

## **Partnering to Survive: Reflections on the Pursuit of Campus-Community Initiatives Prior to Tenure**

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### **Abstract**

How does an early career faculty member survive the pursuit of campus-community initiatives? This article draws on experiences gained through a unique faculty position that combines community engagement with full academic responsibilities. “Survival” in this position emerges from the integration of community engagement with the institutional values of scholarship, as articulated by campus leaders and applied through academic disciplines in teaching and research, as well as the careful creation and institutionalization of reciprocal campus-community partnerships. The article provides lessons learned through adventures in applied teaching, negotiated criteria for tenure and promotion, and the cultivation of community relationships that have culminated in a truly “civic scholarship.”

### **Introduction**

The week before a new academic year was about to begin, my academic dean was motioning me to approach the podium and address the assembled faculty of our private liberal arts institution. I had just completed my first 2 years as an assistant professor of environmental studies, and it was now my turn to speak about the development of campus-community initiatives. This was the annual Faculty Conversation, a kind of State of the Union, where the president and academic dean review our endowment—as it ranks relative to other private liberal arts institutions—and progress toward our long-term and short-term goals.

After a decade or so of rocky relations with our surrounding urban community, the new university leadership prioritized not only the improvement of community relations, but also the integration of campus-community initiatives with our scholarly mission. I was one of a handful of faculty members asked to speak about initial progress toward this goal, and perhaps the only faculty member who had community engagement responsibilities built into their academic job description. Three years prior I had responded to a unique tenure-track job description through the American Political Science Association for a “professor of environmental decision-making and policy” who would establish an “interdisciplinary ini-

tiative” that would “build bridges” to community stakeholders on environmental issues “so that students and faculty become more involved with specific regional conflicts in their classes, research, and service-learning.” This was unlike any of the other jobs I was pursuing in American politics and policy, because it asked me to assume not only the role of a teacher and scholar in my discipline, but also that of a broker between campus and community. I had accepted the job, and now it was time to report on my progress while making the case to the faculty for community engagement as a legitimate pursuit—in no more than five minutes.

My remarks followed two broad themes; one was well chosen, but the other was a mistake, and quite possibly contradicted the first. Both themes reflected lessons learned about wading into community engagement as a junior faculty member. This essay expands on the lessons that stemmed from these two themes. The remarks I believe were well chosen emphasized the ways community engagement had enriched the fulfillment of my professional responsibilities. I linked community engagement to the educational mission of the university, and I described how working with the community made me a better scholar. These remarks reflected lessons I had learned on the importance of integrating campus-community initiatives with the scholarly values and mission of my institution.

As I received a signal that my time at the podium was coming to a close, I hastily blundered into the second theme of my remarks—a long list of past and upcoming community engagement events and programs I had planned. The list was about as clear as the walls plastered with layers of posters, announcements, and advertisements around campus. It contradicted my initial remarks, in that it cast community engagement as an overwhelming array of events outside the scope of the formal bounds of teaching, learning, and research. Perhaps more important, the list betrayed lessons I had already learned about first building relationships and trust among community stakeholders in order to identify shared goals and methods of coordinating campus and community needs, before rushing to perform a campus-generated “community” event. The list of events and programs obscured the fact that I was attempting to move beyond one-time events by institutionalizing campus-community partnerships.

If given another opportunity to contribute to the Faculty Conversation on my campus, I would edit my remarks to emphasize three points: integration, reciprocity, and institutionalization. The lessons I have learned as a junior faculty member pursuing campus-community initiatives center on three factors: (a) integrating the

initiatives with scholarship as established by institutional values, articulated by campus leadership, and applied through the academic disciplines in faculty teaching and research; (b) building reciprocal relationships of respect and trust between and among campus and community stakeholders by identifying shared goals and coordinating needs; and (c) institutionalizing engagement to build reliable and sustained campus-community partnerships that endure beyond a class activity or event and weather the many changes of participating individuals.

### **Integrating With Institutional Values, Leadership, and Faculty Responsibilities**

Advocates for campus-community initiatives often call for the creation of “a new type of university,” as the first president of the University of Chicago did when he championed a scholarship of civic responsibility (*Harper, 1905, p. 158*). Nearly 100 years later the chancellor of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee spoke of creating “a new kind of university” as she worked to engage aspects of each school and college with the local community (*quoted in Brukhardt, Percy, & Zimpher, 2006, p. 5*). Others have called for a “new American college” (*Boyer, 1994*) or argued that becoming an “engaged institution” is an “extraordinary quest that requires taking extraordinary measures” (*Rosaen, Foster-Fishman, & Fear, 2001, p. 24*).

I would argue that what is required is much less radical. Rather than being cast as “new” or “extraordinary,” campus-community initiatives should be integrated into existing institutional values. Research on the results of various institutional change efforts in higher education shows that changes rooted in an institution’s mission and values are most likely to be successful (*Eckel, Hill, & Green, 1998*). Similarly, progress on benchmarks for campus-community partnerships is most often aligned with existing institutional missions (*Torres, 1990*). If it is true that every university “has a signature culture, a way of thinking about itself and what it aspires to become,” (*Wergin, 2006, p. 30*), then the more closely community engagement is integrated into that way of thinking, the more likely it will be to gain wide acceptance and active support. Fortunately, as *Jacoby (2003)* notes, “nearly every college or university mission statement includes some reference to citizenship” (*p. 318*), which can serve as a point of integration for community engagement initiatives. A tradition of service for the public good has also been well documented in the history of higher education (*Bender, 1988; Benson, Harkavy, & Hartley, 2005; Lerner & Simon, 1998*).

When I began working on campus-community initiatives, I searched for support in my university's various statements of mission and values as well as current marketing materials. The mission statement committed my institution to developing "capacities for critical analysis" that could "sustain a lifetime of intellectual curiosity, active inquiry and reasoned independence" in order to "meet the highest tests of democratic citizenship" (*University of Puget Sound, n.d.*). As I will argue, the integration of civic engagement with curricula fosters just this kind of learning and application for the greater good. The university's statement of educational values encourages faculty and students to "make a difference in the world" and argues that "the university and the wider community sustain each other" (*University of Puget Sound, n.d.*). I found marketing materials emphasizing the university's "abundant opportunities for campus and community involvement," as well as its academic core that is designed to foster "active participation as a citizen leader" (*University of Puget Sound, n.d.*).

## **Campus Leadership**

Of course, values and mission statements mean little if they fail to gain a high priority or influence the implementation of day-to-day planning and action. Harkavy (1997) has noted that currently on college campuses "the rhetoric of engagement far exceeds the reality of university engagement" (p. xv). Leadership can certainly help give civic engagement a high priority among the many values implicitly and explicitly vying for institutional importance. Some have considered the support of a chancellor, provost, and/or academic leadership team necessary, if not sufficient, for institutionalizing engagement (*Brunkardt et al., 2006, p. 18*). I have found the support of administrative leaders essential to my work on campus-community initiatives.

Some elements of community engagement initiatives are uniquely attractive to campus leadership. Presidents and deans feel the need to foster good community relations most directly (*Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. xix*) and must confront the ways that external pressures such as decaying neighborhoods affect the university on a day-to-day basis (*Holland, 2001*). Successful presidents must find ways to work with a unique campus culture while distinguishing the university from its peer institutions and establishing their own accomplishments (*Birnbaum, 1992*). As I discovered through my exploration of the university mission statement and marketing materials, community engagement initiatives are one way to link

to historic institutional values while marketing a unique “place-based” experience to prospective students.

A year before I arrived on campus, my university inaugurated President Ronald Thomas, who had successfully led an ambitious community engagement plan at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, that included work with neighborhood schools, nonprofits, and businesses through a campus research institute, a general education curriculum called the Cities Program, and a master plan that improved community access to campus. He argued that initiatives such as these not only served the highest ideals of education and citizenship, but also “enabled us to distinguish ourselves from our competition rather than to pretend we were just like them” (*Thomas, n.d.*). As I began my work on campus-community initiatives, Thomas was forging a link between institutional values establishing the university as a “good citizen” in the community, with a “distinction and uniqueness” stemming from “an engaged and engaging educational experience” with a “profound sense of place” (2003; 2005). That my work on campus-community initiatives aligned with the president’s priorities provided me with legitimacy both on campus and in the community.

## Scholarship and the Disciplines

As powerful as it is to have university leadership champion campus-community initiatives, institutions of higher education are loosely arranged organizations in which the fundamental working units—disciplinary departments—are relatively autonomous from other parts of the larger organization, making it difficult or impossible to transform the institution from the top down (*Orton & Weick, 1990*). Ultimately, the faculty must believe in the “academic worth” of community engagement—it must align with scholarship (*Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 2*). As Boyer (1990) writes, “scholarship is not an esoteric appendage; it is at the heart of what the profession is all about” (*p. 1*). Scholarship in higher education is organized by academic discipline and applied by faculty in teaching and research. Campus-community initiatives must work with the disciplines and complement teaching and research.

Most faculty members enter the academy, form their professional identities, and pursue their intellectual passions through disciplines. This is true even for me, a faculty member in an interdisciplinary position with an applied community engagement responsibility. When I describe my research on rural community responses to radioactive waste disposal, people most often assume

that my professional trajectory emerged from a personal interest in the antinuclear movement, but this is not the case. My interest grew purely out of an academic curiosity in social movement behavior that stemmed from questions in my discipline on political science concerning collective action. My research topic emerged from a search for cases best suited to adding to my discipline's understanding of these questions. In other words, I latched onto an academic question in my discipline, chose a topic that would help me explore that question, and only then developed a compelling personal interest in the topic during my research (*Sherman, 2005*).

I am not arguing that my research trajectory is representative of all academics. Perhaps just as many faculty members are pursuing studies that emerged from a personal interest, which they subsequently matched to more general academic questions. My point is that disciplines organize and prioritize the knowledge and understanding that most faculty members pursue and most students experience in higher education. Despite the well-chronicled shortcomings of disciplines and "disciplinary thinking" (*Harkavy, 1997; M'Gonigle & Starke, 2006; Orr, 1994*), most scholarship in higher education, whether through the practice of teaching or research, is directed toward expanding the knowledge base of its academic discipline (*Nyden, 2003*). Academic disciplines are designed to "cultivate powers of the mind" that can be applied to any number of topics (*Levine, 2003, p. 233*); they coalesce around paradigms with commonly understood methods, concepts, themes or theories, and avenues of inquiry (*Kuhn, 1970*) that enable teachers and students to "understand, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate evidence and conclusions" (*Bain, 2004, p. 85*). Disciplines, typically represented by departments, create the organizational culture and establish the incentives that govern the professional lives of most faculty members (*Birnbaum, 1992; Tagg, 2003*). For campus-community initiatives to achieve broad integration within the higher education curriculum, they must come to be seen as an intellectual approach that complements academic priorities within the disciplines as they are applied in teaching and research.

## Teaching

Students generally like the integration of community engagement with coursework. I have received comments such as "this class was the most useful class I have ever taken at this school," "we learned a lot more outside the classroom instead of relying on just reading material and lecture," and "I really enjoyed the practical application, more classes on campus should be set up this way"

on my end-of-semester evaluation forms. These reactions are consistent with research on student responses in such courses, which finds that students believe community engagement increases the quality of their understanding and facilitates more intellectual stimulation than other types of coursework (Eyler & Giles, 1999). That students like community engagement or believe in its educational benefits, however, is not enough on its own to demonstrate pedagogical merit and overcome the sentiment that “community service is a wonderful thing for students to do, but they should do it on their own time, not as part of class” (Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 57). The student comments point to the importance of application for understanding—the marriage of knowing and doing—a relationship well documented by educational scholars, cognitive scientists, and research on service-learning programs.

John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Alfred North Whitehead each advocated applied learning as a way to get beyond what Dewey (1916) called aloof education and what Whitehead (1929) called inert knowledge. Piaget (1977) argued that “true understanding manifests itself by new spontaneous applications” (p. 731). More recently, cognitive scientists such as Pinker (2005) have found that people are rarely able to generalize factual information or abstract principles to new domains unless they learn through application. Resnich (1987) found that the more a learning experience approximated an actual problem-solving context, the more likely students are to appropriately use knowledge and demonstrate understanding. Eyler and Giles (1999) used extensive surveys and interview responses across many colleges and universities to determine that student participation in “well-integrated” and “highly reflective” service-learning classes was a predictor of increased “complexity in analysis of both causes and solutions to social problems” and that learning by application was associated with enhanced problem solving ability, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of the subject matter (p. 75).

In my own teaching, I have used Wiggins and McTighe’s (2005) prioritization framework to guide the integration of applied work with the community into my course design. These authors distinguish understanding from facts and knowledge. Understanding, they write, “is about making meaning of facts and transferring knowledge to other problems, tasks, and domains” (p. 46). Their prioritization framework progresses from the “enduring understandings” or “big ideas” that a teacher wants students to internalize, to “things that are important to know and do,” and culminates with content that is merely “worth being familiar with” (p. 71). When

applying this framework, each course and each class session should be designed to help students arrive at enduring understandings and grasp the big ideas. How do we know when students are grasping the big ideas? One answer is application; students demonstrate understanding by “using it, adapting it, and customizing it” to a given context (p. 93). Thus, assessing understanding requires that students provide evidence of learning through what Wiggins and McTighe call authentic performance tasks, which are realistically complex contextualized problems requiring judgment, innovation, and the effective use of “a repertoire of knowledge and skill” (p. 155). Carefully crafted civic engagement experiences provide ideal performance tasks.

I have used performance tasks that directly engage my students in community initiatives both to apply big ideas and to master specialized skills. As an example of the former, I teach an environmental politics class that is based on the big idea of agenda setting—the way that some problems rise on governmental agendas while other problems are neglected—and related ideas such as the role of public involvement, media sources, and the strategic use of values in policymaking. Once we have delved into theories of agenda setting in the context of environmental policy problems, my students assume the roles of political consultants and pair with environmental stakeholders to prepare bills and political strategy for the upcoming state legislative session. By working together with political actors in the community, the students apply and reflect on the big ideas of agenda setting in the policy process. In a different course, *Environment and Society*, I use performance tasks that are designed to help students master specialized skills required for survey research such as the conduct of focus groups, participant observation, and interviews. Students use these skills to work with the city public works department in identifying factors influencing individual waste generation and disposal practices, and methods of encouraging citizen waste reduction, reuse, and recycling.

The use of performance tasks that integrate community engagement with big ideas or specialized skills in classes translates well across disciplines. I have hosted faculty workshops in an effort to encourage the broad adoption of community engagement for environmental sustainability in our liberal arts curriculum. After I give a brief presentation on our campus-community sustainability initiatives, I ask my colleagues to complete the following short planning exercise: (1) Identify some big ideas or specialized skills in your discipline or individual class. (2) Identify some fit or linkage between one or two of these ideas or skills and a sustain-



ability initiative. (3) Design an applied class component that integrates the discipline with the sustainability initiative. Two hours of work by faculty teams organized across a range of disciplines produced some promising results. The biology team integrated the study of biodiversity and the life cycles of fish with a performance task that has students working with supermarkets and restaurants to determine the relative sustainability of various seafood options. The business team developed a class module that has students apply principles of marketing to help local businesses encourage the use of reusable shopping bags. These workshops dealing with aspects of environmental sustainability only scratch the surface of this methodology. The American Association for Higher Education has compiled a series of 18 monographs presenting course modules and syllabi that integrate a range of community engagement performance tasks across 18 disciplines (*Lisman & Harvey, 2000*).

## Research

The integration of campus-community initiatives with scholarship is perhaps more easily accomplished with the portion of a faculty member's responsibilities labeled "teaching" than it is with those responsibilities labeled "research" or "professional growth." Wergin (2006) relays this quote from a leader of a campus-community initiative: "young faculty would die to work with us, but would die if they did" (p. 32). Junior faculty often perceive such activities as an unrewarding and risky use of time that competes with research (*Nyden, 2003*). Indeed, the emphasis on research in the tenure review and promotion process poses some significant obstacles for the integration of community engagement, including the need for acceptable documentation and disciplinary fit (*Driscoll & Lynton, 1999*) and the perception that applied relevance is associated with decreased academic rigor (*Wergin, 2006, p. 36; Nyden, 2003, p. 214*). There is nonetheless a growing movement for the inclusion of participatory action research or the scholarship of engagement as legitimate faculty research (*Boyer, 1990; Nyden, 2003; Troppe, 1994*). In my own review process, I have found openings for the integration of campus-community initiatives with the evaluation of professional growth in existing university and departmental standards, as well as opportunities to negotiate new criteria with unique emphasis on community engagement. I have benefited from review standards negotiated with expectations carefully clarified among my colleagues, academic dean, and professional standards committee. Ultimately, my written review criteria, as well as the understandings and interpretations that have emerged through the clari-

fication of expectations, assure me that my professional pursuit of campus-community initiatives is neither unrewarding nor risky for my advancement. My review criteria now reflect and respect the integration of my work on campus-community initiatives with all aspects of my professional responsibilities, including professional growth.

As with institutional mission statements, values reflecting a commitment to civic engagement or an advancement of the common good are often present in professional standards. The time-honored American Association of University Professors (1940) "Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" begins with a charge that research be conducted "for the common good" (p. 3). The disciplines also typically make some mention of research for the greater good. For example, the American Chemical Society (1948), the world's largest professional scientific society, is constituted to encourage the "usefulness of chemists" and to "foster public welfare" (p. 1). The Modern Language Association (2001) charges its members with a commitment to pursue the "philosophical defense of humanity." My own professional association, the American Political Science Association (2008), has approved "core objectives" for scholarship that include "serving the public, including . . . preparing citizens to be effective citizens and political participants" (p. 1). My university standards for professional growth follow this theme, encouraging engagement in public forums with a wider community of learning. My departmental criteria value not only professional growth that leads to publications and conference presentations, but also that which improves the community.

The problem with most review criteria is that they are separated and prioritized into three or four areas of professional responsibility. My university criteria for tenure are compartmentalized, in order of importance, into teaching, professional growth, and university and community service. Community service is not only held apart from the other areas of professional responsibility, it is accorded a mere one-sentence description stating that it should be given "consideration." Indeed, in my observations on campus, the very term *service* seems to signify something less than and apart from our primary professional responsibilities. On more than one occasion I have heard service referred to as simply a "box to check" by sitting on committees and attending meetings.

Criteria should be cast in a way that integrates the many elements of scholarship. Boyer (1990) has proposed as much through his description of the dynamic interplay among scholarship as discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Application is an

aspect of scholarship that is underrepresented in review criteria, yet, just as in teaching and learning, it is the key point of confluence for campus-community initiatives. Scholarship of application uses the knowledge gained from discovery to address real-world problems. Although scholarship of application is often perceived as less worthy than scholarship of discovery, it poses its own intellectual challenges. As Enos and Morton (2003) note, “expertise is easier to maintain when it is not challenged by application” (p. 35); or, as Wergin (2006) phrases it, application often reveals that academic “claims on ‘truth’ are rather fragile and incomplete” (p. 36). Applied research that integrates with community engagement can pose questions for the extension of theory (Rice, 1996) and add relevance to theory directly by addressing pressing and proximate problems (Harkavy, 1997).

In the months leading up to my third-year review, the academic dean and the Professional Standards Committee approved an addendum to my review criteria that better integrated campus-community initiatives into all aspects of scholarship. The addendum expands on the term “service” by outlining my responsibility to “build relationships with local and regional groups” so that the university community can better engage with the wider public on environmental issues. It provides for a balance between my community engagement and other aspects of scholarship, while allowing for documentation through self-analysis, letters from community members, and reviews of events and course materials. I found the openings for the recognition of community engagement in the university, departmental, and addendum review documents alike to be more than mere words—they were genuine reflections of university and departmental norms of review and advancement that were honored and given significant weight by my colleagues during the review process.

## **Building Reciprocal Relationships**

As important as it is to align campus-community initiatives with the campus side of this equation through integration with institutional values, leadership, and scholarship in the form of teaching and research, it is just as important to carefully cultivate relationships characterized by trust and respect with the community side of the equation. As is revealed by the way “service” is often depicted in university criteria for tenure and promotion, the campus approach to the community is too often cast as “benefits bestowed *on* the community *by* the university” (London, 2002, p. 10), a kind of noblesse oblige (Wergin, 2006, p. 31) characterized by

a “paternalistic, one-way approach to service, where one person or group has resources that they share with a person or group that they assume lacks resources” (Jacoby, 2003, p. 4). In contrast, university neighbors believe that the campus and community should be one domain with a shared identity (Enos & Morton, 2003, p. 23). Research on community perceptions of campus-community initiatives reveals that campus neighbors expect *partnerships* with higher education that carry a commitment to outcomes with mutual satisfaction and sustained involvement, as well as shared authority, responsibility, and resources (Leiderman, Furko, Zapf, & Goss, 2003; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). In short, community leaders expect campus-community initiatives to be reciprocal efforts to meet collective needs, rather than “something carried out on behalf of the community” (London, 2002, p. 4).

There are no shortcuts to cultivating the trust and respect required for reciprocal campus-community relationships. In many ways the field research I conducted for my dissertation in rural counties across the United States prepared me for the slow and steady work that is required to create such relationships. When I began this research I expected to augment my quantitative data with interviews gathered relatively quickly through phone conversations. I soon learned that in order to cultivate trust, I not only had to travel to each community and meet face-to-face with respondents, but I also had to build rapport by committing significant time and effort to learning about the community’s history and identity, and genuinely getting to know respondents apart from any research objective. I had to sincerely value the getting-acquainted process and the relationships with my respondents. This process involved everything from reading years of local newspapers on microfilm, to walking the fence with people and sharing meals. I spent far more time learning about the communities and getting to know the respondents than I did conducting the actual interviews (Sherman, 2005). A large part of this acquainting process between my respondents and me involved the development of shared understandings of our respective needs and goals. Just as I had needs and goals for research, they had needs and goals for the communication and dissemination of their stories.

Research on campus-community initiatives has demonstrated that much of the initial time and effort spent by campus and community actors should be devoted to identifying common goals based on the needs of all parties (Jacoby, 2003; London, 2002; Ramaley, 2000). If potential collaborators come to view each other as having conflicting agendas, all parties may come to feel exploited and the

initiative will fail for lack of trust and commitment (*Wergin, 2006, p. 26*). When President Thomas launched his campus-community initiative the year before I arrived on campus, he wrote an op-ed in the local paper explaining that the “first assignment” for campus and community members was “to listen to one another, to help each other address these issues in partnership, and to forge solutions together in good faith” (*2003, p. 1*). When I assumed my position, I was new to the university and new to the community. I translated the lessons learned from my field research by spending nearly a year and a half attending various community meetings and public events, as well as making appointments to have coffee with local environmental stakeholders, before I attempted to implement any significant campus-community events or programs.

When I did finally undertake major events and programs, I was confident that they would be implemented under goals shared by campus and community actors to meet identified needs of all involved in the partnership with shared resources. One local environmental group identified a long-standing goal of hosting community education classes on regional environmental issues and policy solutions. In order to accomplish this they needed the support of an educational institution as well as space and enhanced organizational capacity. This goal matched university needs, including the creation of a forum for students in environmental policy classes to engage with state political actors and share applied projects from coursework. The university provided space and organizational capacity, and the environmental group worked to create the community class sessions with other stakeholders. Both the university and the environmental group provided funds to implement the program. In another example, the city public works department identified a need to enhance its public outreach efforts on environmental sustainability issues just as the campus was undertaking a new sustainability program. The campus was able to partner with the city on a grant that funded a series of events applying community-based social marketing to city and campus sustainability objectives.

Often the university can also serve as a community convener. Two community needs emerged repeatedly from my listening sessions with environmental stakeholders: more coordinated environmental education and a comprehensive management plan for urban green spaces. Once I identified these needs with community partners, the university could convene work on these issues with a countywide leadership summit on environmental education and a citywide partnership for the restoration of urban green spaces.

These two efforts provided opportunities for students to match curricular and cocurricular learning with “real-time” decision-making on environmental issues.

Each program identified above was carried out by a carefully orchestrated partnership of campus and community actors who ensured that all involved had something to give and something to gain from the interaction. As Grobe (1990) writes, one way to identify a partnership is to ask who benefits. “If the answer is not ‘all parties,’ the arrangement is not a true partnership” (p. 6). Another way to think of this is that “both the server and those served teach, and both learn” (Kendall, 1990, p. 22) or that all parties in a relationship recognize the “common capacity to shape one another in profound ways” (Enos & Morton, 2003, p. 20). These programs were the result of reciprocal relationships, and even the funding responsibilities were shared by both campus and community members of the partnerships.

## **Institutionalizing Partnerships**

If establishing the reciprocal relationships required for true campus-community partnerships is time consuming and difficult, sustaining them is even more difficult. One persistent expectation on the part of community actors is consistency in the university’s involvement with initiatives over time. This is also one of the most difficult expectations for campus members to fulfill. Some of the most troublesome incongruities between community and campus needs involve timelines. Community needs are not circumscribed by the academic calendar and may have their own associated time pressures. Campus-community initiatives that involve integration with teaching and learning must face the reality that coursework begins and ends within a very narrow window of time, and large portions of the student population may leave the campus community altogether for several months a year. Faculty research also follows an ebb and flow that is influenced by the academic calendar. Finally, individuals working in the community, whether professionally or as volunteers, also experience fluctuations in their ability to commit to projects over time. I have found three ways to improve the continuity of campus-community initiatives and work toward sustained partnerships.

First, initiatives that are integrated with coursework can be designed so that student work builds from one course offering to another. In this way the project extends beyond a semester or academic year and comes to reflect and reinforce the nature of

campus-community partnerships as “accretions that are layered over time” (*Enos & Morton, 2003, p. 26*). I have had success with such initiatives both by committing a series of courses to a single ongoing project and by committing a series of course offerings to work at a single place with a defined set of community partners. In each case, the knowledge that all contributions are serving more than just an immediate end and are foundations for ongoing work strengthens relationships with the community partners and creates a sense of satisfaction and meaning for students. Some alumni have even checked back to see how a project they had worked on was developing, and others have taken on professional roles with their class projects after graduation.

The second way I have worked to build continuity into campus-community initiatives is to incubate initiatives until they have enough support to stand on their own or find support with another existing institutional arrangement. The university does not have to, and probably should not, permanently own (even in partnership) each initiative it helps orchestrate. If part of the purpose of campus-community initiatives is to build the capacity of community stakeholders, then often it is appropriate for initial university support to yield to independence. This can be facilitated in many ways. The partnership for the restoration of urban green space that was formed over the course of 3 years with university support ultimately formed its own organizational infrastructure and found financial support through a combination of city and nonprofit sources. The sustainability initiative between the university and the city public works department became integrated into a range of campus and city departments. The environmental education leadership summit identified a cadre of leaders to form an advisory committee housed in the county government structure. In each case, the university provided seed resources and acted as an incubator for the initiative until it could ensure continuity of implementation through some other permanent institutional arrangement.

Finally, after engaging in a dizzying array of campus-community initiatives, each with its own set of actors, concerns, events, and timelines, it became clear to me that the university needed an institutional structure to support community engagement. Originally, the external grant that funded my position and my responsibilities was defined exclusively in terms of programs and events. This extended to the way the grant budget was constructed and the regular assessments were conducted, leading to an unmanageable dynamic in which financial support was available only for programs and events, each of which brought with it a greater and

greater need for regularized institutional support. Anyone who has undertaken this kind of work has learned that both campus and community partners can quickly become exhausted by programs and events (*Ramaley, 2000*). Fortunately, my grantor enabled a restructuring that provided staff for the creation of an institutional center to support members of the campus and wider communities working on issues of regional environmental significance. The importance of institutionalization is well documented in the literature on community engagement (*Bringle & Hatcher, 2000*) as a way to smooth the evolution of campus and community participants over time and to provide support and a regular point of contact. My hope is that the newly created hub for environmental engagement will ensure that our campus-community initiatives are more than a series of events and programs.

## Conclusion

One thing I did confess when I had my moment on the podium before the faculty was that the integration I pursued between campus-community initiatives and my other professional responsibilities was initially done out of necessity. I described my first 2 years on the job as “partnering to survive.” It was clear to me that I could not honor either the community engagement or academic responsibilities of my job if I treated them separately. I communicated this problem to an external review committee that interviewed me just before I started my job. They asked me how I, as a junior faculty member, would balance new teaching responsibilities, professional growth, service to campus, and the additional responsibilities of building bridges to the wider community with new campus-community engagement initiatives. I answered that I could achieve balance only if the campus-community initiatives were not “additional responsibilities,” but instead overlapping elements with the rest of my scholarly responsibilities. Just as my individual professional survival necessitated such integration, so too does the vitality of the initiatives themselves. As *Ramaley (2000)* argues, “an ideal partnership matches up the academic strengths and goals of the university with the assets and interests of the community” (p. 240). Instead of casting community engagement as an effort to create something new, advocates are better served by arguing that community engagement enriches what higher education already strives to accomplish. As a junior faculty member I have found that campus-community initiatives work best when they subscribe to the values already espoused by the university, serve the needs of university leadership, and integrate with fac-



ulty teaching and research through the disciplines. However, just as campus needs must be met in this way, so too must community needs be met through the careful cultivation of reciprocal relationships and the support of an enduring institutional presence. Campus-community initiatives should be more than a loose collection of service events and programs. Seeking a collective term for such initiatives, my university ran through a long progression of options, including “education for community improvement,” “community service,” “service-learning,” “community engagement,” and “civic engagement,” before finally settling on “civic scholarship”—a label that properly identifies the integration of campus-community initiatives conducted in partnership with the core purpose of higher education.

