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# *Journal of Higher Education Outreach & Engagement*

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## ***From the Editor...***

### **So What? For Whom? What Difference Does Community Engagement Make?**

As community-university outreach and engagement efforts are maturing, it is appropriate to ask the “so what” and “for whom” questions. What difference does community engagement make to students, to institutional partners, to program participants? More important, what difference does it make to broader communities—to higher education and beyond? In this issue’s opening article, our feature article observing the centennial year of Cooperative Extension, Nancy Franz chronicles that organization’s lessons learned in attempting to respond to the “so what” and “for whom” questions. She notes that, over time, expectations for the value provided by Extension have changed from private value for program participants to the public value of engagement for those not directly involved in the programs. That is, funding stakeholders, in particular, now expect Extension to document not only outcomes and impacts for individual program participants, but “how engagement with communities changes economic, environmental, and social conditions.”

Those of us who have attempted to measure change related to engagement with complex community-based issues know of the difficulty in measuring and articulating such public value. Franz advises attending to plans for measuring the value of engagement efforts during the proposal stages, and for including plans for articulating that value during and after the portfolio of projects addressing a critical issue.

The “so what” and “for whom” questions are addressed by the other articles in this issue as well. Three research articles explore the impact of community-engaged learning on particular populations of university students: White students engaged in a low-income African American community, first-generation and non-first-generation students, and students holding a 2-year degree.

In their study, Houshmand, Spanierman, Beer, Poteat, and Lawson examine the racial attitudes of White undergraduate students enrolled in a service-learning design studio course. Their findings highlight the importance of explicitly addressing multiculturalism in service-learning in order to better serve the communities with which students are engaged. In a large-scale study, Pelco, Ball, and Lockeman compare the effects of service-learning courses on student growth in first-generation and non-first-generation

undergraduate students. When investigating generational, racial, and financial status differences, they found that first-generation and non-first-generation male students showed the greatest differences. Their study also highlights the importance of utilizing large, diverse samples when conducting quantitative studies investigating the impact of service-learning on student development. Finally, Newell examines the differences in civic engagement between individuals with a high school degree, an associate's degree, and a bachelor's degree; her findings suggest that, although to a lesser extent than 4-year degree holders, holders of 2-year degrees do experience gains in civic engagement.

The next two articles in this issue address the “so what” question for faculty members and scholars. These studies probe the meaning and significance of community engagement as well as the challenges academics may face in adopting this orientation and pedagogy. Applying Bandura's (1997) motivational theory enabled Darby and Newman to view faculty members' motivation to persist in utilizing a service-learning pedagogy in its complexity. Their research revealed motivation not as a sum of factors that encourage or discourage faculty members' persistence in the pedagogy, but rather as a cyclical process that continually influenced faculty members' motivation with each academic service-learning experience. Through interviews with exemplars in the field, Kasworm and Abdrahim found that two interrelated but different groups emerged, representing “a university-centric enclave and a community engagement–centric enclave.” Their data relative to these two groups suggest that defining the scholarship of engagement is a socially constructed process, and engaged scholars have varied beliefs and understanding about the field based on their experiences and positions.

Eaton, Wright, Whyte, Gasteyer, and Gehrke in their essay discuss the “so what” of emerging science and technology relative to public engagement. They illustrate how the emerging nature of technologies can have stifling effects but also offer ways for scholars and practitioners to minimize these challenges to effective engagement. From her position as chair of the graduate program of Education, Society and Culture and the Institute for Civic Responsibility at Or Yehuda Israel, Irit Keynan broadly frames the “so what” question. In “Knowledge as Responsibility: Universities and Society,” she argues that authentic social responsibility is grounded in the principles of equal rights, capability, and mutual responsibility. She points out that while they claim to be committed to such principles, many universities “are in fact distanced from

these missions and from social responsibility in its broad and comprehensive meaning.”

Through their rich personal story as narrative inquiry, Tinkler, Tinkler, Gerstl-Pepin, and Mugisha speak to the “so what” for their work as a collaborative Learn and Serve America grant team. They used their experience to demonstrate how a community-based, participatory service-learning approach provides teacher education programs with opportunities to strengthen and sustain their relationships with the communities they serve while developing and embedding cultural competence related to inequities experienced by these communities into the teacher education curriculum.

Two Programs with Promise articles in this issue address the “so what” of developing innovative, comprehensive programs that provide unique benefits to both students and community partners. Rawlings-Sanaei and Sachs of Macquarie University, an Australian public teaching and research university in New South Wales, detail a university-wide signature initiative for community-based experiential learning with local, regional, and international partners. To help others considering such a strategic approach, they address issues of academic rigor, governance, and organization structure. What nonprofit organization does not need grant-writing assistance? Stevens, at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, describes a writing-intensive course that combined a service-learning framework with grant-writing opportunities for students. She offers suggestions for how to incorporate service-learning to promote real-world application of research and writing skills for students while meeting community agency needs.

This issue features five book reviews. Written while onsite in Tanzania, Orland’s review of Agnotti, Doble, and Horrigan’s *Service Learning in Design and Planning* offers the unique perspective of a landscape professor implementing a community design-oriented study. Similarly, Haider reviews Lima’s *Building Playgrounds, Engaging Communities: Creating Safe and Happy Places for Children*, which makes a strong case for incorporating service-learning into a greater number of academic disciplines, most notably design and engineering. Calvin evaluates *Democratic Dilemmas of Teaching Service-Learning*, an edited book by Cress, Donahue, and associates that looks at the historical foundation of service-learning and its current practice. In her review of Rochester, Campbell Gosling, Penn, and Zimmeck’s *Understanding the Roots of Voluntary Action: Historical Perspectives on Current Social Policy*, Gold contends that this collection of essays on the history of voluntary action in the

United Kingdom has significant relevance and utility for today's volunteer organizations.

Finally, the issue concludes where it started by considering questions of accountability, assessment, and impact with Cecil's critique of Lagemann and Lewis's *What Is College For? The Public Purpose of Higher Education*. We, the reviewers and editor team of the Journal, thank those who are on the forefront in pursuing answers to the "so what" and "for whom" questions through their research, evaluation, and reviews. The seeking process as well as the actual documentation of the public value of engagement can, as Franz writes, "help universities and their community partners find common ground on what matters to academics, students, practitioners, administrators, elected officials, and community members."

With best regards,  
Lorilee R. Sandmann  
Editor

### **Reference**

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# **Measuring and Articulating the Value of Community Engagement: Lessons Learned from 100 Years of Cooperative Extension Work**

Nancy Franz

## **Abstract**

The Cooperative Extension System was created in 1914 with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. The act provided resources to improve access to education by creating this nationwide organization to bring land-grant university research and resources to people where they lived and worked. Cooperative Extension was the first formal nationwide structure created for university–community engagement. Expectations for Extension as an engaged institution have changed over time. Once seen chiefly as a source of private value for program participants in local communities, Extension is now also expected to provide public value for those not directly involved in Extension programs. After 100 years of community engagement efforts, Cooperative Extension has learned lessons about measuring and articulating the value of engagement related to professional development, program development, funding, structure, and organization development. Other engaged institutions will find important implications for their work from Extension’s engagement value lessons.

## **Introduction**

The Cooperative Extension System was created in 1914 with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. The act provided resources to improve access to education by creating this nationwide organization to bring land-grant university research and resources to people where they lived and worked (*Rasmussen, 1989*). One hundred years later, Extension educators are located at land-grant university campuses and in county and regional Extension offices across each state and U.S. territory. These educators act as an “extension” of their land-grant university, providing programs in agriculture and natural resources, community and economic development, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development (*Franz & Townson, 2008*). This national network of 3,000 Extension offices makes this system the largest adult education organization in the United States (*Griffith, 1991*). Consistent with the land-grant mission, Cooperative Extension is specifically charged with responsibility for engaging with communities to

address economic, environmental, and social issues by living and working within the local context (Franz & Townson, 2008).

## **The Extension Organization**

Cooperative Extension has a complex and unique structure. Staffing and funding are derived from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state government, county government, and revenue from grants, contracts, gifts, and fees. Originally Extension was funded by federal, state, and county government in equal parts, but reductions in these funds have resulted in a wider variety of funding sources. Budgets and funding sources differ across county and state Extension units (Franz & Townson, 2008).

Staffing of Extension units around the country varies widely. Extension administrators, faculty, and program specialists are land-grant university employees working closely with regional and county educators to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate educational programming. A county Extension office could have as few as two staff or as many as 70 (Franz & Townson, 2008). These paid staff broaden and deepen educational impact using thousands of volunteers, including 4-H leaders, Master Gardeners, and advisory council members (Seevers, Graham, & Conklin, 2007).

## **Extension Programming**

All Extension workers are charged with community engagement through education. Programs are developed using a model of working with communities to conduct a situational analysis to drive program design and implementation as well as program evaluation and reporting (Franz & Townson, 2008). Extension's educational topics and clients range from developing safe and accessible local food systems in communities to nutrition education for low-resource families to science, technology, engineering, and math career exploration for underserved youth. Extension's clients include all residents in the state or area the land-grant university serves (Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, 2013).

Extension educators use four approaches to engaging with communities: service, content transmission, facilitation, and transformative education. Service activities may include providing soil testing, pressure canner testing, or participation on committees and groups. Extension staff also frequently serve as facilitators of group processes and architects of learning environments to help groups address complex community issues. Extension also has a reputation for disseminating content, specifically research-

based information across a variety of topics for homeowners, businesses, agricultural producers, and communities. All three of these approaches help Extension educators create transformative learning conditions by combining effective content and educational processes to help learners develop new and expanded ways of making more informed decisions about their lives (Franz, 2003; Franz, Garst, Baughman, Smith, & Peters, 2009; Franz & Townson 2008). In conducting this work, Extension faculty and staff engage with a wide variety of partners, including elected officials, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, government agencies, schools, and businesses (Apps, 2002).

## **Role of Extension in Community–University Engagement**

Cooperative Extension was the first formal nationwide structure created for university–community engagement. Over the last 100 years it has become the largest nonformal education organization in the world. In addition, it leads 4-H, the largest youth development organization in the nation (SeEVERS, Graham, & Conklin, 2007). However, the nature of this land-grant university engagement with communities varies according to local context, reflecting the interests of community members and the interests and capacity of the Extension educators. In many instances, Extension faculty and staff assist communities in developing their own resources for local programming. Engagement has changed over time, having started as university experts taking the traditional role of providing information to clients and now taking the form of Extension educators being more focused on creating and maintaining mutual learning environments with communities in addition to serving as content experts (Applebee, 2000). Applebee assesses Extension engagement with communities by observing that “Context is everything; relationship is all there is” (p. 421).

The role of Extension with community engagement varies across the United States locally and on campus. Some Extension systems are stand alone units in arrangements similar to that at Iowa State University, where the organization is led campuswide by a vice president for extension and outreach. At other institutions, such as Virginia Tech, Extension is led by an associate dean in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Cooperative Extension may also be embedded in a campuswide engagement unit on a land-grant campus. These structural differences shape the funding, staffing, and program focus for Extension work, which in turn determines types of engagement activities and clients. Traditionally,

Extension has a reputation for conducting community–university engagement with rural communities on agricultural topics and 4-H. More accurately, Extension’s community engagement takes place in all areas of the country with a wide variety of partners and topics (*McDowell, 2001*). Extension systems have experimented with a variety of structures and programs to adapt to changing contexts and demographics. Some systems have broadened their program focus to target audiences, and others have moved to supporting more urban or regional educators (*Morse, 2009*).

### **The Changing Value Expectations for Extension Engagement**

Expectations of Extension’s value as an engaged institution have expanded over time. Previously Extension was expected chiefly to provide private value to program participants; now expected outcomes include the public value accruing to those not directly involved in Extension programs (*Kalambokidis, 2004*). The public’s interest in education and Extension used to focus on valuing learning outcomes and documentation of behavior changes resulting from that learning. In the last decade stakeholders, especially elected officials, have come to expect Extension to articulate how engagement with communities changes economic, environmental, and social conditions. This change in value expectations—from the value of program participation and learning and behavior change to the public value of engagement—has spurred a movement in Extension to measure and articulate the public value of Extension’s community–university engagement (*Franz, 2011a; Kalambokidis, 2004*).

The value of Extension engagement with communities has been impacted by the decline of public funding for engagement organizations, the public school standards-based movement, grant funders’ expectations that engagement efforts will include evidence-based curriculum (i.e., curriculum reflecting evidence from randomized control trials to prove program outcomes), funders’ interest in return on investment, and other expectations of accountability for the use of public funds (*Franz, 2012*). In response, Extension has begun to utilize expanded measures and more full articulation of the public value of engagement with partners, including the creation of public value statements and stories to be used with the media, decision makers, and funders (*Franz, 2013; Kalambokidis, 2011*).

## The Value Measurement Landscape

Extension has explored a variety of ways to measure the value of engagement for the public good. Initially, program evaluation experts were hired as Extension specialists to conduct rigorous evaluations to reveal the worth of Extension programs. In the mid 1980s some Extension systems began to invest in building program evaluation capacity in all Extension educators to more widely and deeply measure the impact of engagement efforts. Both approaches to staffing engagement evaluation in Extension exist today (*Braverman, Engle, Arnold, & Rennekamp, 2008*).

The logic model has become a common tool for program development in Extension engagement and has been adopted by many funders as a key element for grant applications and program evaluation. Common measures as key indicators of learning, behavior, or condition change across engagement efforts are also being used to better describe the public value of engagement. These indicators can range from the number of community policy changes implemented to support healthy eating to the number of jobs created, the number of program participants taking steps to reduce debt, or the number of parts per million of nitrogen in water bodies before and after engagement activities (*Franz, 2012*). Extension has been participating in collective impact efforts as an anchor institution in catalyzing and measuring change concerning complex community-based issues (*Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012*).

Extension educators engaged with communities sometimes find the public value measurement landscape difficult to navigate. They are fearful of applying their program evaluation findings to larger economic, social, and environmental conditions. The focus on evidence-based programs validated by randomized control trials has limited Extension educators' ability to adapt educational activities to their local context. Finally, Extension faculty and staff have requested that more research be conducted to show how their educational programs with communities contribute directly to changes in community conditions (*Franz, 2012*).

## The Value Articulation Landscape

Articulating the value of Extension engagement has changed as funding sources have changed. For much of Extension's history, public funding was substantial and long-term programs were sustained. As public funding has become more competitive and less substantive, community engagement work has become more project-based. This has required building strong relationships with

community partners who can navigate a portfolio of projects from a variety of funding sources, sometimes with predetermined audiences targeted by the funder. Project impact measures that capture data from across a variety of projects have become more important; however, such measures may surface differing values of community members, practitioners, academics, and university administrators about what matters (Franz, 2012).

