawa, Ms. Minami Nagaoka, Ms. Mayuko Sato, and Mr. Natsuki Oka from ICU Japan visited the campus and engaged in service learning as part of UCC-ISESL 2019, from 22 July- 19 July 2019.



ICU Students at Khadi Weaving Unit



ICU Students at the School for the Blind, Keezhmadu



Teaching Origami to the Elderly Group at Chacko Homes



“Taste of Japan”-- The ICU students prepared Japanese cuisine for the staff and friends at Chacko Homes.



Cultural Exchange



ICU Students at Govt. LP School, Chamaparambu & Govt UP School, Kandugallur

Mr. Cyrian Augustine (II BSc Zoology) and Ms. Merin John (II BA Economics) attended the Japan Summer-Service Learning Programme (JSSL) from 3 July- 31 July 2019. Along with a group of sixteen students drawn from various parts of Asia and the USA, the two students from UC engaged in supporting activities at farms, elementary and junior high schools, and facilities for elderly adults.



From ICU to UCC


From UCC to ICU



Four students from International Christian University, Japan: Ms. Yuiko Kajiki, Ms. Hana Kuraoko, Ms. Yumi Miyake and Ms. Konomi Toda attended ISESL 2018 from 23 July to 20 August 2018


Ms.Susanna Sijo (II BSc Psychology) and Ms. Gowri Renjith (II BSc Psychology) attended the Japan Summer-Service Learning Programme (JSSL) from 4 July to 1 August 2018.

TESTIMONIALS


Yumi Miyake 

I am so thankful that everyone worked thier best to let us have great experience as much as possible, and enjoy our stay in Kerala. I would love to keep in touch with you personally, or though college.




Yuiko Kajiki 

I really appreciate for hospitality of theachers and students in UCC. I had great time and experienced what I would never forget in there. I would like to visit Kerala again in the future.

Konomi Toda 

Thank you so much for what you've done for us. Even though it was difficult situation for UCC as well, you took great care of us and we are so thankful to you. It is not hard to imagine that our sentiment toward service learning in UCC and Kerala might have been unpleasant because of the situation. However, it became a great learning opportunity for us and we are even wanting to go back to Kerala. It is all because of you and your great and warm supports. What we learnt from the activities and experience concerning flood have definitely affected my perception. I miss Kerala so much... Again, thank you very much for the service learning experience! I will keep challenging in the future. I hope great development of UCC Service Learning in the future, and I hope people and things in Kerala will recover and back to normal as soon as possible.

Hana Kuraoka 

Dear teachers, students, and all people who took care of us during our stay. Thank you so much for taking care of us until the very end! Without your helps, we couldn't complete our service learning program. Even it is called service learning, we had more things that we got service from others than we did actually service. But we learned a lot of things through your helps, so we are really appreciated for your help. Now Kerala is my home. Hope you are doing well in Kerala.

Collbaoration with Fu Jen Catholic University Taiwan

In January 2019, eleven students under the leadership of Dr. Miao-Ju Chwo and two staff from Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan, articulated in the 14 day Winter Service-Learning (IWSL-2019) from 18 January to 31 January at Union Christian College, Aluva.



SERVICE-LEARNING ADD-ON COURSE

In 2022, SLC at UCC embarked on an inspiring educational journey by introducing the Service-Learning Course. What began with a modest group of 12 enthusiastic participants has attracted 35 eager minds in 2023 from various departments. This course is designed to introduce students to the principles and practices of service-learning. Students will learn about the benefits of service learning, how to identify community needs, how to plan and implement service projects, and how to reflect on their experiences. Through coursework and hands-on projects, students will develop their leadership and problem-solving skills while making a positive impact in their community.



UNION CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, ALUVA

SERVICE-LEARNING

ADD-ON COURSE

WHO CAN APPLY?

First year undergraduate students from all streams.

OVERVIEW

The Service-learning add-on course introduces you to the principles and practices of service learning. Through this course, you will learn how to identify community needs, plan and implement service projects, and reflect on your experiences. You will also develop leadership and problem-solving skills while making a positive impact in your community.



COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

- Learn the principles and practices of service learning
- Identify community needs and develop appropriate service projects
- Implement service projects and reflect on your experiences
- Develop leadership and problem-solving skills
- Evaluate the impact of your service projects on the community
- Collaborate with community organizations and stakeholders
- Gain experience and skills that are highly valued by employers
- Personal growth and development through the service learning experience
- Potential opportunity to participate in an international exchange program



COURSE DURATION & SCHEDULE

The course will be of 30 hours duration and conducted in hybrid mode. Upon the completion of the course, the student will be awarded a certificate.

The best students will be considered for the selection of the Japan Service-Learning Students Exchange Programme, which is going to be held in Japan in July 2023.