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## **Landlabs: An Integrated Approach to Creating Agricultural Enterprises That Meet the Triple Bottom Line**

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### **Abstract**

Global demand is increasing for food, feed, and fiber; for additional agricultural outputs, such as biofuels; and for ecosystem services, such as clean water and outdoor recreation. In response, new agricultural enterprises are needed that produce more outputs from existing lands while meeting the “triple bottom line” of high performance in economic, environmental, and social terms. Establishing such enterprises requires coordination and development within three critical domains: landscape configurations (i.e., types and arrangements of land uses), supply/value chains (i.e., processing and utilization), and policy and governance. In this essay, we describe our efforts, as land-grant university scientists, to support coordinated innovation and enterprise development in integrated place-based institutions, which we term landlabs. We describe our experiences in three prototyping efforts and outline key features of landlabs that are emerging from these efforts. Land-grant universities have a central and crucial role to play in organizing and operating landlabs.

### **Introduction**

U.S. agriculture has tremendous assets and capacities. It also faces major challenges, including rising demand for commodities and other ecosystem services in the face of increasing climate variation, energy and resource scarcity, diet-related public health issues, and food distribution problems. Meeting these challenges will require substantial innovation and development (*Jordan et al., 2007; Reganold et al., 2011*), creating, in turn, new economic opportunities for farmers, landowners, rural communities, and commercial enterprises on many scales (*Defries et al., 2012*).

Here we outline a vision for addressing major agricultural challenges by pursuing these opportunities. The U.S. agricultural research and development (R&D) system is addressing these challenges and opportunities on many fronts, but the need remains for certain crucial capacities and integration among them. This is par-

ticularly true for those capacities related to systemic change in agricultural production and postproduction systems (Reganold et al., 2011). To provide these capacities and thereby accelerate the emergence of new agricultural enterprises that meet new challenges by seizing new economic opportunities, we argue that new integrative institutions are needed, which we term landlabs. In this essay, we discuss the nature of landlabs, which serve as active incubators for coordinating technological, economic, and policy innovations in enterprise development, and thereby reduce the economic and environmental risks and uncertainties faced by farmers, entrepreneurs, and public and private investors. We argue that land-grant universities must play a central role in organizing the multisector public engagement that is essential to landlabs.

Our work on landlabs is inspired by a major paradigm shift that we perceive among private, governmental, NGO, and research sectors concerned with the agriculture-environment nexus. In our view, these sectors are shifting from a problem-focused discourse on biophysical resource conditions per se and their causes (e.g., coastal hypoxia), to a broader opportunity-focused perspective (DeFries et al., 2012), emphasizing total agroecosystem productivity and capturing value from undervalued resources, such as water and nutrients that are released from current agroecosystems. This shift in perspective appears to be creating new pathways to land use and management changes that can produce significant progress on complex biophysical challenges such as coastal hypoxia while also producing new commodities and bioproducts. Accordingly, participants in a landlab emphasize opportunity- and solution-based approaches (DeFries et al., 2012; Kristjanson et al., 2009) focusing on sustainable enterprise development projects that integrate communication, innovation, and collaborative action by multiple social sectors. Here we present the rationale and modus operandi for landlabs, as these have emerged from our prototyping efforts over the past decade in three U.S. states, and discuss implications for the role of land-grant universities in the development of new agricultural enterprises that can meet societal expectations for performance in economic, environmental, and social terms.

## **Background and Context**

Production of more bioenergy, bioproducts, and marketable ecosystem services—while also increasing the food/feed production that is the backbone of our current agriculture—offers major new growth opportunities in the agricultural bioeconomy. Recent scenario analyses suggest that such broad and substantial increases

in total productivity are indeed possible (Dale, Bals, Kim, & Eranki, 2010; Valentine et al., 2012) and might strongly contribute to meeting the most profound challenges facing agriculture in the decades to come (Foley et al., 2011). Moreover, society is increasingly aware of and interested in this expanded basket of goods and services from agriculture—and willing to pay for it—as illustrated by the growth of agro-environmental programs in the United States (Batie, 2009). Consequently, new economic opportunities will arise for producers, landowners, processors, agricultural entrepreneurs, and rural communities.

What might this new agricultural bioeconomy be based upon? Conventionally produced commodity products will remain important; however, emerging forms of agriculture and land use are bringing about a wide range of new agricultural enterprises. These enterprises produce food, renewable energy, and biomaterials, as well as other ecosystem services such as pollination, water purification, and opportunities for agrotourism. New production systems for these goods and services involve a wide range of crops and managed plant communities, including herbaceous and woody perennial crops (Glover et al., 2010), winter-annual and cover crops, and certain forms of animal agriculture, such as rotational grazing (Winsten, Kerchner, Richardson, Lichau, & Hyman 2010). Emerging evidence suggests that these new production systems can increase both efficiency of agricultural resource use and total output of food, renewable energy, bioproducts, and ecosystem services from agricultural landscapes (Dale et al., 2010; Gopalakrishnan et al., 2009). Moreover, such systems may also increase the resilience of production in the face of climate variability and market fluctuation (Jordan & Warner, 2010; Schulte, Liebman, Asbjornsen, & Crow, 2006).

This new agricultural bioeconomy appears to offer much to society, but its emergence will require considerable systemic change, and many barriers stand in the way of such change in U.S. agriculture (President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2012; Reganold et al., 2011). We propose that these barriers can be substantially lowered by focusing on holistic development of new agricultural enterprises that are needed to realize the potential of the new agricultural bioeconomy. Holistic development entails restructuring of production systems on agricultural landscapes, and also encompasses reorganization of infrastructure for harvesting, transport and storage; associated supply, value and marketing chains; and political and institutional support. These elements of new agricultural enterprises must be acceptable to multiple stakeholders, readily adoptable by agricultural producers and

other economic actors, and appealing to rural communities and the institutions that support them. We believe that the United States can meet these needs by developing a greater capacity for agricultural innovation that creates viable new agricultural enterprises via coordinated innovation that encompasses the full range of components previously noted. To do so, the United States should complement the strengths of current agricultural R&D systems with new approaches that can more effectively coordinate innovation and change (*President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2012; Reganold et al., 2011*). To do so, an intensified focus on processes of innovation is necessary.

Our view of innovation parallels that of Leeuwis and Aarts (2011), who characterized agricultural innovations as effective combinations of three elements: new technologies, new knowledge systems and modes of thinking, and new forms of social and economic organization. More specifically, innovation in agricultural land use/land cover (LULC) configurations is needed to identify broadly supported landscapes that increase total production of food, renewable energy, biomaterials, and other ecosystem services across agricultural landscapes via new economies of landscape configuration (*Dale et al., 2010; Gottfried, Wear, & Lee, 1996; Jordan et al., 2011; Scheffran & BenDor, 2009; Wilson, 2007*). Innovation is also needed in supply and value chains for new forms of biomass and other biomaterials. Such innovation adds value to new technologies by linking these into supply chains that perform acceptably according to economic, environmental, and social criteria. Innovation is needed in policies as well, including both incentives and regulations; these create a complex environment that bioeconomic development must navigate and effectively mobilize (*Becker, Moseley, & Lee, 2011*).

To weave these forms of innovation into effective combinations, we argue that contributions are needed from four essential societal sectors: research/knowledge institutions, private enterprise, civil society, and government. Resources and capacities from each must be pooled to create an integrated system of technologies, knowledge and modes of thinking, social and economic organizations, and implementation strategies (*Armitage et al., 2009; Atwell, Schulte, & Westphal, 2010; Bammer, 2008*). Use of collaborative approaches in pilot innovation activities has led to transformational change in other arenas, such as clinical practice and business management in medical and information technology fields, respectively (*e.g., Troy, Carson, Vanderbeek, & Hutton, 2007*), providing models of collaborative innovation for systemic change.



## Landlabs

We have argued that sustainable agricultural innovation depends on linking and leveraging a wide range of public and private resources to design robust agricultural enterprise systems that are well-adapted to the biophysical and social conditions of particular regions. We further contend that enterprise development, as outlined above, requires an implementation-focused approach. At a certain point, a pilot-scale version of new production systems and supply chains must be created in a particular place, new policies applied, and results evaluated. It follows that place-based institutions are needed to create and evaluate the performance of these prototypic enterprises in economic, environmental, and social terms. The essential functions of these institutions, then, are to couple multiple innovation processes across the four key sectors noted, implement the resultant enterprises on pilot scales, evaluate the results, and continue innovation and development as needed to adapt and expand the enterprises to full commercial scale.

We term these place-based institutions landlabs. By linking and leveraging resources from many sectors and stakeholder groups to support and coordinate the innovation processes outlined above, we propose that landlabs can play a pivotal role in transformative change in U.S. agriculture, as called for by Reganold et al. (2011). Landlabs are a form of boundary organization, an institutional form that has emerged in a wide range of arenas in which collective action among multiple social sectors has been important to progress on complex public problems (Cutts, White, & Kinzig, 2011; Franks, 2010). Boundary organizations serve to convene multiple sectors, support mutual learning, and, most important, promote the development and implementation of innovative social and economic organization needed to enable complementary technical innovation (Franks, 2010).

As boundary organizations, landlabs differ substantially in orientation and purpose from certain related institutions, such as long-term ecological research stations (LTERs; Hobbie, Carpenter, Grimm, Gosz, & Seastedt, 2003) and long-term agricultural research (LTAR; Robertson et al., 2008) sites. These institutions provide long-term “observatories” that expand the spatial and temporal horizons of research programs to address integrative questions about the biophysical and social dynamics of their focal systems. Landlabs, in contrast, have a more focused purpose: coordinated and broadly supported innovation that creates new commercial agricultural enterprises that meet high standards for economic, environmental, and social performance. The creation of new and sustainable eco-

nomic opportunities for farmers, landowners, and rural communities is the central purpose of landlabs. Consequently, their agenda is much less science-centric than is the case for LTERs and LTARs, traditional agricultural research stations, and much on-farm and farming-systems research. Rather, science is a key resource for action in a landlab-based process of commercialization via development and coordination of new or realigned production systems, supply/value chains, and policies. In this regard, landlabs are inspired by a major paradigm shift about the agriculture-environment nexus that we perceive among private, governmental, NGO, and research sectors: a shift from observation-based approaches toward proactive creation of new opportunities and solutions (DeFries *et al.*, 2012; Kristjanson *et al.*, 2009).

### Modus Operandi: What Goes On in a Landlab

In essence, landlabs serve to identify technical, economic, environmental, and policy components of new agricultural enterprise systems that can create value for a wide range of stakeholders. These components must be identified to limit uncertainties and risks faced by farmers, landowners, and public and private investors. Consequently, a critical function of landlabs is a “de-risking” process that will enable stakeholders and potential investors to move forward in a coordinated fashion to explore commercialization pathways. Landlabs achieve this by integrating a wide range of knowledge sources to create and share information critical to identifying the goods and services created by new enterprises, the potential values of these for various stakeholders, and prospective returns on investments for development of particular enterprises (Figure 1).

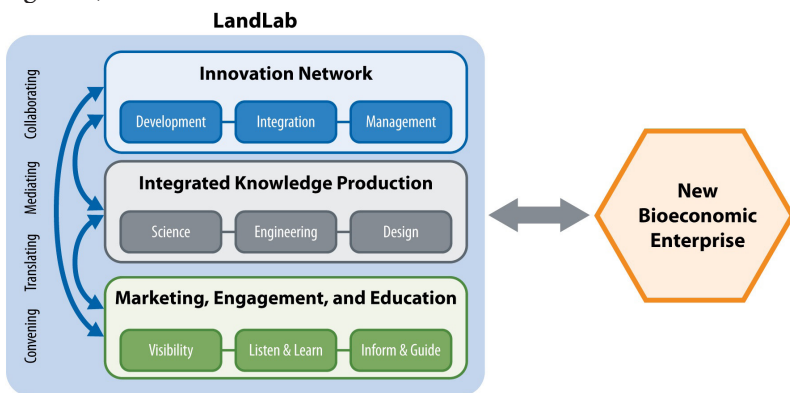


Figure 1. Key features of a landlab, showing interconnections among innovation, knowledge production, and engagement and resulting production of new bioeconomic enterprises.

Such information is critically needed to attract investment from a wide range of public and private sources. For example, a well recognized challenge to biomass-based agricultural bioenergy production is the “chicken and egg” barrier (USDA, 2010), which occurs when investors in conversion technologies and distribution infrastructure are demotivated by lack of biomass supply, and biomass producers are unwilling to invest in new crops and new production systems until there is sufficient demand. By identifying sites for biomass production, cost-effective infrastructure for transport and handling, and potential for production of other valuable goods and services in agricultural landscapes that are producing biomass crops, landlabs can surmount this barrier by reducing uncertainty and enabling risk-sharing across a range of stakeholders. Landlabs thus can play a pivotal role in limiting risk and uncertainty in agricultural development for potential investors, producers, and society at large. We are developing the landlab approach to agricultural innovation in three ongoing prototypes in the upper Midwest.

## Three Landlab Case Studies

### The Iowa landlab.

This effort revolves around an emerging conservation practice for intensive annual crop production systems called prairie strips. These are bands of native grassland vegetation situated along contours or at the bottom of small watersheds in fields of annual field crops (Helmert *et al.*, 2012). Prairie strips have garnered widespread interest from both production-centered and conservation-centered organizations in Iowa because they enable farmers to efficiently meet multiple conservation goals through easy and flexible incorporation into existing farming systems (Helmert *et al.*, 2012; MacDonald, 2012). These attributes of prairie strips appeal to the state’s strong agricultural constituency, address the substantial concerns for water quality that the majority of Iowans hold (Arbuckle & Tyndall, 2013), and are valued by groups concerned with biodiversity. Notably, the notion of prairie strips appears to have strongly promoted social learning regarding shared interests and opportunities among a wide range of stakeholder groups (Grudens-Schuck & Larsen, 2012). We believe that two landlab activities have been key to these developments: establishment of a credible prairie strips R&D site, and the formation of a broad network of colearners.

The R&D site is called STRIPS (Strategic Trials of Row crops Integrated with Prairie Strips); it is located at Neal Smith National

Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Jasper County, Iowa. This site provides data on the dynamic characteristics and functions of prairie strips. STRIPS is run by a group of scientists from Iowa State University, USDA Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service, based on their shared interest in developing a program to address Iowa's persistent water-quality problems in a cost-effective manner. STRIPS research began in 2006, but team and knowledge building began 4 years earlier in workshops intended to organize an interdisciplinary scientific team.

These workshops engaged participants in systems thinking with a focus toward potential levers for change within the Corn Belt agricultural system. Disciplines engaged spanned agronomy, soil science, ecology, economics, education studies, forestry, hydrology, and philosophy, among others. The STRIPS site emerged from these sessions. It employs a robust long-term experimental design, obtains performance measures of interest to a wide range of stakeholders, and is supported by 10-year commitments from project partners. Its location near the state capital affords easy access by organizations active in the state's agri-environmental policy arena. These features appear to be the basis of STRIPS's credibility and value for shared learning among a wide range of stakeholders.

The landlab approach depends on engagement among private enterprise and NGOs in addition to the research institution and government agencies that established the Iowa Landlab. Accordingly, after establishing the STRIPS site, scientific team members sought to broaden the network of colearners by engaging individuals from production-oriented and environment-oriented NGOs active in Iowa. Participating organizations and individuals formed a project stakeholder committee, initially intended for discussion of scientific matters related to the STRIPS experiment. Findings from this experiment have been extensively interpreted and discussed through the social learning of the project stakeholder committee, which has subsequently communicated these findings and their implications for a wide range of stakeholders (e.g., *Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture*, 2011). The project committee has also been active in seeking support for broader implementation.

Since 2006, the project committee has, however, quickly matured to become a multi-stakeholder arena that enables information sharing and cross-organizational learning among members, including researchers, NGOs, private enterprise, and government agencies. Since the establishment of the STRIPS site in 2006, individuals from 26 organizations—spanning state and federal govern-

ment and nongovernmental organizations—have participated in landlab meetings. Participants offer many reasons for engagement, such as “being able to get up-to-date research information” and “being involved with helping to expand the efforts.” Project committee members have also brought resources beyond knowledge to the project, including funding and connections that have helped scientific members reach their goals of longevity and meaningful impact. Now, 10 years after the initial scientific team discussions, prairie strips are being adopted as a conservation practice by private farmers and institutions across Iowa, and appear to be a powerful leverage point for change.

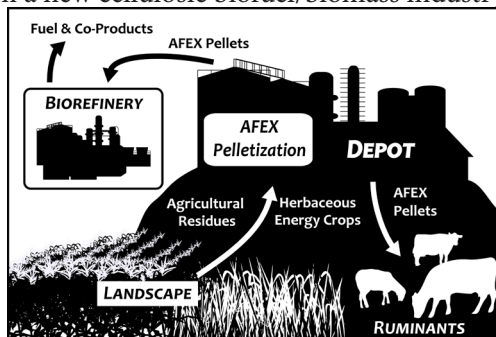
Recently, the Iowa Landlab has begun to focus on enterprise development related to prairie strips via bioenergy development R&D as an outgrowth of STRIPS. In particular, the landlab’s Comparison of Biofuel Systems (COBS) project is comparing fertilized and unfertilized reconstructed prairie to corn systems in terms of its ability to sustainably provide biomass and ecosystems services (*Liebman, Helmers, Schulte, & Chase, 2013*). Results from the STRIPS experimental site suggest that prairie strips are able to produce an average of 7.2 Mg/ha/year of biomass, a yield comparable to switch-grass monocultures, which are widely being touted as the next bioenergy crop for the region (*McLaughlin & Kszos, 2005*). The team has also been encouraged to engage in “institutional change” by a major funder. An initial step in this arena has included working with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to revise existing standards to allow participating farmers to receive higher levels of federal cost-share dollars for implementing prairie strips according to the team’s design. We have also begun engaging partners to develop a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme to link buyers of ecosystem services to farmers using prairie strips to provide services, an effort that will require the development of new financial practices and an organization to manage them in addition to the land management and monitoring practices already in play.

### **The Minnesota Landlab.**

Working in the Middle Minnesota Basin in south central Minnesota, a consortium of University of Minnesota researchers, businesses ranging from farmers to large corporations, NGOs, and government agencies is focusing on the development of a new agricultural enterprise that could be broadly applicable in U.S. agriculture. The enterprise is a production and supply system that will produce a stable and reliable source of lignocellulosic biomass to a pilot biorefinery, and will do so in a manner meeting high

performance standards in economic, environmental, and social terms. Although lignocellulosic biomass is a crucial raw material for large-scale production of biofuels, biopower, and bioproducts, it has serious disadvantages as an industrial feedstock, such as bulk, heterogeneity, instability, and variability. Poor development of production capacity and end-use markets creates additional barriers to enterprise development. However, production of lignocellulosic biomass from annual and perennial sources provides a major opportunity to increase total production of both high-value commodities and other ecosystem services from agricultural landscapes (Dale et al., 2010).

To realize the potential of such biomass for enterprise development, we are developing a new commercialization pathway for lignocellulosic biomass, entailing a network of biomass processing depots—termed AFEX™ depots—in which biomass grown nearby is pretreated using the ammonia fiber expansion, or AFEX, process. AFEX produces a stable, inert, dense pellet product from a wide variety of annual and perennial biomass sources, and adds considerable value by increasing the proportion of fermentable and digestible materials in the biomass (Balan, Bals, Chundawat, Marshall, & Dale, 2010). For this reason, AFEX-treated material can be used as high-quality ruminant animal feed (Bals, Murnen, Allen, & Dale, 2010; Weimer, Mertens, Ponnampalam, Severin, & Dale, 2003) as well as a biorefinery feedstock (Figure 2). Therefore, existing markets for animal feed can incentivize farmers to produce biomass in advance of strong demand for cellulosic feedstocks for biorefining. Such production will create a reliable source of these feedstocks, thereby substantially reducing risk in developing biorefineries and supply-chain infrastructure. Finally, AFEX depots using local biomass sources could feasibly be owned by producer co-ops, increasing opportunities for farmers, landowners, and rural communities to benefit from a new cellulosic biofuel/biomass industry.



**Figure 2.** AFEX processing depot in a feed/fuelshed setting, illustrating production of herbaceous biomass feedstocks from a range of sources and production of AFEX biomass pellets for multiple markets and recycling of mineral ash back to production agroecosystems.

AFEX depots provide a novel and promising commercialization pathway for bioenergy systems. This pathway would utilize a feed/fuelshed area of about 500 square kilometers, assuming a collection radius of about 13 kilometers around an AFEX depot. Assuming a conservative biomass yield of 6 Mg/ha/year and a processing capacity of 100 Mg per day, roughly 10% of the fuelshed area would be required to supply biomass to the depot. The depot thus creates a “market pull” for biomass production from about 50 square kilometers within the fuelshed area. Many lines of evidence (*Schulte et al., 2006*) suggest that if such an area of biomass production is strategically located in critical landscape areas of the fuelshed, a wide variety of goods and services can be produced in addition to cellulosic biomass. Such a fuelshed can be justly termed multifunctional, because when strategically located, perennial and certain annual biomass crops can improve soil and water conservation, store carbon, enhance biodiversity, and improve hunting, fishing, recreation, and ecotourism opportunities. Much evidence thus suggests that a wide range of stakeholders could benefit substantially from AFEX depots situated in multifunctional fuelsheds.

To explore the potential of AFEX depots in multifunctional fuelsheds as a bioeconomic enterprise, the Minnesota Landlab is conducting a de-risking process that will enable a wide range of stakeholders and potential investors to move forward in a coordinated fashion to explore commercialization of AFEX depots in multifunctional fuelsheds. Our de-risking process is engaging the full range of landlab participants to identify and reduce uncertainties and risks related to the depots and the fuelshed landscape that will support them. To do so, we are using a spatial decision support tool (DST) that integrates a range of spatial models to design the fuelshed landscape and the supply-chain logistics of the depot (*Jordan et al., 2011*). The DST helps multiple stakeholders make design decisions by estimating economic and environmental performance metrics for various choices of site-specific feedstock production and management systems; harvest, transportation, and storage options; and depot locations and capacities. We will use outputs from this design effort to identify and analyze implementation-relevant policies, thereby addressing additional sources of uncertainty and risk. Our effort is providing the basis for business plans detailing specific value propositions and returns on investment needed to attract investment in depots and fuelsheds from a wide range of public and private sources. Our short-term goal is to gain funding within 3 years for a commercial-scale (100 Mg/day) depot/multifunctional fuelshed.

## **The Wisconsin Landlab.**

This effort, like those previously described, is motivated by widespread interest in perennial herbaceous biomass crops that can produce both renewable energy and resource conservation benefits, and the need to better understand the economic, environmental, and social performance of enterprises based on these crops in particular settings and contexts. Thus, in 2011, the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Leopold Wetland Management District began a landlab for fostering bioenergy enterprise development in southern Wisconsin. The landlab functions as a “think- and do-tank” that aims to reduce the time, financial resources, and expertise required to gain entry into these enterprises.

In particular, the Wisconsin Landlab was initiated to explore bioenergy enterprise development as a systemic solution to an ongoing wetland management challenge. The Leopold District manages more than 13,000 acres of waterfowl production areas (WPAs) in 17 Wisconsin counties and is continually adding new properties and restoring additional habitat acreage. Currently, controlled burning is used to manage these grassland habitats. However, the district is unable to apply burning at the scale needed to maintain WPA habitats in a healthy condition. Therefore, the landlab partnership is exploring biomass collection as a management method that can maintain habitat value and provide a renewable bioenergy feedstock.

The landlab has established a harvesting experiment to build and test basic components of a model bioenergy enterprise, for which experimental harvests are occurring on six WPAs in five counties. A variety of agricultural, NGO, and commercial/industrial partners are participating in harvest, handling, and use of approximately 1,100 tons of mixed grass biomass annually. A group of UW researchers are evaluating the effects of biomass collection on habitat management goals and other ecosystem service benefits, the economic and technical suitability of the biomass for bioenergy supply and value chains, and potential social and economic effects of this new enterprise system. These experimental harvests will continue, providing long-term educational and research opportunities. Partners in the design and implementation of these experiments and other initial activities include federal agency conservation planners and land managers; agricultural producers; nonprofit organizations; commercial agribusiness; and research and development personnel from academia and industry. These partners have



contributed broadly to project design and implementation, and we observe a shared enthusiasm for the harvesting experiment.

The Wisconsin Landlab is also pursuing three concurrent efforts to complement the harvesting experiment: expansion of grass acres; design and installation of a commercial-scale biomass conversion facility; and seeking end-user commitments (i.e., markets). Our agribusiness partner is leading in the search for opportunities to produce dedicated biomass on private lands adjacent to or near WPAs, and organizing grass brokering among various end users to limit competition among new and existing uses of grass materials. A task force has been formed to identify a project area for an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility to utilize abundant nearby livestock wastes (dairy manure) in combination with locally sourced grass biomass. Our industrial partner, an alternative energy subsidiary of a global industrial corporation based in the Midwest, is leading the task force. With our industrial partner we are also identifying potential end users for natural gas produced at the AD facility. We have engaged nonprofit and consultancy partners to identify and leverage additional enabling technologies, policies, and services, including new rules in Wisconsin regarding the discharge of phosphorus. Under the new rules, city and county municipal wastewater treatment facilities are statutorily accountable to reduce phosphorus discharges. These new laws permit the expenditure of funds on land uses upstream, such as grassing of waterways and field margins on private lands, thus potentially serving dual purposes of yield (i.e., biomass harvest) and nutrient uptake/interception.

Over the coming decade, the Wisconsin Landlab aims to produce a market-driven, self-sustaining, commercially viable bioenergy system in southern Wisconsin. This enterprise system will increase total agricultural output and production options for farmers in the study area, with concomitant income improvements (e.g., income security). We expect that a measureable increase in acres in perennial mixed grasses will lead to measureable improvement in surface water quality in the study area, particularly at the scale of secondary and tertiary streams. Future work is likely to address key social and biophysical attributes of such an energy system, including life-cycle analysis and connections with community-based renewable energy initiatives.

## Reflections on Case Studies and Implications for Land-Grant Universities

Landlabs are boundary organizations for organizing collective action on complex challenges in agricultural development by identifying and systematically pursuing new opportunities linked to value capture, efficiency in resource use, and coordinated innovation. Landlabs seek to frame these challenges and opportunities in terms that effectively engage with shared stakeholder perceptions about agriculture, water, energy, and economic development. In our experiences, these efforts depend on a set of key processes that includes organization and maintenance of horizontal and vertical networks (Ison, Roling, & Watson, 2007), practice of certain communicative activities (Leeuwis & Aarts 2011), and practice of design and other knowledge production that emphasizes the integration of multiple knowledge sources and the provision of quality control from an extended peer community (Nassauer & Opdam, 2008). In Table 1 and below, we reflect critically on our experiences in the case studies, with focus on these key processes.

**Table 1. Key Features of Iowa (IA), Minnesota (MN), and Wisconsin(WI) pilot landlabs**

Case	Theme for Enterprise Development	Organization	Integrative Knowledge Production	Marketing Engagement & Education
IA	Improving the prosperity of Iowa farms and agricultural landscapes by improving their functioning and resilience, and enabling payment for ecosystem services.	Project composed of interdisciplinary science team and a stakeholder team broadly representing agri-environmental interests in state.	Researchers from biophysical (agronomy, ecology, entomology, hydrology, and soil science) and social (economics, education, English, sociology) disciplines working together with periodic input from stakeholder team.	Stakeholder team helps science team frame research findings and disseminate them through communication networks.
MN	Establishing a production and supply system to produce a stable and reliable source of value-added lignocellulosic biomass for animal feed and a pilot biorefinery.	Multistakeholder group of place-based private enterprise, researchers, government agencies, NGOs, and farmers; group shares common interest in enterprise development.	Multistakeholder design and planning processes guided by decision support from environmental, technological, economic, and logistical analysis.	Engaging private enterprise, government, NGOs, and researchers in dialogue about enterprise development and the landlab model.
WI	Forcing the conservation-economy nexus via production of dedicated perennial crops and conservation-land management actions in new bioproduct and bioenergy systems.	Transdisciplinary collaboration, including researchers from multiple disciplines, federal agency personnel, local producers, local and regional agribusiness, a global engineering firm, and NGOs.	Researchers from multiple disciplines, conservation managers, engineers, farmers, speciality harvesters, biomass processors, and business executives working together, guided by reflective processes and periodic external review.	Working with groups and organizations to develop and distribute outreach materials and media; engaging researchers and academic administration in dialogue.

## **Organization of cross-sector networks.**

Each of the landlabs has proceeded through an organizing phase of 5–10 years, during which extensive and repeated efforts were made to establish cross-sector connections that variously included researchers, NGOs, government, and private enterprise. In all three cases, these efforts were started and sustained by a small group of land-grant college of agriculture (LGCOA) researchers and key external partners. These small organizing groups had disciplinary knowledge that was the basis of their respective visions for enterprise development, and an inclination to span boundaries between sectors. These organizers engaged with each other and with members of government and private enterprise sectors in a prolonged period of probing for opportunities to work together on shared concerns and interests. These cross-sector connections were costly to establish and maintain. Crucially, in all cases, there were funding streams that supported the activities of this organizing phase, including dialogue, collaborative learning, and conflict resolution. In some cases, funders have appreciated the importance of supporting this organizing work. This funding has provided the organizing groups with continual institutional support (e.g., support has been provided by the Green Lands Blue Waters project, <http://www.greenlandsbluewaters.org>). Other funding has supported more conventional research programs, but these have emphasized interdisciplinary approaches and reciprocal engagement with other sectors. These small organizing groups have demonstrated a capacity for learning and adaptation; they have thus been able to shift to new framings of the opportunity situation, and have withstood changes in membership.