After a decade of hearing the call to articulate public value of engagement for decision makers and other stakeholders, Extension workers and community partners are working to respond to this request. Extension has a rich and long history of articulating the private value of engaging with individuals, families, and businesses through results such as the 4-H member who has gained leadership skills and become a CEO, the family that has reduced their medical costs due to healthy eating, or the agricultural producer who has reduced inputs and increased outputs due to Extension education. Articulating how these activities contribute to economic, social, or environmental conditions for communities is difficult for many Extension educators and their partners, yet many of them have begun to delve into this approach to sharing impact of community engagement (Franz, 2012).

## **Value Lessons Learned by Extension**

Through 100 years of community engagement work, Cooperative Extension has learned several lessons about measuring and articulating the value of engagement. Professional development opportunities for engagement partners can catalyze measuring and articulating the value of engagement. Extension has found that including the perspectives of economists, program evaluators, and communicators helps Extension workers and community members develop skills to better measure and articulate engagement work through the development and use of value statements and stories (Franz, 2011a, 2013; Kalambokidis, 2004, 2011). The creation of an Extension Public Value Facebook page has helped extend these professional development efforts and reinforce the distinctions between public and private value of engagement. Success has come from engaging early adopters in measuring and determining the value of engagement efforts as well as through providing many examples and formats of engagement value statements and stories for others to adopt.

Extension has been known for its effective community-based program development model. As the need to measure and articulate program value has increased, evaluation has become more integrated into the whole program development process rather than occurring solely at the end of the program. Extension staff and community members are more fully using logic models to plan programs and are determining private and public values to be measured as the program is implemented. Data collection is also integrated into programming rather than conducted separately from program efforts. Program evaluation planning has become a tool through which university and community partners agree upfront on the outputs and outcomes of their collaborative work.

Funding for Extension's engagement with communities has changed over its 100-year history, requiring Extension to become more adept at working with community partners to secure funding for educational programs. Available funding has become more focused on addressing issues rather than supporting ongoing programs. Efforts to measure and articulate the value of Extension's work are increasingly funded by grants, contracts, gifts, and fees. Generating revenue and measuring and articulating engagement value for Extension work have become part of the performance review process for most Extension faculty and staff.

Extension's structure as an organization continues to change to better measure and articulate value. Some Extension systems have made reductions in campus staff to better fund community-based Extension staff. Other systems have specifically added economists, program evaluators, and communicators to their staff to help measure and report the value of Extension's community engagement efforts. Attempts are being made to improve the relationship between data gatherers in communities and engagement value storytellers in Extension administration. This includes adopting new planning, reporting, and promotion and tenure/performance review systems to better capture community engagement data.

Extension's culture is changing to better measure and articulate the value of community engagement and highlight engaged scholarship. Some Extension systems are determining what public values they will overtly pursue with communities across programs. Other Extension systems are selecting and supporting public value champions to catalyze the ability to tell their value story and integrate engaged scholarship more fully into the campus climate. Finally, Extension's culture is shifting to more fully embrace co-learning with communities rather than being restricted to the role of an expert resource for communities. This widening of educational

approaches enables true engagement with communities based on a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and resources (Franz, 2009; Peters & Franz, 2012).

## **Implications for Engaged Institutions**

Organizations interested in measuring and articulating the value of engagement work need to support professional development and other learning supports for university faculty and staff and community partners. Opportunities should build awareness and skills to measure the economic, environmental, and social value of engagement. This may require learning with and from economists, program evaluators, communicators, and those directly and indirectly realizing the value of engagement. Use of technology should be encouraged to enhance professional development and help connect people who conduct similar work so they can share successes and lessons learned in communities and on campus. As part of the promotion and tenure process, the production of academic, applied, and community-engaged products that measure the value of engagement should be encouraged (Franz, 2011b).

Faculty, staff, and community partners can enhance engagement value by building value measurement and articulation activities into the program design process using logic models or other program planning tools. Program design should also include all partners determining upfront the mutually intended values of their engagement work. New value determination methods and processes such as social return on investment and collective impact should also be built into program development to explore new ways to show the value of engagement.

Funding proposals for engagement activities are more likely to succeed if they include methods for measuring the value of the activities as well as a plan for articulating that value during and after the project. Addressing community-based issues rather than simply continuing past efforts also enhances revenue generation for engagement efforts. University administrators can also catalyze university–community engagement by tying engagement revenue generation to performance and providing seed grants to help build a foundation for future external funding for engagement.

To support measuring and articulating the value of engagement work, opportunities need to be created for a variety of perspectives to participate in these efforts. Interdisciplinary efforts across campus and across a community allow for a variety of values to surface and be measured. Systems also need to be created to capture

and report the value of engagement during and after engagement activities take place. These systems should connect promotion and tenure dossier development, faculty and staff productivity reports, project and program reports, and community-based reporting needs. Such systems also should include an online repository of engagement value stories and statements for university and community stakeholders to access, share, and emulate.

Engaged organizations need to constantly evolve to be effective engagement partners. Incentives need to be in place for faculty, staff, and community partners to measure and articulate the value of engagement in ways that support the mission of the university and the goals of the community. Those who lead this work should be rewarded internally and also gain recognition externally (through such means as the C. Peter Magrath University Community Engagement Award). Engaged organizations should support a culture that promotes engaged scholarship to improve research, teaching, and resolution of community issues (Franz, Childers, & Sanderlin, 2012). A focus on the public value of engagement can help universities and their community partners find common ground on what matters to academics, practitioners, administrators, elected officials, and community members.

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## RESEARCH ARTICLES



## **The Impact of a Service-Learning Design Course on White Students' Racial Attitudes**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the racial attitudes of White undergraduates ( $N = 15$ ) enrolled in a service-learning design studio, in which students worked closely on landscape architecture projects with residents in a low-income African American community. Using a modified consensual qualitative research method, the authors analyzed a series of guided inquiry questions at three time points and a focus group discussion at the end of the studio. This resulted in the identification of themes linked to three domains: students' hopes and expectations prior to the service-learning design studio; their experiences during the semester-long service-learning project, and their reflections about the service-learning project upon its completion. Although some participants claimed enhanced awareness of their social location, students continued to blame community members for their living conditions. These themes are discussed with regard to central concepts in multicultural psychology and education, such as racial color-blindness and White privilege, and implications for future research and multicultural service-learning courses are offered.

### **Introduction**

The call to teach through applied experiences has been a recurring discussion within higher education (*Campus Compact*, 2003; *Duckenfield & Madden*, 2000; *Jacoby*, 1996). Service-learning is one method that has emerged as an effective way to engage students in experiential multicultural education (*O'Grady*, 1998). Referred to by various names—service-learning, civic engagement, community-based learning, immersion studio (*Kendall & Associates*, 1990)—the general philosophy is to encourage a mutually beneficial partnership between students and a community group, with students providing needed services to a community that in turn provides rich professional and personal learning opportunities for students (*National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993*; *O'Grady*, 2000). According to Barber (1992), field experiences outside the classroom that provide students with opportunities to interact with the “diversity and plurality of American life [have]

the greatest likelihood of impacting student ignorance, intolerance, and prejudice” (p. 255). Although service-learning has the potential to positively influence students’ racial attitudes, evaluation of its multicultural learning outcomes often has been neglected. In one of the few studies addressing this topic, findings indicated that White students often approached service as an act of charity (*Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2011*). In the current investigation, we examined White students’ racial attitudes throughout their participation in a service-learning project to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of a long-standing, community-based service-learning course.

The site of investigation was a landscape architecture design studio, in which students made several trips to a low-income African American community throughout the year. Community-based design studios link the skills of a design department with the concrete needs of a community (*Boyer & Mitgang, 1996*). While students provide needed services to a community, they ostensibly gain an increased understanding of the community’s social and economic history. Most often, professional skill development is the focus of evaluation efforts; however, it is also important to evaluate community-based design studios with regard to multicultural outcomes.

## **Multicultural Service-Learning**

Multicultural service-learning is a community-based service that is attuned to diversity, equity, and the social and economic context of community concerns (*Boyle-Baise, 2002*). It is intended to provide opportunities for students to gain knowledge about groups other than their own and to recognize strengths in cultural diversity (*Boyle-Baise, 2005*). According to Allport’s contact theory (1954), intergroup prejudice is reduced when members of different racial or ethnic groups are brought together under certain conditions, such as working toward a common goal. Certain empirical studies have shown that service-learning has been associated with positive outcomes such as lower scores on modern racism (e.g., beliefs that racism against Black individuals is no longer a problem in the United States; *Myers-Lipton, 1996*) and higher intercultural sensitivity (*Fitch, 2005*). Using a retrospective case study approach, Buch and Harden (2011) found that a service-learning project contributed to the development of students’ positive attitudes and a sense of civic responsibility toward homeless individuals. In a review of the service-learning literature, Eyster, Giles, and Grey (1999) argued that service-learning reduces stereotypes, contributes to cultural and racial understanding, and enhances civic responsibility.

Furthermore, research has indicated that community partners generally are pleased with service-learning projects (Ferrari & Worrall, 2000; Schmidt & Robby, 2002).

In contrast, critics have expressed skepticism about bringing White middle-class students to low-income communities of color, especially when benefits to the community are unclear (Reardon, 1998; Thompson, 1992). Hess, Lanig, and Vaughan (2007), for example, explained that service-learning is predicated on a "deficit model" whereby students view themselves as the advantaged providing a service to the disadvantaged (p. 32); this model may perpetuate students' negative stereotypes of community members. Hill-Jackson and Lewis (2011) observed a similar deficit-oriented approach among White teacher candidates who participated in service-learning at a local African American museum. Reardon (1994) also emphasized service-learning students' propensity to express paternalistic attitudes (i.e., treating community members as subordinates without agency) and negative stereotypes. Although service-learning may increase students' feelings of self-worth and moral virtue, "It may contribute little to their intellectual and practical understanding of social justice and racial inequality" (Reardon, 1994, p. 53).

Although service-learning leaders cannot undo the power relationships between students and community members, it is possible to "make power relationships visible" (Green, 2003, p. 296). One way to make power relations visible is to encourage reflection upon constructs such as structural racism and White privilege. There are several challenges to discussing racial privilege with White service-learning students. Privilege can take both active visible forms and embedded forms, which dominant group members are taught to ignore (McIntosh, 1988). Moreover, White, middle-class students often believe that it is impolite to acknowledge race or class directly. Students may be hesitant to reveal or discuss negative biases or feelings in service-learning contexts (Paoletti, Segal, & Totino, 2007). Reflecting upon her experiences as a service-learning instructor, Green (2003) noted that White middle-class students feared that mentioning race would make them appear racist and thus avoided discussing race. Consequently, students' racial attitudes were left unexamined. Whiteness is a critical yet often overlooked concept in multicultural education in general including multicultural service-learning (Hill-Jackson 2007, 2011 & Lewis, 2011).

## **The Setting: East St. Louis Community Open Space Design Studio**

In the current investigation, we examined the racial attitudes of White students enrolled in the East St. Louis Community Open Space Design Studio at a large predominantly White midwestern university. In the studio, landscape architecture students collaborated with community partners on design projects identified by the residents. During the time of the study, approximately 98% of the East St. Louis population was African American, and approximately 39% lived below the poverty level, as compared to the national average of 15.1% (*United States Census Bureau, 2010*). This design studio was, and continues to be, part of a larger, university-wide multidisciplinary service project engaged in technical assistance and action research. The primary objective of the design studio is to teach basic design and participatory processes. Although the design process was central to the studio, various pedagogical techniques were included to raise awareness about East St. Louis history and community development. For example, students were required to attend tours of East St. Louis to learn about its history. Although most course readings address aspects of basic design, some pertain to multiculturalism and open space (e.g., *Loukaitou-Sideris, 1995*). Students did not receive any direct instruction related to structural racism or White privilege.

The students and course instructor traveled to East St. Louis for three 2-day visits (i.e., outreach weekends) to conduct site analyses, meet with residents, attend community meetings, and participate in service projects. The first visit took place at the beginning of the semester, the second during the middle of the semester, and the final visit during the last week of classes. The instructor, an assistant professor of landscape architecture, facilitated lectures and supervised studio design. She accompanied students on all visits to East St. Louis. During outreach weekends, students worked with residents on park projects, such as designing a new plaza and revitalizing an existing park. Each project was structured as a participatory design process whereby the students proposed projects to the community, discussed residents' concerns, developed design alternatives, and then presented final plans to residents. Because many of the design projects were long-range and hypothetical, students also engaged in immediate service efforts, such as picking up trash in vacant lots or painting a community center.

## Purpose and Rationale of the Present Study

With notable exceptions (e.g., Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004; Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2011), little prior research has focused explicitly on the racial attitudes of White students engaged in multicultural service-learning. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to explore these attitudes and related outcomes in one long-standing community-based design studio. Community-based learning has the potential to enhance students' sense of civic responsibility (e.g., Astin & Sax, 1998) and facilitate understandings of social justice (e.g., Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004); it also presents the possibility of reinforcing students' negative racial stereotypes (Hess et al., 2007; Reardon, 1994). Empirical investigation of this design studio has the potential to provide insight into similar community-based design projects and to enhance the benefits of multicultural service-learning for students and community members.

## Method

A qualitative research approach is well-suited to examining relatively unexplored topics, especially those pertaining to multicultural issues (Ponterotto, 2010). To this end, in the current study we employed qualitative methods to examine students' experiences via two sources: (a) responses to open-ended survey items (i.e., guided inquiries) at three time points and (b) a focus group discussion at the end of the term. The research team used a modified consensual qualitative research (CQR) approach (Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997; Hill et al., 2005), which uses an inductive process to understand the data and relies on consensus among team members to reduce individual bias. The research team selected CQR on the basis of its effectiveness in the study of complex racial phenomena (e.g., Kim, Brenner, Liang, & Assay, 2003; Knox, Burkard, Johnson, Suzuki, & Ponterotto, 2003) and because it provides rich descriptions of phenomena during the initial stages of exploration (Hill et al., 1997). Similar to previous research, the method was modified to extend its use with data beyond individual interviews (e.g., Clark, Spanierman, Reed, Soble, & Cabana, 2011; Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2008); the essential components of CQR (i.e., multiple perspectives and external auditor) were retained. In contrast to traditional CQR, we included themes in the current study that were expressed by only one or two students. These divergent perspectives represent important counter-narratives that offer a rich and nuanced understanding of the phenomena of interest.

## Participants

The sample included 14 self-identified White undergraduate students and one graduate student ( $N = 15$ ; 9 men, 5 women, and 1 not-indicated). Ages ranged from 20 to 30 years ( $M = 22.4$ ;  $SD = 3.16$ ). All students self-identified as Christian, and all had completed at least one multicultural course at university. See Table 1 for demographic information. A subsample ( $N = 5$ , two women and three men) participated in a focus group discussion at the end of the semester.

**Table 1. Student Participant Demographic Characteristics**

Participant Number	Gender	Age	Visit ESL	MC Courses
101	Male	23	Yes	Two
102	Male	22	No	Two
103	Female	22	Yes	One
104	Male	21	Yes	Two
105	Male	21	Yes	One
106	Female	21	No	One
107	Female	30	No	Three
108	Female	20	No	Two
109	Male	20	No	Two
110	Male	23	No	None
111	Male	29	No	Five+
112	Male	21	No	One
113	Male	21	Yes	One
114	Female	20	No	Two
115				

Note. MC Courses = Number of multicultural courses student completed as an undergraduate student; Visit ESL = participant had visited East St. Louis prior to enrolling in the course. Where students did not provide an answer, responses are blank.

