Cognitive Learning Scale (CLS) ©

This revised version of the original scale consists of 9 items. The scores of the items stated in the negative (not) should be reversed before totaling all items for an overall scale score (the second, third, sixth and seventh items). The inter-item reliability Alpha coefficient for the nine items is .86.

Pretest:

We recommend a series of background questions that assess students’ prior service learning and service experiences when using this scale. Part A represents some sample questions for this purpose. In addition, some form of student identification must be included to be able to match pretest with posttest data.

Part A: Please check or fill in each of the following.

How many college courses have you had, prior to this semester, in which you participated in service-learning, community service and/or volunteerism to meet some of the course requirements?

_____None  _____One  _____Two  _____Three  _____Four  _____Five or more

Within the past year, how frequently have you volunteered either on or off campus?

_____Never  _____Once per month  _____Once  _____A few times per month  _____A few times  _____Weekly or more than weekly

Within the past year, what is the approximate total number of hours you have volunteered?

_____0  _____1-15  _____16-30  _____31-45  _____46-60  _____61-75  _____over 75

Part B: Please circle the response that best corresponds to your level of agreement with each of the statements below by using the following scale:

SA = Strongly Agree  A = Agree  U = Undecided  D = Disagree  SD = Strongly Disagree

Typically, course requirements that go beyond participation in class and assigned readings:
do help me to make connections between the ideas and questions I encounter in different classes and/or fields of study.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do not teach me how to apply things I learned in class to real problems.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do not greatly enhance my learning in the course beyond what I gain from reading the text and attending class.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do help me to spontaneously generate my own examples of principles and concepts I am learning about in class.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do help me to see the complexity of real life problems and their solutions.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do not provide me with a greater understanding of the social and ethical issues in that field.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do not enhance my understanding of the logic behind various perspectives about controversies in that field.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do allow me to gain a much deeper appreciation of the importance of things I am learning about in class.  SA  A  U  D  SD
do provide me with a much deeper understanding of course material.  SA  A  U  D  SD
Posttest:

Instructions: You are asked to answer the following questions about the course and your own learning. You should read each item and go with your strongest response then move on. There are no right or wrong answers; what is important is that you answer as honestly as possible.

Part A:

If there is a lot of variability in the service-learning or other experiential learning projects then Part A can include questions that get at time, commitment, quality of placement, etc. Again, some form of student identification must be included to be able to match pretest with posttest data.

Part B: Please circle the response that best corresponds to your level of agreement with each of the statements below by using the following scale:

SA = Strongly Agree   A = Agree   U = Undecided   D = Disagree   SD = Strongly Disagree

In this course, requirements that went beyond participation in class and assigned readings*:

did help me to make connections between the ideas and questions I have encountered in different classes and/or fields of study.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did not teach me how to apply things I learned in class to real problems.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did not greatly enhance my learning in the course beyond what I gained from reading the text and attending class.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did help me to spontaneously generate my own examples of principles and concepts I was learning about in class.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did help me to see the complexity of real life problems and their solutions.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did not provide me with a greater understanding of the social and ethical issues in this field.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did not enhance my understanding of the logic behind various perspectives about controversies in this field.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did allow me to gain a much deeper appreciation of the importance of things I was learning about in class.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

did provide me with a much deeper understanding of course material.  
SA  A  U  D  SD

*This version of the posttest stem assumes that both service-learning and non-service-learning students are being assessed. Alternatively, if the scale is to be used with service-learning students only the stem could read something like, “In this course, the service-learning component:”