In each case, we observe that network formation has been strongly facilitated by the emergence of an intermediary object (Steyaert *et al.*, 2007). Intermediary objects (IOs) are defined as conceptual entities (e.g., models, maps, or management strategies) that recognize the interests of—and are therefore significant to—multiple social sectors. For example, the management strategy of capturing value from undervalued resources (e.g., commodity production using water and nutrients that are released from current agroecosystems; Gopalakrishnan *et al.*, 2009) is a high-level IO that is strongly appealing to both agricultural and environmental NGOs, in our experience. An effective IO will motivate such sectors to engage in negotiations, collaborative learning, and collective action that address the situation surrounding the IO. We believe that in each case, the emergence of IOs has enabled new cross-sector understandings of opportunities for novel agricultural enterprises

that capitalize on perennial-based cropping systems. In the Iowa case, the IO is the concept of prairie strips and the STRIPS experiment. In Minnesota, AFEX depots and their associated fuelsheds are functioning as an IO, and in Wisconsin, the notion of harvestable zones in wildlife management areas provides this function. In the Minnesota Landlab, the emergence of an IO appears to have ended a long latent period that began in about 2003, when a private enterprise announced plans to develop a 20 kW bioenergy facility that would use a range of biomass feedstocks. This move excited wide interest initially, but did not stimulate much enterprise development; in our view, many stakeholders were highly uncertain about economic and environmental opportunities related to the new bioenergy facility. In contrast, the emergence of a new IO in the form of the AFEX depot/fuelshed concept appears to be far more attractive. In particular, this IO appears to offer a more certain “value proposition” to many stakeholders and has attracted much stronger interest across sectors. In the Iowa case, prairie strips function as an IO and have garnered widespread support from both production-centered and conservation-centered organizations within the state, some of which have been fairly entrenched in their approach. Prairie strips fulfill the role because they provide multiple benefits to multiple, diverse stakeholder groups, as shown by the STRIPS research site. Similarly, in Wisconsin, WPAs have served as IOs, providing a tangible challenge around which production-centered and conservation-centered organizations have collaborated to find workable, mutually beneficial solutions via interdependent learning and action.

### **Communicative activities.**

As argued by Leeuwis and Aarts (2011), certain forms of communication are basic to coordinated innovation. Within social networks, management of conflict and tensions occurs, as does learning. Such communicative activities are certainly ongoing in each case, in several different forms.

First, we are using new tools from ecological economics, spatial science, collaborative environmental planning, and other disciplines to help multistakeholder groups engage in *systemic learning*. By this term, we mean development of a shared understanding of the economic, environmental, and social performance of an agricultural enterprise, viewed systemically across multiple dimensions of performance and across geographic and time scales (Collins et al., 2011; Sieber, Zander, Verborg, & Van Ittersum, 2010). For example, a set of integrative spatial decision support models is emerging to

address biophysical and social uncertainties; these models map and project how production and other ecosystem services of agriculture are distributed across multiple relevant spatial scales and how social and economic systems respond to these biophysical signals (e.g., Bryan, Raymond, Crossman, & King, 2011). Such models enable quantification and visualization of trade-offs and synergies that can be expected from a given agricultural system, which in turn enable concrete discussion of scenarios for accommodating multiple stakeholder interests in a redesigned agricultural system (De Groot, Alkemade, Braat, Hein, & Willemsen, 2010). Evidence suggests that these models enhance users' understanding of interacting factors such as water, land use, and habitat quality, as well as building awareness of multiple spatial and temporal scales (Kremer & Lansing, 1995; Prato, Fulcher, Wu, & Ma, 1996; Stave, 2002).

We are also working to facilitate a different form of multi-stakeholder learning: *communicative learning*, defined as a social process of reflective deliberation that integrates multiple value perspectives and knowledge sources to construct new understandings among cross-sector and multistakeholder groups (Kesting, 2010; Mezirow, 1996). Communicative learning aims to address barriers that result from diverse and potentially conflicting priorities and goals among sectors and stakeholders. These barriers arise from divergent positions and interests, as well as from unresolved differences in worldviews and mental models. In effective communicative learning processes, stakeholders enable each other to comprehend and appreciate the logical validity, moral basis, and sincerity of their expressed worldviews, mental models, and viewpoints on complex issues. Evidence shows that collaborative and inclusive stakeholder processes that involve significant interaction and information sharing can promote convergence of perspectives in multistakeholder groups (Deyle & Slotterback, 2009; Forester 1999; Innes & Booher, 1999) and produce designs and other decisions that are more representative of stakeholder values, have positive environmental impacts, and are more innovative (Mandarano, 2008; Webler, Kastenholz, & Renn, 1995).

In our view, an ongoing and coupled process of systemic and communicative learning is needed to develop the interlinked innovations in land use, supply/value chains, and policies that are needed to establish a new agricultural enterprise. To develop these innovations and thus design a new enterprise, multistakeholder groups must develop and explore alternative scenarios for such enterprises, using visualization and multicriterion decision-support tools (Jordan et al., 2011). These scenarios will differ in terms of

land use, supply/value chains, and policies, and will perform differently in economic, environmental, and social terms. To decide on performance standards that can be used to choose among alternative scenarios, ongoing and coupled learning is needed in a multistakeholder group. In particular, interplay is needed between systemic learning—which reveals how a design for a new enterprise is *expected to work*—and communicative learning, in which multiple stakeholders deliberate about how the new enterprise *should* work. In each of the pilot landlabs, this interplay is being used to negotiate and define performance standards that specify key outcomes from new enterprises, and to assign priorities among these outcomes when trade-offs occur.

This model of learning has not been fully realized in any of the pilot landlabs to date. We do believe that substantial communicative learning regarding institutional and organizational goals and motivations has occurred during the organizing phases, and in relation to identification of each landlab's IO. Formal evaluations of such learning processes are under way in the Iowa and Minnesota landlabs. Each landlab also has faced various tensions related to goals and interests, ranging from inability to set firm prices for biomass to mistrust based on publicly critical stances taken by various participants; these tensions and their management have not yet been documented. However, we believe that these learning and conflict-management activities have not yet reached the levels of intensity and effectiveness that will be needed to bring enterprise development to broad implementation. For example, innovation processes related to policy and governance are crucial to enterprise development and will require extensive learning and conflict management; in each landlab, these particular innovation processes are in initial phases.

### **Knowledge production.**

In each case, there are intensive efforts to create new understanding to support the systemic learning that is key to enterprise development. Knowledge production focuses on the IO in each case, so that multiple stakeholder groups can be assured that their key concerns related to the IO are being met. Relevant examples include the creation of databases for decision support for fuelshed landscape design and visualization in the Minnesota case, the evaluation of the biophysical effects of prairie strips in Iowa, and observations on bird, arthropod, and plant community responses to management at landscape spatial scales in the Wisconsin Landlab. All of these efforts are incorporating multiple knowledge forms in

the process of knowledge production, and striving for close integration with the enterprise development process. However, the knowledge production to date has been largely confined to natural science research. Each landlab has characterized novel production systems and their effects on related resource systems. Each landlab has plans for landscape and supply-chain design, and for other relevant knowledge production, such as development of supply-chain infrastructure, analysis of willingness to pay for ecosystem services, or analysis of policy factors influencing each enterprise development. However, these investigations are in their initial phases. Each is dependent on recruitment of additional researchers and other contributors of knowledge and analytical capacity. To date, most knowledge production activities have been performed by natural scientists involved in the initial organizing of each landlab. None of the landlabs have yet demonstrated a capacity to bring a wide range of stakeholders and knowledge producers into the sustained and manifold interactions that appear necessary to support the comprehensive and coordinated innovation needed for enterprise development.

## **Implications for Land-Grant Universities**

In our experience, the practical and conceptual foundations of the landlab approach—boundary organizations, networks, communication, and new approaches to knowledge production for agricultural innovation—presently receive little sustained, integrative, and critical attention in land-grant colleges of agriculture (LGCOAs). Certainly, some LGCOA faculty and students are practically and intellectually engaged with these matters, as are faculty and students in other parts of these LGUs. However, in our experience, most of these workers do not participate extensively in the mainstream of LGCOA instruction, research, and outreach.

In our view, this situation is highly problematic; we believe that LGCOAs should play a major if not leading role in the organization and facilitation of landlabs. LGCOAs have many relevant assets, including faculty willing to play key organizing roles, analytical capacities, scientific credibility, and participation by young and creative students in a range of service and community-engaged learning roles. Moreover, LGCOAs, as research institutions, are one of the four sectors whose participation is crucial to the coordinated innovation that is essential to the work of landlabs. Therefore, we believe that some minimal number of LGU personnel should participate in landlabs on a sustained and extensive basis. The previously noted absence of discussion and focused work on the pro-

cesses that are critical to landlabs is doubtless a barrier to LGCOA involvement.

## Conclusion

In this essay, we have argued for the value of integrated place-based institutions, which we term “landlabs,” to support the coordinated innovation and enterprise development needed to increase agricultural outputs from existing lands, while meeting the triple bottom line of high performance in economic, environmental, and social terms. In a landlab, a range of innovators are networked to coordinate novel land uses, supply chains, policies, and other domains necessary for the emergence of new agricultural enterprises. Innovation is coupled to knowledge production emerging from science, engineering, and design. Active engagement with a wide range of interested parties occurs via various marketing, learning, and outreach efforts. All three of these core activities in a landlab must be interlinked and coordinated by an emphasis on organization, communication, and two key forms of social learning: systemic and communicative learning. A group of individuals who are willing to provide ongoing organization and integration is key to our landlab model.

Land-grant universities have a central and crucial role to play in organizing and operating landlabs. To enable LGCOAs to play leading roles in landlabs, we propose that LGU researchers will require certain new skills and habits of mind that will enable them to help organize and lead agricultural innovation efforts associated with landlabs. Recently new approaches to agricultural science education have been explored that aim to develop these skills (*Francis et al., 2012; Jordan, Wyse, & Colombo, 2012*). We propose that these skills and habits of mind will complement the deep knowledge of a scientific discipline that is the hallmark of university researchers and enable a critical mass of LGU researchers to be skilled leaders or key participants in landlabs and other efforts to spur broadly based innovation in response to the grand challenges and opportunities of contemporary agriculture.

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## PRACTICE STORIES





## **Community-Based Research, Race, and the Public Work of Democracy: Lessons From Whitman College**

Paul Apostolidis

### **Abstract**

This practice story tells of one professor's discovery and conduct of community-based research (CBR) at a leading liberal arts college. Originating through collaborations with an immigrant meatpacking workers' union, Whitman College's program on The State of the State for Washington Latinos has earned national recognition since its founding in 2005. The program's story speaks to the vital role CBR projects in the academy can play in addressing deeply rooted forms of racial injustice and cultural exclusion, from political under-representation to gaps in bilingual education. This narrative further highlights the importance of durable community partnerships that allow mutual trust to grow and flourish; the challenges faculty members face when institutions provide sparse infrastructure for CBR program development; the transformative effects of these endeavors on students; and the unusual success of Whitman's State of the State program in matching rigorous research with an ambitious agenda of public outreach to enhance regional democracy.

### **Early Experiments: Community-based Research With Immigrant Workers**

**W**hen I think about how I initially became involved with community-based research (CBR) as a faculty member at Whitman College, it occurs to me that the most pivotal conversations were with people outside the academy.<sup>(1)</sup> In those beginnings, I now see, were the sources of the unique direction our CBR projects at Whitman eventually would take. What has made our projects different—and has posed unusual challenges—has been our special dedication to making CBR public. By this, I mean our sustained and systematic effort to bring the results of CBR projects to policymakers, organization leaders, and the broader public. We aim not only to assist specific partner organizations, but also to spark a more inclusive and vibrant culture of democracy in the northwest region, especially when it comes to dealing with inequalities of race. Our movement in that direction reflects that the initial impetus for my CBR work came from beyond campus, and from leaders who were interested in broad-scale,

coalition-based social change rather than simply improving their organizations' capacities.

My first conversation about CBR happened in 2001, in my kitchen, with a young labor organizer from Brooklyn named Tony Perlstein. Tony had recently moved to Walla Walla, Washington, where Whitman is located, to organize workers at a large Tyson Foods beef plant. Two years before, these astonishing workers, most of whom were immigrants from Mexico, had pulled off the largest wildcat strike among meatpackers in decades. Now they were struggling to keep their momentum going in the face of rapid turnover due to the dismal job-related injury rates at the plant. They were also hoping to renew their tenuous support in the community, which had fortified their 6-week strike effort, but had waned in the intervening months (*Apostolidis, 2010*).

Tony had an uncanny knack for showing up unannounced right around dinnertime. My family and I found this habit both transparent and endearing, and I empathized with it. Having been a political field organizer in an earlier life—a Philadelphia-suburbs preppe transported to the Iowa cornfields to run ground operations for Michael Dukakis—I understood something about the loneliness and the need for comfort in the midst of an organizer's never-ending grind. The more Tony told me about the remarkable courage of the Tyson workers, the more I thought: "I want to get involved in this struggle, and find a way to help students get involved, too." Thinking out loud, I proposed approaching one of Whitman's student extracurricular organizations about the situation at Tyson. Tony grinned and shook his head (and had some more chicken). "No," he said—it couldn't be just volunteer work, or the students wouldn't commit. "You need to teach a class," he told me, and it struck me that he was probably right, although I'd never done anything like that before.

That conversation led to a course-based CBR project in 2002 that rekindled the workers' hope that there were people in the community who cared about their struggles. It also inspired the students in the course to accomplish an enormous volume of collaborative research, at a high level of quality and with a spirit of maturity I had never witnessed before among our typically young, privileged undergraduates. The experience made me see how different and exciting this sort of teaching could be, and also how CBR could spark genuine campus-community reciprocity and involve undergraduate education in a broad, collective effort to tackle deeply entrenched inequalities. Combining interviews of workers about the grave health and safety problems they faced on the line with

an analysis of data about Tyson's diverse vectors of power (from its corporate customers to its campaign finance priorities), the project linked complex institutional dynamics to workers' bodily and emotional pain. The worker-leaders of Teamsters Local 556 called the students' report "the Bible"; for the students, collaborating with the workers was something akin to a revelation.

My second formative conversation about CBR occurred 2 years later during a subsequent partnership with the union. This time we focused on the 2004 elections. Joaquin Avila, an attorney who had litigated a raft of historic Voting Rights Act cases in California and Texas and had recently moved to Seattle, traveled to southeastern Washington to speak to Local 556 activists and Whitman students about boosting political mobilization and electoral inclusion among immigrant workers. Many of the union activists were legal residents but not U.S. citizens, and the few citizens scattered among the group were mostly not registered to vote. So there was a sense of unrealized potential in the room when we met with Joaquin. But with the union on the verge of being busted by the company while in the midst of a grueling contract dispute, this turned out to be our least successful partnership: Local 556 simply could not afford to expend much effort on the collaboration. In the end, the project more vividly demonstrated the obstacles to immigrant workers' political involvement than it illuminated the pathways toward voter participation.

After we met with the workers and students, Joaquin mused grimly that in terms of political marginalization, circumstances for Latinos in the State of Washington roughly paralleled those he had witnessed in Texas—in the early 1960s. And with near zero Latino political representation throughout state and local government in Washington, he underscored, support simply did not exist among public policy makers for addressing the wide range of social inequities to which Latinos were subjected, not just in labor matters but also in health care, education, and other domains. What Latinos in Washington State needed, he said, was a regular report that would identify and analyze these multiple interrelated inequalities. And such a report would have to make the case that these were not just "Latino" problems, but rather issues in which a genuine public interest was at stake. "Want to do it?" he asked me, more than half-seriously. I considered how the union was on its last legs; wondered just how I would locate new partner organizations; thought about how much the collaborations with Local 556 had meant to the students and workers—and decided to give it a try.

## **The State of the State for Washington Latinos: Year I**

The long-term CBR program that grew out of these experiments and conversations came to be known as Whitman's project on the State of the State for Washington Latinos. From the very start, in 2005, it had a purpose that distinguished it from other initiatives in community-based learning and research: to influence statewide political culture and state policy, and thus to have effects that stretched well beyond the local community. At the same time, to keep the project engaged with urgent problems and to open up concrete research opportunities, it was vital that students collaborate with community partners. Thus, the story of the State of the State project is about navigating the turbulent waters we entered with the combined—and not always compatible—goals of building local community resources, raising public awareness of tenacious social inequities, and provoking shifts in public policy. We aimed to do all this through research characterized by intellectual freedom, rigor, and responsibility, and conducted by capable and enthusiastic but inexperienced undergraduate students.

I remember seeing this as a tall order in the first year of the project. At the time, I viewed what we were doing as an experiment with at best a 50-50 chance of succeeding. Twelve students took the course, and in retrospect the blemishes marring our work that semester seem more than a little unsightly. The partnerships varied widely in terms of the community member's investment in the process. The quality of the work was uneven, too. Nevertheless, rough-cut though they were, the final analyses put in sharp and disturbing perspective a range of interconnected facets of racial injustice, from a severe lack of health insurance coverage for Latinos to poor-quality trailer housing and discouraged withdrawal from electoral politics. So we went ahead with the original plan to call a press conference, and issued a general invitation to a public meeting. Joaquin predicted confidently that the response to the report would be powerful and positive. I wasn't so sure.

Joaquin could not have been more right. The report, flaws and all, struck a nerve in the Latino community, as though it validated a long-held desire for these problems to be talked about publicly, and not just by Latinos. It also broke the smooth surface of silent, polite complicity with the norms of our racially divided and highly unequal rural town, at least for a few hours. More than 150 people showed up at the public meeting we held at the college—I had been expecting closer to 50. My students held forth, with passion and sometimes in blunt terms, about the problems they had discov-

ered. Our intention had been to spark active discussion of these challenges among community members. And discussion there was—heated open conflict about the adequacy of the school district’s bilingual education program. Sharp words were exchanged over one student’s finding that there were no full-time bilingual teachers in the Head Start classroom where Latino children were in the vast majority. We had no plan for managing the defensiveness among community members that we should have known the students’ criticisms were bound to ignite. But although the event was far from smooth, it could not have been clearer how important it had turned out to be, for campus and community alike.

That first public meeting taught me two lessons that have stayed with me ever since. First, there was a genuine need for more of this research, a need felt acutely among Latinos and a need that grounded an obligation on our part to continue this work. A slew of e-mails promptly arrived from “the other side of the mountains,” inquiring about how others could access our research results, and when our students would be traveling to Seattle (the state’s urban hub) or Olympia (the seat of state government). Second, the public outreach dimension of the project was certainly worthwhile, but I needed to prepare students more thoroughly for ventures into community forums and the media spotlight. We also had to find a way to handle the tensions between carrying out a partnership with community organizations and being frank—in public—about the criticisms of those organizations that arose in the research. In addition, just as the research had barely scratched the surface of the racial-ethnic inequalities pervading the region, holding a public meeting on campus and talking to local reporters were likewise only small steps toward the outreach needed to reach more diverse components of the public.

In early 2006, shortly after the public meeting, I learned there would soon be a Latino state lobbying day at the capital in Olympia. I jumped at the chance to have the students participate, along with one of our community partners who worked as a public health educator. I strategized before our visit to Olympia with a friend, Nancy Amidei, who runs a civic engagement project at the University of Washington focused on state legislative advocacy. This preparation proved crucial to the success of our trip (and convinced me that I needed to keep Nancy on board as an adviser to the project). Unlike most lobby day participants, who were planning to stop by legislators’ offices unannounced, we pre-arranged a slate of meetings, which gave us a better chance of speaking with the representatives and senators and not just their staff members. We targeted the bills

on which our research gave us genuine expertise, and contacted the legislators most likely to listen to us because the students lived in their districts. We also made a point of visiting each of the three Latino legislators (a number that exemplified the problem of low Latino political representation, in a state with 147 state senators and representatives and a Latino population of over 10%).

This first trip to Olympia revealed both the extent of the challenges we faced and the opportunity the CBR gave us to speak with credibility about addressing racial inequality through state policy. An encounter with a rock-ribbed conservative lawmaker, in particular, suggested the students' potential to do more than preach to the converted. They cornered this senator as he was leaving a committee meeting. One student, Ben Secord, had barely launched his policy rap about health care for Latinos when the senator interrupted and asked, in a cut-the-crap tone, "Are any of these folks you're talking about illegals?" Of course, Ben replied. The official shot back, "Well, then, they ought to go back to where they came from—we can't support them here." At that point, my student Angela Walker, who had researched the cruelties faced by undocumented victims of domestic violence in partnership with the Walla Walla YWCA, switched the policy focus and tried a tactic Nancy had recommended: She told him a story about a woman whose abusive (legally resident) male partner had threatened to expose her undocumented status and take away her children if she tried to leave him. That was why state services for undocumented women were crucial, Angela explained. There followed a brief but telling pause in the conversation. The senator did not have a ready comeback; he seemed to "get it" that his blithe dismissal of the social and personal realities of immigrants' lives, at least in this case, just would not work. I do not know whether that lawmaker ended up supporting the domestic violence prevention programs that Angela's research indicated were needed. But the next spring he was the only Republican senator who addressed the participants in Hispanic-Latino Legislative Day, and he has met with our students every year since that first, uncomfortable exchange.

### **Over-extension, Policy Breakthrough, and the Boomerang Effect**

In retrospect, the first year of the State of the State for Washington Latinos set the trajectory for what lay ahead. Our experiences that year revealed the challenges we had to grapple with to make the multiple, unruly components of this ambitious project succeed and cohere. One challenge was the task of coordinating separate part-

nerships for each individual student. Many CBR projects, of course, take the more sane approach of partnering with just one organization. But given our small rural community with its limited stock of potential partners, along with our foundational commitment to addressing a wide range of issue areas, I thought we should persevere in our original mode. The second year of the project, however, showed that this was definitely not a viable long-term strategy. This was especially so given the underdeveloped institutional basis for CBR and service-oriented coursework at Whitman. Although there is a good deal of “experiential learning” that takes students off campus, until very recently there have been no administrators, and few faculty who work on civic engagement projects that have a curricular focus and are grounded in an explicit ethic of social responsibility.<sup>(2)</sup> So I created the structure of the State of the State program and negotiated partnerships entirely on my own. While I have always been grateful for the freedom to design a new project like this, and for the financial support that Whitman has provided, I have faced the task of building the program as a solo endeavor.

By fall 2006, word had gotten around Whitman about how exciting the State of the State experience had been for the first cohort. Now I had 16 students in the seminar—and the problems with managing 16 different partnerships predictably multiplied on both sides. In a couple of instances, students flaked out and did not follow through on their research commitments. One partner proved to have an unstable organization that abruptly relocated out of state. And with so many partnerships to manage, I simply could not keep a sufficiently close eye on the projects to make sure students were communicating with their partners and approaching their research in effective, responsible ways. Each student’s research methods typically included a mix of field interviews and quantitative data collection from existing sources, as had been the case in 2005. Thus, the challenges in terms of methods training were not unrealistic, but because of the idiosyncrasies of each partnership as well as the students’ lack of experience, the students needed individualized attention to help them figure out whom to interview and how to identify and access the most salient data sources. A few students needed more specialized training in survey design and basic statistical analysis because of the particular research interests of their community partners. Through some mild arm-twisting of colleagues I helped these students get the instruction they needed, which I could not provide since I do not use quantitative methods in my research. Nevertheless, the capacities of our enterprise were stretched thin, and eventually the strain showed.

These tensions showed all the more visibly because of the public dimension of our program. Following her research on Latino students at Walla Walla Community College (WWCC), one of my students made unsupported claims—at another public meeting—that WWCC was doing a disservice to its minority students. A vice president of the community college called and took me to task for letting the student make these unjustified statements. I re-examined the report, concluded that he was right, and pulled the document from our new website, but a certain degree of damage had already been done. Then, at our final gathering of all students and partners, another student stepped into a now-familiar minefield when she presented findings critical of her partner without sufficient tact, and hit a raw nerve. Viviana Gordon's excellent report had revealed racially differential treatment of youth within the juvenile justice system. But when Vivi announced her provocative title—"And Gringo Justice For All?"—her partner, a young White man who worked with kids in the local juvenile facility, took exception: He felt she was accusing him and his co-workers of being racists after he had devoted several months to working with her in good faith.

One lesson from the course project in 2006 was clear: We needed fewer partnerships. Moreover, the partnerships had to be cultivated over the long term to establish the foundation of mutual trust essential for conducting public outreach, and for handling tensions when the research yielded critical findings about our community partners' endeavors. A promising corollary was that in our small town, perhaps because it is hard for people to avoid each other, it was worth trying to make amends and work out a more mutually satisfactory collaboration when things got off to a bad start. The school district administrators who had chafed at our 2005 research responded enthusiastically when I approached them later and suggested we work out a new, mutually agreeable plan for research. The bilingual director and her husband, who with her advises the high school's Club Latino, have been highly dedicated partners ever since, and the partnership has produced some of our most eye-opening research. Part of the problem at Walla Walla Community College, in turn, was that our project had gotten entangled in internal WWCC politics. A frank conversation with the vice president clued me in to those thorny issues, cleared the air, and opened the way to later engagements.

A second lesson from the 2006 project was that the public impact of our research outside Walla Walla could go far beyond the symbolic. My student Ian Warner partnered with Joaquin that year to learn how to analyze voting returns to determine if there



were grounds for applying the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) in order to change local electoral systems. Washington State is full of voting jurisdictions where, despite large minority populations, minority candidates seldom run and even more rarely win. Ian's conclusions were clear and devastating: A VRA remedy was necessary and could be legally mandated for city council elections in the town of Sunnyside, a farming community in the heart of the Yakima Valley where the state's Latino population is most concentrated. The document that came to be known in the region as *The Warner Report* hit the local papers. Latino community leaders notified the federal Department of Justice, which initiated an investigation. Within a few months the town adopted a partial system of district elections for city council, replacing the entirely at-large voting arrangement that had produced discriminatory consequences. The report, the ensuing investigation, and the electoral system change were intensely controversial. The *Yakima Herald-Republic* denounced Ian's research and ran letters to the editor suggesting that if Latinos did not show up to vote it was because they did not care and should just go back to Mexico—again, we heard that familiar refrain from the political right, now with the added canard of lumping all Latinos into the category of Mexican immigrants. Subsequently, when a white Sunnyside official spoke out about the issue during a spring 2008 public meeting we held in the neighboring town of Toppenish, a torrent of chagrin came rushing forth. The official felt that *The Warner Report* imputed racist intentions to her and her colleagues—again, we sensed the stubborn difficulty, among Whites in mid-level professional jobs with Latino clients, of distinguishing between personal bigotry and racist institutional practices.

In spring 2007, we matched the increasing public visibility and consequentiality of our research with a more highly developed plan for public outreach. It was an agenda I had prepared with professional help, enlisting the expensive but valuable services of a policy communications consultant, David Messerschmidt. David had a background in public radio and a keen sense of how to nudge the students toward translating their research findings and recommendations from “academese” into more accessible language—terms that would make busy legislators, harried staffers, and skeptical citizens stop and take notice. He also cleverly advised that we replace our photocopied, black-and-white handouts with a glossy “overview” document combining text and images in a colorful, attractive way. The document attracted attention when we distributed it at the Capitol and reinforced the impact of the students' verbal

comments. The students, in turn, were much better prepared to communicate effectively this time, thanks to their work with David. Ian spoke to a boisterous and appreciative crowd at Hispanic-Latino Legislative Day. The bilingual students ducked into stairwells to huddle with reporters from Spanish-language media outlets. Kevin McNellis, a student who had examined financial trends in Latino higher education, even provided expert testimony in a committee hearing.

That spring we also got our first taste of how making CBR public could generate boomerang effects on our own institution, revealing Whitman's participation in the dynamics of racial inequality. With our school district partners, Diana and Bill Erickson, the students led a pair of workshops at the annual convention of the Latino/a Educational Achievement Project in Tacoma. This event put our students in touch with scores of Latino youth who were striving to realize their ambitions of going to college, often as the first ones in their families. At the same time, it raised (publicly) the issues of Whitman's very low racial minority student enrollment and its reputation among Latino "townies" as inaccessible and unwelcoming. The Ericksons had shepherded a group of some two dozen Latino students from Walla Walla High School to the conference. These "Wa-Hi" kids attended our workshops, and said frankly that they had never even considered applying to Whitman. Yet it was evident they were starting to think about Whitman, and about college in general, in new ways when my students personally urged them to apply, and when the high schoolers saw how college-level CBR work could involve them further in their communities of origin rather than severing those ties. The exorbitant cost of a private education at Whitman was, of course, the elephant in the room—actually, a pachyderm in plain view thanks to Kevin's remarks on the changing cost structure of higher education. Kevin's research had argued for tackling the sociocultural barriers to minority college enrollment (e.g., lack of information and motivation) through policy initiatives like Talent Search and other federal programs to facilitate higher education attainment by first-generation college students. At the same time, he stressed the limited effects of such policies given the wider, troubling trend of student loans replacing grants while tuition rates explode. Our experience at the Latino/a Educational Achievement Project conference confirmed, live and in person, this diagnosis of the obstacles to increasing Latino participation in higher education.

## Public Work, “Tabling,” and Race Talk

Documenting, analyzing, and addressing the extremely low electoral participation and political representation of Latinos in Washington State had been at the core of our project since its inception. Thus when another major election year came around in January 2008, I decided we should lay aside, temporarily, our ambition to research a wide gamut of issues and concentrate on voting rights and political mobilization. Simplifying the structure of our community partnerships was a must, and so with Joaquin’s help I made contact with the regional chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and arranged for them to join Joaquin as one of only two partnerships that semester. With students working on closely related projects and multiple students per partner, I could standardize the research methodologies as well as the methods training. This not only made the teaching easier for me but also enhanced the reliability of our findings when we brought them to the public. Joaquin and LULAC targeted four local areas in the eastern, heavily Latino part of Washington State. For each area, one student analyzed local elections and voting behavior, explored whether a shift from at-large to district-based elections would improve Latino representation, and analyzed the availability of bilingual election materials. Meanwhile, another student investigated both formal organizations and informal community networks to assess and explain the levels of Latino civic engagement for each location. Joaquin came to campus and led a “boot camp” in VRA analyses for the voting rights researchers. Gilbert Mireles, a colleague in sociology with whom I co-taught the course that spring, and I trained the political mobilization researchers to conduct interviews and analyze organizational capacities, since these were the methods of choice in our own scholarly endeavors. Thus we prepared the student investigators to produce research that would be as empirically rigorous as it was topical.