## Researchers

The primary research team consisted of one White female assistant professor of counseling psychology, one White male counseling psychology graduate student, and one White female counseling psychology graduate student. An internal auditor, a White female assistant professor of landscape architecture and the instructor of the studio, was not involved in data collection nor analysis until the course was completed and grades were entered. An Iranian-Canadian female counseling psychology graduate student conducted an external audit of the preliminary data analysis. Team members primarily were interested in using an exploratory

approach to understand White students' racial attitudes. As recommended by Morrow (2005), team members openly discussed their collective antiracist bias at the onset of the study and throughout the investigation. All were aware of their assumptions that many White students at the university of interest did not understand the societal context in which the community was located and were unaware of institutional racism and White privilege in the United States. The research team remained cognizant of such bias to reduce its effects on the analysis. Consistent with CQR, team members discussed power differentials among them based on degree status, discipline, gender, and race (Hill *et al.*, 1997; Hill *et al.*, 2005). The team was dedicated to creating a respectful, egalitarian environment in which all members felt comfortable expressing their views.

## Data Sources

**Demographic form.** A brief demographic form was used to collect information on participants' age, gender, number of undergraduate multicultural courses completed, and whether or not students had visited East St. Louis previously.

**Guided inquiry questions.** Guided inquiry questions have been used in previous research focusing on process (*e.g.*, Heppner, Rosenberg, & Hedgespeth, 1992) and learning (*e.g.*, Heppner & O'Brien, 1994). In the current study, guided inquiries (or open-ended questions) were designed to assess students' expectations for the course, knowledge of East St. Louis and its residents, and racial attitudes. Questions were developed through a review of the literature on White racial attitudes as well as discussions among the researchers about their prior experiences with undergraduate teaching; the internal auditor reviewed items and suggested minor changes. Students responded to different items relevant to racial attitudes and multicultural learning at each phase of data collection. In the first phase, students responded to five questions that focused on hopes and expectations (*e.g.*, "What do you expect to see in East St. Louis?" and "What do you think are the main considerations when designing the public landscape in low-income communities of color?"). In the second phase, students responded to six questions that emphasized the process of the service-learning project (*e.g.*, "What was the most meaningful part of your experience in East St. Louis?" and "Were you aware of your race while in East St. Louis? Please elaborate."). In the final phase, students responded to seven questions that required reflection on the semester-long experience (*e.g.*, "Did your involvement influence how you feel about the physical and social conditions in East St. Louis?" and "In what

ways, if any, have your views about racism changed as a result of your experience with the residents of East St. Louis?”).

**Focus group protocol.** As suggested by Krueger (1994) and Krueger and Casey (2000), focus group questions were designed to elicit deeper reflections on students' experiences in East St. Louis. Due to their interactive nature, focus groups are able to ascertain different kinds of information than guided inquiry questions (Krueger, 1994). In addition to stimulating deeper reflection, focus groups also may serve to triangulate findings from open-ended responses (Hill *et al.*, 1997). The semi-structured format consisted of several questions that pertained to students' (a) overall experiences in East St. Louis in comparison to their initial expectations (e.g., “How has your experience in the East St. Louis project compared to your expectations?”); (b) reflections on various aspects of the East St. Louis community and project (e.g., “How has participating in the East St. Louis project influenced your thoughts or feelings regarding the African American community?”); and (c) thoughts about their own racial attitudes and identity (e.g., “How has participating in the East St. Louis project influenced your thoughts or feelings regarding issues of race?”). The focus group protocol was developed with questions similar to the guided inquiries in order to elaborate on students' responses to the guided inquiries.

## Procedure

The researchers obtained approval from the institutional review board where the data were collected. During spring semester 2005, they solicited voluntary participation for the guided inquiry questions at three time points. All students enrolled in the course completed the guided inquiries at all time points; they wrote their guided inquiry responses independently during class time. Participants completed the demographic form during the first administration. The phases of the research project are congruent with the timeline of the site visits. Two graduate students in the primary research team conducted all data collection. They administered paper and pencil guided inquiry survey packets to students on three occasions during class while the instructor was not present: (a) during the second week of class before students traveled to East St. Louis, (b) during the fifth week of class, after students' first visit to East St. Louis to work with community members, and (c) during the 16th and final week of class. Responses to open-ended questions were transcribed verbatim, and identifying information, except for gender and age of the participant, was removed. Code numbers were assigned to identify each participant during the remainder

of the investigation. The researchers did not analyze data from one African American student because the focus of the investigation was on White students' racial attitudes.

On the last day of class, students were invited to participate in a focus group, the purpose of which was to triangulate findings from open-ended responses and encourage deeper reflection. Five students expressed interest, and all were available to participate. The same graduate students who administered the surveys also conducted the focus group in a private location on campus. The audio-recorded focus group discussion lasted approximately 75 minutes. The recording was transcribed verbatim, and identifying information except for gender and code number was removed.

## Data Analysis

**Phase 1.** During Phase 1 of the analysis, the primary research team (i.e., counseling psychology professor and two graduate students) worked collaboratively to achieve consensus on domains and common themes. First, the graduate students independently read the open-ended responses and focus group transcript several times to identify domains and common themes. Then, they presented the preliminary analysis to the second author (i.e., counseling psychology professor), who suggested several modifications. Researchers agreed upon topic domains but condensed or deleted certain themes within domains. After the design studio was completed and grades were entered, the last author (i.e., course instructor) reviewed the findings and provided feedback. The team incorporated her feedback and made minor modifications for clarity.

**Phase 2.** During the second phase of data analysis, the primary team presented the domains and themes to the external auditor, a graduate student who had no prior involvement with the project. She reviewed all the raw data to determine whether the domains and themes accurately reflected the data. Subsequently, she recommended deleting several themes, combining others, and revising some (e.g., clarifying the name of the theme). Upon arriving at a consensus, the team revised domain names, combined a number of themes to increase parsimony, and clarified subthemes to better reflect the data. Each investigator independently reviewed the audit and suggested minor modifications.

**Trustworthiness.** Data analysis addressed standards of trustworthiness via four criteria (*Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005*): credibility (e.g., examining codes that supported or contrasted

with main themes, using multiple sources of data collection, and involving multiple investigators); transferability (e.g., providing detailed descriptions of the context); dependability (e.g., using auditors); and confirmability (e.g., including participants' quotations to support researchers' conclusions).

## Findings

The researchers identified three overarching domains: (a) Hopes and Expectations, (b) Experiences Throughout the Service-Learning Process, and (c) End of Year Reflections. See Table 2 for an overview of the domains and respective themes. The three domains correspond with the three time points of data collection. Within each domain, several themes emerged. Although each theme is distinct, they are not mutually exclusive. As noted above, certain counter-narratives expressed by only one or two participants are included. The participant's code number and gender follow each quotation (e.g., 101, M). Occasionally, retrospective data from the focus group are included to augment guided inquiry responses. When focus group data are featured, the participant's gender and code number (e.g., Focus Group, F1) are provided. Efforts to uphold confidentiality precluded researchers from matching focus group participants to those from the guided inquiries. In this section, we report and thematize participants' responses, whereas in the following section, we discuss and interpret the findings.

**Table 2. White Students' Racial Attitudes: Domains, Themes, and Definitions**

Theme	Definition
<i>Domain 1: Hopes and Expectations (Prior to service-learning)</i>	
Theme 1: Gain a "real world" experience	Students identified applied professional experience as their primary motivation.
Theme 2: Expectations about community and its members	Students anticipated observing negative East St. Louis media representations and stereotypes they had learning previously.
Theme 3: Fixing East St. Louis	Students expected to solve the city's problems through service.
<i>Domain 2: Experiences Throughout Service-Learning Process (during service-learning)</i>	
Theme 1: Confirming environmental expectations	Students' negative expectations about the environment often were confirmed.
Theme 2: Feeling conspicuous as White person(s) in East St. Louis	Students felt noticeable on account of their Whiteness in East St. Louis.
Theme 3: Expressing negative emotional responses to the experience	Students expressed fear, sadness, pity, and anger.

Theme 4: Making meaning through collaboration with community members	Students identified connecting with and learning from community members as the most meaningful part of their experience.
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*Domain 3: End of Year Reflections (after service-learning design studio)*

Theme 1: Denied influence of design studio on racial attitudes toward people of color	Students stated that service-learning did not influence their racial attitudes.
Theme 2: "It's not my fault!" Blamed community members	Students held community members accountable for the state of East St. Louis.
Theme 3: Gained perspective and/or awareness of social identity	Certain students gained awareness of their social location.

## Hopes and Expectations

In the broad domain of Hopes and Expectations, three themes represent what students anticipated prior to engaging in the service-learning design studio.

**Theme 1: Gaining a “real world” experience.** When asked about their motivation for enrolling in the design studio, the majority of students identified applied professional experience as their primary motivation. For example, one student noted, “I chose this studio because we are going to work with the public and with the people of the community with which we are designing for. I like to interact directly with people who want the design and change” (107, F). Another participant explained:

I feel it will give me the experience of a real life project in which I am allowed to see every aspect of it. For example, I will interact with the community and then design for their needs. It will offer practical client relationships. (106, F)

Linked to the “real world” component of the design studio, students wanted to serve others and hoped to grow personally and professionally. For example, one student stated, “I think it [working in East St. Louis] will open my mind up to a larger awareness of humanity” (114, F). Another noted, “I could not only contribute my knowledge about the area, but learn new things, meet new people, and help better my community” (105, M).

**Theme 2: Expectations about the community and its members.** The majority of students had negative expectations about East St. Louis and its members. Students anticipated seeing “a lack of interest by the community” in general and only “a few hard-working people trying to turn things around” (109, M). They

expected to witness conditions that were consistent with media representations of East St. Louis and previously learned stereotypes. One student noted, “I expect to see what I see in pictures. Burned buildings, boarded-up houses, garbage, crime, unclean streets and neighborhoods” (108, F). Another student expected to see “lots of vacant, run down buildings and homes” (101, M). Referring to a previous experience in East St. Louis, a student reported, “I have always heard a lot of violence taking place. . . . My high school basketball team played at [a high school in East St. Louis] and were escorted into the building by guards” (102, M). Reflecting back during the focus group discussion, students likened their earlier expectations of East St. Louis to portrayals in National Lampoon’s *Vacation* (Ramis & Simmons, 1983). More specifically, they recalled a dangerous characterization of East St. Louis where the White, middle-class Griswolds were robbed when they stopped to ask for directions.

In contrast, three students expected to witness community members who took pride in their community. For example, despite her expectations to “encounter many people living below the poverty line and many dilapidated structures,” one student also anticipated “a strong sense of community” (103, F). Another expected to see “a lot of people whose optimism and spirit belongs to a better urban environment than that in which these qualities currently reside” (110, M).

**Theme 3: Fixing East St. Louis.** Most students demonstrated a desire for “rehabilitating” (103, F), “improving” (108, F), and “fixing” (Focus Group, F2) what they perceived to be a “misguided and unfortunate” (109, M) community. For example, one student wrote, “It would be a good learning experience to find solutions to issues [East St. Louis community members] face” (101, M). Students saw the studio as “an opportunity to improve human aspects of life” (114, F). Another student explained, “I chose this studio in order to learn strategies for turning around a misguided/unfortunate community. I want to learn how parks can help rehabilitate rundown communities” (109, M). Recalling her earlier sentiments, a focus group participant stated:

I kind of came in with this idea of how great would it be if I could solve all of East St. Louis’ problems. Not really knowing what they were, but expecting that something that I did would actually matter and make sense, and just hoping that I could accomplish something out of the studio other than just learning how to draw better

and how to communicate better, but actually finding some way to fix the problem. (Focus group, F2)

In this way, students held paternalistic notions of expecting to identify solutions for a subordinate community plagued by poverty.

## **Experiences Throughout the Service-Learning Process**

In the broad domain of Experiences Throughout the Service-Learning Process, four themes emerged that captured students' experiences during the semester-long service-learning project.

**Theme 1: Confirming environmental expectations.** Several students reported that their visits to East St. Louis confirmed their negative expectations of the environment. One remarked, "There were many burnt, vacant, or boarded up homes, and many empty lots" (101, M). Another stated, "It was similar [to my expectations] in the fact that the population was mostly African American. It was also similar to expectations in the fact that the city was rather run down in certain areas" (113, M). Students primarily perceived East St. Louis as a dilapidated city, which matched their initial expectations. One student, however, was surprised that despite his negative expectations, "The parks were in better condition than [he had] thought [and] the new commercial area was really nice" (102, M).

**Theme 2: Feeling conspicuous as White person(s) in East St. Louis.** Almost all of the students reported feeling noticeable and out of place on account of their Whiteness. Students were aware of being the numerical minority for the first time in their lives. For example, one expressed, "I was one of 13 other White people. It was pretty noticeable we were the minority" (114, F). Furthermore, students felt they were noticeable to the community members. For example, one observed that "a lot of people were curious as to what we were doing just as I had expected, because we stood out as a big group of Whites" (101, M). Another student described, "The only other race I saw while I was there, besides our group, was a White mail carrier. I felt like an outsider" (103, F). Notably, two students also reported a change in perceptions of prejudice toward White people. They exclaimed, "I feel less racist, but am more aware of racism toward Caucasians" (105, M) and "I found out that racism is a bigger issue than I had expected. When we visited a couple different neighborhoods, the residents felt as if we were in their territory" (112, M). Students' perceptions of prejudice toward White people are problematic and will be reflected upon in the discussion.

Despite an overall heightened awareness of their minority status, the majority of students did not reflect further on this topic.

**Theme 3: Expressing negative emotional responses to the experience.** Students expressed a range of negative feelings throughout the design studio. Most often, they discussed fear and concern about their safety in East St. Louis. For example, one student shared, “I felt safe with the group [of students], but when I wandered away for a minute I did feel a little uncomfortable when a group of three young Black males approached” (101, M). A focus group participant provided a specific example of a time when she felt fearful during the service-learning experience. She said, “When we went over to Lincoln Park for the first time, there was a group of people drinking. They were being drunk and hanging out. They were people you’d be nervous of” (Focus group, F2). In a unique case, one student expressed that after “talking with residents about their hopes for their community”, he went from “fearing East St. Louis to feeling connected” (105, M).

Other students expressed feelings of sadness, pity, and anger toward East St. Louis residents. For example, one student felt sad that “people . . . are living like this at such a large scale rather than as just a segment of the community” (104, M). One student expressed anger that he “had to come in and clean up their mess, just so they could trash it again and not care” (105, M). In contrast to the breadth and depth of negative emotions, one particular student felt “really good and useful in the efforts of bettering/revitalization of parks/open space” (112, M).

