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## Building a More Resilient University Campus: Lessons Learned from Six Emergency Management Service Learning Projects

Claire Connolly Knox  
*University of Central Florida*

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# **Emergency Management Service-Learning: Lessons Learned from Six Emergency Management Service Learning Projects**

Claire Connolly Knox, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor/Emergency Management and  
Homeland Security Program Coordinator

# **Current Educational Challenge in Emergency Management Education**

- Linking students' theoretical and practical knowledge prior to entering the evolving and challenging field of emergency management.
- Potential Solution: increased use of service learning in emergency management academic programs

# National Survey

- Emergency management academic program coordinators
  - Provided by the Emergency Management Institute at Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Response rate of 22%
- 55.9% of respondents incorporate service learning in their curriculum.
- Service learning has been included in programs for an average of 4 ½ years.

# **PAD 6397 and UCF's Office of Emergency Management**

1. Develop an evacuation plan for the main campus. (GIS Map)
2. Develop an evacuation and housing plan for resident students living on campus. (GIS Map)
3. Research various types of technology used in Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) in institutions of higher education. (National Survey)
4. Research the placement of an Office of Emergency Management in an institution of higher education organizational chart. (National Survey)
5. Develop measurable objectives and a pre/post test to measure the impact of public outreach for active shooter awareness educational program. (Pilot Video)
6. Research the emergency notification systems at institutions of higher education. (National Survey)

# Best Project?

5. Develop measurable objectives and a pre/post test to measure the impact of public outreach for active shooter awareness educational program.

**Client Feedback:** “Arguments made within the paper are well supported by the research, and may even be used by our office to further support our efforts in increasing participation within this program. I was pleased with the group’s motivation to administer their developed survey to a sample of the student population. This approach allows us to measure our effectiveness before implementing the survey on our own, thus allowing us to make improvements to our programs before switching to a fully online model.”

# Best Project?

5. Develop measurable objectives and a pre/post test to measure the impact of public outreach for active shooter awareness educational program.

**Student Feedback:** “I enjoyed this service-learning project. This was my first service-learning project and my first semester in graduate school. I feel our project made a difference to UCF. Instead of just analyzing something based on theories from the class readings and giving recommendations, we actually did something with concrete results. It is unknown if UCF OEM will take the recommendations of the group based on the research and pre and posttest results we submitted. It is satisfying to me knowing our time and effort will not have been for nothing.”

# Project Structure

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Project Proposal and Plan	10	11:59 p.m. on September 10th
Literature Review	10	11:59 p.m. on October 1st
Interim Report	0	11:59 p.m. on October 15th
Methodology	10	11:59 p.m. on October 29th
Service Learning Project Report	60	11:59 p.m. on November 30th
Peer Review Evaluation	5	11:59 p.m. on December 6th
Reflection Paper	5	11:59 p.m. on December 6th
Total Points	100	

# Lessons Learned

- Online service learning environment can be challenging with communication being the biggest issue.
- Client – “some of the groups never contacted us for any questions or guidance throughout the project. Overall, we appreciate the opportunity and look forward to others. We learned a lot from the project and next time we may need to force ourselves to be involved. Maybe this is a result of this being online?”
- Student group projects, even at the graduate level, is filled with drama.

# Thank You!

Claire C. Knox, Ph.D.

Email: [Claire.Knox@ucf.edu](mailto:Claire.Knox@ucf.edu)

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