Overall, in 2008, the State of the State for Washington Latinos solidified into a long-term commitment with a durable academic, financial, and community scaffolding. At Whitman, the project had gained a reputation as a challenge meant for only the most motivated, students. Enrollments were limited (averaging 11 per semester), and those who signed up were a tough, self-selected bunch who were both willing to do the work and capable of pulling it off. I had developed relationships with other faculty members and staff whose help was essential to handle research methods training beyond my capabilities (e.g., statistics) as well as logistical tasks (e.g., planning public meetings). Beginning in the fall 2008

semester, moreover, what was once a single course was expanded into a two-semester course sequence. This allowed for more extensive public outreach, and made student participation in these activities something they did for credit rather than just a volunteer effort. It also allowed me to enrich the academic component by anchoring outreach activities in critical discussions of democratic theory and public communication in a political culture increasingly allergic to discussing racial inequality.

The financial basis of the State of the State project also improved dramatically in 2008, and this helped bring the public side of the project into full bloom. As far back as my experiences with Local 556, my approach to community-based research had been informed by Harry C. Boyte and James Farr's (1997) notion that service-learning ought to be seen as a form of "public work": labor done in public, for public purposes, and by a group of students and community members acting in reciprocal ways to identify and solve public problems as a "public." At the same time, democratic theorist Romand Coles (2005) has argued that convening these "publics" in a society rent by racial and class domination cannot mean just inviting different groups to have "a seat at the table." All too often, this burdens people from underprivileged quarters with the job of going where White people with power and money say they should go to tell their stories. Instead, urges Coles, communicative democratic action requires going "tabling" —literally moving the "table" where people gather to do public work into multiple, varied cultural-spatial locations rather than, say, expecting everyone to get on the bus to the state capital (2005, pp. 213–238).

But "tabling," in this sense, takes money. Fortunately, we were able to access the new resources we needed: In 2008, we began receiving funding from Princeton University's National Community-Based Research Networking Initiative, which was administering a 3-year federal Learn & Serve grant to promote community-based research. What set us apart from other schools in the nationwide competition and snared us an "innovation sub-grant" worth \$7,500 a year for 3 years (matched at 50% by Whitman) was our unusual emphasis on public outreach as well as our goal of having an impact on public policy. With the help of these funds, spring 2009 turned out to be harvest time for the public outreach side of the project, and the yield was abundant. During our next trip to Olympia, students not only testified in legislative committees—a committee staffer asked one student to draft a bill on electoral reform, and another student was invited to serve on a gubernatorial health policy task force. A public meeting

in Seattle hosted by the interracial/ethnic Minority Executive Directors' Collection finally made good on the potential we had always known was there to link with organizations in the state's urban center, and to put our work in dialogue with the concerns of other minority groups. Our website went bilingual. And at the community college in Walla Walla, we created an exhibition with Pedro de Valdivia, a talented young artist who had done a series of vibrant paintings for our project. The exhibition opened with a Cinco de Mayo public event, in a packed auditorium, where my students used Pedro's images as points of departure for introducing questions and findings from the research.

All this gave me a tremendous emotional charge, which intensified as I saw my students stretch themselves as scholars, come into their own as communicators, and become increasingly thoughtful about the racial differences and interactions among themselves—and they spurred me to try to do likewise. I watched them wean themselves off their prepared remarks, becoming more spontaneous and lively as they spoke to continually shifting audiences. The crowning moment came when they decided on their own, before a May public meeting with Chicano Studies students and faculty at Yakima Valley Community College, to chuck their notes and speak entirely off the cuff. Of course, the levels of energy and conviction they conveyed roughly doubled. They were jubilant at what they had accomplished, and I marveled at how they had matured not only as public speakers but also in two other ways: as intellectuals, who were able to bend their minds in new directions and keep learning as they listened to people respond to their work; and as exemplars of the personal effort required to fight racism, as they attentively listened to one another, riffed off one another's ideas, and performed in person the values of racial equality and reciprocity their research promoted.

It bears emphasis, however, that this last achievement took real, intentional effort. It also involved a process in which the roles of educator and student were, to a significant degree, reversed. Over the years I had made only a few sporadic attempts to call attention to the racial dynamics within our group, which typically included a small cohort of Latino students, some other students of color, and an equal or greater number of White students. I finally saw the need to do this more deliberately, however, when I saw how our public face at key events might subvert our message of racial equality. I had been leaving it to the students to decide who among them would speak for the various research groups, and in what order. When the students lined up to present to the mostly Spanish-speaking and

almost entirely Latino crowd at Hispanic-Latino Legislative Day, I realized to my dismay that we had three White students (none of whom spoke Spanish) presenting while a Latina student assisted them by translating (but did not speak about her research). It was only too obvious what we were implying about whose intellectual work mattered most, and who was more suited to offer technical support. Faced with yet another challenge that took them outside their comfort zone, the students once again rose to the occasion and pondered the racial dynamics among themselves, both within and beyond the public eye. Their consensus: that audiences needed not only to hear them critically analyze problems of racial inequality, but also to see them self-reflectively, visibly model an endeavor of interracial cooperation. Ultimately, the students were more confident about addressing these questions of racial dynamics than I had been, and they helped me become more willing and confident about confronting these important matters.

### **Impatience, and the Arc of the Moral Universe**

When I think about the public outreach activities my students and I carried out in 2008–2009, I feel an abiding sense of wonder and deep satisfaction at all that we did – and this sensation has only grown in the years since then as our efforts have yielded an accelerating series of concrete impacts. In the winter of 2012, five years after The Warner Report touched off electoral reform in Sunnyside, Washington, and following several more studies on voting rights, two of my students took the microphone to deliver expert testimony in hotly anticipated state legislative committee hearings on a newly proposed Washington Voting Rights Act. The Act would allow lawsuits in state courts to compel municipalities to shift from at-large to district elections, if conditions existed like those Ian Warner had found in Sunnyside. Although it narrowly missed eventually coming to a floor vote in both chambers, the Act startled everyone by making it that far through the process and remains on state lawmakers' agenda today – and State of the State research was indispensable to justifying reforms of this sort. Several months later, a consortium of Northwest public radio stations borrowed our research methods and extended our study of low Latino representation rates in ten Washington counties across the entire territory of Washington, Idaho and Oregon. The multi-part broadcast series they produced brought an unprecedented level and breadth of public attention to the problem.

I routinely receive indications from people in many parts of the state who are aware of our program that the research has pen-

etrated diverse quarters, and that it is exerting positive and sometimes striking effects. There is a feeling around Washington State these days that the Latino community is getting mobilized politically, and that the racially dominant population is paying more attention. The annual Hispanic-Latino Legislative Day not only has become a regular, well-attended event but also has spurred the formation of a new coalition called the Latino Civic Alliance. In 2006, large and unprecedented immigrant rights protests, as in so many other places across the country, broke out in cities and small towns all over Washington State. Although labor activism has been nonexistent at the Tyson plant since the company quashed the union in 2005, farm workers have built union movements at eastern Washington dairies, in the berry fields of the Skagit Valley, and in nearby towns in northeastern Oregon. In 2010, more Latinos ran for the Washington state legislature than ever before, although too few prevailed.

The State of the State program has helped gradually shift the political culture so that it allows the seeds of all these activities to germinate. Our trips to Olympia have reaffirmed the sense among policy professionals that the issues identified as important by the Latino community need to be taken seriously. We have contributed in modest but concrete ways to the knowledge bases and public reputations of our long-term partners. (Our collaborator at the Washington State Farmworker Housing Trust, organizer Rosalinda Mendoza, a Whitman grad who researched juvenile justice problems in the first State of the State group, told me they regularly consulted a student's 2009 report on vineyard workers' labor conditions in the region that wine enthusiasts call "the new Napa.") When throngs of Wa-Hi and middle school youth walked out of class in the heady immigrants' rights actions of 2006, students from the State of the State program coordinated public events. In 2009, my student Pedro Galvao, who had investigated the near-total lack of Latino elected officials in Walla Walla, got over 200 people to turn out for a workshop on political involvement that the organization he founded with Latino community members, *El Proyecto Voz Latina*, conducted at a Catholic church.

As spring arrived in 2010, a few State of the State veterans came over to my house to have dinner and talk about the future of the program. They all agreed that in terms of students' experiences, the project has been an almost unqualified success. Although they unanimously considered the workload in the research semester to be extreme, to the point of being almost unmanageable, they confirmed that students emerged from the project with vastly forti-

fied capacities as scholars, and as present and future public leaders. The roster of Whitman graduates who have gone on to public service-oriented careers shaped by their State of the State experiences is growing long. Danielle Alvarado, who wrote the controversial 2005 report on Head Start, became an organizer for No More Deaths/No Más Muertes near the Arizona-Sonora border. Estela Vasquez, who as a junior had joined Governor Gregoire's task force on health disparities after analyzing the stress and frustration of Latino kids at Wa-Hi, entered a doctoral program to investigate racial inequality. It isn't just knowing about these post-Whitman developments that makes me believe what the ones who visited my house that evening said about the program's profound effects on students. Even more, it's the accumulating pile of notes and cards I get from them, sometimes well after they graduate, referring back to the project and using phrases like "life changing." Meanwhile, largely as a result of these students' achievements and my own protracted nudging of Whitman administrators, the college now more actively affirms curricular civic engagement projects like mine as institutional priorities. A plan to open a new center for civic engagement focused on academic projects—"public work," not just volunteer work—is now on the agendas of the president and the provost. Our vice president for development agreed to include an appeal for community-based learning in the capital campaign that was launched in late 2011. It wasn't long before a major donation materialized, courtesy of a college overseer who was astonished at the poise, knowledge and conviction the students had presented at a public forum he attended.

I still feel, however, that we have only begun to realize our project's potential to have a public impact and to produce results that will be of lasting benefit to our partner organizations. Here in Walla Walla, 2012 was a breakthrough year for our partnership with the school district. District leaders at last responded to the accumulated weight of seven years worth of research showing the need to expand dual-language programs throughout the schools, hire more Latino teachers, and train teachers and staff in cultural competency. The superintendent convened a Diversity Committee bringing together District leaders and concerned individuals in the community, and spotlighted the 2012 State of the State research at the two initial meetings – such that our research effectively set the agenda for diversity initiatives at the highest levels of school district leadership. Now, we need to ensure that there is real follow-through on this laudable agenda. Similarly, our research partnerships with the statewide immigrant advocacy group Other research partner-



ships have demonstrated the damages to community-police relations from federal efforts to get local jails to help detain and deport immigrants, as well as the need for vastly increased immigration services funding if and when Congress passes Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Now the challenge looms of persuading officials at local, state and even federal levels to take these findings seriously and change public policy.

Odd as it might seem for someone like me who chose a career in academia over long-term work in the political world, I am impatient to see change happen. I re-read and teach Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" just about every year, and the message of what he called "the fierce urgency of the now" strikes me to my core every time. So does his frustration with well-meaning liberals who kept counseling him: "Wait!" As King observed, for African Americans, "This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.' We must come to see . . . that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied'" (1986, p. 88). This is where things stand for Latinos today in the Pacific Northwest, as well as, of course, for many other racial minority groups who populate our region.

King also knew, however, that large-scale change requires a multitude of smaller-scale shifts accumulating over time. Several years after writing his famous letter, King spoke at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and declared that "the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice" (1986, p. 179). Recently, I have learned how that long-term view, and the discipline and persistence it bespeaks, informs the work of a remarkable western Oregon farmworkers' organization, *Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste/Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United* (PCUN). This organization's orientation reflects the spirit of King and offers a valuable perspective on what the future of the State of the State project may hold.

I first met PCUN's leaders when we collaborated on the 2003 Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, along with Teamsters Local 556.<sup>(3)</sup> Over more than two decades, PCUN has patiently built a local culture of empowerment among severely marginalized Oaxacan migrants in the Willamette Valley. The organization's dynamic secretary-treasurer Larry Kleinman (2011) explains the group's approach to organizing:

We consider it short-sighted to struggle for institutional change. Rather, we must build a movement which can sustain and defend that change. Therefore, we are guided by the notion that achieving deep, broad and

lasting change requires building and reinforcing a broad base.

Our experiences since 2005 have shown that pushing back against the wall of racism, even for people whose social marginality is not so extreme, poses massive, long-range challenges. Thinking about this helps me put my impatience in perspective, although I would never want to let go of it. It leads me to hope that our public work in the State of the State program can continue helping to form that broad base for lasting change in our region—with community organizations, in the policy-making process, in public opinion, and among an intellectually formidable and socially committed cohort of young leaders.

## Endnotes

1. Whitman College is a liberal arts college located in the town of Walla Walla in eastern Washington State. Whitman was founded in 1882 and is one of the premier liberal arts institutions in the northwestern United States. It is exclusively an undergraduate institution, with approximately 1,500 students and about 160 faculty members.
2. Whitman's mission statement employs a few keywords, such as teaching students "leadership," "responsibility," and the capacity to "engage," that evoke a vague sense of civic responsibility. But as a Princeton alum who takes seriously that institution's motto of acting "in the nation's service and in the service of all nations," and as someone married to a graduate of Oberlin, with its official commitments to "nurture students' social consciousness" and to foster "social justice," I have always wanted to see Whitman make its concern for social responsibility more coherent and emphatic.
3. The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride sent two busloads of immigrant workers from Seattle and Portland across the country to Washington, D.C., where they joined buses from eight other major cities to advocate for immigrant workers' rights.

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## About the Author

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## PROJECTS WITH PROMISE



## **Campus Corps Therapeutic Mentoring: Making a Difference for Mentors**

Shelley Haddock, Lindsey Weiler, Jennifer Krafchick, Toni S. Zimmerman, Merinda McLure, and Sarah Rudisill

### **Abstract**

College student mentors are increasingly mentoring at-risk youth, yet little is known about the benefits that college students derive from their experience mentoring within the context of a service-learning course. This qualitative study used focus groups to examine college students' experiences as participants in a unique program, Campus Corps: Therapeutic Mentoring of At-Risk Youth. This course-based, service-learning program utilizes college student mentors to mentor at-risk youth within a family systems framework. In 19 focus groups conducted with 141 college student participants, the student mentors indicated that they experienced significant personal growth and professional development through their participation in the program and that the program positively influenced their civic attitudes and their orientation toward civic engagement. This article provides a review of related research, describes the program, explores the findings of the focus groups, and discusses implications for college service-learning programs.

### **Introduction**

The popularity and potential benefits of youth mentoring programs have resulted in research that explores the effectiveness of these programs. As most studies focus on the outcomes experienced by youth mentees, little is known about outcomes for college students who mentor youth (*Evans, 2005*). Even less is known about the presumed positive outcomes that college students gain from mentoring at-risk youth specifically within the context of a service-learning course. Our study aims to address these gaps in the research literature and to illustrate the outcomes that college student mentors experience when mentoring at-risk youth in the context of a service-learning course.

### **Literature Review**

Youth mentoring programs facilitated by agencies such as Big Brothers Big Sisters are commonly found throughout communities across the United States; however very few of these programs are associated with post-secondary service-learning programs. This

review addresses research on the outcomes that college students experience through participation in service-learning, through mentoring youth, and through mentoring youth in the context of a service-learning course.

## **Service-Learning**

Valerius and Hamilton (2001) characterize service-learning as the practice of students becoming involved in their community in order to utilize knowledge learned in the classroom and to gain opportunities for learning through experience. Giles and Eyler (1999) suggest that service-learning programs are one of the primary modalities by which students gain experience and competence in community engagement and service. Service-learning is a unique learning experience in that it provides students with preparatory learning for service, through lectures, course readings, and trainings; incorporates self-reflection; and directly engages students in active service. Schmidt, Marks, and Derrico (2004) suggest that the training and scholarship provided by service-learning courses better equip students to provide high-quality service to the community. Thus, training and supporting mentors within the context of a university based service-learning course may in theory enhance the quality of the mentorship due to the academic foundation associated with the specific service being provided. Additionally, the particular context of service-learning is thought to enhance the mentors' experience resulting in an increase in positive outcomes.

Studies that address post-secondary service learning indicate a spectrum of educational and personal outcomes for student participants, including: (1) increased knowledge of theory, and an enhanced ability to apply theory to real world issues (Astin & Sax, 1998; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993); (2) increased understanding of community concerns (Astin & Sax; Giles & Braxton, 1997; Giles & Eyler, 1994); (3) increased confidence in one's ability to handle challenge and stress (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997); (4) greater emphasis placed on volunteering and helping professions (Astin & Sax, 1999); (5) increased sense of social and personal responsibility (Giles & Eyler); (6) greater appreciation and gratitude for past experiences (Schmidt et al., 2004); and (7) improved self-efficacy and self-confidence (Deeley, 2010; Lisman, 1998). Relatedly, McKenna and Rizzo (1999) studied the service-learning experience of students from 17 disciplines and found that not only did students gain an understanding of others and an increase in their sense of civic responsibility, but they also gained a greater understanding of themselves.



Several studies suggest additional outcomes for students who participate in service-learning projects with at-risk youth. Terry (1999) found that these students better understand the pressures that face children and adolescents. Hughes, Welsh, Mayer, Bolay, and Southard (2009) found that students articulated changes in their attitudes toward, and their understanding of, youth living in poverty or in disadvantaged situations. Hughes, Boyd, and Dykstra (2010) also found that service-learning students who worked with youth challenged their own negative stereotypes about youth, desired to help combat social injustices experienced by youth, and experienced an increase in their understanding of how social inequality and poverty may directly affect youth. Schmidt and colleagues (2004) found that students who work with youth in service-learning projects tend to have greater confidence in their ability to change the life of a child.

## **Mentoring**

A few notable studies have explored the views of adult mentors and how they perceived the mentoring process, the quality of the mentor-mentee relationships, and the structure of the mentoring program (Hughes et al., 2010; Spencer, 2007; Evans, 2005). Few studies have examined the more personal effects of mentoring that may be experienced by mentors. Trepanier-Street (2007) explored the experiences of college students who mentored at-risk elementary students enrolled in the Jumpstart program. Mentors reported increases in their knowledge of child development and their understanding of developmentally-appropriate education practices. Similarly, Philip and Hendry (2000) conducted in-depth interviews with 30 adult mentors of at-risk youth. These mentors perceived the mentoring process as a way to understand the realities of youth in their communities, facilitate adult-youth relationships, offer youth mentees support and challenges while viewing them as equal, make sense of their own childhood experiences, gain insight into the lives of others, and create a form of “cultural capital” through adult-youth relationships (p. 218).

## **Mentoring within Service-Learning**

Studies on mentoring, and separately service-learning, would seem to suggest that the benefits of both might be experienced by students who mentor youth in the context of a service-learning course. Mentor training and support have been identified as key factors in building effective relationships between mentors and

at-risk youth (Karcher, Kupermic, Portwood, Sipe, & Taylor, 2006). A service-learning course delivered in a university setting is well positioned to provide a supportive structure for effective programming for at-risk youth, as well as enhanced benefits for college student mentors.

Few studies have evaluated youth mentoring in the context of a service-learning course and these studies contain notable limitations. Banks (2010) analyzed the written reflections of 25 college students who mentored middle-school girls to encourage their participation in math and science. Analysis indicated that the student mentors perceived benefitting from enhanced awareness of culture, practical experience negotiating group dynamics, affirmation of their abilities, and career guidance. Banks (2010) concluded that mentoring within a service-learning context can provide students with an academic, as well as an experiential understanding of a topic. While these findings are informative, the applicability of this study to other contexts is limited by its small sample of all female, predominately White, and not at-risk college student mentors; the collection of mentor responses by co-mentors (as opposed to trained researchers); and that the decision to measure the mentor experience was not made a priori. In order to avoid these particular limitations, the current study builds on these results by recruiting a larger sample, collecting data systematically by trained researchers, and aiming to study the mentor experience from the start.

Another applicable study explored the experience of mentors of youth enrolled in high-poverty schools (Hughes et al., 2010). In this study, mentors were asked to provide written responses to open-ended prompts. In their responses, mentors indicated their perceptions that they had gained an understanding of the challenges of poverty, enhanced their character and professional development, formed relationships, gained appreciation for their own life experiences, and reevaluated priorities (Hughes et al.). This research suggests that the service-learning context provides mentors with adequate and ongoing training and support, which may translate into greater feelings of self-efficacy in the mentor's ability to maintain a successful mentor-mentee relationship. Karcher et al. (2006) suggest that mentor self-efficacy is crucial in building a high-quality mentoring relationship. Mentors reported several perceived limitations of the program: they wished that the program had more organized group activities, improved matching of mentors and mentees, clearer goals for mentors, and improved communication of goals to mentoring sites and staff. The mentoring program in the present study incorporated these recom-

mentations in hopes of improving outcomes for mentors of at-risk youth.

## The Present Study

Research has revealed several positive outcomes for student involvement in service-learning and mentoring. Due to the limited research on outcomes for mentors as a function of service-learning, it is unknown how mentoring youth at risk of delinquency within this context will affect the student mentor. Furthermore, little is known about the effects of mentoring on the mentor, in general. This study will build upon the extant literature and will begin to fill important gaps in the literature.

## Campus Corps

Campus Corps: Therapeutic Mentoring of At-Risk Youth (Campus Corps) is a unique, university-based service-learning course in which college students from Colorado State University (CSU) serve as mentors for at-risk youth (ages 10-18) from the surrounding Fort Collins, Colorado community. The program aims to provide mutual benefits for both student mentors and youth mentees.

## History

The program was designed in direct response to a call to action from the local juvenile justice system in Larimer County, Colorado. In 2009, faculty from CSU's Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) were invited to a community meeting regarding the status of first-time offending youth. The meeting highlighted a local need to more appropriately and effectively treat low-level youth offenders and those at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. The HDFS faculty in attendance proposed a service-learning course that would address a gap in available community services for youth and in which college students would gain valuable service experience. Situating a mentoring program within a university service-learning course has several benefits. First, it reduces the costs that are typically associated with high quality services because student mentors earn university credits, rather than income, for their service. Additionally, whereas community-based mentoring programs often have difficulty recruiting and sustaining mentors for youth at risk for serious delinquency (*Novotney, Mertinko, Lange, & Baker, 2000*), being able to provide mentors with

college credits significantly strengthens the ability to recruit and sustain mentors.

Campus Corps was initially supported by a grant from the Corporation of National and Community Service, which provided funding for the development and piloting of the program. The program serves approximately 130 mentors and 130 youth per semester. Campus Corps continues to be managed and supervised by the same faculty who initially developed and piloted the program.

## **Format**

A new Campus Corps session begins at the start of each fall and spring semester. The program takes place on the Colorado State University campus, from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., four days per week. Each youth participant is paired with a college student mentor and each pair attends one session per week; 30 mentor-mentee pairs are present for each day's session. Youth select their mentor from Mentor Profiles, which are prepared by the mentors for this purpose. These one-page profiles summarize each mentor's interests (sports, music, fun, hobbies, etc.), academic major, personal and professional goals, and why the student chose to become a Campus Corps mentor. To provide additional social support to mentors and mentees, mentor-mentee pairs are organized into Mentor Families, which are comprised of four mentor-mentee pairs organized by youth age and supervised by a Mentor Coach, who is an experienced student mentor. Mentor Families engage in many of the evening's activities together.

An evening of Campus Corps begins and ends with an hour that only the college students attend. During this time, the family therapist instructor aids the students with the development of plans to best support mentees. This time is also used for group reflection and debriefing of the students' experiences. This level of support is intended to help mentors experience high self-efficacy in their ability to maintain a successful relationship; an integral component of maintaining high-quality mentorship (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005).

Youth attend Campus Corps from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. During this time, mentors and mentees (a) take a walk on campus to re-connect, and learn about campus and various professions, (b) work on homework, (c) share a meal, and (d) engage in pro-social activities, such as cooking, sports, and art. Because Campus Corps serves at-risk youth, Campus Corps has created a structure that goes beyond

simply spending time together. Campus Corps activities integrate what is being learned (e.g., rules of kickball and how to form clay models) with developmental assets (e.g., teamwork and creativity).

Campus Corps is held each semester, with youth attending 12 of the 16 weeks. The first four weeks of the semester are devoted to mentor training. A recent meta-analysis found that positive effects were found in mentoring programs of brief duration (i.e., less than 6 months) as well as longer lasting relationships (i.e., more than 12 months; *Dubois et al., 2011*). Additionally, research suggests that an important consideration with respect to the mentor-mentee relationship is whether or not the relationship is maintained throughout the duration of the established timeframe (*Larose, Tarabulsy, & Cyrenne, 2005*). With program structure offered by Campus Corps, youth and mentors maintain a relationship during a specific timeframe. Youth and their mentors are furthermore sufficiently prepared for the length of their mentoring relationship with one another. Thus, Campus Corps supports each mentor-mentee pair in fulfilling their commitment to the relationship and ending the relationship, when the time comes.

## **A Therapeutic and Family Systems Approach**

Campus Corps' design is unique because mentors and mentees are paired together and approximately 30 pairs operate within a family systems framework during each evening's session. These pairs are clustered together into Mentor Families, which are comprised of four mentor-mentee pairs of similarly aged mentees. Each Mentor Family is facilitated by a Mentor Coach. A family therapist is responsible for supervising approximately six Mentor Families. Campus Corps recognizes each mentor-mentee pair as a subsystem of the larger Mentor Family in which cycles, rules, boundaries, and alliances exist. Of particular importance is the role of the family therapist facilitator who provides expertise in systemic thinking, as well as clinical interventions (e.g., suicide assessment). In many mentoring programs mentor-mentee pairs exist in isolation, but in Campus Corps each dyad is supported by a Mentor Family that is supported by a family therapist. The researchers believe that this distinct characteristic of Campus Corps has aided in its success thus far.

## **Youth Participants (Mentees)**

Campus Corps serves youth between the ages of 10 and 18. The youth who attend Campus Corps are considered at risk of offending

or re-offending and are referred to Campus Corps from a variety of sources including the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, the Department of Human Services, the local school district, and other community agencies. Seventy percent of youth enrolled in the program possess at least one charge with the juvenile justice system. Although all youth attend voluntarily, Campus Corps is often part of each youth's diversion or probationary conditions, or treatment plan.

Campus Corps strives to reduce the offense and re-offense rates of these youth by engaging them in activities that will improve their educational outcomes and strengthen their life skills, self-confidence, and productive engagement with the community. Campus Corps allows youth to (a) develop a relationship with a caring adult, (b) practice social skills, (c) receive academic support, and (d) develop a sense of belonging to a supportive community. Current program evaluation efforts are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of Campus Corps with respect to its promotion of positive outcomes. Specifically, through a mixed-method research design, we are evaluating "Campus Corpseffectiveness in deterring risky behavior and promoting academic achievement, self-esteem, happiness, and positive future orientation.

### **College Students (Mentors)**

Campus Corps enrolls undergraduate and graduate students from any major on campus. Students from over 40 majors have served as mentors to date. Students must follow a specific process in order to be deemed eligible as a mentor, beginning with attendance at a mandatory informational meeting and subsequent formal application to become a mentor. Applications allow program staff to identify mentors who possess important skills and attributes for effective mentoring, including experience in helping roles (*Dubois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002*), sense of self-efficacy, and appreciation of cultural and socioeconomic differences (*Hirsch, 2005*). If accepted into Campus Corps, students must also complete and pass a criminal background check. Because Campus Corps is offered as a one-semester service-learning course, students receive course credit for participating as mentors in the program. Many students elect to participate in subsequent semesters of Campus Corps, either as a Mentor Coach or as a Research or Teaching Assistant.

## **Mentor Learning Goals and Objectives.**

The program aims to develop students' critical thinking skills and their ability to analyze community-identified needs of youth. Additionally, the curriculum is designed to train mentors to recognize issues related to power, privilege and oppression, diversity, and social justice within the context of their own lives and the lives of their youth mentees, and to increase students' understanding of adolescent identity development. Mentors learn to apply best mentoring practices and other paraprofessional skills including motivational interviewing, group facilitation, record keeping, and communication skills.

## **Mentor Training.**

Students participate in an extensive 20-hour training program prior to mentoring. The training is conducted by faculty from Colorado State University, juvenile probation officers, investigators from the District Attorney's Office, the juvenile court magistrate, and other key juvenile justice professionals. Training includes juvenile court observations, mentoring skills instruction, role playing, instruction in adolescent development, and an orientation to the systems from which youth are referred to the program (juvenile justice, schools, community agencies, etc.). Some students also elect to participate in an optional, intensive training in Motivational Interviewing, which is offered prior to start of each the semester. During the 12 weekly sessions, students receive ongoing training and supervision to continue to support their development as mentors and their acquisition of professional skills. Therapeutic mentoring supervision is provided by family therapists who are trained in Marriage and Family Therapy. A highly selective group of experienced mentors (Mentor Coaches) provide direct supervision to mentors in a Mentor Family comprised of only mentors. This aims to assist mentors with youth interventions and role modeling. Mentor Coaches are also available to strategize how to best meet the needs of individual youth.

## **Mentor Reflection.**

Reflection is a core component of service learning (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009) and therefore formative self-evaluations and reflections are purposefully embedded in students' program experience. Students are asked to reflect on their experience both during the training and throughout the semester. This reflection occurs during the students' preparatory session with

the instructor before the youth arrive each evening, during a debriefing session after the youth have left, and in the form of a weekly journal assignment. These exercises guide each student to reflect on their own performance as a mentor and the ways in which this experience informs their own personal and professional development. In addition, mentors set clear goals for the following week, including specific objectives for supporting the academic, social, and behavioral success of their mentee. By participating in required weekly written and verbal reflections, students are able to integrate their experience of mentoring with the academic foundation provided by the assigned readings and group discussions.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

All participants were enrolled as mentors in the Campus Corps program at Colorado State University during the Spring 2010 or the Fall 2010 semesters. Mentors voluntarily consented to participate in the study. All students enrolled in the course during these semesters ( $n = 141$ ) agreed to participate in the study. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 50 ( $M = 21$ ). Eighty-seven percent of participants were female. The majority of the participants identified as Caucasian (89.5%), 3.8% identified as Hispanic, 2.6% as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 2.2% as African American and 1.9% as Asian. Additionally, a little over half of the participants (51.9%) were in their senior year at the university, 45.6% were juniors, and 2.5% were sophomores. Finally, a majority of the participants (42%) majored in Psychology, with 29% majoring in Human Development and Family Studies, 14% in Health and Exercise Science, and less than 5% in Spanish, Family and Consumer Sciences, and other.