**Theme 4: Making meaning through collaboration with community members.** Notably, the majority of the students made meaning of their experiences through personal connections with community members. Students reported that interacting with the residents was the most meaningful part of the design studio. One explained, “Learning from [community members] how they think we could help was a great experience” (101, M). More specifically, some students identified their most memorable experience as meeting a particular family and restoring a fountain in honor of their deceased mother. Students presented their individual projects to 20 family members, who then selected some for further development.

Students reported that they learned more about park design by engaging with community members. Focus group participants provided a specific example of what they learned from community members throughout the service-learning experience. For

example, one reported that she learned that community members prefer walking paths around the perimeters of park areas as a safety measure and described this as “unique because we’re usually taught to put walking paths through parks” (Focus Group, F2). Students reported that community members “provided more insight than just a map and statistics could” (115, gender not indicated).

## End of Year Reflections

The final broad domain was composed of three themes that represented students’ thoughts and feelings at the end of the year.

**Theme 1: Denied influence of design studio on racial attitudes toward people of color.** When asked directly whether the community-based design experience influenced their perceptions of racism, almost all participants stated that it did not. Some students noted having always treated all people equally. One asserted, “My views [on racism] have not changed, I still view everyone as equals” (113, M). Another remarked, “I don’t feel like my views on racism changed during the course. I was always raised to treat people with respect and fairly no matter who they are” (101, M). Moreover, students did not believe that race was a factor to consider regarding the role of parks in East St. Louis. A few students felt that other factors such as “income” were more pertinent than race to discussions of the East St. Louis environment. A focus group participant reported, “The experience made me think about income” (Focus group, F2). Racial color-blindness, discussed in detail below, permeated student responses to a guided inquiry question about whether the role of parks changes in the context of a low-income community of color. One student stated, “No. People are people. All want the same things” (110, M).

**Theme 2: “It’s not my fault!” Blamed community members.** Despite learning from and connecting with particular community members, students predominantly described them as irresponsible, apathetic, and lacking pride in their neighborhood. One noted, “I feel like many residents in East St. Louis are content with the living conditions because they lack the want or the motivation for change” (103, F). Another expressed, “Because these parks are in poor condition, residents of ESL don’t seem to appreciate and/or recognize their purpose” (102, M). A focus group participant explained:

The problem is that, I don’t know what East St. Louis was like when everybody was there, but I’m pretty sure that all the trash that is there now probably did not come and sit there from like way back when. . . . That

came from people just being irresponsible and that has to do with how much pride you have in your own community. I can understand where money does affect a lot of things, but responsibilities that you have just as a person living in a community aren't affected by income. (Focus group, F2)

Focus group participants reacted defensively when a minister in East St. Louis brought racial disparities to the forefront of their experience. Upon reflection on the minister's comment that White people contributed to the current conditions of East St. Louis, students reported that the minister's comment was inappropriate. One student perceived the minister's comment to be accusatory. A focus group participant explained:

I felt like "Why are you telling me this?" Especially to a group of . . . twenty-one-year-old college kids . . . it's not our burden or fault that this is the way things are. . . it made me feel like he was trying to pass off the blame to us, as White people, and I didn't feel like I deserved any blame for what was going on down there. (Focus group, M1)

In response, another participant elaborated:

[East St. Louis community members] were not that active or responsible. . . . It took us to go there and start cleaning some stuff up for them to kind of chip in and do their part. I know my mom goes on walks and takes a garbage bag with her and picks up trash when she walks around the neighborhood to try and make the neighborhood look a little better. (Focus group, M2)

Students approached service-learning as a form of charity and considered simple acts such as picking up trash on leisurely walks as a commodity that all people share equally. In contrast to the above comments, one student expressed the following: "I knew from news that the area was not in the best physical and social condition. I realize now that a lot of people don't want it to be like that but it's very hard for them to make a difference" (101, M). Overall, the majority of students held East St. Louis community members accountable for the state of East St. Louis without considering the sociohistorical context of the partnering community or the larger context of institutional racism in the United States.

**Theme 3: Gained perspective and/or awareness of social identity.** By the end of the semester, a few students became aware of some of the lived realities of East St. Louis community members. For instance, one stated, "I feel like I've gained a view on something unfamiliar to my life. I grew up in a middle class suburb and [have] never really seen poverty this bad before" (108, F). Focus group participants became aware of their perception of safety within their own communities and, at times, linked perceptions of safety to their racial group identities. For example, one focus group participant said, "Safety is something that [East St. Louis residents] always think about when they go to the parks. . . . And being White, I don't know if that has that big of an effect on it, but in my community I guess I feel safe going to a park" (Focus group, M2). Another focus group participant added, "I feel sheltered. I haven't been exposed to feeling unsafe in a park and having to have a police escort to do everyday things. . . . It was just a lot of things I haven't come across before being the majority race" (Focus group, F1). In sum, by the end of the design studio, certain students began thinking about their own social location.

## Discussion

By examining White students' racial attitudes throughout one landscape architecture service-learning design studio, findings from the current study add to the literature on multicultural service-learning. Despite previous findings that service-learning enhances students' racial understanding (*Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler et al., 1999*), the multicultural learning outcomes in the present study were more nuanced and complex. Although students reported making certain professional gains because of the "real world" context of service-learning and exposure to a diverse setting that few had visited before, findings suggest that this particular service-learning project did not necessarily lead to enhanced racial awareness or multicultural sensitivity.

Throughout the design studio, the majority of students blamed residents for community conditions and did not consider the larger social, political, and economic context. These findings make sense in the context of a predominantly White university, in which students rarely have an opportunity to discuss power, privilege, and oppression. To frame the discussion of students' racial attitudes and offer recommendations to university personnel, the authors feature three key concepts that were expressed across domains: reinforcing negative stereotypes, exhibiting color-blind racial attitudes, and conveying paternalistic notions of helping.

## Reinforcing Negative Stereotypes

As described in several themes, students' "negative expectations about the community and its members" stayed the same or were reinforced throughout the semester. The majority of participants expected that they would witness conditions consistent with negative media representations (e.g., dangerous and dilapidated). Almost all students reported that the project confirmed their negative environmental expectations: That is, they continued to perceive East St. Louis as a broken-down city. Many students identified East St. Louis as a dangerous environment and feared for their safety. Consistent with previous literature (*Boyle-Baise & Sleeter, 2000; Darley & Gross, 1983; O'Grady, 1998*), students interpreted their experiences in ways that confirmed their hopes and expectations prior to the service-learning experience as opposed to challenging or contextualizing them.

Despite intentions to promote social justice and foster societal benefits, service-learning programs can inadvertently have harmful effects by perpetuating negative stereotypes. Scholars in urban studies argue that unless Black community members are of equal or higher social status, interracial contact does not lead to a reduction in stereotypical attitudes for Whites (*Ihlanfeldt & Scafidi, 2002*). According to Allport's (1954) intergroup contact hypothesis, positive effects of intergroup contact occur only in situations with four crucial conditions: equal group status within the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law, or custom. For the most part, students in the current study did not perceive Black community members to be of equal status, and their negative stereotypes were reinforced.

## Color-Blind Racial Attitudes

Color-blind racial attitudes encompass denial, distortion, and minimization of individual and institutional racism (*Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000*). Color-blind racial attitudes inadvertently encourage racism by maintaining the belief that race does not influence one's lived experiences (*Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004; Neville & Awad, 2014; Worthington, & Spanierman, 2001*). Despite "feeling conspicuous as White persons in East St. Louis," several students identified race as irrelevant to their service-learning experience and to the experience of community members. Previous literature posits that when White individuals experience being a numerical minority, they may become more self-conscious of their Whiteness and consequently develop a critical understanding of

racism (McKinney, 2005). Students in the current study “blamed community members” for the conditions of their environment and some decried claims of reverse racism (i.e., the perception of racism toward Whites; McKinney, 2003; Pincus, 2003). For example, a student reported that he gained awareness of “racism toward Caucasians” at the end of the service-learning design studio. Claims of reverse racism focus solely on individual prejudice rather than structural racism, deny societal power and privilege, and maintain racial segregation (Cabrera, 2012).

Also linked to color-blind racial attitudes, the majority of students explained that they have always treated everyone equally and respectfully despite their race. White individuals’ recognition that people of color are human beings with human abilities, personal characteristics, and so forth is an important step in dismantling stereotypes as long as it is not “extended to a belief that every group’s experiences are the same, in terms of opportunities and power” (McKinney, 2005, p. 54). Most students claimed to see Black community members as equals and consequently argued that race should not and does not matter. The role of parks and open space does not change in the context of a low-income community of color because all people want the same things. Students may have been reluctant to reveal negative perceptions or feelings and thus applied a color-blind framework to their experience (Irvine, 2003; Paoletti et al., 2007). In the current study, students’ racial color-blindness was linked to their identification of racial issues as irrelevant throughout the design studio.

Focus group participants, in particular, elaborated on their color-blind racial perspectives through their encounter with an East St. Louis minister. During this encounter, in which the minister explained that White people were responsible for the abject poverty in East St. Louis, focus group participants were appalled. Being unable to understand how White supremacy and structural racism had an impact on the city, focus group participants responded defensively and disengaged with the minister. With the exception of two focus group participants who identified a possible link between their Whiteness and sense of safety in their communities, the majority of students maintained color-blind racial attitudes throughout the service-learning experience. In seeing race as irrelevant to the East St. Louis community and its members, student participants may have unintentionally prevented opportunities to engage with the reality of societal oppression, their White privilege, and the pertinence of racism to the lived experiences of East St. Louis members.

Where students in the focus group “gained perspective and/or awareness of their social identity,” the focus most often was on social class. This is consistent with scholarship that asserts that White individuals may deflect or avoid analyses of racism by maintaining that classism is the primary discriminator in society (*Green, 2003; Roskelly, 1998*). Students in the present study began reflecting on their privileged upbringing, never having experienced such extreme poverty. Focus group participants attributed their heightened concern for safety in East St. Louis and sense of safety in their respective communities to their middle-class social status. Some students were able to consider their social class privilege with respect to East St. Louis and similar low-income communities. As participants reflected on social class privilege, they continued to identify race as irrelevant to their service-learning experience.

### **Paternalistic Notions of Helping and Missionary Zeal**

Students approached the community-based design studio with a profound sense of professional responsibility to serve diverse groups and address community concerns; however, their relationships with community members were also paternalistic. At times, students’ relationships with community members were linked to paternalistic notions of helping and exacerbated power differentials between community members and students (*Boyle-Baise, 1998; Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004*). For example, students expected the residents to appreciate them as “do-gooders” who can and will “fix St. East Louis.” Students engaged with the service-learning program as professionals commissioned to help a community in need (i.e., as “pro bono” work instead of a collaboration with partnership; *O’Grady, 1998*); their form of engagement reflects missionary ideology (*Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000*).

In addition to paternalism, students’ experiences were guided by a missionary ideology, which refers to a group’s attempt to impose ideas upon another group while neglecting that group’s belief systems (*Price, Toole, & Weah 2007*). When guided by missionary ideology, service-learning is about delivering a product at the neglect of personal development (*Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2011; Price, et al., 2007*). Students hoped to implement solutions used in their communities (e.g., picking up trash on leisurely walks) to solve East St. Louis’s problems. Although the service-learning project was introduced as an opportunity for collaborative learning, consistent with multicultural service-learning literature on missionary zeal

or missionary ideology (Burnett, Hamel, & Long, 2004; Novek, 2000), certain students appeared to have confused service with charity.

Racial color-blindness, stereotyping, and paternalistic assumptions are central to the concept of "silent racism," a contemporary form of racism that conceptualizes how well-meaning White people who do not view themselves as racist can perpetuate racism (Trepagnier, 2010). Although students did not see themselves as racist, some of their comments insinuated forms of silent racism. For example, the concept of silent racism might explain students' anger that they had to clean up the "mess" in East St. Louis, despite what they perceived to be the residents' unwillingness to leisurely pick up trash, so that residents could apathetically "trash" it again. As described in the findings, students did not consider multiple explanations for poverty and blamed individuals for their plight (Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004). Thus, students would have benefited from critical discussions, including leisure time as a commodity that not all persons in the United States share equally. Similar to previous studies (e.g., Endres & Gould, 2009; Hess et al., 2007; Reardon, 1994), some students positioned themselves as superior to community members without considering systemic oppressions targeting low-income communities of color. In sum, most students justified the irrelevance of race to the community-based design studio through racial stereotypes of East St. Louis residents as lazy and apathetic, color-blind racial attitudes, paternalistic attitudes, and by identifying social class as a more salient factor.

## Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Findings from the present study contribute uniquely to the literature on multicultural service-learning; however, several limitations must be noted. The participants were predominantly from one limited geographical region, at one predominantly White university, in one particular service-learning project. Consequently, the findings may not be transferable to different types of White students (e.g., those from multiracial urban settings) and White service-learning students at universities with large populations of students of color. Future research should examine the racial attitudes of different White service-learning students in different learning environments. The particular community-based design studio under examination was only one semester; thus, future research should examine changes over time. Further, the design studio was structured around professional design; thus, future research should examine White students' experiences in service-learning projects

with explicit multicultural learning objectives and tactics for preparation and reflection.

In line with a constructivist approach (*Morrow, 2005*), the authors recommend that other types of qualitative research be conducted to obtain richer data and provide more insight into students' racial attitudes throughout the service-learning design course. For example, researchers could conduct individual interviews to gain deeper insight into students' racial attitudes throughout their service-learning projects. Furthermore, although the focus group provided an additional data source and thus was a strength of the overall research design, participants noted that they wished the focus group discussion had come earlier in the term. Students reported that they would have benefited from a space in which they could discuss thoughts and emotions throughout the studio. Data might have been richer if an additional focus group had been conducted in the middle of the semester or if the researchers had used multiple focus groups throughout the term. Only in the focus group did the researchers learn of complex topics such as students' experience with the minister who explained that White people contributed to the community conditions.

The racial demographics of the community-based design studio in this study included a White instructor and 16 students, 15 of whom were White. Notably, in empirical investigation of a service-learning class with greater racial diversity, Boyle-Baise and Langford (*2004*) observed that racial differences between students strained the group dynamic. Students of color perceived service-learning as stereotypical and degrading, worried about White peers' deficit view of communities, and would have liked to hear more about the strengths of the community. Further, previous multicultural courses did not influence students' racial attitudes in the present study. Because the details of these courses were not ascertained, future research should explore the depth and nature of prior multicultural instruction to aid curriculum development.

## **Implications for Practice and Teaching**

Findings suggest that multicultural learning is not inherent in service-learning projects and must be the explicit focus of such programs (*Bell, Horn, & Roxas, 2007; O'Grady, 1998*). The structure of the targeted course, including its short-term duration and intense focus on design instruction to improve professional knowledge and skills, limited what the instructor was able to facilitate in terms of broader multicultural learning. Although students benefited from

exposure to a diverse setting while gaining a certain degree of reflexivity, their personal racial attitudes went unexamined because explicit multicultural training related to racial attitudes was lacking. To counter students' previously learned negative stereotypes, avoid paternalistic attitudes, and foster critical racial self-awareness, students must engage with structured multicultural education beyond the design process. Immersion in a low-income community of color in and of itself is insufficient to foster racial understanding and sensitivity. To challenge their tendencies to consider service-learning as an act of charity, students must become aware of how they benefit from the experience beyond professional development (King, 2004).