GET IN TOUCH

Service-Learning Centre, Union Christian College, Aluva

Dr Justin R Niyagami (Department of Botany)
 Dr Malini R (Department of Psychology)
 Dr Sunil Abraham Thomas (Department of Economics)
 Dr Jeyan Paul (Department of Chemistry)
 Akhila Naryaran (Department of English)

COURSE FEES

₹500

SL students with members of various Kudumbasree Units

Service-Learning Centre, Union Christian College, Aluva →

11 / 12

RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

Department of Psychology:

An assessment of social development and intellectual functioning of children who attend WE CARE special school was done on 1st January 2018. Each student assessed one child. They used Vineland Social Maturity Scale and Seguin Form Board Test. This has helped the special educators to make Individualized Education Plan as well as Vocational Rehabilitation Plan for these children. Students got an opportunity to interact with and assess differently abled children and they also got training in psychological report writing.

An assessment of socio demographic details, specific occupational skills and quality of life among the general public was done by thirty-two students of V semester B. Sc. Psychology of 105 families residing in Ward 7 of Karumalloor Punchayath, near U.C. College in the month of December 2017. The objectives of this activity were (1) To provide students an opportunity to interact with general public as well as understand the life of people who belong to the lower socio economic group. (2) To understand their occupational skills and based on this introduce a cottage industry to support their economic status.

The Department of Psychology, with the support of **UBCHEA**, embarked on a transformative **service learning project** in 2017. This project aimed to provide a unique experiential learning opportunity for both undergraduate and postgraduate Psychology students while addressing the critical issue of substance abuse within our cultural context.

Publication and Presentations

Books:

- *Eye- Openers: A service-Learning Initiative with The Blind* by Dr. Justin R Nayagam
- *International Student Exchange Service-Learning* by Dr Justin R Nayagam, Malini R and Akhila Narayanan

Dr Justin R Nayagam

International

- Invited speaker in "International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan" on March 1, 2019, in the International Conference on Service Learning
- Invited lecture in "International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan" on August 5, 2018, in the Japan Summer Service Learning
- Presented a Paper entitled "Eye Opening service learning with the Blind" in the international Conference – 6th Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Service – Learning, Petra Christian University, Indonesia. May 28 to June 2, 2017.
- Presented a paper entitled "Experimental Service-Learning for Blind Student Development through Regional Partnership" in the International Service – Learning Symposium at Lingnan University, Hong Kong, March 11 – 12, 2016.
- Presented a paper entitled "Stewardship of Water through Ensuring Sustainable Development of River Banks" in the 4th Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Service – Learning, held at Hong Kong and Mainland China, during June 6 – 7, 2013

Lotus and Herbal Garden

Lotus Pond Herbal Garden and Butterfly Park was sponsored by the Service-Learning Centre, UCC to Govt LP School, Chamaparambu. It was inaugurated by Dr Thara K Simon on March 2019.

Research Paper presentation – National

- Presented a paper entitled "Attaining Best Practices through Service – Learning Service Learning" in the national conference – An Emerging Experimental Learning Process in India, Christ University, Bangalore, July, 2017 and E-SAIL March, 2018.
- Presented a paper titled "Integrating Biodiversity Study in Service Learning: A Multidisciplinary Approach" at the 9th Asia Specific Regional Conference on Service-Learning held at Christ University, Bengaluru from 19-21 July 2023.

Moderator/ Session Chair

- Moderator, session Chair and resource person 6th Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Service – Learning, May 28th to June 2nd, 2017. Petra Christian University, Indonesia

Dr Malini R

- Participated in the 6th SLAN (Service Learning Annual Network) Meeting, entitled "Service-Learning in Asia: Models & Best Practices in Course Design and Evaluation" held at De La Salle University on 8-9 June 2018, Manila, Philippines. She presented service learning updates at UCC and its new directions.

Dr Syna Soosan Abraham

Resource Person

- International Service Learning Workshop. Organized by Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei, Taiwan from 20-26 November 2017

Co-Authored

- **Dr Justin R Nayagam, Dr Thara K. Simon & Dr Malini R** Book Chapter titled "Evoking Eco Consciousness Through Service Learning" in Food for Thought: Service-Learning Research in Asia
- **Dr Justin R Nayagam, Dr Malini R & Akhila Narayanan** "Service-Learning Under the New Normals and Beyond", *Service-Learning in the Era of "New Normal": Reflections on the Modes of Service Learning and Future Partnerships* (p. 36-47), 2021
- **Akhila Narayanan, Dr Malini R & Dr Justin R Nayagam** "International Service-Learning: Proposal for a Multi-dimensional Model for Student Selection", *International Journal for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement* (Vol.10: Issue 1:9), ISSN: 2374-9466, 2022.

Workshops

- **Dr Jenish Paul and Akhila Narayanan** participated in the South-Asian Service-learning Virtual Consultations organized by UBCHEA on 21 August, 18 September and 16 October 2020. Presented a proposal for institutional service-learning on 20 November 2020



Herbal Garden

A Herbal Garden was opened in the School for the Blind, Keezhmaadu as part of UBCHEA Project titled "Eye-Openers". The Garden was renovated in 2023.