The college student mentors were paired during the program with youth, ages 10-18 ( $M = 15$ ). These youth were not participants in this study; however their demographics are relevant to exploration of the mentors' experiences. Most youth in the program were male (64%) and the majority of the youth primarily identified as Caucasian (52%), with fewer Hispanic (41.6%), American Indian or Alaskan Native (1.4%), African American (1.2%) and other (3.8%) participants. All youth were identified by referring agencies as being at risk for future delinquency. Most youth (86%) were part of a probationary diversion program, meant to reduce the depth of a youth's entry into the juvenile jus-



tice system by providing opportunities for avoiding adjudication (Chapin & Griffin, 2005).

## **Procedure**

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Colorado State University and conducted by members of the Campus Corps leadership team, whose responsibility is program evaluation, not program implementation. Individuals who were engaged in program implementation did not participate in the recruitment of participants, facilitation of focus groups, or data analysis.

### **Recruitment.**

Participant recruitment and consent took place during Campus Corps, two weeks prior to data collection. The Campus Corps program held four separate sessions per week during the given semesters and participants were equally recruited from all four sessions. A trained researcher, unknown to potential participants, recruited students. This individual stressed the voluntary and confidential nature of participation in the study, explained that participation would not affect the course standing of any student, and reviewed potential benefits and risks associated with participation in the research study. A formal consent form was reviewed, signed, and submitted by each student.

### **Training.**

The research team developed a focus group protocol. In order to encourage participants to respond honestly to the focus group questions, the individuals who served as interviewers were unknown to study participants and were not involved in program implementation. Interviewers were trained how to ask open-ended questions, how to prompt interviewees, and how to use audio-recording equipment. They were given a copy of the interview questions to study ahead of time. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, interviewers were encouraged to follow the lead of each focus group in expressing their perception of participating in Campus Corps.

### **Data Collection.**

Nineteen focus groups were conducted. Four were completed in the pilot Spring 2010 semester of Campus Corps and 15 were completed in Fall 2010, upon completion of the 12-week Campus

Corps program. Each focus group consisted of 8-10 mentors and one trained facilitator. Each focus group was audio-recorded and lasted between 50 and 65 minutes. The focus groups were semi-structured, and open-ended questions were asked in order to guide the discussion as it related to the mentors' experience of being a mentor to at-risk youth (see Table 1). In order to facilitate participants' ease in honest and forthright communication, we did not keep record of which statements were made by a particular participant.

**Table 1. Select Open-Ended Questions for Campus Corps Focus Groups**

How has your participation in Campus Corps influenced you as a person, if at all? As a student?
How has your participation in Campus Corps influenced your thinking about your future personal choices, behaviors, attitudes, activities, and values?
How has your participation in Campus Corps influenced your perspectives on your future as a working professional?
How has your participation in Campus Corps influenced your feelings and attitudes about civic engagement?
How has your participation in Campus Corps influenced your perspective on your ability to influence the lives of others?
How has your participation in Campus Corps influenced your sense of personal responsibility for respecting or tolerating individuals whose culture, lifestyle, attitudes, values, behaviors, and challenges may be different from your own?
How do you feel your mentee has influenced you, if at all?

## Establishing Trustworthiness

This qualitative, exploratory study was conducted using a phenomenological approach. This approach was chosen, as suggested by Van Manen (1990), as a means to facilitate deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of the experience. Qualitative research was deemed appropriate due to the service-learning aspect of Campus Corps, and due to the reflective nature of the experience of mentoring. Several steps were followed to enhance the reliability of the findings. First, as described by Shenton (2004), we employed specific tactics to ensure participant honesty. At the start of each focus group the facilitator encouraged participants to be candid, assured participants that there were no right or wrong answers, and reminded participants that their comments would have no bearing on their status in Campus Corps. Further, participants were assured that their names would not be attached to their statements.

With respect to data coding, a team approach to data analysis was used to ensure validity of the emerging codes (Creswell, 1998). Finally, in reporting the results of the study, a detailed descrip-

tion of the findings is recommended (Creswell, 1998; Shenton, 2004). Accordingly, a rich depiction of the focus group interviews is provided and supplemented with quotes that are representative of the focus group participant responses.

## Data Analysis

Each focus group was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcriptions were assigned ID numbers to maintain the confidentiality of each focus group. Content analysis was used to analyze the data. First-order codes were applied to group phrases and dialogue into meaningful units, while second-order codes were used to group the units into key themes. Validity was maintained by presenting the data, in the form of unlabeled codes, to the lead researchers who then identified their own codes. Themes that were congruent were maintained in the analysis. Incongruent themes were reviewed and coding decisions were determined by the research team through consensus.

## Results

Findings from the current study revealed a significant experience for mentors of at-risk youth. Mentors described change related to personal and professional growth, as well as civic engagement and attitudes. Through the voices of the mentors, it is evident that participation in Campus Corps resulted in a “life changing experience.” The findings revealed in the current study represent an important step in beginning to understand how profound the mentoring experience can be. Table 2 provides a visual summary of the resulting themes and subthemes.

**Table 2. Summary of Focus Group Themes**

Themes	Significant Personal Growth	Notable Professional Development	Valuable Civic Attitudes and Engagement
	Recognition of privilege and opportunity	Application of course content	Awareness of local needs
	Awareness of self	Clarification of professional goals	Family systems perspective
	Management of stress and challenges	Sense of belonging at the University	Awareness of stereotypes
Subthemes	Confidence in leadership skills		Sense of volunteerism
	Development of interpersonal skills		Ability to make a difference
	Sense of purpose		

## **Significant Personal Growth**

### **Recognition of privilege and opportunities.**

Mentors reflected on their own upbringing, family, and education as a result of mentoring a vulnerable youth. Through this experience, mentors gained an appreciation for the positive aspects of their lives. Participants commented on the support they felt from families and friends during their own adolescence: "As I got to know my mentee, I became more appreciative of the things in my life that a lot of these kids don't have." Many of these sentiments were highlighted by their experience in Campus Corps as a result of learning about the often difficult life experiences of the youth mentees. For example, one participant stated: "This was such an eye opener for me, I feel extremely lucky to have parents who were so supportive of me." Contrasts in personal privilege were likely pronounced for those mentors from affluent families. Another participant noted the importance of social support: "Campus Corps made me appreciate my family and friends more. A lot of the kids didn't have the support group that I did." When mentors recognized personal privilege, this appears to have provided increased motivation for mentors to develop positive relationships with their mentees. One mentor stated: "It made me aware of privilege and how people are more privileged than others and how that affects their lives."

Participants also noted gratitude with respect to educational opportunities. One participant stated: "I think Campus Corps just reinforces how lucky I am to get to have a college education." Participants actively thought about the opportunities available to them because of a college education. While mentoring a youth who may be the first in his or her family to graduate from high school, mentors recognized that not all people have the same access to education. One mentor said: "It made me rethink my relationships with my family while growing up. I had all the resources I needed and it made me think about how fortunate I am." This reality hit home for many of the mentors and also provided inspiration to motivate and encourage their mentee to succeed academically.

### **Awareness of self.**

Due to the intimate nature of developing mentoring relationships and the many opportunities for intentional self-reflection that are embedded throughout the Campus Corps curriculum, mentors gained an enhanced self-understanding. In the

mentor relationship, they are positioned as both a friend and an authority figure when working with their mentees and as a result, they become acutely aware of their own strengths and shortcomings. For example, participants indicated that through the experience of teaching and encouraging mentees to develop better study habits, their own work habits improved. One participant described: “Campus Corps helped me be on top of my own work because I was following up on my mentee; I became more aware of my own habits.” Another participant’s comment reflected heightened awareness of potential discrepancies between their own actions and their advice to their mentee: “It made me think about what I’m doing because if I’m telling my mentee they shouldn’t be doing something, then I shouldn’t either.”

Participants also gained insight into their own personalities. Through written, verbal, formal, and informal reflection activities, mentors reflected on ways in which they felt changed by Campus Corps. One participant stated: “Campus Corps made me more aware of how I show up for people, what my strengths and weaknesses are, I learned about myself and grew personally.” Another commented: “It provided us with a good life skill of being self-reflective and recognizing your place and your identity.” Much of the program training engaged mentors in discussion about bringing their “best self” to their work with the mentees. Mentors were challenged to think about how they interact with others, how they cope with difficult situations, and how they take care of their physical and emotional selves.

### **Management of stress and challenges.**

Working with at-risk youth is not only rewarding, exciting, and enjoyable, but the reality is that stressful and challenging situations are also likely. The dynamic nature of mentoring relationships provided ample opportunities for mentors to learn effective stress management and how to respond to challenges presented by their mentees. Mentors indicated increased confidence in their ability to handle such events, as one participant reflected: “I had to learn to deal with challenging situations. I had to stretch my comfort zone. Campus Corps helped me be more flexible.” Other participants described awareness of their capacity to handle stressful situations: “I learned a lot about what I can handle in difficult situations,” and “I learned a lot about myself and learned that I am able to handle high stress situations.”

### **Confidence in leadership skills.**

Campus Corps provides opportunities not only for mentors to practice leadership in their interactions with the youth, but also with their fellow mentors. Mentors expressed that through their participation in Campus Corps they developed more confidence in their ability to lead in multiple areas of their lives. One participant described how having a comparatively young mentee allowed the mentor to act more confidently: “For me, having such a young mentee challenged my views on what to expect. It helped me realize that I can take on a leadership role and help someone. It gave me more confidence to be in that role.” Others described feeling “more assertive in authority roles.” For some mentors, the leadership confidence translated outside of Campus Corps: “It helped me to be a better leader, especially in my sport” and “It made me appreciative of my leadership role. It helped me see I could actually do this.” These experiences highlight the importance of offering opportunities for college students to be involved in leadership roles, both formally and informally. One mentor described it this way: “It is important to think of leadership in your community. You don’t have to be involved in organizations to be involved in community service. You can lead.”

### **Development of interpersonal skills.**

The reciprocal nature of mentoring relationships affords opportunities for both mentees and mentors to develop healthy interpersonal skills. Working within relationships while at Campus Corps helped mentors develop a wide array of skills in social competence. Mentors most frequently referred to developing patience and listening skills. For example, one participant highlighted how her mentee “made her more patient.” Another participant said: “I realized how important it is to listen and how the youth respond to that,” indicating the importance of lending a listening ear. These comments by the participants illustrate how, by engaging in active listening, the mentors were able to enhance the quality of the mentoring relationship as well as the quality of other relationships in their lives.

Other participants perceived that Campus Corps helped them become more understanding of others and less judgmental. One participant stated: “Campus Corps made me less likely to judge people. For example, some kids might not do their homework but they might have a reason why.” Another participant stated, “Nobody is any better than anyone else. Just because someone

didn't have the opportunities everyone had doesn't mean they don't matter." In order to illustrate the importance of accepting differences, and entering a relationship without judgment, another mentor described: "I learned that even if you have differences from people that being in an authentic relationship and being real helps you build a foundation for a relationship."

Similarly, mentors described feeling more open-minded and less inclined to react personally to others' comments or actions. One participant directly stated that "Campus Corps teaches you a lesson about not taking things personally." Another mentor described, "It was a real patience tester. My mentee was gone half the time. I had to remember it wasn't a reflection of my personality, but a reflection of her being in [a juvenile detention center] and there was nothing I could do." These perspectives suggest that the mentoring experience helped mentors grow with respect to empathizing and validating, entering a relationship with an open mind, and realizing that the actions of other individuals do not necessarily reflect on oneself.

### **Sense of purpose.**

As illustrated in all of the above subthemes, the mentor experience is deeply personal. In the same way, mentors in Campus Corps shared that their involvement gave rise to a greater sense of life purpose. However, this purpose was less related to self-improvement (as in the other subthemes) and more related to the needs of others. One mentor described: "In College, your focus is on yourself. But, Campus Corps gave me an opportunity to focus on others." Another participant added: "It's funny how when you make someone else feel they matter, you make yourself feel like you matter too." This new focus yielded a sense of fulfillment and purpose specifically. As illustrated by one participant: "Working with youth makes me feel like I'm doing something with my life and being productive." Another mentor stated: "I liked that I had the chance to give back to the community. It helped me feel fulfilled and gave me a sense of purpose." Participation as a mentor in Campus Corps seems to have increased many students' motivation to serve others and cultivated an increased confidence in their future personal and professional direction. The next main theme expands on this notion, more specifically.

## **Notable Professional Growth**

### **Application of course content.**

While some mentors were affiliated with academic programs that do not provide students with direct experience working with adolescents or in human services, most mentors were pursuing closely-related academic majors, such as Psychology or Human Development and Family Studies. Mentors expressed that their participation in Campus Corps made their education more meaningful and stated that it “was easier to grasp the knowledge I was being taught in class because I was applying it directly.” They found their courses to be more relevant and interesting as a result of their participation. One Campus Corps mentor clearly stated: “The application of the real world part of it was so beneficial, I don’t feel I really understood anything I learned in the classroom until I was in the real world.” In support of this statement, another participant said: “I understand what I learned in my classes more because of my experience.” These participants highlighted the importance of first-hand experience with respect to concepts learned in the classroom.

Furthermore, students expressed that Campus Corps made it possible for them to practice the skills that they learned in class. This made their education feel more meaningful, as described by this mentor: “Some of my psychology classes have been able to be applied to a real life setting, like adolescent development and basic counseling skills.” One mentor aspiring to be a physical therapist said: “It helped me realize that you have to motivate people in different and creative ways, based on who they are.” Even if the course was not directly related to their major, students recognized the benefit of the experience: “Because I’m a Health and Exercise Science major, I wasn’t sure how this was going to help my degree. But, it gave me an experience about life and working with people.” Mentors evidently realized that participation in the hands-on experience was important for deepening their understanding of theory and concepts learned in the classroom.

### **Clarification of professional goals.**

Direct service with individuals in the community allows students to be exposed to the profession of their choice. Sometimes this experience confirms their current career intentions and at other times it results in a desire for a new direction. Mentors from all majors experienced this. By participating in Campus Corps,



mentors either confirmed their choice of academic major or career goals or decided to change their major or career goals.

Some participants decided that after experiencing work with adolescents they were not “cut-out” for this work: “Campus Corps steered me away from working with adolescents. It was a great experience and it helped me narrow down what I want to do.” Another mentor intending to become a therapist stated: “It made me doubt my confidence and that maybe dealing with adolescents is not my forte.” Mentors who experienced a shift in their sense of career direction also expressed an appreciation for the timing of these new insights: “This has given me more to consider before graduation. It opened my eyes to more places and populations to work with.”

Other mentors expressed that Campus Corps opened their eyes to career opportunities related to their academic major as well as in other fields: “It opened my eyes to a field of work that I might be interested in down the road. I’m a business student, so this isn’t something I knew much about before.” For many young adults, university serves as a place of exploration of future possibilities and it appears that Campus Corps aided participants in this exploration. As described by one participant: “Campus Corps was a good starting point to get my feet wet and find out what I want to do in the future.” Some participants were able to gain better understanding of what working with at-risk youth entails. They used this knowledge to make more informed decisions about their future career goals. In support of this statement, one participant said: “I want to be an elementary school teacher. I think that Campus Corps led me more towards that because I want to be a positive impact for kids before they get into the system.” This statement further illustrates the impact that participation in Campus Corps had with respect to participants’ future career orientations.

While some participants decided to change their academic and career paths, many mentors felt a sense of affirmation that they are, indeed, pursuing the right career. For example, one mentor stated that: “I’ve always been interested in working with at-risk youth, and I’ve done a couple of programs that were similar. Campus Corps makes me want to do this more!” Other mentors echoed this stating: “It reaffirmed my direction and helped me realize that I want to go into counseling,” “This experience confirmed my plans to go to law school and now I have an interest in juvenile law,” and “It gave me confidence in what I want to do in the future.” It is evident, therefore, that by participating in Campus Corps, particularly at an early stage of career development, participants gain

insight regarding their own expectations of what it is like to work with adolescents.

### **Sense of belonging at University.**

One's sense of belonging at their college or university can directly impact their success in both their major and their career. Importantly, a sense of belonging can also promote retention at the university (Nicpon *et al.*, 2007). Mentors described a community of belonging – a place in which they mattered. They expressed feeling close to other mentors and mentor supervisors. Regarding the Mentor Family model, one mentor clearly depicts the closeness mentors felt during the Campus Corps experience:

“I think the Mentor Family was nice because you got really close and have a great support system.” Another mentor added, “It makes me wish some of my other classes were not so large. You don't build relationships in those classes the same way as you do in Campus Corps. It's up close and personal.” Still another said, “I think the Mentor Family is one of the best things that I experienced in Campus Corps. The big group is cool because there is a bunch of people you know, but it's even better when you get down to five people who you know you can turn to. I think it's impossible to not have a relationship with people who you spend six hours with at a time. It's impossible not to get close with them. They become constant support.” Participants often mentioned the support they received from other mentors in their Mentor Family. One participant said, “My mentor family was amazing. I had a lot of different struggles this semester and they were always there for me. I benefited from their input and their advice. I really do feel like I have a second family with them.”

Additionally, it provided an environment for students to learn from one another. One participant describes, “I think it was really helpful. You can only learn so much from one person, it helped to have different types of personalities and mentoring styles to impact the mentees. Campus Corps was our support group.” Another mentor describes how Campus Corps allowed students to network with one another: “I think it was a good experience for us as college students to network with each other too.” Mentors described a sense of family among those who took part in Campus Corps, and

a feeling of support from those in this family: “I noticed I gained a whole family and a place to belong at CSU and a feeling of support.” Another said, “I had a really close-knit family. One of the girls in my group didn’t have a mentee but you never would have noticed it. She was really close with the other two mentees that were in the family. We all just really thrived in the situation. We just really cared for each other. It was a family for sure. We mentors really supported each other outside of Campus Corps too. I think there was so much support.” This statement adds to the illustrative discussions about the support and the network that university students felt from their peers. Mentors felt that the service-learning context of Campus Corps cultivated a greater sense of belonging to the University than traditional, non-service-learning classes did.

## **Valuable Civic Attitudes and Engagement**

### **Awareness of local needs.**

Through working with their youth mentees, students were exposed to the reality of the challenges experienced by some families in the surrounding Fort Collins, Colorado community. Mentors recognized that their local community faces great needs. Some college students live in a sheltered environment while on campus. Their sense of community, therefore, exists on campus. Through exposure to the surrounding community, outside of campus, the program provided mentors with an opportunity to learn and understand what their community is facing: “It made me more aware of the things outside the college community that happen in Fort Collins. It painted a very different picture of what goes on.” Conversations with participants highlighted their heightened awareness of local needs: “Seeing the needs in Larimer County, such as gangs, makes me aware of different ways to help.” Mentors expressed a sadness related to the lack of local services for youth and frequently expressed a desire to promote programs such as Campus Corps: “I realized what a great need we have for working with kids in the Fort Collins community and that we need more programs like Campus Corps.”

### **Awareness of stereotypes.**

At-risk youth often have a certain inevitable reputation in the community. The focus group discussions illustrated that many mentors began the program with negative and preconceived perspectives concerning “at-risk youth”, but that through their first-

hand experience they were able to challenge and let go of their previous judgments, and develop more positive and empathetic perspectives. One mentor stated: “I had to really re-examine my biases because I came in with a strong bias of where these kids were coming from, but as I got to know them, those biases were blown out of the water.” Mentors also indicated that their appreciation for diversity increased: “It helped me realize my own stereotypes; I realized I shouldn’t assume anything about people based on how they look,” and “You shouldn’t be labeled for your mistakes; labeling has a bigger effect than we think it does.” Mentors appeared to gain the perspective that the youth served by Campus Corps were not “bad,” but rather that they had experienced life challenges and situations that may have negatively influenced their behaviors. One participant made the heartfelt comment that: “They are good kids, they’re not bad people.”

### **Sense of volunteerism.**

Many of the mentors expressed that through the program they developed a greater understanding of the importance of community, as well as an increased desire to participate in community service and volunteer. One participant described: “Once I talked to the youth and realized how much they value the time we spend with them, it made me realize how much of a responsibility we have to step up and volunteer in our community.” Another participant stated: “Campus Corps influenced me with respect to the idea of volunteering and service work. This kind of thing can change a person’s life.” Yet another participant exclaimed that involvement in Campus Corps made “[me] want to help out with the community even more.” Many participants mirrored this statement. One mentor reflected, “I realize it is more than just community service, I enjoyed doing it for fun and it didn’t feel like a requirement. It helped me realize I might want to do more of this in the future.” Volunteerism and community service—initially regarded as an extra line on a résumé, or forced duty—became a fun and engaging activity. Another mentor put it this way: “I think it’s very sad to see people want something in return for helping others. We should do it because we want to help, not because we have to.” Mentors echoed this perspective when many of them chose to volunteer for subsequent semesters of Campus Corps as Mentor Coaches.

## **Family systems perspective.**

Campus Corps was designed by family therapists and is organized around a family systems framework. Because of this, mentors were exposed to a new understanding and appreciation for the interactions among subsystems. Mentors described that they now recognize that youth are a part of a larger family system in which patterns, rules, boundaries, and expectations exist. Mentors gained knowledge of the profound influence of families on adolescent development. Illustrating this theme, one participant discussed the importance of family boundaries: “My mentee had parents who had good boundaries and it helped me realize just how that affects the mentees that we have here.” Another participant commented on the interconnectedness of systems: “Seeing the factors that play into the lives of youth and how that web influences who they are. Being able to look at them holistically and not try to blame one person or one system is important.” Yet another participant highlighted how the program helped him/her understand the importance of helping one part of a system as a means to help the larger system: “I’ve grown up being involved and I’ve never thought about how we can serve a family as a whole, not just kids.” Mentors also saw the value of considering the larger context in which a young person lives including the families, peers, and greater institutions (e.g., juvenile justice and child welfare) to which they belong. Further, mentors realized that youth also influence reactions from their immediate environments. This new systemic perspective aided mentors in their work with youth by allowing them to understand the chain of reaction involved in systems theory.

## **Ability to make a difference.**

The mentors who participated in the focus groups were asked how Campus Corps influenced their confidence in their ability to make a difference. A few of the mentors expressed that they had a decreased confidence in their ability to make a difference because they realized that the extent of change that is needed is beyond the ability of a single individual. For instance, “I feel less confident in my ability because I couldn’t pick him up and take him to school. I felt limited in what I could do.” This sentiment is understandable for service-learners. Often, the magnitude and complexity of the problem they are exposed to appears so large that it is overwhelming. Some mentors experienced despair when they realized the extent of the problems that their mentees faced: “I feel disheartened because it took so much effort to make such a small difference

with my mentee. If I can't help one girl, how am I going to make a big difference?"

Other participants experienced hope when they realized that sometimes empathy, understanding and being engaged with their mentee was enough to make a difference. A healthy balance of hope and urgency emerged for mentors taking part in Campus Corps:

“There are a lot of big social problems in our world, but if no one does anything, there will be no changes. Campus Corps helped me to see that we can affect the little things, and that might affect the big problems later on.”

Additionally, many mentors expressed that they indeed feel more confident in their ability to make a difference in their community and in the lives of others, especially in the lives of at-risk youth: “I learned that people our age (referring to traditional college students) can have a positive impact on teenagers and our community.” Other mentors stated: “I feel like I am more confident in my ability to change others,” “I realized it was just the little things that mattered and that you don't have to make a huge impact to make a difference,” and “It's given me hope that I can really make a difference with what I want to do.” Lastly, some mentors expressed a sense of relief that while skill and education are not insignificant, a helping hand can make a difference in someone's life: “I realized you don't need as many skills or schooling and you can still make a difference.”

## Discussion

The findings presented in this article provide an important window into the experiences of college students who serve as mentors in the context of a service-learning course. The current study builds on service-learning scholarship (e.g., *Astin & Sax, 1998; Deeley, 2010; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Schmidt et al., 2004*) and extends it to the mentors' experience of mentoring at-risk youth. Specifically, the experience of mentoring at-risk youth within a service-learning course appears to benefit the college student mentors who participated in Campus Corps. Results from this qualitative study revealed that participation in Campus Corps resulted in mentors experiencing: (1) significant personal growth; (2) notable professional development; and (3) valuable civic attitudes and engagement.

Many of the sub-themes that emerged from focus groups in this study are consistent with findings from similar research studies, and further clarify the profound experience that well-designed service-learning opportunities provide to students. For instance, other researchers have noted that engagement in meaningful service learning has resulted in significant personal growth for students, such as improved self-efficacy and self-confidence (Deeley, 2010; Lisman, 1998), an increased ability to manage stress (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, et al., 1997), greater awareness of self and others (McKenna & Rizzo, 1999), and a greater awareness of privilege and opportunity (Hughes et al., 2010). Improvements in civic attitudes and engagement also have been found by other researchers, including an increased awareness of community concerns (Astin & Sax; Giles & Braxton, 1997; Giles & Eyler, 1994), a greater sense of volunteerism (Astin & Sax, 1999), increased sense of social and personal responsibility (Giles & Eyler), awareness of stereotypes (Hughes, et al, 2009) and greater confidence in the ability to make a difference for others (Schmidt, et al., 2004). Similar to our findings, other researchers have noted that service-learning students experience significant professional development, such as clarification of professional goals (Hughes, et al., 2010) and ability to apply theory to real world issues (Astin & Sax, 1998; Markus, Howard, & King, et al., 1993).

While many sub-themes that emerged from focus groups in this study were consistent with findings from similar research, one sub-theme is unique; that is, students gained a greater sense of belonging at the University through participation in Campus Corps. Mentors resoundingly reported feeling a greater sense of social support in their personal, educational, and professional lives as a result of participating in Campus Corps. This finding is noteworthy because it has implications for academic persistence and retention—an important topic on university campuses. Students who feel as if they belong and matter to other students, faculty, staff, and the campus, in general, are more likely to feel satisfied at their current university and to re-enroll (e.g., Harris., 2006).

We hypothesize that this greater sense of belonging results from the unique design of Campus Corps. First, because Campus Corps includes mentors from over 40 majors, students that would not typically have class together have the opportunity to interact with each other across departments, reinforcing their connection to the broader campus. Second, unlike many service-learning opportunities in which students leave campus to engage individually or in small groups with a particular community agency or

population, Campus Corps occurs on campus in a group setting. An intentional community is created by having mentor-mentee pairs meet in the same location at the same time to engage in meaningful activities together. Third, and perhaps most influential to the sense of belonging, the Mentor Family component of Campus Corps provides a built-in support system and place of belonging.

Rather than applying a traditional dyadic model of youth mentoring in which the mentor and mentee engage in activities in isolation, Mentor Families integrate each dyad in meaningful, enriched relationships with additional mentor-mentee pairs. As described above, Mentor Families are comprised of four mentor-mentee pairs, and are facilitated and supervised by a Mentor Coach, an experienced Mentor. These Mentor Families belong to a structured and intentional community, which is overseen by a Family Therapist Instructor. During an evening of Campus Corps, Mentor Families have their own space and spend a considerable amount of time together (e.g., going on a walk around campus, sharing a family-style meal and working on homework). As such, each mentor dyad is nested within a network of support beginning with the Mentor Family, and extending to a larger structured mentoring community.

By interacting with the other mentors and mentees within a Mentor Family, mentors have meaningful experiences with one another. They witness first-hand one another's successes and challenges in mentoring, and are able to elicit in-the-moment support from one another in mentoring the youth in their Mentor Family. Mentors within a Mentor Family also spend two hours per evening (the hour before youth arrive and the hour after youth depart) together, engaging in personal reflection and strategizing together how to make the biggest difference in the lives of the youth in their Mentor Families. As such, mentors learn to rely on one other for advice, encouragement, and companionship, thereby providing them with opportunities to develop close personal relationships. As reported by many focus group participants, these relationships often extend beyond Campus Corps and into the other aspects of students' lives, translating to a greater sense of social support and belonging at the University.

## **Implications**

Because service learning experiences often ignite significant personal and professional growth in students, it is incumbent on faculty who teach service-learning courses to provide students with



the necessary supports and resources to fully realize the potential of this growth. Our experiences have taught us the importance of several types of support: (1) opportunities for reflection, (2) referrals to other services or communities on campus, and (3) continued opportunities to belong.

As has been noted by many service-learning scholars, intentional and effective reflection is an essential element of course success (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, *et al.*, 2009). It is through reflection that students are able to make sense of and meaningfully integrate their service-learning experiences (Bell, 1997). Additionally, reflection provides faculty with a window into students' experiences, allowing them to intervene, if necessary or desirable. For instance, in focus groups a few students indicated their experiences in Campus Corps had made them less confident in their ability to make a difference. If a student shares these perspectives as part of formal or informal reflection, a faculty member is provided an opportunity to explore how to best support this student in their service-learning role.

We have learned that a second type of support also is important; that is, referrals to other services or communities on campus. For instance, as students experience significant personal growth, they often benefit from referrals for counseling, leadership opportunities, or diversity and social justice outlets for involvement. Students experiencing notable professional development often benefit from referrals to appropriate services on campus that help them explore these new trajectories. Assuring that students are connected with advisors in different departments or career counselors at the campus career services center will be particularly helpful as they reflect on the application of course content, clarify professional goals and experience a deeper sense of belonging on campus. Additionally, as students exhibit valuable civic attitudes and engagement, faculty may want to connect them with resources that can facilitate further engagement in the community. Campus service-learning offices or community-based volunteer clearinghouses can provide students with the connections they need to make the next step as they further integrate service-learning into their lives.