Perhaps due to the emphasis on collaborative learning, students in this particular service-learning project acknowledged "making meaning through collaboration with community members" to design practice. They identified interacting with community members as the most meaningful part of their experience. However, the difference between an act of charity and collaborative community engagement was not always explicit. O'Grady (1998) recommended that students engage in discussions to increase their understandings of structural oppression prior to service-learning. Without the necessary context for multicultural education, students may not perceive important differences, and instead demonstrate color-blind racial perspectives and reinforce negative stereotypes (O'Grady, 1998). Buch and Harden (2011) found that service-learning students made positive gains when attitudes and civic responsibility toward homeless individuals were specific goals. Student participants in the current study could have benefited from explicit discussions and exercises focused on racism and classism.

Interestingly, the best resource for personal reflection in this study was the research investigation itself, which provided students with an opportunity to reflect upon their thoughts and feelings without the presence of their course instructor. It seems unlikely that design instructors could take on an additional role as multicultural educators, as doing so would require additional training, de-prioritize the course focus on design, and create dual relationships that might interfere with students' engagement. However, programs could implement dialogues led by trained facilitators to engage issues of race and racism, which could provide students with opportunities to debrief their thoughts and feelings throughout service-learning.

As noted by previous scholars (e.g., Bell et al., 2007), service-learning requires high levels of support to avoid the unintentional

perpetuation of stereotypes and develop more critically engaged forms of service-learning. Stater and Fotheringham (2009) found that greater university resources led to the most positive benefits for community partners. Thus, universities intending to make positive community impacts should consider carefully the resources allotted to service-learning programs. The current findings indicated that interaction with community members has the potential also to be very meaningful to students. Perhaps service-learning programs can devote more time to this part of the process by inviting community members to campus to help frame the service-learning experience. Therefore, we agree with O'Grady (2000) that an institutional commitment to social justice provides a critical context in which service-learning can add an experiential component to multicultural education that can help students feel empowered to engage with social justice efforts.

## Conclusion

As one of the first empirical investigations to focus on White students' racial attitudes during service-learning, this study offers empirical support for what multicultural educators have long known (O'Grady, 1998). The service-learning experience in and of itself is not enough to positively influence White students' racial attitudes; in fact, it may be harmful and perpetuate stereotypes. Students obtained an understanding of conditions in East St. Louis, gained perspective on their social identity, and perceived collaboration with community members to be very meaningful. However, because the context necessary for engaging with multicultural service-learning (e.g., instruction) was missing, the service-learning experience reinforced students' negative stereotypes. Students typically approached the design studio with paternalistic and color-blind racial attitudes that inhibited opportunities for multicultural learning, self-reflection, and limited their ability to learn from community members. As a practical matter, it is likely that one instructor cannot do it all. Landscape design faculty, for example, may not have the training and expertise needed to address students' racial attitudes effectively. In addition to understanding critical contextual material, findings suggest that instruction must address students' reactions and emotional responses throughout the service-learning experience. Furthermore, community members' perceptions of service-learning and their level of engagement with the students are critical factors in multicultural outcomes.

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## **Student Growth from Service-Learning: A Comparison of First-Generation and Non-First-Generation College Students**

Lynn E. Pelco, Christopher T. Ball, and Kelly S. Lockeman

### **Abstract**

The effect of service-learning courses on student growth was compared for 321 first-generation and 782 non-first-generation undergraduate students at a large urban university. Student growth encompassed both academic and professional skill development. The majority of students reported significant academic and professional development after participating in a service-learning course, and female students reported similarly high levels of growth regardless of their generational, racial, or financial status. However, for male students, the amount of growth differed significantly as a function of generational, racial, and financial status. Non-first-generation male students from minority and low-income backgrounds reported the least growth, whereas first-generation male students from minority and low-income backgrounds reported the most growth. These findings reveal that first-generation and non-first-generation male students may differ in their responses to service-learning and highlight the importance of utilizing large, diverse samples when conducting quantitative studies to investigate the impact of service-learning on student development.

### **Introduction**

Students in today's college classrooms show greater diversity than at any other time in our nation's history. Colleges and universities across the United States are enrolling increasing numbers of historically underrepresented groups such as first-generation students (*Pike & Kuh, 2005*), and many higher education institutions are working to find ways to increase these students' academic success. In the case of first-generation students (i.e., students whose parents have not earned a bachelor's degree), these efforts are particularly important because the number of first-generation college students is rapidly increasing and because first-generation students are at very high risk for leaving higher education before they complete a bachelor's degree. Estimates of the percentage of all beginning postsecondary students who have first-generation status range from 43% (*Chen & Carroll, 2005*) to more than 50% (*Davis,*

2010). Choy (2001) found first-generation students were twice as likely as non-first-generation students to leave 4-year institutions before the second year. Warburton, Bugarin, and Nunez (2001) reported that first-generation students have 15% lower persistence rates at 4-year colleges. Even when first-generation college students persist beyond 3 years, they are less likely to earn bachelor's degrees than their second-generation peers (Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996) and less likely to enroll in graduate degree programs (Hahs-Vaughn, 2004). Low-income first-generation students fare even worse, with a four times greater likelihood of leaving college after their first year (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Graduation rates are also abysmally low, with only 11% of low-income first-generation students finishing a bachelor's degree within 6 years, compared to 55% of their advantaged peers (Engle & Tinto, 2008).

## Characteristics of First-Generation Students

These data clearly indicate that first-generation students struggle to succeed in postsecondary education, and a number of recent studies point to characteristics shared by first-generation students that may underlie these struggles. Specifically, first-generation students appear to be underprepared, both academically and psychologically, for higher education. For example, first-generation students enroll less often in rigorous high school classes (Horn, Nunez, & Bobbit, 2000), have lower SAT scores and lower high school GPAs (Warburton et al., 2001), show weaker cognitive skills (Terenzini et al., 1996), lack effective study skills (Filkins & Doyle, 2002; Terenzini et al., 1996; Treisman, 1992), and demonstrate lower academic self-efficacy (McConnell, 2000) than their non-first-generation peers. However, the most critical core characteristic of first-generation students is a broad and deep lack of familiarity with the culture of higher education (Davis, 2010). This lack of sophisticated understanding of both the purpose and workings of higher education may play a causal role in first-generation students taking longer to choose a major (Chen & Carroll, 2005; Terenzini et al., 1996), and, once they have selected a major, sticking with it and resisting further deliberation (Hahs-Vaughn, 2004). Problems with choosing a major arguably reflect first-generation students' uncertainty regarding their future professions and the skills needed for obtaining a job after graduating from college. Student growth, both academic and professional, may be delayed in first-generation college students even if they do successfully complete their degree.

Saenz, Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf, and Yeung (2007) found 86.8% of first-generation freshmen that entered 4-year institutions in fall

2005 were students of color, and Bui (2002) and Horn et al. (2000) reported that first-generation students were more likely to be ethnic minorities than non-first-generation students. Choy's (2001) data indicated that first-generation students were more often from poor and working-class backgrounds than their non-first-generation classmates. Despite these findings, it is important to remember that although a correlation may exist between minority and low-income backgrounds and first-generation status, many first-generation students are neither students of color nor poor. As Davis (2010) correctly emphasizes, "Having first-generation student status does not exclude one from belonging to any of the other demographic categories" (p. xvi). The key characteristic shared by all first-generation students is a lack of life experiences that promote university and college culture and that foster the development of competence and comfort in navigating the higher education landscape (Davis, 2010). However, the contributory roles of minority and financial status, when comparing the college experiences of first-generation students with those of their non-first-generation peers, cannot be ruled out.

## Support for First-Generation Students

The development and implementation of formal support programs for first-generation students is only just beginning. Programs within colleges and universities are being designed to accommodate the characteristics of first-generation students as described in the literature previously cited. For example, recommendations were made for support programs to include summer immersion programs, academic remediation, study skills instruction, specialized academic advising, and campus acclimation assistance (Davis, 2010; Gupton, Castelo-Rodriguez, Martinez, & Quintanar, 2009). To date there is a lack of empirical evidence for the efficacy of these approaches in increasing first-generation college students' graduation rates.

An alternative approach to developing interventions targeted specifically at first-generation students is to investigate the efficacy of high-impact educational practices that increase engagement and success in the general population of college students. These high-impact practices have been described in detail by Kuh (2008) and included service-learning, collaborative assignments, diversity/global learning, first-year seminars, core curricula, learning communities, writing-intensive classes, undergraduate research, internships, and capstone experiences. Kuh's data indicate that first-generation students less likely to participate in these high-impact practices than their non-first-generation peers, yet no published

research currently exists that investigates the use of such practices with first-generation college students. This article addresses one specific high-impact educational practice, community engagement courses, and whether these courses have a positive impact on student growth. The impact of community engagement courses on first-generation college students will be compared with the growth reported by a comparable group of non-first-generation college students.

## **Service-Learning and First-Generation Students**

Service-learning is a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and allows them to reflect on the activity to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (*Bringle & Hatcher, 1996*). Service-learning has been shown to improve students' academic performance (*Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson, 2005; Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000*) and to support the development of their personal and civic identities (*Ash et al., 2005; Eyley, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001*).

Although research supports the benefits of service-learning on student development, these results may not be equally generalizable to all student subgroups. A number of studies have reported on gender differences in student outcomes following service-learning class participation. However, some studies report no gender differences in students' growth following service-learning class participation (*Tomkovick, Lester, Flunker, & Wells, 2008; Wang & Rodgers, 2006*), while other studies show females benefiting more than males (*Casile, Hoover, & O'Neil, 2011; Pragman, Flannery, & Bowyer, 2012*). These inconsistent findings may result from the effects of other demographic and social variables that were not controlled for in these studies, such as racial, financial, and generational status. Large quantitative surveys that poll students from a variety of demographic and social subgroups are needed to overcome these generalization weaknesses.

Surprisingly, very few studies have addressed first-generation students' experiences in service-learning, and no large-scale quantitative study on this topic has been reported. A small number of qualitative studies have recently been published that explore the experiences of first-generation students in service-learning classes. Yeh (*2010*) interviewed six low-income, first-generation students

of color (three males and three females) and found that service-learning provided these students with opportunities to connect personal values with academics. These connections enabled the students to find greater meaning in their education and to become more motivated to complete their bachelor's degrees. Henry (2005) interviewed three first-generation female students about their experiences in a service-learning class and found that the class provided opportunities for these students to expand their self-awareness. Henry noted that the young women she interviewed were able to develop their self-identities during their service-learning experience by reflecting on the important characteristics they shared with people they met at the service-learning site.

Only one small quantitative study could be found that has examined the impact of service-learning courses on first-generation college students. McKay and Estrella (2008) examined the impact of service-learning courses on the social and academic integration of 43 first-generation college students. This study found correlational support for the importance of service-learning in helping first-generation students achieve their academic goals and feel better integrated into the college community. However, this study presents a number of limitations for generalizing from its results. No comparison group was provided, so there is no evidence that the courses brought about improvements for first-generation students that they would not have for non-first-generation students. In addition, the number of students who participated in this study was relatively small and consisted almost entirely of minority students. The results of this study could be explained by the students' minority status rather than their first-generation status.

The current study extends our limited understanding of the impact of service-learning courses on student development (academic and professional) in first-generation students by comparing the self-perceived growth of several hundred first-generation and non-first-generation students after completing service-learning classes at a large urban public research university.

## **Service-Learning at Virginia Commonwealth University**

Service-learning courses taken by the first-generation and non-first-generation undergraduate students who participated in this study were offered across a wide range of disciplines at all academic levels (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior). All courses had been formally designated by the university's Service-Learning

Office as service-learning courses after the instructor had demonstrated that the course included (a) service activities that met a community-identified need, (b) a minimum of 20 hours of community service per student per semester, and (c) planned reflection activities that connected students' community service with the academic content of the course. During the 2009–2010 academic year, a total of 115 class sections (53 distinct courses) at both the undergraduate and graduate levels carried a service-learning designation. These classes were taught by 55 different instructors and enrolled a total of 2,633 undergraduate and graduate students. For the purposes of the current study, only undergraduate students were surveyed.

## **Hypotheses**

Student growth is defined in our study as a self-reported improvement in academic skills (oral, written) and professional development (leadership, goals, and attitudes). Because of the limited research literature regarding the impact of service-learning on first-generation students' growth, this is an exploratory study. We hypothesized that (a) first-generation students would report improvement in academic skills and professional development at levels similar to those of their non-first-generation peers, and (b) demographic differences in growth might be evidenced.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

End-of-course survey responses were obtained from 1,155 (35%) of the 3,191 degree-seeking undergraduate students who were enrolled in designated service-learning courses during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years at a large urban public university in the southeastern United States, and approval to use the survey for research purposes was granted by the institution's Internal Review Board for Human Subjects Research. Of these respondents, 74% were female and 58% were White. Most respondents were upperclassmen (78%), and most were enrolled as full-time students (94%). In addition, 25% were Pell Grant recipients. A Pell Grant is a postsecondary educational federal grant sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education that is awarded to students based on their demonstrated financial need. At the time of their enrollment in the service-learning course, 80% of respondents were of traditional college age (18–23 years).

For purposes of this study, students were classified as first-generation college students if they indicated that neither parent/caregiver had graduated from college; 321 students (27.8%) fit this criterion. Another 782 students (67.7%) indicated that one or both parents/caregivers had graduated from college. These individuals are classified as non-first-generation students. These proportions are consistent with responses from a university-wide demographic survey of Virginia Commonwealth University students that was conducted during the year prior to data collection for this study. Students who did not indicate whether their parents/caregivers had graduated from college (4.5%) were excluded from the data analyses.

## **Survey Instrument**

All students who were enrolled in designated service-learning courses at Virginia Commonwealth University received an e-mail invitation to complete an online survey at the end of the semester. The survey consisted of demographic questions, questions about students' service-learning and community engagement experience, and items relating to student growth.

**Demographic questions.** Demographic questions included age, gender, race, enrollment status (full-time or part-time), academic classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior), and major. Students were asked whether they were recipients of a Pell Grant for financial assistance. Students were also asked to provide the academic qualifications of their parents, and this information was used to determine their generation status (first-generation or non-first-generation).

**Service-learning and community engagement experience.** Students indicated course details of the service-learning class they had just taken, including the course name, section number, instructor's name, and date of completion. Students also reported the number of community engagement activities in which they were currently involved.

**Student growth instrument.** The student growth instrument consisted of five items: (a) This course helped me to develop my writing skills, (b) This course helped me develop my speaking and communication skills, (c) Participating in the community for this course helped me enhance my leadership skills, (d) This service-learning course helped me clarify my professional goals, and (e) Service-learning made me more aware of some of my own biases and prejudices. The first two items focus on skills essential to post-

secondary academic success; the final three address additional skills fundamental to the professional development of the student. Students responded using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *No Opinion*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*). A student growth measure was calculated from the sum of the responses with a minimum score of 5 and a maximum score of 25. To test the internal reliability of this measure, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated, and a value of 0.80 suggests that this measure has adequate reliability.

