Integrating service-learning into a core forestry course: Forest measurements, modeling, and inventory

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Integrating Service-Learning into a Core Forestry Course: Forest Measurements, Modeling, and Inventory

Bronson P. Bullock

Service-Learning was integrated into a core course in the Forest Management Curriculum within the Department of Forestry at North Carolina State University: Forest Measurements, Modeling, and Inventory. The objective of the service-learning component of the course was to have the students research, design, implement, analyze, report, and reflect on the application of forest inventory and modeling techniques in conjunction with a service-learning community partner. The ‘real-world’ situations that the students encountered integrated the core course concepts and encouraged active learning, teamwork, and critical thinking. A local nonprofit organization, the Triangle Land Conservancy, served as the community partner for this endeavor. Articulated learnings, guided reflection sessions, and an online bulletin board facilitated the service-learning process. Each student participated in at least 25 hours of service work over the semester. At the end of the semester, each group formally presented the results of their service-learning project to the community partner and other stakeholders. An overview of the service-learning projects, inputs, outputs, evaluations, and recommendations for integrating service-learning into a natural resource measurements course are presented.