Third, given the meaningful experience and sense of belonging that students often gained during Campus Corps, it is not surprising that they often sought ways to continue to be involved. We found many avenues for this continued involvement, which contributed to an even greater sense of community for students. Opportunities for continued involvement were: re-enrolling in the course to serve

as a mentor for another semester, enrolling in the course to serve as a Mentor Coach, serving as a research assistant on the project, serving as a teaching assistant for the Campus Corps course, conduct an honors thesis relevant to Campus Corps, or volunteering to lead activities or contribute in other ways.

## **Limitations**

A few elements of this study limit the extent to which the study findings can be generalized to other populations and contexts. First, students' responses were self-reported and although the aim of this study was to capture their experience first-hand, direct observation of changes in mentors may add additional information to this research (*Hughes et al., 2010*). Second, focus groups were conducted at the end of the semester in which students were involved in Campus Corps. Without follow-up data, it cannot be determined how long-lasting the changes that students reported will be. Third, the majority of the sample included White college students and thus, overgeneralizing these results to other populations is not recommended.

## **Next Steps**

The results of this study have informed the researchers' subsequent design of a quantitative, quasi-experimental evaluation of the outcomes of participation in Campus Corps for student mentors. Decisions about the variables to measure in the quantitative study were informed by salient themes from these focus groups, such as mentors' civic attitudes, diversity awareness, interpersonal skills, self-esteem, and community service self-efficacy. In this study, variables related to student retention, such as students' sense of belonging on campus and intention to re-enroll, also will be measured.

In the further future, the researchers plan to investigate characteristics of mentees or mentor-mentee matches that may contribute to greater benefits to mentors. Match variables may include age difference between mentors and mentees, the effect of similar at-risk backgrounds, and what difference a mentee's success in Campus Corps may have on a mentor's experience. The researchers also are interested in exploring the factors that contribute to service-learning students experiencing a loss in confidence in their ability to help others. While this tends to be a minority of students who experience this unintended consequence of service learning, discovering the factors that contribute to this phenomenon will help

practitioners strengthen teaching methods for these students. Additional research goals include the creation of a specific quantitative measure for capturing the mentor experience. Although measures exist to look at many components of the experience, no measure identified to date captures the experience of mentoring specifically. Finally, a longitudinal assessment is needed to evaluate the sustainability of outcomes experienced by mentors and future research will track student outcomes over time (e.g., 6-month intervals throughout their college career). This will allow the researchers to explore, for example, whether mentors' Campus Corps experience affects their graduation rates, career choice upon graduation, longer-term sense of civic responsibility, or future community involvement.

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# **Health Campaigns as Engaged Pedagogy: Considering a Motorcycle Safety Campaign as Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

Marifran Mattson, Emily J. Haas, and Carin Kosmoski

## **Abstract**

This article argues that teaching health campaigns from an engaged pedagogy perspective is beneficial for students, instructors, and communities. This argument is supported by a teaching and learning perspective using a motorcycle safety campaign as an exemplar. Retrospective interviews were conducted with students who participated in a graduate-level, two-course engaged pedagogy sequence. Subsequently, the instructor's perspective is used to describe challenges and offer suggestions for teaching health campaigns applying the scholarship of teaching and learning perspective. The analysis illustrates the benefits gained by incorporating a real-time health campaign into the curriculum, such as accomplishing specific course objectives while working on a bona fide safety campaign, and achieving a high level of student satisfaction. Ultimately, instructors are encouraged to incorporate this engaged approach when designing and teaching health campaign courses.

## **Introduction**

This article reports on a study that evaluated the learning outcomes of a health campaign course that designed, implemented, and evaluated a motorcycle safety campaign in the Purdue University community. The Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign was established in 2006 because a serious motorcycle accident involving their course instructor led graduate students, in a two-course sequence on health campaigns, to suspect their community needed a road safety campaign. After convincing their reluctant instructor to allow the class to conduct a needs assessment, a new road safety campaign was deemed warranted (Kosmoski, Mattson, & Hall, 2007), and the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign was disseminated one year later. Currently, undergraduate and graduate students, with guidance from their instructor, continue to collaborate with the community through this ongoing campaign to promote motorcycle safety among motorcyclists, drivers of cars and trucks, and family and friends of motorcyclists.

Although students' anecdotal and course evaluation feedback has been consistently positive, the instructor questioned whether applying this engaged approach to pedagogy assisted the students in achieving the learning objectives and applying those objectives in their careers. Therefore, a retrospective study was designed to assess what students learned in this unique health campaigns course.

We begin by mentioning traditional readings often included in health campaign courses. Next, we describe the engaged pedagogy approach integrated into this new health campaigns course. We then discuss study methods and results, to illustrate how integrating a real-time campaign facilitated the accomplishment of course learning objectives. Finally, the course instructor's perspective is presented to highlight the challenges of teaching a health campaign course in this way, and to offer suggestions for addressing these challenges.

## Literature Review

Generally, traditional approaches to teaching health campaigns feature readings from the literature about campaign theories, case studies, class discussion, and written assignments. Typical sources for learning about health campaign process include "The Pink Book" (*Making Health Communication Programs Work*; National Cancer Institute, 2001) and CDCynergy (CDC, 2003). CDCynergy is a CD-ROM-based tool that provides a step-by-step process for developing and implementing a social marketing campaign. In addition, the health communication campaign framework (Mattson & Basu, 2010a, 2010b) presents a phase-by-phase campaign development and evaluation process. Like The Pink Book, the health communication campaign framework (Figure 1) is situated within social marketing (Kotler & Lee, 2008) but extends the model with essential communication elements to consider when creating, disseminating, and evaluating campaign messages.

Although students gain knowledge from reading about and studying the health campaign process through these sources, translating a traditional health campaign course into a more engaged pedagogy that is consistent with the scholarship of teaching and learning is thought to enrich students' learning experiences, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities (Mattson, 2011). The design, implementation, and evaluation of the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign is an exemplar of this approach because conceiving and developing this real-time campaign immersed stu-



dents as they simultaneously addressed course learning objectives and a genuine community need. The two-course sequence illuminates how students, with their instructor, combined a traditional readings-based approach during the initial phases of the campaign and progressed toward the scholarship of teaching and learning as they developed messages, then implemented and evaluated the campaign. This project advances the literature by demonstrating how developing a bona fide health campaign can foster stronger learning outcomes for students, such as building confidence and applicable skills for their careers.

### **Overview of the Project: The Motorcycle Safety at Purdue Campaign as Engaged Pedagogy**

The Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign is distinctive both for its roots in pedagogy and its extensive use as a teaching strategy to enhance learning outcomes and student satisfaction. The goal of the two-course sequence was to learn about the research and practice of designing, implementing, and evaluating health campaigns. The specific learning objectives included

1. understanding campaign process using a reframed social marketing approach grounded in communication theory, research, and practice;
2. studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices;
3. learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy; and
4. designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation.

Consistent with a traditional-readings approach to teaching health campaigns courses, students utilized information presented by *The Pink Book* (NCI, 2001), CDCynergy (CDC, 2003), the health communication campaign framework (Mattson & Basu, 2010a, 2010b), and *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good* (Kotler & Lee, 2008) to study previous campaigns, identify best practices, and further understand the messaging process. Then, moving beyond the traditional readings-based approach, the instructor incorporated a scholarship of teaching and learning approach by engaging students in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a health campaign to meet expressed community needs. In accord with the fourth learning objective, this engagement integrated the other three course objectives with direct application in the com-

munity. The format of the two-course sequence, which aligns with the four-stage process of health campaign development, is outlined as follows.

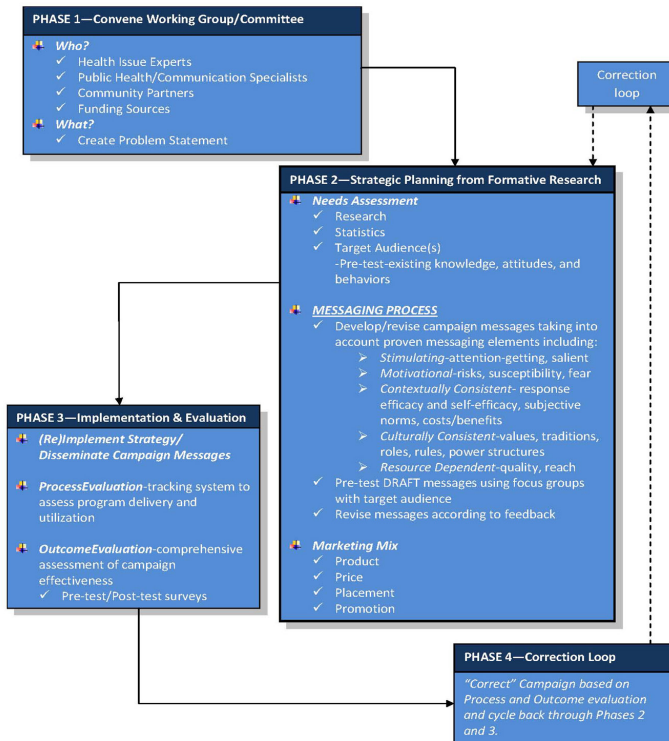


Figure 1. Health Communication Campaign Framework (adapted from Mattson & Basu, 2010a; 2010b)

## Phase I of the Project: Strategic Planning from Formative Research

### Needs assessment.

The second learning objective was for students to study previous campaigns and identify best practices. One such practice students identified through their course readings was conducting a thorough needs assessment before developing a health campaign (Gilmore & Campbell, 2005; NCI, 2001). Alerted by the course instructor's motorcycle accident, the students suspected that a road safety campaign was needed. However, to gain more definitive knowledge, the students conducted a comprehensive needs assessment (Kosmoski et al., 2007), using strategies outlined by Gilmore and

Campbell (2005). The first step was an information search and review of literature about motorcycle safety. After research into the issue, they drafted the following problem statement:

The incidence of deaths as well as injuries on motorcycles has been steadily increasing over the past seven years. Each year, an average of 3,000 people (nationally?) die as a result of a motorcycle accident and around 60,000 are injured. In the state of the Motorcycle Safety Campaign, there were 2,157 motorcycle crashes in 1999. 1,637 motorcyclists were injured and 67 were fatalities. (*Motorcycle Industry Council, 2006*).

Factors contributing to this problem are: lack of helmet usage, (helmet use among fatally injured motorcyclists is below 50% and only 53% of motorcyclists in the Midwest use a helmet) lack of helmet laws, unlicensed cyclists and almost a third of the fatally-injured operators are unlicensed and speeding.

Potential motorcycle rider profiles show that two age groups are most at risk for injuries and death. Part of the challenge for this campaign will be that the reasons are different across age groups.

If better safety measures are not taken, such as increased helmet use, better education, wearing protective clothing, driving at appropriate speeds and changing policies, motorcycle riders will continue to be more susceptible to death, injury, and permanent disability which can affect quality of life. Accidents also can result in an increase of financial costs for the rider and his or her family, as well as health care costs for other health care consumers.

Based on the problem statement, students assessed the surrounding community needs relative to motorcycle safety. Typically, university communities contain structural and logistical risk factors associated with motorcycle accidents. The home of the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign is West Lafayette, Indiana, a mid-sized, upper-middle-class town. Several unclearly marked one-way streets run through the campus. Crowds of pedes-

trians often jaywalk across these as well as other campus streets. Additionally, thousands of new students and their friends and family come to the university each year. Many of these individuals are unaware of the community's traffic patterns and regulations. All these factors—the confusing traffic patterns, the lack of understanding of traffic regulations, and the inconsistent movements of pedestrians—cause distractions for motorcyclists and drivers of cars and trucks that can compromise safety.

Students also discovered that university demographics exacerbated traffic and motorcycle safety risks. The Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign was developed and initiated in West Lafayette, where more than 50% of the population is aged 18 to 24 and approximately 10% are under the age of 18. In addition, there are 137 males to every 100 females over the age of 18 (*Purdue University, 2009–2010*). Further, the incidence of vehicle crashes, and motorcycle crashes in particular, is highest among young males (*CDC, 2008; NHTSA, 2010*). These demographics and the associated risk factors suggest that this university community is an appropriate environment within which to address motorcycle safety for this high-risk population.

Crash statistics also informed the decision to create a motorcycle safety campaign for Purdue University and the surrounding community. In Indiana, Purdue University's home state, motorcyclist fatalities have increased an average of 9.4% annually, while other categories of traffic fatalities have decreased (*Nunn, 2009*). The age groups most frequently involved in motorcycle crashes are 21–30 and 41–50 (*NHTSA, 2010*). In 2009, 100 motorcycle crashes were reported in Tippecanoe county, where Purdue University is located (*Nunn, 2009*). Generally in this county, motorcycle crashes are “primarily due to driver error, failure to yield the right-of-way, or an unsafe speed by either the motorcyclist and/or other drivers involved” (*Baldwin, 2007, p. 41*). Thus, Purdue University and its surrounding community were deemed an essential setting for a motorcycle safety campaign.

After gathering relevant statistics to inform the campaign (e.g., demographic information, geography of the community, logistical risk factors), the second step of the needs assessment was forming focus groups with motorcyclists from the university community. It was important to discuss with motorcyclists whether they perceived a need for a safety campaign. Three focus groups were conducted with motorcyclists who were university students, staff, and faculty. To recruit participants, flyers were posted around campus. Based on Krueger and Casey's (2000) recommendation, 8–15 participants

were recruited for each focus group, although some sessions had fewer than 8 participants, due to the voluntary and uncompensated nature of the methodology. The focus groups were conducted on the campus. Students in the course served as facilitators and co-facilitators of the focus groups while the remaining students and the instructor observed and took copious notes. The students in the course did not serve as focus group participants. This same recruitment process occurred for each focus group conducted during the two-course sequence. Focus group facilitators probed motorcyclists about their beliefs and behaviors regarding safety practices, such as wearing safety gear and riding safely, as well as their opinions about what should be included in a motorcycle safety campaign.

Several crucial findings from these focus groups shaped subsequent development of the campaign. Students learned that motorcyclists would be accepting and supportive of a motorcycle safety campaign if motorcyclists were not the only target audience. Motorcyclists were weary of campaigns telling them how to be safer while no campaigns targeted drivers of cars and trucks to be safer around motorcyclists. Focus group participants also indicated they would appreciate facts and statistics regarding motorcycle safety so they could make informed decisions about their personal safety. This portion of the needs assessment supported the working assumption that a comprehensive motorcycle safety campaign was warranted and likely would be accepted by the surrounding community. The needs assessment also determined the three target audiences for the campaign: motorcyclists, drivers of cars and trucks, and family and friends of motorcyclists.

In addition to providing valuable information that shaped the development of the campaign, the needs assessment gave students experience conducting focus groups. In addition to reading about focus groups (*Krueger, 1998; Krueger & Casey, 2000*), students gained experiential lessons regarding frustrations associated with preparing and revising an institutional review board application, recruiting participants (especially with very specific selection criteria), non-attendance by some registrants, resources that focus groups require, and how being a focus group facilitator is a demanding yet pivotal role. Despite these challenges, students learned that focus group research provides rich feedback in a relatively short time. Students gained a better understanding of and appreciation for a typical research method for health campaigns and other consumer-oriented initiatives.

After determining that the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign would target three audiences, the students were divided into

three target audience teams. Each target audience team, which consisted of approximately 3–5 students, was assigned a target audience (i.e., motorcyclists, drivers of cars and trucks, family and friends of motorcyclists) and tasked with conducting a needs assessment specific to that audience. The goal was to understand what each target audience needed from the campaign. Target audience teams decided what methodology was appropriate and subsequently conducted focus groups and surveys to gather data about the attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and information needs of each target audience. For example, the needs assessment for family and friends of motorcyclists revealed that 80% of those surveyed supported their family member or friend's riding a motorcycle, but many desired that the individual ride more safely (*Kosmoski et al., 2007*). Family and friends communicated that they needed techniques for successfully persuading their family member or friend to be safer while riding a motorcycle. This encouraged the students to develop conversation starters for family and friends of motorcyclists to comfortably initiate discussions about safety with motorcyclists. Conversation starters provide scenarios that offer the opportunity to talk with a motorcyclist about safe riding, such as a news report of a motorcycle crash, seeing a motorcycle for sale by owner, watching a motorcyclist on television, and noticing someone riding a motorcycle. Each conversation starter card includes one of these scenarios and talking points for initiating a conversation about motorcycle safety. For instance, if someone is riding their motorcycle with all their protective gear, the family member or friend could indicate that the motorcyclist's use of safety gear makes them feel more at ease.

From these targeted needs assessments, the students and instructor refined the strategic plan for the campaign based on the unique communication requirements of each target audience. Suggestions for communication channels through which each target audience could be reached most efficiently and effectively included a website, a booth at campus events, and bus posters.

### **Community Partnerships.**

The students knew from their formative research that to increase credibility with their target audiences and serve as channels for message dissemination, they would need to develop and sustain community partnerships (*Mattson & Basu, 2010a, 2010b; NCI, 2001*). The first partnership activity took place during a scheduled class meeting. Telephone books were brought to class, and students looked through the yellow pages to brainstorm area

businesses and nonprofit organizations that might become campaign partners. After a list of potential partners was generated, students role-played making a partnership pitch to each organization. This role-play activity helped students formulate and revise the pitch they would eventually make in person. After thorough rehearsal, small groups of students were assigned organizations from the list of potential partners. Consequently, the campaign developed essential and longstanding partnerships with American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE), a motorcycle dealership, the Purdue University football team, the city bus public transportation company, and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. No community organizations declined partnering with the campaign; however, several meetings occurred to solidify the partnerships and determine the benefits for both the campaign and the community partner. In addition to benefiting the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign, these partnership activities raised students' confidence in their ability to discuss the campaign and persuade others to become involved in addressing a relevant safety issue in the community. This emphasis on partnerships and collaboration with the community allowed students to experience the multifaceted approach necessary to create a health campaign, as stated in the third course learning objective.

## **Phase 2 of the Project: The Messaging Process**

### **Pre-testing messages and promotional items.**

Based on the needs assessment and the messaging elements outlined by the health communication campaign framework (*Mattson & Basu, 2010a, 2010b*), the students developed several draft messages and promotional items. Draft messages were tested with at least two focus groups for each target audience. Results from the 12 focus groups indicated clear audience preferences for messages and promotional materials that sometimes were inconsistent with students' expectations. For example, students' favorite draft message was targeted toward the family and friends audience and featured an image of a wildly unattractive female with the caption "You wouldn't let your friend go home with that ugly girl from the bar, why would you let him ride unsafely? Talk to your friends about riding safely" (Figure 2). The students were certain this risqué, edgy message would capture the target audience's attention. Therefore, the students were surprised when the feedback from focus group participants was negative. Participants said the message was too wordy and required too much thought and time to process; some considered the image offensive. Therefore, this message was not considered further for the campaign.



Figure 2. Example of draft motorcycle safety message

Focus group responses to another message also surprised the students. This message foregrounded intersecting street signs that displayed well-known campus street names as well as “Awareness” and “Respect” as the top two street names on the pole. The accompanying text stated, “Motorcycle safety is where awareness and respect intersect” (Figure 3). The students wondered if the message was clever enough to grab the attention of the target audiences. Although focus group participants suggested revisions to make the message more straightforward, they generally liked the message because it emphasized an essential element of motorcycle safety, respect, and was relevant to the university campus through the local street names.



Figure 3. Sample motorcycle safety message



Seven other draft messages and three versions of the campaign logo, a preliminary website, and numerous ideas for promotional items (including T-shirts, pens, key chains, and air fresheners) were tested during each of the focus groups conducted by the target audience teams. The most popular promotional items were T-shirts, pens, and key chains. Feedback collected from the focus groups was analyzed (*Krueger, 1998*) and resulted in major revisions to the draft messages and the promotional items. Revised messages and promotional items were repeatedly pre-tested with subsequent focus groups. When focus group participants confirmed the acceptability of final designs, those designs were approved for production.

One of the lessons not overtly included in health campaign literature that students learned during message testing is the necessity of overruling target audience members when their feedback challenges the integrity of the campaign. For example, while testing different types of key chains, nearly all focus group participants indicated that they preferred the key chains that included a bottle opener. This focus group feedback was overruled by the students and the instructor because distributing a key chain that also functions as a bottle opener may send a contradictory message about drinking and driving and would conflict with the safety messages of the campaign.

The messaging process was exciting, creative, and arduous for the students. Students experienced enlightening moments when they received negative feedback about their favorite message designs or when feedback contradicted the campaign's safety message. Generally, the message-testing activities provided empirical evidence to support campaign development guidelines that message testing is imperative.

### **Phase 3 of the Project: Campaign Implementation**

Implementation was the most rewarding phase for the students because they experienced all the labor of previous phases coalescing into the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign roll-out. The campaign was implemented one year after its conception. Campaign messages were broadcast on the campus television network, posted inside buses that traversed campus, and displayed at the campaign's booth during relevant events. The students and instructor served as representatives of the campaign at various events and interacted with people who approached the booth. Students engaged booth visitors in dialogue regarding the importance of and strategies for

motorcycle safety, answered questions, and provided handouts and promotional items.

Participating in campaign implementation activities provided students the opportunity to interact with each target audience and observe responses to their work promoting safety behaviors. Students also learned that representing a health campaign is not always easy or comfortable, as they sometimes encountered opposition from individuals who did not agree with the goals of the campaign. Students learned and refined their abilities to assertively initiate conversations, and they developed additional skills such as crafting counterarguments in real time and politely accepting criticism. These unique learning experiences can be achieved only by participating in a bona fide campaign.

### **Phase 4 of the Project: Campaign Evaluation**

Although evaluation is emphasized in the final phases of health campaign literature and models, an evaluation plan must be included in the strategic plan as the campaign is being developed. Assessing the effectiveness of the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign posed a unique challenge because the campaign has no predetermined end date. Instead, the campaign is intended to persist until there is a substantial and sustained decrease in motorcycle crashes, injuries, and deaths. To assess the effectiveness of the campaign, the students conducted a baseline survey of the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of target audience members regarding motorcycle safety prior to campaign implementation (i.e., August 2006). The survey for motorcyclists contained 76 questions; the survey for drivers of cars and trucks, 50 questions; and the survey for family and friends of motorcyclists, 67 questions. Since students in the two-course sequence conducted the baseline survey, the campaign has conducted surveys during the spring of each subsequent year beginning in 2007 to continue measuring changes in the target audiences' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding motorcycle safety.

The surveys students developed at baseline continue to be utilized annually with additional questions included to determine the effectiveness of new messages and channels of distribution. Most participants are university students, although some faculty and staff also complete the surveys. Space constraints preclude inclusion of outcome data for each year and target audience in this article; however, the data indicates a steady increase in awareness of the campaign on Purdue University's campus. Participants

report being aware of the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign mainly through campaign messages and promotional items such as T-shirts and key chains, communication classes, events on campus, and word of mouth.

Students in the initial course sequence experienced the challenges involved in creating a valid survey to assess the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign, including the need to pre-test the survey and finding and reaching out to target audience members who have been exposed to campaign messages. Perhaps most telling, students learned that campaigns do not always produce immediate results; rather, campaign practitioners must diligently and patiently pursue the campaign strategy. Developing a strategy to evaluate the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign was the fourth learning objective students were tasked with in the course.

This detailed account of the four-step campaign process followed during the two-course sequence is intended to aid readers in understanding the campaign project and to support those contemplating possible future implementation of this course format. The next section reports on the retrospective study that the students participated in to evaluate the learning outcomes of the course.

## **Methods**

The study involving the former students of the two-course sequence assessed how they responded to the engaged pedagogy approach used to teach them health campaigns. Since this approach to teaching health campaigns courses is unique and still utilized by the instructor, further inquiry about the impact of this teaching method on students' learning outcomes and application of those outcomes was necessary. Although students evaluated the course upon its completion, following up with students to determine how they utilized skills learned in the course could provide more insight into this teaching method. This study was deemed by the Institutional Review Board to be exempt because respondents were anonymous to the instructor and the questions did not contain sensitive information.

## **Data Collection and Sample**

A list of eight interview questions was distributed electronically to the 17 graduate students who completed the two-course sequence. The interviews were administered electronically because a majority of the students had completed their graduate program and were geographically dispersed. Since students did not know

they would receive a request to evaluate the course, they were given two weeks to complete the evaluation and send their responses to a current graduate student's e-mail address so individual responses would be anonymous to the instructor.

The interview questions were developed based on the goal of engaged scholarship as encouraging a more active learning experience through hands-on participation (Boyer, 1996) and to help assess the effectiveness of this approach as a pedagogical tool. The questions probed students' expected and unexpected challenges, whether the course prepared them for health campaign research and fieldwork, whether the instructor created a collaborative environment among students, how collaboration was fostered in the community, what students learned about fostering collaboration, whether project teams experienced conflict during the course and, if so, how they handled conflict in ways that fostered collaboration. After three e-mail reminders, a total of eight students (47%) responded to the interview questions.

## **Data Analysis**

The graduate student and professor adhered to Boyatzis' (1998) guidelines of thematic analysis. Initial coding occurred within each data file, during which each interview transcript was read line by line to inductively derive codes from the raw responses. After initial coding provided analytic direction, focused coding occurred during which all of the transcripts were analyzed together to synthesize and further connect the themes that emerged from the data. Generally, themes emerged within each interview question. For example, respondents were asked to discuss expected and unexpected challenges in a course that was structured in this format. Several themes emerged related to expected and unexpected challenges that were coded during the analysis. The data was analyzed by a graduate research assistant and then reviewed by the course professor to ensure it fit within the code and to further elaborate the code. After reliability was determined based on the repetition of the data, the codes were finalized and defined with their respective themes and the codebook was confirmed. Following are the themes that emerged from responses to the interview questions.

## **Findings**

The findings of this study are summarized in Table 1. In addition to providing the themes that emerged from the interviews, the table depicts the learning objectives addressed and the number of

students who responded within each theme. Example responses also are included to illustrate how the themes were identified. The first theme encompasses the challenges that respondents acknowledged throughout the course.

**Table 1. Thematic Depiction of Respondents' Reflections**

Code	Theme (n) in Parentheses	Example	Respondent Response/ Reflection	Learning Outcome(s)
Unexpected Challenges	Community collaboration/partnerships (n=7)	"The realities of working with outside stakeholders/partners (potential community partners not returning phonecalls or not following through)." (Respondent 1)	"I'm hesitant to call teh example a challenge because it was an essential experience in understanding audience segmentation and message development." (Respondent 1)	* Studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices. * Learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy.
	Time and effort needed to create a campaign (n=6)	"I think the most unexpcted challenge that we faced was hot time consuming the class projects were. We completed a tremendous amount of work in one semester so we were constantly working on multiple projects." (Respondent 3)	"There were a few times when as a class we had to adjust deadlines or even expectations. I learned to work together and have confidencei n my colleagues' work. I learned to delegate instead of micromanage." (Respondent 3)	* Learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy. * Designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation.
	Money troubles (n=3)	"The challenge that we faced for securing money was frustrating because we needed some seed funds to do the formative research and produce teh posters." (Respondent 6)	"I later went with Marifran to meet with him and a partnership developed into a long-term relationship and provided a venue for the campaign to put the ads." (Respondent 6)	* Learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy.

**Table 1. cont.....Thematic Depiction of Respondents' Reflections**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Theme (n) in Parentheses</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Respondent Response/ Reflection</b>	<b>Learning Outcome(s)</b>
	Working with colleagues and community members (n=6)	"As a group we dealt with a few stakeholder groups and realized that matching time for events and meetings with us and them can be a tedious process. Our lives as students, the professor's schedule in terms of all the things she is involved with, and the stakeholder's schedules all in the context of school, and federal holidays are a tough thing to match!" (Respondent 7)	"Have regular group meetings to solve the problem." (Respondent 7)	*Studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices. *Learning a hands-on, multiphase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy. *Designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation.
	Working together toward a common goal	"We were put into work teams so we were forced to collaborate among the team. The teams were working toward the ultimate goal of developing the campaign so all of the teams had to work together." (Respondent 3)	"There were a lot of compromises made and we all got used to having our 'brilliant ideas' shot down and replaced with better ideas." (Respondent 3)	* Studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices. *Learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy.
	Collaboration is difficult but worth the effort (n=8)	"Being able to brainstorm an idea into existence through collaborative effort does teach you the value of teamwork, support, leadership, collaboration, initiative, and perseverance." (Respondent 2)	"For me, I think back fondly at that time with my colleagues and [professor] from class to campaign and appreciate that I was involved in the process." (Respondent 2)	* Understanding campaign process using a reframed social marketing approach grounded in communication theory, research, and practice. * Designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation.
	Solving conflict together to foster collaboration (n=4)	"A conflict I recall is [one respondent] with a very strong and negative personality. I recall her making class discussions very frustrating because she had a very narrow view of how campaigns should be developed." (Respondent 3).	"I remember spending a lot of time explaining to her why things weren't always done her way...we made the effort to explain to her why we were not following her suggestions all the time." (Respondent 3)	* Designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation.

**Table 1. cont.....Thematic Depiction of Respondents' Reflections**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Theme (n) in Parentheses</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Respondent Response/ Reflection</b>	<b>Learning Outcome(s)</b>
Blend of theory and application	Use of class readings to extend campaign practice (n=6)	"Not only do I reference and utilize social marketing theories, but I often refer to the elements of campaign design. Also, I have lent my textbooks and articles from class to co-workers (at their request) because they are interested in the background from class that I share." (Respondent 1)	"The MSC experience showed the value of audience segmentation and message development, and I frequently apply that knowledge." (Respondent 1)	* Studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices. * Understanding campaign process using a reframed social marketing approach grounded in communication theory, research, and practice.
	Practical writing skills developed (n=3)	"I learned to write a proposal that would fit into the CDC's framework" (Respondent 6)	"Also benefited from participating in and witnessing the creation and launching of the campaign from the design of the logo to message testing, and to poster design." (Respondent 6)	* Studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices. * Learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system supported by CDCynergy.
	Applying skills in future work (n=4)	"The Design Implementation Evaluation model has been useful when trying to influence health behaviors." (Respondent 5)	"Focus groups and survey analysis provided insights into the problem and ways to address that problem." (Respondent 5)	* Understanding campaign process using a reframed social marketing approach grounded in communication theory, research, and practice. * Designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation.
	Bridging theory and practice (n=7)	"It also gave me a great background in social marketing and an opportunity to see theory in action." (Respondent 4)	"It prepared me for the frustrations of the 'real world'." (Respondent 4)	* Understanding campaign process using a reframed social marketing approach grounded in communication theory, research, and practice. * Designing a motorcycle safety campaign from formative research through roll-out.