## Results

### Demographic Comparisons

For both generation groups the majority of the respondents were female (74%) and academic juniors or seniors (79%). First-generation students consisted of an older sample [ $\chi^2$  ( $df = 3$ ,  $N = 1102$ ) = 24.82,  $p < .001$ ] with more part-time students [ $\chi^2$  ( $df = 1$ ,  $N = 1103$ ) = 10.61,  $p < .001$ ]. First-generation students were more often minority students [ $\chi^2$  ( $df = 1$ ,  $N = 1025$ ) = 25.32,  $p < .001$ ] and recipients of Pell Grants for low-income families [ $\chi^2$  ( $df = 1$ ,  $N = 1102$ ) = 81.68,  $p < .001$ ]. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the demographic variables collected in this study. To control for possible confounding influences of age and enrollment status when comparing first-generation and non-first-generation college students, the data analysis that follows was limited to traditional full-time college students ages 18 to 23 ( $n = 856$ ). The effects of minority status and Pell Grant status were included as additional variables in the statistical analyses that follow.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants by Generation Status (N=1,103)**

	Non-first-generation		First-generation	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Age</b>				
18-23 years	640	82	238	74
24-30 years	112	14	47	15
31-45 years	23	2	32	10
46 + years	6	1	4	1
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	212	27	77	24
Female	568	73	244	76

Minority status				
White	496	69	158	52
Minority	226	31	145	48
Pell grant status				
Nonrecipient	647	83	183	57
Recipient	134	17	138	43
Academic classification				
Freshman	55	7	25	8
Sophomore	107	14	48	15
Junior	244	31	99	31
Senior	375	48	149	46
Enrollment status				
Full-time	744	95	289	90
Part-time	37	5	32	10

## Service-Learning Experience

Students who completed this survey came from 47 different service-learning classes that ranged in size from small classes with fewer than 15 students to much larger classes with close to 100 students. First-generation students ( $M = 2.86$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ) did not differ from non-first-generation students ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ) in the number of community engagement activities they had been involved in previously,  $t(854) = 0.92$ ,  $p > .05$ . Likewise, first-generation students ( $M = 1.54$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ) did not differ from non-first-generation students ( $M = 1.55$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ) in the number of community engagement activities in which they were currently involved,  $t(854) = 0.91$ ,  $p > .05$ .

## Student Growth

The overall mean score for student growth was 17.85 with a standard deviation of 3.76. Most students (first-generation and non-first-generation) reported significant improvements in all aspects of their student growth as a function of participating in service-learning courses. If we assume that a midpoint score of 3 for each item reflects that the participant neither agrees nor disagrees with each statement, then single sample  $t$ -tests for each item show that the mean response from all participants was significantly greater than 3. Table 2 summarizes these findings.

**Table 2. Mean Scores for Each Item in the Student Growth Measure**

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Writing Skills	3.19	1.09
Oral skills	3.61	1.05
Leadership skills	3.83	0.91
Clarification of professional goals	3.62	1.07
Awareness of biases & prejudices	3.60	1.03

Note: Single sample *t*-tests show that all means are significantly different from a midpoint score of 3,  $p < .001$ .

Given the large size of the database compiled in this study and the variety of students who responded to the survey, a four-way analysis of variance was conducted for student growth scores: Gender (2) × Generation Status (2) × Minority Status (2) × Pell Status (2). The main effect of Gender almost reached significance, with female students reporting marginally more growth ( $M = 17.96$ ,  $SD = 3.68$ ) than male students ( $M = 17.62$ ,  $SD = 3.92$ ),  $F(1, 783) = 3.04$ ,  $p = .08$ . The only other significant effects found were for the three-way interaction of Generation Status × Minority Status × Pell Status,  $F(1, 783) = 11.60$ ,  $p < .001$ , and for the four-way interaction involving all factors,  $F(1, 783) = 9.62$ ,  $p = .002$ . The four-way interaction includes the three-way interaction and therefore, we will describe only the four-way result in more detail. To simplify the interpretation of such a complex interaction result, three-way Generation Status × Minority Status × Pell Status analysis of variance tests were conducted separately for female and male students. No significant results were found for the female students (refer to Figure 1); however, a significant three-way interaction was found for the male students,  $F(1, 178) = 13.05$ ,  $p < .001$  (refer to Figure 1). Non-first-generation minority males who were Pell Grant recipients reported the lowest levels of growth (even below the midpoint of the scale), whereas their first-generation counterparts reported higher levels of growth than most other groups of male students. These results highlight the complex mediating role that a student's cultural and financial background can play within any generation results that are obtained.

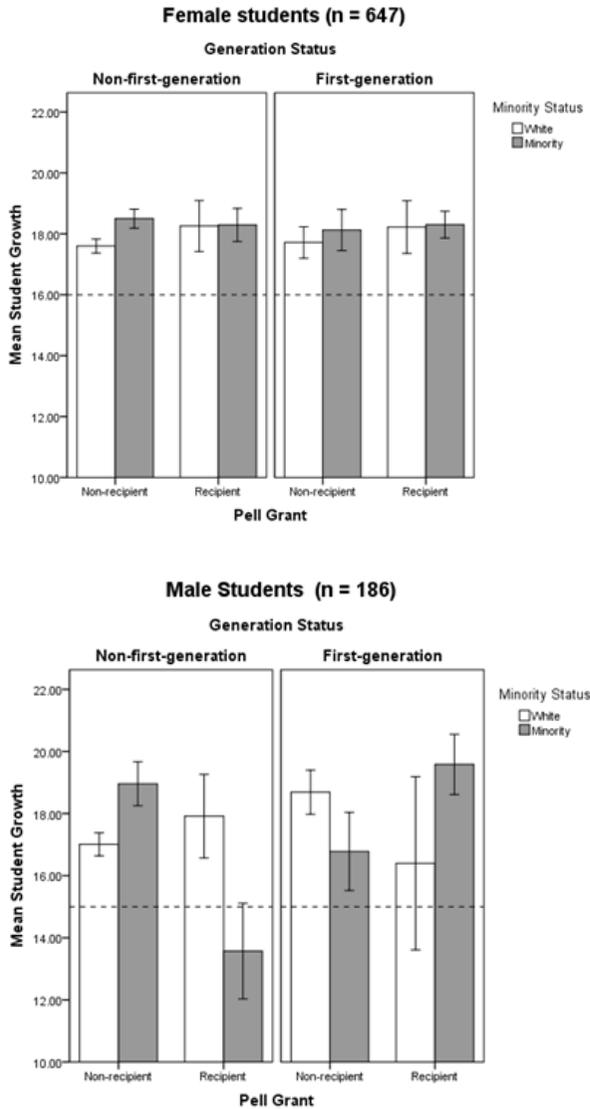


Figure 1. Interaction of Gender  $\times$  Generation Status  $\times$  Minority Status  $\times$  Pell Grant Status on student growth after participating in service service-learning. The dashed line depicted on the figure indicates the mid-point of the student growth scale.

Caution should be used when interpreting these complex interactions because the numbers of male students for these comparisons were relatively small. It is important to point out, however, that these results did not reflect the experiences of a small group of male students from the same service-learning class because the

males in each of these subgroups were enrolled in a variety of different service-learning classes.

## Discussion

The current study explored first-generation and non-first-generation undergraduate students' perceptions of their growth as a student (academically and professionally) after completing a semester-long service-learning class at a large urban public research university. This study is important because of the large number of first-generation students now entering postsecondary education in the United States (*Davis, 2010*) and the low success rates of these students (*Choy, 2001*). This research represents the first large-scale study to specifically address the impact of service-learning on the growth of first-generation college students.

In their responses to an end-of-semester survey, both first-generation and non-first-generation students in our sample perceived their service-learning classes positively and believed that service-learning classes promoted their academic and professional growth. The consistency of this finding is impressive given the variety of service-learning courses in which the participants were enrolled. Students in the sample completed service-learning courses in multiple academic disciplines such as business, geography, nursing, criminal justice, religious studies, public relations, dental hygiene, graphic design, biology, and art education and these classes were offered at every academic level from freshman to senior. Consistent across all service-learning classes at Virginia Commonwealth University is a minimum of 20 hours of service per semester per student and instructor-planned reflection activities that connect the academic and service components of the class. Although previous studies have found that university students' perceptions of their service-learning classes were positive (*Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Eyster, et al, 2001*), this literature has not yet disaggregated responses collected from first-generation students. This study provides evidence that first-generation college students value and appreciate service-learning classes as strongly as do their non-first-generation classmates.

The results of this study indicate that the response of first-generation students to their service-learning classes was mediated by other demographic variables, particularly gender. Female undergraduates, regardless of their generation status, financial need, or racial background, reported that they gained both personal and academic skills as a result of their participation in service-learning

classes. In fact, none of the various social and financial factors included in the study influenced the amount of growth reported by the female students. The female students did report marginally higher growth than male students, and this result is consistent with previous research showing that female students may benefit more from service-learning than do their male classmates (*Casile et al., 2011; Pragman, Flannery, & Bowyer, 2012*).

On the other hand, male students differed significantly among themselves in their response to service-learning experiences, with some males reporting considerable benefits and others reporting very little benefit. These findings did not result from differences in the types of classes taken by these male students because the males in our sample were widely dispersed across a variety of service-learning classes in many academic disciplines. Males who were from both low-income and racial minority backgrounds differed significantly in their perceptions of personal outcomes that resulted from their service-learning experiences depending on whether they were a first-generation or non-first-generation student (refer to Figure 1). We do not have the data to explain these differences because we did not ask our participants to explain why they did or did not experience growth as a student while participating in their service-learning classes. Qualitative studies involving small focus groups drawn from these different student populations are needed to help answer this question. At this time, we can only conjecture about the possible factors that underlie the differences in student growth found with our subgroups of male students.

One hypothesis is that these differences relate to the motivation behind each student's decision to attend a four-year college and whether participation in service-learning courses helps to validate this decision. For many students, attending college is a preliminary step in their identity formation and allows them to explore professional and personal goals (*Luyckx, Goossens, & Soenens, 2006; Luyckx, Schwartz, Goossens, Soenens, & Beyers, 2008*). However, other students may not have the financial or social support to use college to explore personal and professional options. They have already overcome many of life's hurdles to become a college student and have a clear identity formed. For these students, college is a validation of their hard work and life decision, and these students may have a sense of adulthood more akin to that of individuals already in the workforce (*Luyckx, Schwartz, Goossens, & Pollock, 2008*). Participation in a service-learning course that engages the student in many forms of critical self-analysis will have very different effects on these different types of students and may lead to very different perceptions

of the benefits of service-learning experiences for student growth. We recently conducted research that found identity statuses to vary as a function of status in college students (Pelco, Ball, & Lockeman, 2013). We believe this is a promising direction for future research that aims to understand the impact of service-learning on college student development.

A second explanatory hypothesis relates to cultural differences in the students' precollege background and their current campus life. Recent research by Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, and Covarrubias (2012) indicated that first-generation students often experienced a cultural mismatch between the independent norms institutionalized in American universities and the relatively interdependent norms that first-generation students are socialized with in working-class home contexts. Stephens and her colleagues used gender as a covariant, so the effect of gender in their studies was not reported. However, if students viewed service-learning pedagogy as aligned primarily with interdependent (rather than independent) norms, this may explain why first-generation males from racial minority and low-income backgrounds perceived themselves as benefiting more from service-learning experiences than their non-first-generation counterparts. This difference was not as evident with female students. We hypothesize that women, as a gender, may be more comfortable with interdependent norms, and therefore the first-generation and non-first-generation female students in our sample showed no differences in perceived growth by generation status. Future research is needed to address questions related to first-generation and non-first-generation college students' cultural assimilation to campus environments and how service-learning may assist this assimilation process.

The preceding paragraphs elucidate the complex interplay of variables that affect a student's service-learning experience. Our data suggest that students' socioeconomic status may influence their growth as a result of service-learning class participation, yet very little service-learning outcomes research addressing socioeconomic status exists. First-generation status and socioeconomic class are often correlated. However, not all first-generation students grow up in low-income families, and many students with high financial need have parents who graduated from college. It will be important for future research to disaggregate the influences of first-generation status and socioeconomic class so that these two important variables can be considered separately as well as cumulatively.

Several limitations of this study are important to note. Limited data were collected on the variability of service-learning experi-

ences within each of the service-learning class sections used for this study. For example, each of the classes included some form of reflection and at least 20 hours of service per student; however, no information was collected describing the type of reflection (written, discussion-based, graded, etc.) or service project (individual, group, graded, etc.). These variables may play causal roles in explaining the group differences we observed. Future studies should further explore the roles these variables play in the service-learning experiences of first-generation and non-first-generation students.

The results of this study support the contention that first-generation students believe service-learning classes facilitate their professional and personal growth. Future research is needed to develop and test a higher education academic success model that includes both person (e.g., clarification of professional goals, leadership skills) and context (e.g., number of service-learning courses taken) variables that lead to student success outcomes that include, but are not limited to, the attainment of a 4-year diploma.

Because universities and colleges around the United States will be matriculating an increasingly large percentage of first-generation students over the next decade, the economic viability of these institutions will rest, at least in part, on the success of their first-generation students. In challenging economic times, the implementation of a variety of high-impact educational strategies that work to engage the vast majority of students, rather than the creation of many interventions targeted to specific subgroups, may be most efficacious. A growing body of research, including results from the present study, lends support to the conclusion that service-learning is one of these important high-impact educational strategies.

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# **What's a Degree Got to Do With It? The Civic Engagement of Associate's and Bachelor's Degree Holders**

Mallory Angeli Newell

## **Abstract**

This study explored the civic engagement of adults holding an associate's degree compared to those holding only a high school diploma and those holding a bachelor's degree. Most prior research has focused on individuals who hold 4-year degrees; the present study, however, sought to understand differences between holders of 2-year degrees and 4-year degrees. Descriptive statistics showed that associate's degree holders exhibited higher rates of civic engagement than high school graduates but lower rates than bachelor's degree holders; the regression analyses showed that associate's degree holders were significantly less likely than bachelor's degree holders to be civically engaged, but more likely to be engaged than high school graduates, suggesting gains in engagement from a 2-year degree.

## **Introduction**

American higher education has “typically had among its primary goals not only the development of the individual intellect, but also the fostering of a sense of one's moral and civic responsibility” (*Pascarella, Ethington, & Smart, 1988, p. 412*). Fostering civic engagement on college campuses has been a concern of numerous higher education associations, including the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the American Association of Community Colleges, and the American Association of Higher Education (*Perry, 2005; Saltmarsh, 2005; Van Stephenson, 2010*). These organizations focus chiefly on the engagement of students at 4-year universities, leaving large gaps in the literature on the engagement of students at 2-year colleges, also known as community colleges. The recent partnership of the Association of American Colleges and Universities' 4-year initiative, the American Democracy Project, and the Democracy Commitment, a 2-year college initiative, has begun to shed light on the important contributions the 2-year segment can make in developing the civic capacity of college students.

