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Service learning provides a way to integrate interdisciplinary studies by actively engaging in the community, with individuals from various walks of life, and by creatively and expansively applying theories from many fields in a location and activity that take place outside of academia. Together with Aliah Carolan-Silva, we propose for the spring an investigation into whether a service learning would enhance honors options experiences, and how professors and students alike envision benefiting from a service leaning component in their curricula and intellectual growth. The project we propose would culminate in a template and set of resources for professors to use when they consider implementing a service-learning project. That template might offer a structure for the seemingly elusive endeavor of creating a relevant and meaningful service learning experience that provides gravitas to student and faculty's work

To research the development of a service learning honors option, we will be interviewing students and faculty at James Madison College. This will help us understand the depth of interest and the viability for such a project. Interviews will take place one-on-one with faculty and in focus groups with students. The protocol for the focus groups will center around how the participants define service learning and how they understand the honors option, both in theory and in practice. Further, the protocol will try to get at what they understand to be the benefits and outcomes, and what they consider to be the challenges in integrating a service learning component to the curriculum in a sustainable and academically rigorous way. The purpose of this research is to ensure that a service learning honors option would be suitable for James Madison College and respond to the essential questions of the CCP major:

- What is the role of culture in contemporary politics across the world?
- What is the impact of globalization on cultural identities and inter-cultural relations?
- How do different societies — and different groups within societies – understand and articulate cultural identities and diversities?
- How and when do cultural representations and practices become politically salient?

(<http://www.jmc.msu.edu/ccp/CCPdescription.htm>)