## Challenges

The former students were asked to reflect on some of the expected and unexpected challenges they encountered in the course sequence. Several of the respondents discussed the difficulties of working with potential stakeholders, partners, and community members. Mainly, they indicated that communicating with community members was sometimes problematic, including reaching them via telephone or recruiting them to participate in a focus group.

In addition, respondents reported that when working with community organizations they and their teams often could not move as quickly as preferred on projects. When comparing this course to more traditional courses, respondents said that in this campaign course sequence it was much less likely that projects would progress according to plans. However, as participants repeatedly stated, “This is reflective of life outside academia” (Respondent 4). Relatedly, they reported having to be more flexible in this course than in other courses. The need to “adjust deadlines” and more or less “go with the flow” was critical (Respondent 3). Also, more individual commitment and team meetings were needed to be effective.

Another challenge discussed was securing campaign funding. Although this was very challenging, respondents appreciated the communication skills they developed by interacting with community professionals. Respondents reported that they repeatedly called potential partners and sponsors to offer their persuasive pitches and gain support. For some respondents, needing to make these phone calls more than once was frustrating. Creativity was necessary, as illustrated in the examples included in Table 1.

Despite these challenges, the respondents seemed to appreciate the benefits of these course experiences. In particular, two indicated that having the opportunity to work with people outside the classroom increased their confidence in face-to-face communication and mediated encounters with professionals. In addition, many respondents indicated that this course sequence prepared them to overcome setbacks in the “real world” and provided a valuable opportunity to experience theory in action.

## Collaboration

This campaign course sequence encouraged fostering collaboration both inside and outside the classroom. Former students were probed to reflect on and discuss what they learned about community collaborations. One respondent said, “To me, the first rule of



collaboration is trying to reach out to community organizations, you might hit and you might miss but it is all a learning experience” (Respondent 4).

In addition, respondents were asked to reflect on the environment within the classroom. Respondents appreciated the collaborative atmosphere facilitated by the instructor as a model to follow while engaging community members about the safety issue. As one respondent explained:

Professor Mattson was wonderful. Though I realize she is passionate about this issue, I never felt she pushed us towards this idea. The class through many interactions and numerous brainstorming decided on the topic. From then on Professor Mattson supported us, encouraged us, facilitated and led the team and in doing so I think everyone felt they had an equal part and equal say. Of course this makes for a wonderful environment to work in and a great sense of collaborative effort. (Respondent 2)

As described previously, one of the activities performed in the classroom was practicing partnership pitches with potential community partners. Almost all the respondents mentioned that preparing and rehearsing these persuasive presentations helped create a stronger presentation to community members. One respondent said she learned to effectively probe why the potential partner wanted to be involved in a campaign about this specific issue and to what extent, which helped in specifying goals and outcomes of the partnership. After building a strong relationship with these community partners, several respondents commented that they were able to enlist their partners and their partners’ networks of contacts for campaign message dissemination, further expanding the concept of collaboration.

## **Conflict**

No major conflicts during the course sequence were reported; respondents mentioned only basic misunderstandings and strong personalities colliding. Respondents indicated that in order to continue their collaboration efforts inside and outside the classroom, conflicts were addressed immediately and directly so they could move forward to complete their tasks. For instance, one respondent said, “We talked about the situation and shared our thoughts good and bad. And we were okay after that. And I have no reason

to believe my group members had held any grudges” (Respondent 7). Participants consistently responded that because collaboration was necessary to complete their tasks, any conflict, no matter how minor, had to be resolved in a timely and effective way.

## **Blend of Theory and Application**

When asked if they had any additional comments about the health campaign course sequence, respondents indicated that the blend of readings and practice was the perfect combination of theory and application, which also speaks to the first course learning objective. The following response elaborated on this notion:

The campaign classes were definitely the most valuable classes I took while at Purdue University, not to mention the most enjoyable. They were wonderful departures from traditional classes and I felt that I really left the classes with valuable experience that I would put to use. I hope that every student has the opportunity to experience a class where he/she is given the opportunity to apply the skills he/she is learning. (Respondent 3)

Respondents also said that the collaborative climate in this course sequence “Is an excellent example of a class project that combines theory, research, practice and community entities” (Respondent 5). Even when the former students commented on the challenges they experienced, they also pointed out the positive aspects of working on the campaign. For example, one respondent said,

It was a good mix of practicum and theory. However, the problem was so large that it was a bit demotivating when we weren’t able to achieve the results we hoped. That’s how things are so it’s a good taste of reality. (Respondent 4)

The findings demonstrate that implementing an engaged approach to pedagogy to enhance the scholarship of teaching and learning helps students achieve learning objectives and course satisfaction. Having discussed the students’ perspectives, we next revisit the learning objectives the instructor identified for this course sequence to consider how they can be used in students’ future careers.

## **Discussion**

A return to the learning objectives of the course suggests ways in which this engaged pedagogy approach to teaching and learning can foster a positive learning experience for students while building their confidence to apply the skills they developed in future settings.

## **Learning Objectives**

The goal of the two-course sequence was for students to learn about the research and practice of designing, implementing, and evaluating health campaigns. In order to accomplish this goal, specific learning objectives were developed. Two learning objectives, (1) understanding campaign process using a reframed social marketing approach grounded in communication theory, research, and practice and (2) studying previous campaigns to identify and utilize best practices, were based on a traditional readings-based approach to teaching health campaigns. This approach helped students complete a comprehensive needs assessment for the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign. The next two objectives, (3) learning a hands-on, multi-phase health campaign system and (4) designing a health campaign from formative research through roll-out and initial evaluation, required a scholarship of teaching and learning approach. According to their interview responses, the students appreciated the health communication campaign as a model of engaged pedagogy. Specifically, comments about the blend of theory and application support these course objectives. One participant commented, “There were wonderful departures from traditional classes and I felt that I really left the classes with valuable experience that I would put to use” (Respondent 3). This comment implies that although this respondent appreciated reading and learning about health communication campaigns, applying what was learned via a real-time campaign was a novel and useful experience.

Based on this feedback, other undergraduate and graduate courses offered by the instructor now incorporate projects associated with the campaign, giving interdisciplinary students opportunities to learn while contributing to the development and growth of the campaign. Through these classes, the instructor continues to experience transformational learning. Converting the students’ idea for creating a motorcycle safety campaign into a health campaign pedagogy tool is an ongoing learning process fraught with pedagogical challenges. In the next section, the instructor’s per-

spective is considered, and suggestions are offered for addressing specific challenges.

## **Instructor's Perspective**

An important aspect of engaged pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning is mindful practice. As Johns (2004) defined it, mindful practice is being aware of the self within the unfolding moments of achieving a desired vision for action. Mindful practice is akin to Schön's (1983) notion of the reflective practitioner and Dana and Yendol-Silva's (2009) extension to the reflective educator. Although designing, implementing, and evaluating a health campaign was not part of the original vision of the health campaign course, upon students' swift introspective reflection and subsequent urging, the vision of the course changed as the opportunity to learn through a more action-oriented research approach (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010) surfaced. Along with the change in vision came some unanticipated pedagogical challenges. Agreeing to embark on a motorcycle safety campaign as an integral part of the two-course health campaign sequence was the first in a series of difficult decisions that punctuated the course instructor's experience. Three principal challenges are highlighted, and suggestions are offered to other instructors who may want to adopt an engaged pedagogy or a scholarship of teaching and learning approach in their own teaching.

### **Choosing a health issue.**

The first and most intricate challenge was the instructor's reluctance to even consider getting involved in a motorcycle safety campaign. When she returned to teaching after an academic-year hiatus to recover from her accident, in addition to coping with a severe physical injury, her ego was quite fragile. She struggled with regret about ever riding a motorcycle because she now felt that, as some health care providers had implied, someone with her advanced education should have known better. Essentially, riding a motorcycle presents a risk of a crash 39 times greater than riding in a car or truck (NHTSA, 2010). After her accident, she had resolved to take fewer risks, and this decision about changing the trajectory of the health campaign course harbored a personal risk. It would have been less emotionally fraught to refuse the students' promptings. However, their persuasive arguments resonated with the idea that perhaps they could help other motorcyclists avoid crashes and in

the process turn the instructor's recovery from an unfortunate circumstance into a more positive experience for others and herself.

Upon further reflection, the instructor realized that at this juncture in her teaching career she had a unique, though uncomfortable, opportunity to serve students as a role model. Not only would she be illustrating the effectiveness of their persuasive arguments, she would be showing them that personal tragedy can result in positive outcomes. In retrospect, although it can be emotionally draining at times, teaching through or in spite of personal experiences can provide a font of passion, insight, and even healing. The instructor even sometimes teases that due to the loss of her leg and the aftermath, she now feels like a legitimate health communication professor.

Although the foray into engaged pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning came through personal tragedy, the impetus for teaching from an engaged perspective can come from a variety of sources, including any issue an instructor or students are passionate about. Any issue that addresses a community need is appropriate for engaged pedagogy, but it is often a personally relevant health issue to the instructor and/or the students that may benefit most from designing, implementing, and evaluating a health campaign. Despite the challenges involved, choosing an issue of personal concern often helps sustain interest in the health campaign project.

### **Relinquishing control over content.**

Another challenge or risk of engaged pedagogy is relinquishing control over course content. Although following a health campaign framework like CDCynergy or the health communication campaign framework offers the illusion of control via its step-by-step process, real-time health campaigns often take on a life and timeframe of their own, and the instructor needs the flexibility to adapt. As former students of the health campaign course sequence emphasized, flexibility is paramount. The format and content of the syllabus for the course sequence was very different from that for a traditional readings-based health campaign course. After the decision to incorporate the early phases of a health campaign to address a bona fide community need, the syllabus had to be revised. Although it still contained the typical sections, the course assignments and calendar became less organized around readings about the theory and research of campaigns and the experiences of others. Instead, it was explained in the syllabus that both the class

format and the assignments would be “emergent and very applied,” and descriptions of assignments were less directive.

For example, the coordination of students into three target audience teams was not planned in advance but occurred when the target audiences had been determined based on the needs assessment. After the students were organized into target audience teams, an updated version of the syllabus that incorporated assignments for each team was distributed. A section of the syllabus that includes these assignments follows.

### C. Funding Opportunity Report

Your Target Audience Team is responsible for researching, contacting, and reporting on your exploration of a funding opportunity for the campaign. Leads will be provided.

### D. Partnership Pitch

Your Target Audience Team will prepare, present, and report on a campaign partnership pitch. Your report will include the details of your pitch, the result, and a self-assessment of the pitch with recommendations for improving future pitches.

### E. CDCynergy Phase Reports

For each of the six phases of CDCynergy, your Target Audience Team will present a report of your findings. These reports will be both oral and written (typically in executive brief format).

Target audience team assignments followed the flow of campaign development. Requirements of the assignments were graded based on the instructor’s observations of the activity, when possible, target audience team presentations, and reports of the assignments. Also, at the end of the course, students filled out a confidential evaluation of each member of their target audience team, and each target audience team filled out a confidential evaluation of each other team.

Generally, the syllabus was more open-ended and centered around action-oriented activities for each phase of the campaign, leaving available the possibility of spontaneous activities. Although this more open-ended approach to the syllabus can be refreshing and exciting because students are involved in fleshing out the course as the campaign progresses, it can be frustrating for both students and the instructor because typically they are not social-

ized or trained to plan, teach, and take courses in this less predetermined way. To adjust to such an approach, the instructor must be comfortable with a more open-ended syllabus concept when planning the course and must be prepared to repeatedly explain to students why this openness is integral to the course.

### **Addressing the unknown.**

A third challenge of engaged pedagogy stems from the second challenge because it involves the reactions of students to non-traditional forms of teaching. As some of the students who participated in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign confirmed, at times students become frustrated because much of what happens in the course cannot be planned for or is unpredictable. For example, during the second course in the sequence, each target audience team did not know a priori how many focus groups they would need to conduct to achieve feedback saturation about draft messages. Each team needed to plan and conduct focus groups until they received repetitive feedback and were confident in the changes they needed to make to improve the effectiveness of the messages. Each team then conducted additional focus groups with target audience members to validate the revised messages before the messages could be finalized and produced for campaign implementation. This iterative process took more time for some teams than for others. Some students became frustrated because it was difficult to plan their schedules around these unknown aspects of the campaign. Regardless of the varying time involved, each target audience team was graded on completing the requirements of the assignment. However, assignment due dates were revised if the specific team gave notice.

In an effort to preempt student frustrations, instructors can include acknowledgment of unknown factors in their descriptions of the course and even encourage potential students, prior to registering for the course, to talk with them or students who previously took the course. Perhaps more so than in traditional courses, instructors teaching from an engaged pedagogy perspective need to proactively explain the pros and cons of participating in these courses. After the course commences, students' frustrations should be proactively addressed. Students should be encouraged to share their frustrations, and concerns aired either overtly or covertly should be resolved through timely discussion.

## Lessons Learned for Future Projects

In summary, this section provides five lessons learned from utilizing an engaged pedagogy approach to teaching health campaigns. First, incorporating a real-time campaign guided by *The Pink Book*, CDCynergy, and the health communication campaign framework is a transformational pedagogical tool in transitioning from a more traditional pedagogy of health campaigns that emphasizes readings and case examples. However, these readings do provide important information for students to apply in developing a campaign that meets community needs. Instructors who adopt this approach will need to purposefully select readings, since class time spent on discussion of readings is more limited than in traditional-readings-based courses.

Second, this two-course sequence demonstrated that designing, implementing, and evaluating a health campaign can be a valuable pedagogical tool to enhance course objectives and student knowledge, understanding, and application. Responses illustrate that the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign provides numerous hands-on opportunities for students to immediately apply what they are learning to address a community need. Perhaps the most vital lesson students glean from working on a bona fide campaign while enrolled in a health campaign course is learning to deal with the often-glaring juxtaposition between how campaigns should be designed, implemented, and evaluated “in theory” or according to published guidelines and how campaigns actually are designed, implemented, and evaluated in the “real world,” which often includes budgetary, time, staffing, and community challenges in addition to numerous other, often unforeseen, constraints.

Third, in addition to the pride students felt pursuing active roles in conceiving and creating the campaign, students reflected that they acquired hands-on experience that is highly marketable in the current economic environment (*Edgar & Hyde, 2005; Field, 2009; Greenberg, 2009*). Students participating in these campaign courses have the opportunity to acquire a set of skills including, but not limited to, working in teams; working under strict deadlines; working with tight budgets; forming connections and working with community partners; message design, testing, and evaluation; website development; survey design, implementation, and data analysis; and proposal and report preparation and presentation. Equipped with these skills, students likely will stand out as employment candidates and eventually as model employees. However, students may not initially recognize this benefit, so instructors are advised to discuss with students how they can incorporate relevant



experiences in the course during job interviews and throughout their career path.

Fourth, the campaign not only benefited the students involved with its development, but also the communication department within which it is housed by showcasing to Purdue University administration the impact engaged pedagogy has on students and the community. As a result, the campaign receives funding from the College of Liberal Arts and other forms of recognition and support from the university, including seed grants and coverage in publications. Therefore, maintaining a partnership with the Purdue University Brian Lamb School of Communication also helps sustain the campaign as it grows and requires additional support. For instance, the campaign was featured in the annual communication magazine, *The Communicator*, which is sent to thousands of alumni. This publicity promoted the campaign not only beyond the university community, but beyond the state, as well.

Fifth, engaging students in a bona fide campaign as they learn campaign process is a complex pedagogical challenge. Because students not only interact in the confines of the classroom but also collaborate with the community, explicit discussion of ethics in health campaigns and community interventions is imperative. Although ethics was implicitly discussed in the course sequence when, for example, the agenda for the focus groups was reviewed and when the class considered how to approach potential community partners, some responses by target audiences to finding a draft message offensive suggests that a section of the course on ethics is warranted. Ideally, this section should occur early in the course, with concepts and principles revisited throughout the course to aid retention and practice. Rabinowitz's (2013) outline of ethical issues in community interventions emphasizes the Hippocratic concept of "do no harm" and provides a variety of questions and concerns to contemplate and act upon while designing, implementing, and evaluating a health campaign.

### **Limitations That Emerged from the Data**

In the previous section we addressed general lessons learned about an engaged pedagogy approach to teaching. However, since the Motorcycle Safety at Purdue campaign is an ongoing project that spans across classes from semester to semester, the retrospective interviews helped both to inform previous and perhaps current limitations of the pedagogical process within these classes and to provide direction for modifying future projects. As the results indi-

cated, former students who chose to participate in the retrospective study had little contrary input about the two-course health campaign sequence. It is possible they felt pressure or had a stronger desire to report positive experiences and how they were using the information learned in the course, rather than more negative aspects they experienced along the way. However, the few negative responses received did reveal some limitations of applying an engaged pedagogy approach in class.

Students referenced the time constraints of the course as a barrier to accomplishing all of their objectives and goals in a timely manner. To address this barrier, the professor continues projects from semester to semester. If one class is not able to complete a task due to time constraints or scheduling conflicts with community partners, then a subsequent class can continue the project at the start of a new semester. Additional retrospective interviews should be conducted with subsequent classes to determine whether time constraints are still a limitation of this teaching method, from the students' perspective, and whether any new constraints emerge. In addition, since the retrospective interviews were conducted with graduate students, it would be valuable to receive input from undergraduate students. Undergraduate students may be using the skills they acquired differently from graduate students and thus may have varying perceptions about the practicality of this course.

## **Conclusion**

The goal of this article was not only to illustrate the numerous benefits gained by both the instructor and students in response to incorporating the development, implementation, and evaluation of a bona fide health campaign into a health communication curriculum, but also to provide encouragement to instructors to consider incorporating the scholarship of teaching and learning when designing health campaign courses. Although this engaged approach to pedagogy requires much time, commitment, and effort, the empirical support suggests that despite the challenges, incorporating a health campaign into the curriculum is achievable and immensely rewarding. Colleagues across disciplines are encouraged to carefully assess the unique needs within their communities and engage the design, implementation, and evaluation of a campaign to address those needs. The benefits of this endeavor to the students, community, academic program, college or university, and instructor will be well worth the effort.

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## BOOK REVIEWS



Loss, C. (2012). *Between citizens and the state: The politics of American higher education in the 20th century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 344 pp.

### Review by Timothy J. Shaffer

The role of higher education functioning as an intermediary between the federal government and citizens is one with a long history, reflecting many changes throughout the twentieth century. Christopher P. Loss's *Between Citizens and the State* traces this history, framing higher education's role as extending beyond what he calls the "rise of the professions and the growth of the federal-academic research matrix." He suggests, and rightly so, that too much of our understanding of the history of higher education has been wrapped up with "big science" and the "handful of elite institutions and experts that produced it" (p. 1). Contributing to a growing literature exploring the role of intermediary institutions in American society functioning as liaisons between the central government and a population preferring local or state control. Loss argues higher education has played a critical role mediating relations between the state and its citizens. Focusing attention on the "big three" federal higher education policies—the 1944 G.I. Bill, the 1958 National Defense Education Act, and the 1965 Higher Education Act—and other policy developments that bracketed those legislative moments, Loss approaches higher education history less as a march toward progress and more as a journey on a somewhat turbulent path. Because of this approach, the book does not read as a congratulatory celebration of higher education; rather, it provides a more honest assessment of the episodes in higher education history that have shaped and been shaped by the last century.

The book, which is very much a selective survey, is broken up into three parts: part 1, "Bureaucracy," looks at the development of higher education's growing institutionalism during the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s; part 2, "Democracy," explores how higher education and democratic citizenship became intertwined during the Second World War and during the ensuing Cold War period; and part 3, "Diversity," turns attention away from public-oriented issues such as the Federal Forum Project in which citizens came together to discuss public issues toward a more recent focus on students' private concerns and questions about what was occurring within universities rather than the role of universities in communities. Because of this shift, the three parts are loosely connected. The first two parts maintain a coherent thematic

development while the third part strains to maintain that trajectory as the discussion shifts to the rights of an increasingly diverse student population.

Still, the book holds to the theme of democratic citizenship as it was understood, articulated, and actualized during different periods, with Loss' central interest being an articulation of higher education's intermediary role. The chapters themselves are rich narratives, offering a historian's perspective and hindsight while also allowing the voices of the actors involved to speak for themselves without being overly interpreted. The stories are told less with statistics and instead rely more heavily on quotes.

Chapter 3, entitled "Building the New Deal Administrative State," is the chapter most explicitly focusing on topics relevant to outreach and engagement in higher education. This remains a largely forgotten period with respect to higher education's engagement with citizens and communities and its role in the development of democratic life. Loss notes that: "Although scholars have forgotten it today, higher education helped bridge the gap between citizens and the state during the 1930s (p. 53). Readers of the book will benefit from learning about American society before the Second World War in a time when citizens, especially rural men and women, were facing some of the most difficult times because of serious economic downturn dating back to the early 1920s, roughly a decade before the rest of America faced the devastation of the Great Depression. During this time of uncertainty, land-grant colleges responded to the needs of the federal government by utilizing the cooperative extension system to function as on-the-ground staff for the USDA's Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA).

As a complex story, Loss outlines the role land-grant colleges in the administration of the AAA and describes the tensions between a centralized bureaucratic approach to addressing public problems and a decentralized one like the utilization of the extension service, a trusted institution in rural communities. For many rural men and women, the idea of federal employees increasingly playing roles in their lives was anathema to their ethic of individualism and self-sufficiency. "Between 1933 and 1938," Loss writes, "county agents scoured the countryside on behalf of agricultural adjustment, changing farmers' relationship to the state" (p. 68). County agents worked with farmers to educate them about the importance of reducing production levels, but, importantly, these government employees were local community members, trusted because they were of the community.



Because of this positive relationship with extension, farmers were more willing to participate in the federal government's program to pay them to reduce their output. This raised the price of farm products and their livelihoods as farmers, but it also helped to stimulate the larger economy. By administering the AAA, extension shifted its energy away from purely education work to a more nuanced role with administrative responsibilities such as overseeing the numerous expectations and agreements of the AAA with regard to farm production and payments. This reconceptualization of extension's work was contested by some, a reality that would continue throughout the New Deal. While the utilization of extension by the USDA during this period forced extension to broaden the scope of its work with citizens, a more explicit attempt at engaging citizens in an educational environment was taking place through the Federal Forum Project.

John W. Studebaker, the Commissioner of Education, in the U.S. Office of Education, gained fame in the early 1930s with his Des Moines Forum Project, an initiative that positioned free and open public discussion at the heart of democracy. Studebaker (*p. 14*) asked, "What makes a democracy? Not government forms alone.... The spirit of the people, their ability to understand and their desire to grow in understanding, their willingness to perform the duties of citizenship—only these can give to governmental forms the vitality that is necessary for a successful democracy." Studebaker saw an opportunity for citizens to come together to discuss some of the most fundamental issues facing the country. Struggling to gain support at the national level for such a project, Studebaker was eventually able to get some funding to establish ten federal forum demonstration sites—in cities and counties from Portland, Oregon to Monongalia County, West Virginia—beginning in 1936. The project established Cooperative Forum Centers and Forum Counseling Programs in partnership with state universities and departments of education.

In many ways, it replicated the extension system through its use of educators in communities. But as Loss notes, the forum movement never achieved the status of a "training ground for national citizenship" as had been hoped. Nevertheless, it did encourage an estimated 2.5 million citizens who participated in one of the federal forum project's 23,000 discussion sessions between 1936 and 1941 to come to think of citizenship as more than voting (*p. 83*). The forum project "was eventually eclipsed by wartime exigencies and the availability of new mass communications. The coming television age offered a powerful alternative to the face-to-face give

and take of the forum model, irrevocably changing the manner in which most Americans received news and participated in democratic deliberation” (p. 85). Yet today, many academic professionals and educators replicate, somewhat unknowingly, this important initiative in the history of American higher education.

As rich as these examples detailed by Loss are, they are not inclusive of two other educational initiatives during this period that utilized group discussion and deliberation with the expressed purpose of helping “ordinary” citizens and academic professionals understand the increasingly complex economic, social, cultural, and political issues facing them. These USDA initiatives were known as discussion groups and Schools of Philosophy for Extension Workers. More than 3 million rural men and women participated in discussion groups and over 50,000 Extension workers and other rural community leaders attended Schools. The absence of these two initiatives serves as a reminder of the challenge of covering so many topics and times and the selective focus of the book.

Overall, the material included in this book is interesting and offers a fuller understanding of the relationship between citizens and government with higher education playing a vital role in the development of that relationship. Loss stated at the onset that he was attempting to fill a gap in the literature regarding this relationship by looking beyond the narrow scope of science and the research university. However, in his own way, Loss continues to narrowly tell the story of the role of higher education in fortifying democracy in the United States. He fails to mention anything about the cooperative extension system other than discussing the implementation of the Agricultural Adjustment Act during the New Deal. Extension serves as one of the largest and most enduring examples of higher education’s connection with the state in the project of nurturing citizenship, communities, and civic life, its relative neglect serves as a reminder of the selectivity of Loss’ book. Further reinforcing this sense of missing stories and lost historical richness and complexity, the concluding chapter focuses on themes from the 1970s and early 1980s, making the final pages feel like they move too quickly through the concluding decades of the century. The reader is left with the sense that the desire to write about the twentieth century as a whole led to its less than robust treatment.

Finally, Loss’ discussion in the first two parts of the book seems different than the final section on diversity and the “rights revolution.” There is a shift away from public problems being addressed through higher education’s social role to a discussion focused on the students and faculty within universities, showing the book’s

interest in the politics of American higher education rather than a sustained narrative about civic engagement. The work of higher education in the 1930s was about bringing citizens together to discuss public problems. During the Cold War, educational television emerged as a classroom without walls. Then, during the 1960s and later, students began questioning and challenging the status quo of higher education with the desire to transform the institution. This transition is intentional because, as Loss writes, “[The] reciprocal conception of educated citizenship endured until the 1960s, before being eclipsed by a rights-based citizenship model that did not require service to the state” (p. 215). But is this true? Such a shift seems somewhat artificial, especially considering publically engaged scholarship’s current role in shaping the public role and purpose of higher education. Loss could have made a less dramatic statement by acknowledging the various dimensions shaping higher education and its role in both providing opportunities for students while also working with the public through engagement.

At Cornell, Loss’ example of an elite institution struggling to respond to changing demographics, racial tensions played out with black students taking over an administration building because racism continued to shape their collegiate experience. Alongside the women’s studies movement and the emergence of ethnic studies programs, he concludes his study with an exploration of the “private marketplace of identity in an age of diversity.” While fascinating scholarship, one is left wondering about the impact of such shifts within higher education for the broader public. What did these students, now armed with a better understanding of racism, sexism, and classism, do with their knowledge? Loss mentions the Port Huron Statement and its authors, the Students for a Democratic Society, as well as its predecessor, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, but little was written about the continued development of the student movement and a desire to connect their education with political action and engagement. For example, where does the AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program fit into the narrative about the relationship between higher education and the state, decades after the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 established it? This service program, designed as a domestic Peace Corps, continues to rely heavily on recent college graduates to commit to a year of service in communities across the country. It is helpful to know the origins of such programs, but continuing the story about the ongoing development and work of the AmeriCorps VISTA program in fostering citizenship and civic life would have strengthened the book.

Loss offers his readers an opportunity to take a long view, narrating in his own way many elements of higher education's history that have not often been told. He provides a critical and illuminating look at the role of higher education in what he refers to as an intermediary institution between the federal government and citizens. Yet, the book struggles in this telling because of the enormity of the topic at hand. It seems the material could have been developed more thoroughly if he had chosen a more focused topic within the domain of higher education's role between citizens and state. Loss has provided, however, an important foundation for other scholars to explore more deeply often forgotten chapters of American history dealing with higher education's role in our democracy.

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## About the Reviewer

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Rhoten, D., & Calhoun, C. (Eds.). (2011). *Knowledge matters: The public mission of the research university*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press. 539 pp.

## Review by Sam Cordes

The editors of this book, both of whom are affiliated with the Social Science Research Council, reached out to 21 other collaborators from around the globe to compile an impressive and thought-provoking body of knowledge. The international scope of this lengthy volume is one of its most compelling features. Indeed, Antarctica is the only continent not represented!

I wish the editors had created a final chapter that encompassed the contents of the book as a whole. Such a chapter might have attempted to ferret out common themes (and contradictions); summarize areas of cross-cultural difference and similarity; and perhaps pose some research questions for future consideration. Their five-page preface falls short of this calling, as it basically offers a brief summarization of each of the 15 chapters, with little integration or broader synthesizing. However, this is a small complaint and not one that should deter other scholars, including the readers of *JHEOE*, from putting on their thinking caps and delving into this volume.

The title of Rhoten and Calhoun's edited book needs to be emphasized. The book is not about the public mission of public universities, although public universities (which are not as easily defined as one might think) are part of the mix; and to some extent they do receive the bulk of the attention. However, private research universities also have public missions, often as part of their underlying philosophy or values (as is certainly the case with religious-based universities) or because they receive public funds for research or for other activities. Hence, the book examines the public mission of the research university, whether public or private.