The U.S. Department of Education has emphasized the importance of civic learning and engagement in higher education

through a number of recent publications, including *Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action* (2012), “Civic Learning for Democracy’s Future” (Kanter, 2012), and the flagship publication, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future* (AACU, 2012). These publications offer a strong call to action, as well as provide steps the Department will take to advance civic learning and ways colleges can assess civic learning and promote engagement on their campuses. Sadly, there is no explicit mention of the important role community colleges play in advancing this goal. For example, *A Crucible Moment* argues that it is time to add to the current national priorities for higher education—career preparation and increased access—the priority of fostering informed, engaged, responsible citizens. The focus on increased opportunities for engagement, however, largely lies within the 4-year sector.

Long before the Department began to focus on the importance of civic learning, adolescents were increasingly engaged in community-based activities (Sax *et al.*, 2003) that enabled them to work with others to solve community problems and make an impact on their surroundings. Colleges have subsequently focused their attention on this area by developing programs aimed at increasing community-based and political engagement (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003) through volunteer opportunities, learning communities, service-learning, and “get out the vote” rallies.

Service-learning is one area that has clearly been linked to positive outcomes for students. Service-learning has been found to be what George Kuh (2008) called a high-impact activity linked to deep learning and personal as well as academic gains within the first and senior years of college, as exhibited in the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement. Kuh noted that historically marginalized students, particularly Black and first-generation college students, tended to benefit more from engaging in high-impact activities than majority students. However, marginalized students were less likely to participate in service-learning. This research highlights the benefits of service-learning and the disproportionate access to activities for marginalized students; however, it is based solely on findings from 4-year colleges and universities.

Astin, Volgelgesang, Ikeda, and Yee (2000) obtained similar results regarding the benefits of service-learning. In a longitudinal study of over 22,000 undergraduates at 4-year colleges and universities, Astin *et al.* found that participation in service-learning yielded gains in 11 positive outcomes including academic performance, leadership, and self-efficacy. They further found that ser-

vice participation had the strongest effect on whether a student would pursue a service career later in life. Although this study provided additional research on the value of service-learning, it also was limited to the 4-year realm.

A survey of the literature makes it clear that there is limited research on service-learning at community colleges. However, in a 2003 national survey of community colleges conducted by the American Association of Community Colleges, Prentice, Robinson, and McPhee (2003) found that the number of service-learning programs at community colleges had increased over the past few years. These authors noted that service-learning course offerings had increased, faculty involvement in these types of courses had increased, and more community colleges were creating service-learning offices with a designated director. They also indicated that community college faculty may have been less engaged in service-learning projects because many of them were part-time faculty; however, colleges can be proactive in inviting part-time instructors to try service-learning in their classrooms. In addition to benefiting students, this type of encouragement may engage part-time faculty members with activities on campus and thus increase their sense of inclusion.

Research has already shown that young adults with a college experience were more civically engaged than those who did not attend college (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Kirby, Marcelo, & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2009; Lopez & Brown, 2006). These differences reflect differing opportunities and backgrounds from childhood on; however, colleges and universities play a distinct role in strengthening students' civic skills and knowledge (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). That is why it is so important to better understand the difference between the engagement of adults with associate's degrees versus bachelor's degrees. Due to the many differences between 2-year and 4-year colleges, results from research on 4-year institutions cannot be easily applied to 2-year colleges. The greatest difference is that community colleges serve all individuals regardless of their past education, educational ability, or income status. Many 4-year colleges and universities can set a level of selectivity, but community colleges open their doors to all who wish to enter. Not only do community colleges operate under open-access policies, they are low cost to attend and conveniently located within driving distance of students' homes, making them a viable option for upward mobility for individuals from low socioeconomic status backgrounds. Most of these students attend a community college to obtain an associate's degree, enter into a skilled career, gain additional job training,

or transfer to a 4-year university to further their education. If community colleges do not teach students the skills necessary for engagement later in life, a very large segment of American higher education will continue to place some individuals at a disadvantage, leading to their underrepresentation in our political system and giving minority and low socioeconomic status groups less of a voice in the political process (*Kahne & Sporte, 2008*).

As a result of their admissions policies, community colleges serve a much more diverse student population than 4-year colleges. According to the American Association of Community Colleges (2013), half of all undergraduate students are enrolled at a community college. More than half of all women in college and the majority of Black and Hispanic undergraduate students in the United States study at a community college. Since community colleges serve a wide variety of students with an array of educational goals, largely from minority and low-income backgrounds, and the habits learned while in college may last well beyond the college years (*Putnam, 1995*), it is important that community colleges commit to fostering civic engagement on their campuses. To further reinforce this argument, longitudinal studies showed that adolescents who performed community service and were part of civic organizations succeeded in school and life at a higher rate than their counterparts who did not engage, even after controlling for other factors (*Davila & Mora, 2007*).

Furthermore, the majority of students who attend community colleges commute, have jobs off campus, and are on campus only during the time of their classes. This limits the colleges' ability to create a sense of community on campus (*Minkler, 2001*), which can be detrimental to the development and practice of civic engagement. Research does indicate that community colleges can foster a sense of community on their campuses by focusing on teaching their students how to participate effectively as citizens of a democracy while in their classes (*Tinto, 1997*).

In one of the few studies of civic engagement and community colleges, Lopez and Brown (2006) acknowledged a lack of available data focused on the large group of Americans who study in community colleges and either finish their education with an associate's degree or transfer to a 4-year college. Using National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 data, Lopez and Brown found that community college students fell below 4-year students but above high school graduates in their levels of civic engagement as reflected in voting, reading the newspaper daily, and watching TV news daily. Community college students, largely those who intended to

transfer to a 4-year college, were almost equal to bachelor's degree holders in rates of volunteering and registering to vote.

Civic engagement, however, does not begin in college; it occurs throughout life as a cumulative process in which the college years play an important role and which results in individuals expressing varying levels of civic engagement over time. Therefore, this study explored the differences in civic engagement of adults with an associate's degree and adults with only a high school diploma or with a bachelor's degree while controlling for the influence of background characteristics. Due to the differences between 2-year and 4-year students, it was hypothesized that adults who graduated from a 2-year college would exhibit significantly lower levels of civic engagement than adults who graduated from a 4-year college, but higher rates of engagement than adults with only a high school diploma, even after controlling for background characteristics.

## Factors Leading to Civic Engagement

### Background Characteristics

Research shows that immigrants and limited-English speakers are less civically engaged than nonimmigrants and native English speakers, and Whites exhibit higher rates of civic engagement than Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. Although ethnicity and citizenship have been found to predict certain areas of civic engagement, these demographic factors may mask other important differences (*Foster-Bey, 2008*). For example, Blacks and Hispanics have lower average incomes and levels of education than Whites and Asians. Similarly, in a study of the 2006 Civic and Political Health of the Nation Survey conducted by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), Lopez and Marcelo (*2008*) found that young immigrants were less engaged than their native-born counterparts in activities such as volunteering and voting, though children of immigrants were often among the most engaged group of young people.

Cultural differences among ethnic groups also influence civic engagement. For example, research suggests that students from urban communities may have less faith in traditional forms of political engagement and thus participate in civic activities in ways that go unrecognized in contemporary literature. Such activities may include artistic expression via art, music, dance, and poetry, or providing financial assistance for family survival (*Ginwright, 2011*). Surveys on volunteering may also exhibit cultural or class

bias by leaning toward unpaid service in formal, nonprofit organizations. Many ethnic groups may engage in helping activities outside formal settings by such means as helping a neighbor or family member (*Foster-Bey, 2008*). These activities may not be captured by traditional survey tools.

Differences in engagement by men and women exist in the types of activities in which young men and women participate. Women and men have been found to be equally civically engaged but in different types of activities, with men more likely to be engaged in political activities and women more likely to be engaged in community-based activities (*Jenkins, 2005; Marcelo, Lopez, & Kirby, 2007; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995*). However, in a study of the Census Current Population Survey November Supplement, CIRCLE (2013) found that the rate of voter turnout for young women ages 18–29 was 7 percentage points higher than that for young men. Over the past 30 years, a gap has emerged such that women's turnout rate for presidential elections exceeded that of men.

## **School Environment**

The environments individuals experience while growing up, as well as in high school and college, are considered an important influence on civic engagement (*Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, & Delli Carpini, 2006*). Research posits that students who attend schools that provide civic training in the classroom or reward service opportunities are more involved than students whose schools do not provide opportunities for engagement. Just requiring students to pay attention to politics did not result in greater civic engagement; rather, when teachers and campuses encouraged open discussions about politics, facilitated volunteer work, and made volunteering a requirement, students' levels of engagement increased (*Zukin et al., 2006*).

High schools play a key role in the developmental process. For example, high school juniors who reported their community as one in which adults cared about youth and made the community better were more likely to report high levels of commitments to civic participation (*Kahne & Sporte, 2008*). However, these opportunities may vary depending on the average socioeconomic status of the student body. Research suggests that a student's ethnicity and academic track and the student body's average socioeconomic status determine the availability of school-based engagement, with opportunities more readily available to White and higher socioeconomic status students (*Kahne & Middaugh, 2008*).

Because higher education has grown to be the primary institution for civic engagement of younger generations, it has been argued that no comparable institution exists for young adults who do not attend college. As research has found for high school environments, activities that lead to student engagement are more common in colleges that enroll privileged students than in schools that serve poor and minority populations (*Flanagan & Levine, 2010*). It can be argued that more selective colleges and universities provide greater opportunities for students to be engaged than do community colleges, which tend to serve lower income, minority students. Thus, it is argued in this study that students' school environment will influence their level of engagement, be it a high school, community college, or 4-year college environment.

### Conceptual Model

The conceptual model used in this study is based on the work of Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002). Keeter et al.'s 19 measures of civic engagement have become widely accepted for operationalizing and assessing adolescent civic engagement. Keeter et al. divided civic engagement activities, or indicators, into four categories: civic, political voice, cognitive, and electoral activities. Drawing upon their work, this study focused on the development and testing of a conceptual model that identified key experiences and characteristics that fostered civic engagement in adults who had attained their ultimate level of education.

Students come to college with individual background characteristics that provide a baseline in their development and influence the activities they participate in while in school. Other preexisting influences include the socioeconomic status of a student's family and individual socialization experiences. Individuals also attend varying higher education institutions with diverse cultures and different opportunities for engagement that may affect their level of engagement while in college and later in life. Other individuals do not attend a higher education institution, limiting their exposure to the opportunities that might have been available to them on a higher education campus, and this absence likewise affects their engagement throughout life. Further, some individuals, on a college campus or not, may have less time to devote to civic or political activities due to other responsibilities, such as supporting and caring for a family.

The background characteristics students bring with them to college or life after high school form the starting point of their

development. The time and opportunities they have to engage in activities affect their development of civic engagement. The level of education that an individual attains also affects their opportunities for engagement. Therefore, levels of civic engagement will be different for individuals with varying levels of education. Using this conceptual model as a basis, the following section explores the differences in civic engagement of these groups.

## Data

Current Population Survey (CPS) data were used to explore the differences in civic engagement of adults who likely had attained their ultimate level of education. The CPS data included the Volunteer Supplement survey for September 2008 (*U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008b*) and the Civic Engagement Supplement survey for November 2008 (*U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008a*), both nationally representative and weighted samples. The CPS Volunteer Supplement survey is administered yearly to a sample of respondents in conjunction with the annual CPS. Because the Civic Engagement Supplement survey was administered only in 2008, the 2008 sample for the Volunteer Supplement was used in order to include responses from the same time frame.

The survey was administered to a sample of the U.S. population. The data offered information on community-based, volunteer, and political indicators. Background characteristics available in the data included highest level of school completed or degree received, gender, ethnicity, citizenship status, and family income. The survey respondents used in this study indicated that their highest level of education was a high school diploma, an associate's degree, or a bachelor's degree. Adults who were currently enrolled in any type of school were removed from the data.

As shown in Table 1, the distribution of ethnicity in the population surveyed was consistent across education levels with that of the U.S. population. However, there were more female respondents with associate's degrees than in any other group, and the sample contained a slightly lower percentage of Black adults than the U.S. population.

**Table 1. CPS Sample Compared to U.S. Population of Adults**

Background Characteristics	U.S. High School	CPS High School	U.S. Associate's Degree	CPS Associate's Degree	U.S. Bachelor's Degree	CPS Bachelor's Degree
White	84%	83%	67%	83%	72%	85%

Black	10%	11%	12%	8%	7%	6%
Asian	4%	3%	5%	3%	5%	5%
Hispanic	8%	7%	12%	10%	8%	7%
American Indian	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Female	52%	51%	62%	57%	56%	52%
Male	48%	49%	38%	43%	44%	48%

Source: (NCES, 2009)

## Measures

The inclusion of variables was based on Keeter et al.'s (2002) comprehensive measurement of civic engagement, which categorized 19 indicators of civic engagement into civic, political, political voice, and cognitive behaviors. To measure each of the categories, Keeter et al. developed indicators that fell within each group. Using the data available, this study attempted to explore civic and political indicators. It should be noted that Keeter et al. included volunteering as a civic activity but due to the availability of the volunteer indicators in the Volunteer Supplement survey as opposed to the Civic Engagement Supplement survey, these indicators were analyzed and reported separately from the other civic indicators.

Four questions from the CPS data related to community engagement were used to measure civic engagement, and these variables were combined to create an additive community-engagement index. Ten questions from the CPS data were used to measure volunteerism, and these indicators were combined to create an additive volunteer index. Political engagement indicators were measured using four questions from the CPS data to create the additive political index. Each of these indices had the same weight.

Background characteristics were added to each model as controls. The variables for background characteristics that were used included ethnicity, gender, U.S. citizenship status, and family income. Table 2 presents the full list of variables used in the study.