If it is not always easy to make a sharp delineation between public and private research universities, neither is it easy to define "the public mission." In Chapter 2 ("Great Expectations, Past Promises and Golden Ages: Rethinking the 'Crisis' of Public Research Universities") Fischman, Igo, and Rhoten do a remarkably good job of framing what can be meant by "publicness." Four approaches are identified. One is legalistic, in which "the state" (which can be either national or a subnational jurisdiction) owns or charters the institution and provides funding as well. The

second approach is to think of higher education as exhibiting the characteristics of a “public good.” In economics literature, a pure public good is one whose consumption by one individual does not reduce its availability to another individual; and once provided, it is accessible to everyone. In this configuration, science, research, and education are produced for the unfettered consumption of all. A third approach links to what is frequently referred to as “the public interest,” which is grounded in some collective ethical notion of what is of broad societal value. This framing suggests that research and education have a public benefit and these services must be provided by public institutions, although this does not preclude their also being provided by the private sector. The final approach revolves around “public accountability.” Although grounded in the notion that research and education are intrinsically valuable in serving the public interest, the public accountability view layers-in an additional expectation. In this view, trust and credibility with the public require that an institution be responsive to societal demands and transparent and communicative about its performance.

Fischman et al. argue that the first three views of “publicness” prevailed until the 1980s, but since then there has been growing emphasis on the public accountability domain. Many of the other contributors to this volume support—and typically lament—this view. Their perspective rests on the hypothesis that this approach is part of a larger neoliberal philosophy that has guided much of the global thinking in many policy and topical arenas; hence, it is not too surprising that a “commodification” approach to knowledge and research has also come into play and that a market-oriented and private sector philosophy and terminology (e.g., cost and revenue centers and “the entrepreneurial university”) are becoming more prominent and dominant within higher education circles.

In Chapter 3 (“‘El central volume de la fuerza’: Global Hegemony in Higher Education and Research”), Marginson and Ordorika argue that some of the specific attributes of the public accountability approach had their origins in the New Public Management (NPM) model that first emerged in the United Kingdom in the 1980s. Marginson and Ordorika go on to link this view of publicness to other fundamental and challenging issues, including Anglo-American hegemony in higher education globally and the growing preoccupation with global higher education rankings.

Many of the remaining chapters in the volume focus on the public mission of higher education in a variety of countries and continents. This is a reflection of the societal importance of higher

education, especially research universities, throughout the world, as well as a recognition that false generalizations need to be avoided. In other words, “local” history and context matter . . . and they matter greatly. Indeed, the juxtaposition of the Anglo-American hegemony with the importance of “local” history, culture, context, needs, and opportunities associated with higher education in non-Anglo settings presents what may be the most challenging question—and most worrisome issue.

Academics and other scholars from within the United States may have the most to gain from this book, as we tend to be woefully ignorant of the history, context, and institutional configuration of higher education in other parts of the world, especially Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This is one of the prices U.S. scholars pay for the Anglo-American hegemony in higher education. Or, as Marginson and Ordorika note: “To some American faculty, nothing [in the way of research and knowledge] is produced outside the United States” (p. 91).

Many challenging and unanswered questions are raised in this volume, and many of them may not be of immediate interest to readers of *JHEOE*. However, some are likely to be of considerable interest and importance to those readers who are involved in outreach and engagement, broadly defined. Listed below are five examples—neither by priority nor in any logical order—of the type of thought-provoking issues and questions stimulated by the book that could have particular relevance for the readers of *JHEOE*.

1. What are the main issues and questions that arise if the title of this book is turned on its head to read *Knowledge Matters: The Public Mission of the Engaged University*? The initial instinct is to state that engagement is simply synonymous with the public mission. However, in many ways that may be begging the question, depending upon the nature of engagement, the services provided, and which part of the public receives the benefits. The final chapter (“Cultural Formations of the Public University: Globalization, Diversity and the State at the University of Michigan”) by Kennedy provides some important insights and perspectives on such issues. For example, should intercollegiate athletics be seen as part of the public mission, recognizing that this is almost exclusively an American peculiarity? Or, if one’s view of the public mission is linked to the notion of pure public goods, how does this square with technical assistance provided to a particular firm or

business? And which “public” is of highest priority: what Kennedy calls the proximate external publics (e.g., legislators and philanthropists) or global and disenfranchised publics?

2. On a related note, what aspects of outreach and engagement (O/E) lend themselves to the market-driven, neoliberal “publicness” lamented by some contributors to the book? Is it possible to create a model in which these activities generate revenues and help offset the cost of other aspects of O/E that are not “profitable” but are more in keeping with the broader view of public goods and the public interest?
3. If public universities have seen public funding decrease and the search for alternative sources of funding increase, what is the cause and effect? Can or should this cycle be broken? If not, what are the implications for the public mission? What are the implications for governance? For example, if state government contributes only a small amount of the total funding, what is the rationale for having a publicly appointed (or elected) governing board?
4. The Anglo-American hegemony expresses itself in a number of ways, including international rankings. These rankings are driven largely on the basis of research metrics, with a strong orientation toward “hard science” and little or no consideration of social sciences, arts, and humanities. When only a few disciplines are included and when teaching and O/E are completely excluded, the public mission—however defined—is being measured by only a minuscule slice of the outcomes of higher education. What can be done to move away from such myopia? What metrics can be developed to measure O/E? If metrics for teaching and O/E were included, would the Anglo-American domination of the rankings continue?
5. There are many downsides to the Anglo-American hegemony. Western scholars are not learning as much as they could from scholars elsewhere, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. With respect to O/E, what mechanisms exist or need to be developed to address this issue? Conversely, how can O/E scholars



in the Anglo-American sphere do more to support O/E in these three continents? For example, in Chapter 5 (“Public Research Universities in Latin America and Their Relation to Economic Development”), Moreno-Brid and Ruiz-Napoles assert that “the greatest limitation, or constraint, is the lack of university-business links.” Many Anglo-American universities have developed very strong links to business and industry. Hence, this stated constraint represents an opportunity for cross-cultural learning and sharing. Similar situations could also create opportunities for O/E scholars to provide leadership in paving the way for culture plurality in research.

In closing, I encourage readers of *JHEOE*, first, to reflect upon the five issues and questions noted. Second, consider reading *Knowledge Matters: The Public Mission of the Research University*. It is not an easy read, but I do not think you will regret the time and effort invested. Third, use the questions and issues I have raised, as well as others that might surface in a careful reading of the book, for additional thought and for conversations with your colleagues and others. Perhaps there is grist for a seminar within your university? Perhaps there is grist for a symposium within your professional association or society? Perhaps there is grist for a new research project or undertaking? Or, if you are a nonacademic, perhaps there is grist for taking a leadership role in creating a dialogue between your peers and nonacademic networks and the academe?

It is my hope that this insightful and thought-provoking book or my short review will stimulate such activities and advance our knowledge and practice of outreach and engagement, whether in a public or private research university or in some other setting.

### **About the Reviewer**

**Sam Cordes** is professor emeritus at Purdue University, where he served as associate vice provost for engagement and as one of the founding codirectors of the Purdue Center for Regional Development.



## Review by Glenn Sterner

What is community development? Why is community development practiced in certain ways? How do people engage in community development? Why is community development relevant? Gilchrist and Taylor tackle these and other tough questions in *The Short Guide to Community Development*. Although explicitly UK-focused, this overview of the history, current practices, and scholarship of community development provides an important opportunity for seasoned veterans, newcomers, and students to reflect on the concept of and their role in community development.

Reflection is important in any professional work, but it is especially critical in community development practice due to the field's interventionist nature. Those with years of experience and those new to the field should regularly consider critical questions about current and historical practices and scholarship in community development, areas that Gilchrist and Taylor highlight succinctly. However, reflection is not simply the reading of additional information; it requires a deeper process. Reflection involves critical, dialogic engagement with both historic and newly encountered ideas, orientations, and professional practice. Integrating information into practice without considering its creation, utility, and accuracy is irresponsible. Thinking critically about how community development practice and scholarship is developed, for whom, and why, allows citizens, practitioners, and scholars to determine whether it is applicable and relevant to their contexts.

Critically examining and reflecting on community development history and current practice should also lead individuals to explore their own perspectives and methods. Complacently accepting current practice and knowledge is as dangerous as blindly implementing new scholarship. Instead, reflection allows for the consideration of newly encountered information, and for exploring how it aligns with, expands, or perhaps contradicts one's own current thinking and practices. What is known about this problem? How do other communities engage with this situation? What is contemporary thinking on this issue? Taking time to reflect on questions such as these provides the opportunity for newly acquired information to enhance one's work in community development.

This reflective process should also lead practitioners to be more reflexive about their place in communities and community development. Reflexivity forces individuals to consider their biases and values regarding their community development approaches. Making individual values explicit allows practitioners to critically consider how they are enacting community development practices. When working with and in communities, community development practitioners should be very aware of their role and how they engage with others. Through reflexive practice, these considerations generate a greater awareness of an individual's effects on community development practice and, therefore, on community, both positive and negative. Reflexivity provides an opportunity to explore new ways to consider how to revise individual practice to maximize impact and minimize unintended negative consequences. Through reflexive self-examination, those engaged in community development may come to realize how their personal perspectives and behaviors lead them to enact certain practices. Gilchrist and Taylor work through several considerations to enhance this process.

Concern for those affected by community development should be central throughout the processes of reflection and reflexivity. This consideration opens the opportunity to emphasize dignity in the community development process. When we engage others with dignity, we show respect for them and their situation. We value and utilize their local knowledge and experiences. We emphasize the importance of their participation in community development initiatives. This orientation toward dignity exposes how an individual approaches community development. A focus on dignity requires individuals to consider the role of the knowledge they bring to a community development initiative as well as how it is enacted. Community development is not an easy task; it requires careful contemplation of how to include others. Working through this process, Gilchrist and Taylor provide a good foundation and framework for resolving these challenges.

Reflection and reflexivity should be integral to community development. *The Short Guide to Community Development* acts as a vehicle for working through these essential processes. The first half of the book explores the foundations of community development, with an emphasis on its theory and historical development. Although they heavily focus on the United Kingdom, Gilchrist and Taylor ensure that the book is relevant for a wider audience by weaving in relevant literature from multiple perspectives. Throughout this examination of the scholarly foundations of community development, the authors refrain from taking normative

stances on the various approaches to community development they highlight. However, in the second half of the book, which explores the practical application of community development, they emphasize a pluralistic approach. In these chapters, they encourage the reader to engage in reflection and reflexivity, and they provide tips and practical advice for those hoping to engage in community development. They also explore contexts where community development may currently be especially relevant. The book concludes with an assessment of future trends that may shape and be shaped by community development, which can inspire individuals and communities to take action on important issues that face us all, such as public or collective action and climate change.

The accessibility of this book offers newcomers to community development a chance to gain a solid grasp of the field's historical, theoretical, and practical foundations. The authors also provide an interesting and honest exploration of the historical context of community development in the United Kingdom that will be of interest to those looking to expand their perspective. Whether new to the field or experienced, readers will find that this book provides an opportunity to reflect on community development, examine their role in community development, and consider how to best engage with communities. It also has direct relevance for academics and public scholars engaged in fostering and nurturing community-university partnerships.

### **About the Reviewer**

**Glenn Sterner** is a Ph.D. candidate in rural sociology in the Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education Department at the Pennsylvania State University.



Holsinger, K. (2012). *Teaching justice-solving social justice problems through university education*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company. 164 pp.

## Review by Patreese Ingram

*T*eaching Justice: Solving Social Justice Problems Through University Education is a book in the series Solving Social Problems, edited by Bonnie Berry, director of the Social Problems Research Group, USA. The series provides a forum for the description and measurement of social problems with a focus on proposals for their solutions.

The author, Kristi Holsinger, strongly advocates for a transformative approach to teaching criminal justice programs in higher education. Particularly noteworthy is the importance this author attaches to the overarching concept of justice and its counterpart, injustice. An important starting point is defining the term justice itself. Students are challenged to wrestle with the complex notions of justice and to position criminal justice within the larger justice perspective. Holsinger astutely notes that an examination of introductory criminal justice classes and textbooks supports the conclusion that the concept of justice does not get the attention it deserves (Owen et al., 2006).

According to John Rawls, "social justice is about assuring the protection of equal access to liberties, rights, and opportunities, as well as taking care of the least advantaged members of society" (Robinson, 2010, p. 79). Are criminal justice and criminal justice practices consistent with social justice? This is a question that deserves a critical examination. Throughout the book Holsinger suggests that engaging students in critical thinking and evaluation of social justice and the justice system requires attention to issues of diversity. She references an American Sociological Association report (2011) that suggests the study of criminal justice requires extensive study of sociology and is currently lacking in its focus on issues such as race, class, and gender (Jaschik, 2010). The level of importance attached to cultural competence and sensitivity to issues of diversity in analyzing the criminal justice system is particularly significant. One area of diversity that could be given more attention in the book, however, is religion, considering the growing number of crimes related to religious differences.

Arrigo (1998) asserts that criminal justice policies often perpetuate injustice and will continue to do so unless thoughtful attention is given to the undergirding principles of criminal jus-

tice. A clear example is the war on drugs, which has resulted in a disproportionate percentage of blacks and Latinos being incarcerated. Although the majority of illegal drug users and dealers nationwide are white, nearly 90% of all people imprisoned for drug offenses in 2007 were black and Latino (Alexander, 2010; Robertson, 2011). Alexander (2010) refers to this inequity as a new form of the Jim Crow caste system that existed earlier in our country's history. In this vein, Holsinger's bold call for attention to white collar and corporate crime, which may cause harm to larger proportions of the population than crimes committed by and against individuals, is encouraging.

Throughout the book, the author describes the development of her capstone course for undergraduate criminal justice majors. In preparing to write this book, she conducted a survey of criminal justice faculty to determine (1) the most effective methods of getting students actively engaged in social justice issues, (2) whether justice as an overarching concept was taught in the field of criminal justice and criminology, (3) how colleagues measured the effectiveness of their teaching, and (4) what faculty perceived as barriers and limitations to teaching about these topics in the college classroom. Findings from the 126 responses received, as well as the author's own classroom experiences, are shared throughout the book and integrated into each of the book's six chapters.

Chapter 1—Teaching Justice. Holsinger advocates for the active engagement of students in the learning process, which reflects a critical dimension of good teaching. This chapter focuses on the necessity of moving away from a reductionist view of education with the teacher as the authority figure who dominates and controls the classroom to a teaching approach that empowers students and gives them more responsibility for what they learn. Critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, and critical thinking promote an understanding of deeper, more socially constructed meaning. Critical pedagogy acknowledges that injustices exist and emphasizes the role of culture, diversity, and social position in how we understand and experience the world. The more students can personalize course materials, the more likely they are to become actively engaged in solving problems in the world.

Holsinger recognizes that certain circumstances can make active learning about social justice more difficult. Many students are comfortable with the traditional teacher-centered classrooms, and resist personal investment in the learning process. Others may have limited experience with individuals very different from themselves and may be unaware of social realities around



them. Although many criminal justice programs tend to focus on examining social process in concrete and observable ways, college faculty should encourage students to explore the more abstract concepts of justice, which can lead students to consider larger societal patterns and encourage questioning of the status quo. Recognition of and attention to these issues help to make this book a unique contribution to the field.

Chapter 2—Learning Justice. Although the chapter is titled “Learning Justice,” much of it is devoted to the many ways that survey respondents teach social justice in the classroom. Approaches include the use of classroom discussion, documentaries, films and film clips on social themes, current events, real-life and personal experiences, service-learning projects, field trips to prisons, and opportunities to interact with prisoners and victims of injustice. Detailed survey responses reflect how faculty teach justice as an overarching construct of criminal justice/criminology. In one example, a faculty member asks students to apply Miller’s and Rawls’ theories of social justice to criminal justice practices. This instructor asks students whether criminal justice helps bring about or interferes with realizing social justice. However, some respondents disagreed with the goals of teaching about justice as an overarching construct, feeling it did not fit into their courses.

Holsinger uses nine short writing assignments in her capstone course to help students personally connect with issues of injustice. For example, one assignment asks students to evaluate a statement made by Weisheit and Morn (2004): “Becoming aware of how justice issues are woven through our everyday decisions is an important step in righting wrongs.” Writing assignments and projects are designed to help students distinguish between justice and injustice. The author provides an abundance of ideas for teaching about social justice and activism as an overarching construct in criminal justice.

Chapter 3—Personally Connecting. Chapter 3 focuses on student apathy or lack of engagement with justice issues. This chapter also shares strategies professors use to engage students and help them personally connect with existing social problems. This is perhaps the most important chapter in the book. Personal connection to the issues of criminal justice is necessary to awaken students’ passions and inspire activism and action. Holsinger argues that the burden lies with teachers to develop strategies that will engage students in the learning process and the topics taught. Survey results shared a number of strategies, including allowing students to write their papers on self-selected topics of interest to them; use of video

content, current events, and interviewing assignments; and asking students to take a stand on controversial issues. Strategies used in the capstone courses include writing about witnessing or personally experiencing an injustice, writing an editorial on a recent news story, and addressing a social issue or social problem that the student feels strongly about.

Chapter 4—Taking Action. The call by Ernest Boyer (1990) for universities to use their resources to help communities solve problems was re-conceptualized in the 2000s as “engagement.” Holsinger endorses the benefits of service-learning as a strategy to engage university students in social problems. Survey respondents shared a variety of ways students were engaged in local communities. Their strategies included requiring students to actively advocate for a neighborhood or group, involving an entire class in an initiative to address a community, and requiring students to volunteer in the community. She also requires a project in which students must engage in activism related to a justice issue. A list of topics her students have addressed in previous classes is provided. Criminal justice faculty in many university settings would unquestionably benefit from the examples this author shares that bring college students together with court-involved youth in joint learning experiences. These kinds of experiences have the significant impact of helping college students develop more empathetic attitudes toward these youth.

Chapter 5—Assessing Learning. Despite increasing attention to assessment of student learning in higher education, many faculty use only student evaluations and grades to determine the effectiveness of their teaching. Few use outcome-driven student assessments. Some faculty, however, use pre- and post-tests to measure changes in students’ attitudes. Holsinger provides examples of pre-and-post survey items used to determine changes in attitudes and perceptions about the correctional system, justice, equality, and opportunity. Surveys were also used to determine whether students believed the class met the main learning objectives, to evaluate the teaching methods, and to obtain students’ suggestions for methods that might be useful in learning about the topics.

Writing skills are an important component of assessment in the author’s classes. Student definitions of justice at the end of the class are compared with those given at the beginning. Definitions at the end of the class tend to include concepts of fairness and equality. There is also a greater focus on activism associated with justice—the idea that one must address or respond to injustice. Students

recognize the desire to include more active work in the community as a part of courses in criminal justice programs.

Chapter 6—Justice Redefined. The last chapter of this book begins by addressing what faculty perceive to be barriers to teaching about social justice and activism. High on the list of survey responses are student apathy, political indifference, sense of powerlessness to make a difference, and inability to see a relationship between larger societal problems and students' own lives.

A number of barriers were directly related to faculty ideology. The ability of the teacher to “teach the student how to think, not what to think” and to lead students to examine their own perspectives on issues rather than teaching a particular perspective were noted. Holsinger warns that teachers must also guard against letting their own beliefs influence their assessment of student work. Other barriers included limited time to teach social justice and activism in the course, lack of student diversity in the classroom, conservatism of some students, and time constraints on students' engagement in social activism.

It is critical that the academic discipline of criminal justice move beyond preparing students solely for jobs in criminology. The field must incorporate the larger perspective of justice that includes concepts of social justice and activism. Incorporating opportunities to address real-world, problem-based issues will help students gain critical thinking skills, be more informed citizens, and develop the ability to see the inadequacies of our existing justice system.

*Teaching Justice* is a must-read for anyone who teaches criminal justice courses. This book offers insights that can help increase the legitimacy of the discipline of criminal justice and criminology. It not only encourages, but also provides specific methods for, faculty to challenge students to critically examine our system of criminal justice and the theories of criminology. Being exposed to the lives and problems experienced by real people in the community can empower students to become actively engaged in addressing injustice and challenging the status quo. The author provides a wealth of practical tools and strategies for teaching a criminal justice class. The book supplies numerous resources, specific activities, strategies, and concepts to incorporate in these courses, including resources by the author, as well as those recommended and shared by national and international professionals in the field of criminal justice/criminology. If more professors follow Holsinger's recommendations, a greater number of students will be motivated to actively engage in addressing injustice in our world.

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## About the Reviewer

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Bowdon, M.A., & Carpenter, R. G., (Eds.) (2011). *Higher education, emerging technologies, and community partnerships: Concepts, models and practices*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference. 452 pp.

### Review by Al Turgeon

This edited book, available in both hardcover and e-book formats, offers a series of chapters describing an array of partnerships involving universities and other institutions that were facilitated by ICT (information and communication technologies) and DT (digital technologies). As evidenced throughout this volume, these technologies have significantly influenced collaborations between institutions of higher education, communities, and their partners, making these analyses extremely pertinent to higher education today. Comprising case studies, reviews, and critiques, the book's 36 chapters provide a comprehensive discussion of technology's impact on higher education and community partnerships.

Higher education partnerships have existed at least since the formation of land-grant colleges, and thus since the mid-nineteenth century, as these institutions could not have been established nor functioned without strong partnerships among individuals, private sector organizations, and government. The key technology then was the printing press, which supported affordable publications and textbooks. Today, computer hardware and software, acting together to form the worldwide web, are the emerging technologies that have made possible new partnerships among universities and their numerous and varied constituencies.

These partnerships and interrelationships are elucidated throughout the book. Each chapter is a unique discussion of an example of technology assisting in the development and maintenance of bonds between universities and communities. Topics range from discussions like Chapter 7, "Integrated Product Teams at the University of Alabama in Huntsville" by Matthew W. Turner, Michael P. J. Benfield, Dawn R. Utley, and Cynthia A. McPherson, which presents a case history in which engineering students communicated with each other and with outside groups on their senior project, to Chapter 26, "Here and Now or Coming in the Future? E-Learning in Higher Education in Africa" by James Kariuki Njenga and Louis Cyril Henry Fourie. The latter chapter describes the challenges of implementing online education in Africa given the current lack of necessary infrastructure and the resistance of African institutions to using ICT in their academic programs. The topics

in the book reflect an impressive breadth of coverage, addressing nearly every means of applying technology to link communities with higher education.

Most chapters propose applicable and intriguing ideas for partnership through technology. For example, Chapter 15, “Web-Based Information Science Education: Leveraging the Power of the Network to Re-Define the Global Classroom” by Kathleen Schisa, Anne McKinney, Debbie Faires, Bruce Kingma, Rae Anne Montague, Linda C. Smith, and Marianne Sterna, discusses the Web-based Information Science Education (WISE) consortium of graduate library and information science (LIS) programs, involving 15 member institutions around the world. Although specific to LIS education, the program provides a model for inter-institutional course exchange through which students at one member institution can take online courses from another, with the institution paying the cost from the student’s tuition. The chapter provides a user perspective on the program as well as walking through its three pillars: quality, pedagogy, and collaboration. One can only hope that this type of institutional collaboration is expanded to other programs and other institutions, as everyone—the institutions offering the courses, the institutions importing the courses, and especially the students taking the courses—benefits from such an inter-institutional feedback system. Inter-institutional cooperation is more important than ever in a constrained budget environment. The members of the WISE consortium, and the institutions housing these LIS programs, should be applauded for their bold leadership.

Another example of the book’s range is Chapter 29, “Bridging the Gaps: Community-University Partnerships as a New Form of Social Policy” by Caroline Collins, Olga A. Vásquez, and James Bliesner. This short chapter describes a project, La Clase Mágica, through which the University of California at San Diego set up computer labs at various locations within the surrounding county to provide access to learning resources that would help members of marginalized groups prepare for higher educational opportunities. Subsequent expansion of the program to include more sites and other constituencies suggests that it has had a positive impact. The project’s philosophy, commitment to collaboration, and impacts provide a unique example of technological implementation across communities.

Not all of the selections within this compendium are especially helpful. Chapter 25, “From Collision to Collaboration: An Expanded Role for Project Evaluators in the Development of Interactive Media” by Karla Saari Kitalong, attempts to describe

the evaluation of Water Journey Through the Everglades, a project that uses information technologies to link experts and end users to ensure completion of its goals and objectives. The author's rambling left me with more frustration than insight. The chapter lacks concrete analysis, and thus fails to provide any valuable information or conclusions.

The contributions about the role of information technologies in community-university partnerships are insightful, providing a broad range of examples in which modern technology is used to foster linkages among higher education, communities, and their respective partners. Before these modern technologies were available, higher education outreach was a noble idea, but extraordinarily difficult to implement in ways that could touch all elements of society. That is no longer true. Even marginalized elements of our society are within reach, as several chapters demonstrate. Although the book often points to lack of funding as an impediment to further progress, the only real impediment is the limitations of our own creativity in developing and employing the available technologies as we foster partnerships to achieve our goals.

### **About the Reviewer**

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Tisch, J., & Weber, K. (2010) *Citizen you: How social entrepreneurs are changing the world*. New York: Random House. 247 pp.

### Review by Michael Fortunato

The message conveyed in each chapter of Jonathan Tisch's book, *Citizen You: How Social Entrepreneurs Are Changing the World*, is as clear and simple as it is important: A global movement is underway, and Jonathan Tisch wants you to be part of it. *Citizen You* is a highly readable and timely amalgam of narratives, personal anecdotes, and pertinent calls to action; a short volume that speaks to any professional, inside or outside of the academy, who craves a deeper sense of satisfaction from their work than earning a mere paycheck. While loosely-assembled at times and drawing heavily from personal anecdotes and the experiences of acquaintances, Tisch weaves an elegant argument for the benefits of personal transformation toward a life of citizenship and service, perhaps even solving the world's most pressing problems. The author's centrality in a network of socially-minded thinkers and doers, and his own expertise as a leader in socially-responsible business practice, offers the reader a refreshing glimpse of the stories and thoughts of a cohort of individuals who have successfully bridged from the for-profit world to the for-humanity world, all the while deeply improving their own life's satisfaction and sense of world citizenship.

The first chapter sets the tone of the rest of the book, capturing the reader's attention quickly with personal narratives to which readers can easily relate. Woven amidst these narratives, Tisch quickly lays out the seven transformations that describe this "global movement" of new activism: from volunteerism to active citizenship, from charity to social entrepreneurship, from targeted philanthropy to systemic change, from helping a few to building to scale, from lobbying governments to energizing the private sector, from modest reforms to entirely new models, and from paternalism to community-based action. Tisch points to the coming rise of the Millennials and their culture – young people born from 1978 to 2000 – as being the most civically-minded and well-networked generation in history, and at the vanguard of the movement of new activism, pointing to events like the Twitter-fueled youth rebellion against the most recent presidential election in Iran (the book antedates the Arab Spring of 2011). But, Tisch makes it very clear through the remainder of the book that anyone, not just the Millennial generation, has the power to change their

lives mid-stream and find new ways of rediscovering active citizenship without upsetting the apple cart.

After the first chapter, each following chapter contains a different “angle” on how any person can rediscover and reengage their citizenship in different ways. Chapter 2 begins with social entrepreneurs, and contains inspiring stories from a wide range of socially-minded new businesses launched to solve a social problems. Examples include launching a business to working with disadvantaged kids to write in school newspaper, learning important journalistic skills; to Mercy Corps, a company developed to help ravaged societies through microfinance, conflict management, environmental protection, and the development of sustainable energy sources. Other chapters relate to ways that working professionals can make their businesses more socially-conscious, how governments can stimulate better citizenship through more engaged programs, and techniques for building citizenship online. Tisch continues with stories of how corporate executives have attempted to make their companies more like active citizens, and provides strategies for how to “bridge to act two,” or how to “start your life anew” as an engaged citizen. He illustrates using one particularly interesting story of an IBM executive who became the unlikely Chief Operating Officer of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE). If this were not enough grist to jump out of one’s chair and get started, the book ends with 52 specific websites to visit, each with a different way to sign up and join the global movement of new citizen activism. The not-so-subtle message: Armed with all this information, and inspiring stories from key difference-makers, there is no excuse not to put down the book and do *something* to reaffirm your sense of citizenship and responsibility to making the world a better place, even in a small way.

Researchers and professionals who are looking for a systematic approach to entrepreneurship, the effects of social entrepreneurs on society, or a distillation of best practices in social entrepreneurship may be disappointed in this book. The title is even somewhat misleading: *Citizen You* is about much more than how social entrepreneurs are changing the world. The knowledge in this book is not organized categorically, nor is it overly synthesized, and its analysis is overlaid by Tisch’s overt and unfettered enthusiasm for citizen engagement and its benefits. The central argument is crafted anecdotally, and Tisch makes heavy-handed use of stories from places he knows well, like Tufts University (home of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service), Loews Hotels

(for which he serves as co-chairman of the board of directors), and the New York City government (where he lives and works).

However, such a personal approach should not deter researchers and professionals from the book's essential wisdom. *Citizen You* reveals, through careful pairing of narratives and ideas, deep insights about reflexive practice, and how anyone, in any position, can contribute to the book's stated goal of encouraging citizen activism. Tisch's familiarity with successful social entrepreneurs and their stories, and his commitment to the cause of citizen activism, presents a clear bias. It also presents a rich display of personal and citizen expertise, as Tisch winds the reader through richly-descriptive personal testimonies and stories of everyday citizen heroism from his own life, and the lives of his acquaintances, that are as thought-provoking as they are inspiring. Perhaps most practically useful, Tisch offers a boxed section at the end of every chapter called "Food For Thought, Seeds For Action," which offers realistic, pragmatic opportunities for engaging in citizen life, and real strategies for thinking reflexively and critically about what you, yourself, have to offer your fellow citizens that you may not have even realized.

In summary, Jonathan M. Tisch pulls no punches in *Citizen You*. From the early pages, any reader can expect to be drawn in by the book's inspiring stories, and its reaffirming tone that all of us, deep down, crave human interaction, and the chance to live harmoniously in a caring and committed world community. This book is an excellent choice for anyone who seeks such transformation or connection in their own lives, paired with down-to-Earth suggestions of how to make it happen. By the book's end, it is possible that even you could play an integral role in the global movement toward citizen activism (if you do not already).-

### **About the Reviewer**

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