**Table 2. List of CPS Survey Variables**

Variable Name	Description
<b>Background Variables</b>	
High school diploma	Dichotomous
Associates degree	Dichotomous
Black	Dichotomous
Hispanic	Dichotomous

Asian	Dichotomous
Pacific Islander	Dichotomous
American Indian	Dichotomous
Gender (Male)	Dichotomous
Citizenship status	Dichotomous
Family income (\$ per year)	Dichotomous
<b>Community-Based Engagement Variables</b>	
Participated in a service organization	Dichotomous
Participated in sports or recreational org.	Dichotomous
Attended a church or synagogue	Dichotomous
Participated in any organization	Dichotomous
<b>Volunteer Variables</b>	
Volunteered	Dichotomous
Tutored or taught	Dichotomous
Mentored youth	Dichotomous
Ushered, greeted, or ministered	Dichotomous
Collected, made, or distributed clothing, crafts, or goods other than food	Dichotomous
Fundraised or sold items to raise money	Dichotomous
Provided counseling, medical care, fire/EMS or protective services	Dichotomous
Engaged in music, performance, or other artistic activities	Dichotomous
Engaged in labor, supply, or transportation for people	Dichotomous
<b>Political Engagement Variables</b>	
Attended a political march or rally	Dichotomous
Supported a political candidate	Dichotomous
Attended a political meeting	Dichotomous
Boycotted or boycotted a product	Dichotomous

*Note: Dichotomous: Yes= 1, No= 0; Family income interval: 1 = < \$5,000, 2 = 5,000 to 7,499, 3 = 7,500 to 9,999, 4 = 10,000 to 12,499, 5 = 12,500 to 14,999, 6 = 15,000 to 19,999, 7 = 20,000 to 24,999, 8 = 25,000 to 29,999, 9 = 30,000 to 34,999, 10 = 35,000 to 39,999, 11 = 40,000 to 49,999, 12 = 50,000 to 59,999, 13 = 60,000 to 74,999, 14 = 75,000 to 99,999, 15 = 100,000 to 149,999, 16 = over 150,000*

## Data Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the CPS Civic Engagement Supplement survey was administered only in 2008, limiting the time frame of data available on the civic engagement of adults from this survey. Only a limited number of measures for civic engagement were available in the 2008 survey; it is particularly disappointing that no indicator addressed whether individuals

voted in any election. Therefore, the overall conclusions that could be drawn about the civic engagement of adults who had attained their ultimate level of education reflected the limitations on the data available for this study.

Additional background variables that have been linked to civic engagement, such as parents' education and income, socialization experiences, and elements of the college environment, were not included in the CPS data, thus limiting the variables available for in this study that have previously been linked to increased civic engagement of adults.

Even though the CPS data were obtained from large, weighted, representative samples of the U.S. population, there is always concern about generalizing the results on a wide scale. Since it is a representative sample, one would think the findings could be generalized to the U.S. population, but one would be hesitant to generalize to individuals who attended non-U.S. educational systems. It is believed that the results from the CPS data can be applied to the national context since U.S. Census Bureau data has been used to generalize about the U.S. population for centuries. Lastly, the variables included relied on self-reported information, which may have resulted in overreporting. Since self-reported data are common in research, especially in the use of U.S. Census Bureau data, this limitation can be applied to many other surveys and therefore is not just a limitation of this study.

## Methods

Descriptive statistics using simple cross tabulations were used to identify differences between the civic engagement of adults with an associate's degree compared to adults with a bachelor's degree or a high school diploma. Ordinary least squares regression analyses were used to test the influence of educational attainment on community-based engagement, volunteering, and political engagement. A multiple regression model was then used to explore the influence of the background characteristics on the indicators. The standardized coefficients and adjusted  $R^2$  values were reported for each of the regression models.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics showed that adults who attained an associate's degree exhibited lower rates of civic engagement than

adults who attained a bachelor's degree, but higher rates of civic engagement than adults who attained only a high school diploma. This was the case in all variables available within the data.

For community-based activities, the distribution of individuals who participated in a service organization was highest for bachelor's degree holders (7%), followed by high school graduates (6%) and associate's degree holders (3%). The distribution of engagement with a sports or recreational organization was 11% of bachelor's degree holders, 8% of associate's, and 4% of high school graduates. For attending a church or synagogue on a weekly basis, there were positive responses from 18% of bachelor's degree holders, 16% of associate's degree holders, and 9% of respondents with a high school degree. Overall participation in any organization had the highest response rate from bachelor's degree holders (6%), followed by associate's degree holders (4%) and high school graduates (3%). The results of this analysis showed that adults with a bachelor's degree attended religious services at the highest rate, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Differences in Civic Engagement of Adults Who Attained Their Ultimate Level of Education**

	High School	Associate	Bachelor
<b>Community-Based Engagement Variables</b>			
Participated in a service organization	3%	6%	7%
Participated in sports or recreational org.	4%	8%	11%
Attended a church or synagogue	9%	16%	18%
Participated in any organization	3%	4%	6%
<b>Volunteer Variables</b>			
Volunteered	11%	16%	28%
Tutored or taught	2%	4%	8%
Mentored youth	2%	3%	9%
Ushered, greeted, or ministered	1%	1%	3%
Collected, made, or distributed clothing, crafts, or goods other than food	2%	2%	4%
Fundraised or sold items to raise money	3%	3%	6%
Provided counseling, medical care, fire/EMS, or protective services	1%	2%	4%
Provided general office services	1%	2%	2%
Engaged in music, performance, or other artistic activities	2%	3%	5%
Engaged in labor, supply, or transportation for people	3%	6%	7%

Political Engagement Variables			
Attended a political march or rally	1%	2%	3%
Supported a political candidate	6%	10%	16%
Attended a political meeting	3%	6%	10%
Boycotted or boycotted a product	4%	6%	10%

For volunteering, the type of organization for which individuals volunteered varied by education level. Over 70% of respondents at all education levels did not volunteer at all. Of the respondents who did volunteer, individuals with a high school diploma volunteered by fundraising or selling items to raise money for people or engaging in labor, supply, or transportation for people at the highest rate (3%). Of the respondents with an associate's degree, 6% volunteered by engaging in labor, supply, or transportation for people, followed by tutoring or teaching (4%) and mentoring youth (3%). Bachelor's degree holders volunteered largely by mentoring youth (9%) tutoring or teaching (8%) and engaging in labor, supply, or transportation for people (7%).

The distribution of engagement in political activities followed a pattern similar to that of the other indicators, with bachelor's degree holders exhibiting the highest rate of engagement, followed by associate's degree holders, then high school graduates. The percentage of respondents reporting that they attended a political march or rally within the last 12 months also increased as education level increased, with positive responses from 1% of high school graduates, 2% of associate's degree holders, and 3% of bachelor's degree holders. Rates of respondents reporting that they supported a political candidate within the last 12 months were highest for bachelor's degree holders (16%), followed by associate's degree holders (10%), then high school graduates (6%).

For attending a political meeting, bachelor's degree holders made up the largest percentage (10%), followed by associate's degree holders (6%) and high school graduates (3%). For boycotting or boycotting a product, bachelor's degree holders once again participated at the highest rate (10%), followed by associate's degree holders (6%) and high school graduates (4%). These findings were consistent with the literature, which showed that individuals with no college experience exhibited lower levels of engagement in all areas than individuals with higher levels of education (*Lopez & Brown, 2006*); however, these results further disaggregate the college experience into 2-year and 4-year degrees, reflecting added

value not only in a 2-year degree over high school alone but also in a 4-year degree over a 2-year degree for these indicators.

## Regression Analyses

**Community-based engagement index.** A regression analysis was used to explore the relationship between community-based engagement and highest level of education achieved. In the first model, the ordinary least squares regression model for community-based engagement, with no controls, showed that adults who attained an associate's degree were significantly less likely than bachelor's degree holders to engage in community-based activities.

A multiple regression model was then used, which added the background characteristics as controls. Significant differences between the groups remained with the addition of the background characteristics, which indicates that background characteristics do not explain the differences between the groups and their engagement in community-based activities. Therefore, something other than ethnicity, gender, income, or citizenship status is a better predictor of the differences in community-based engagement of individuals with varying levels of education. However, differences did exist between ethnic groups, with Asian (.078), Black (.045), Hawaiian (.007), and Hispanic (.060) adults being significantly less engaged in community-based engagement activities than White adults (See Table 4). For gender, male (.031) adults engaged in community-based engagement at a lower rate than their female counterparts. In regard to citizenship, U.S. citizens (.018) engaged in community-based activities at a higher rate than noncitizens. Though the overall relationship within the model was significant at the .000 level, the adjusted  $R^2$  explained only 2.5% to 6% of the variance in the model. Therefore, between 94% and 97.5% of the variance within the model was explained by variables that were not available within this analysis.

**Table 4. CPS Community-Based Engagement Index Regression Results**

Variable	(1)	(2)
		+ Background
High School	-.170***	-.139***
Associate's degree	-.035***	-.033***
<b>Background</b>		
American Indian		.003***
Asian		-.078***

Black		-.045***
Hawaiian		-.007)
Hispanic		-.060**
Other		.040***
Citizenship		.018***
Gender		-.031***
Family Income		.136**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.025	.059
N	150,999	150,999

Note. Standardized coefficients,  $p < .001$  (\*\*\*) and  $p < .01$  (\*\*)

**Volunteer index.** The second linear regression analysis was used to explore the volunteer index. With no controls, high school graduates and adults with an associate's degree were again significantly less likely to engage in volunteering activities than adults with a bachelor's degree. The standardized coefficient for high school graduates with no controls was greater at  $-.191$  compared to  $-.096$  for associate's degree holders (See Table 5). These differences indicated that individuals who had attained only a high school diploma engaged in volunteer activities at a lower rate than associate's degree holders since the standardized coefficient is a larger negative number. This pattern remained with the addition of controls for background characteristics, again indicating that the background characteristics included in this study did not explain the differences in volunteering between the groups and, therefore, other variables not included in this analysis would better explain the differences.

The results further showed that only adults who identified as Black (.031) were significantly less likely to engage in volunteering activities than White adults. Differences between all other ethnic groups were not statistically significant, meaning no conclusions could be drawn regarding the relationship of membership in these ethnic group with volunteering. Citizenship was also not significant in this model. Gender was significant at the .01 level, with males being less engaged in volunteer activities than females. Family income (.059) was significant, with higher income families engaging in volunteer activities at a higher rate than lower income families. This measure exhibited the highest standardized coefficient in the model, suggesting it explained the greatest amount of the differences between adults who volunteered and those who did not volunteer. Again, the overall relationship was significant at the .000 level, but the adjusted  $R^2$  explained only 3% to 4% of the vari-

ance within this model; therefore, variables outside the scope of this study explain 96% to 97% of the variance.

**Table 5. CPS Volunteer Index Regression Results**

Variable	(1)	(2)
High school	-.191***	-.173***
Associate's degree	-.096***	-.094***
<b>Background</b>		
American Indian		-.008
Asian		-.020
Black		-.031*
Hawaiian		.000
Latino		-.028
Other		.012
Citizenship		.027
Gender		-.029**
Family income		.059***
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.026	.035
N	150,799	150,799

Note: Standardized coefficients, \*,  $p < .001$  (\*\*\*),  $p < .01$  (\*\*), and  $p < .05$  (\*)

**Political engagement index.** The final regression explored the relationship between political engagement and the educational attainment of adults. The results were consistent with the two previous models in that adults with only a high school diploma or with an associate's degree were less likely to engage in political activities than adults with a bachelor's degree. This pattern continued with the addition of controls for background characteristics. In this model, all background characteristics were significant at the .001 level. Asian (.051), Black (.012), Hawaiian (.002), and Hispanic (.045) adults were found to engage in politically based activities at a lower rate than White adults (See Table 6).

As for citizenship status, U.S. citizens (.034) engaged in political activities at a higher rate than noncitizens, and males (.020) engaged in political activities at a lower rate than females. Family income data also indicated that higher income families are significantly more engaged in political activities (.127) than lower income families. This variable again exhibited the highest standardized coefficient in the model. The standardized coefficients in the first model, without controls, showed that associate's degree holders were 0.146 standard deviations less likely to engage in political activities; the standardized coefficient for high school graduates was again greater at .171, indicating they were less likely to engage

in political activities than bachelor's degree holders or associate's degree holders. The overall relationship was again significant at the .000 level, and the adjusted  $R^2$  explained between 2% and 4% of the variance within this model.

**Table 6. CPS Political Index Regression Results**

Variable	(1)	(2)
		+ Background
High school	-.171***	-.146***
Associates degree	-.065***	-.065***
Background		
American Indian		.002***
Asian		-.051***
Black		-.012***
Hawaiian		-.002***
Latino		-.045***
Other		.001***
Citizenship		.034***
Gender		-.020***
Family income		.127***
Adjusted $R^2$	.024	.048
<i>N</i>	150,799	150,799

Note. Standardized coefficients,  $p < .001$  (\*\*\*)

## Discussion

This study focused on the differences between individuals with an associate's degree compared to those with only a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree. Since the data for adults reflected a nationally representative, weighted sample of the U.S. population, the findings may be applied to high schools, community colleges, and 4-year universities within the United States. It should still be considered that the measures of civic engagement and factors linked to increased civic engagement were limited. The full range of civic indicators developed by Keeter et al. (2002) were not available in the data. This may have impacted the outcome of the regression analyses as there were no electoral indicators and a limited number of political indicators.

It would be ideal if future research could include all 19 civic, electoral, political voice, and cognitive indicators as outlined in *The*

*Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait* (Keeter et al., 2002) as well as a wide range of demographic information including family socioeconomic variables and high school engagement activities. With the inclusion of a wider range of background characteristics, the models would likely predict a larger amount of the variance between education levels, and the wider range of engagement variables would enable a better understanding of differences in the types of engagement by education level.

For the limited number of variables available in the data within this study, the descriptive statistics and regression analyses did show that individuals with a bachelor's degree had higher rates of engagement than associate's degree holders and high school graduates, but associate's degree holders had higher rates of engagement than high school graduates in all measures. These results confirmed what we already knew: that education has a tiered effect, with levels of civic engagement increasing as education increases. What is unique to this study is that the results suggest a positive correlation between an additional 2 years of college and gains in an individual's level of engagement, at least for the measures examined. Conversely, these results indicate that an individual who does not obtain any additional education beyond high school is at a disadvantage in a participatory democracy. These findings highlight the importance of an additional 2 years of education at a community college, which apparently augment students' skills for lifelong engagement. This is particularly important for those who do not go on to obtain a bachelor's degree.

## **Implications**

The linear regression analyses indicated that background characteristics did not explain the differences in engagement for the indicators included in this study. Rather, additional factors outside the scope of this study came into play, which may include parents' income and education. These additional factors could result in individuals from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds attending a 4-year college and obtaining a bachelor's degree at higher rates than lower socioeconomic status individuals. These variables were not available in the data but should be added in future research. The variation in engagement by education level may also be attributed to the cumulative nature of civic engagement: that is, as education increases, so does civic engagement. Even so, if individuals with an associate's degree are more likely to engage in civic activities than individuals with a high school diploma, these findings have important implications for community colleges concerned with the civic

engagement of their graduates throughout life. Since an associate's degree may be the terminal degree for many adults, community colleges should focus on teaching students the skills necessary to be engaged citizens and provide opportunities for them to practice these skills in case they do not obtain higher levels of education. Since adults with an associate's degree exhibit lower levels of civic engagement than bachelor's degree holders but higher rates of engagement than high school graduates, community colleges may be able to provide interventions to students between high school and the workforce that can foster civic engagement in college and throughout life. Community colleges may choose to promote policies and practices as well as provide strong leadership toward creating a culture of civic engagement on their campuses. If students are provided opportunities to engage in civic activities while in school, they will likely develop the foundation needed for future engagement, thus limiting their disadvantage in our democratic system.

American education systems should join forces to increase the civic engagement of their students at all levels. Many 2-year and 4-year colleges are already participating in Campus Compact, a coalition of over 1,000 colleges and universities committed to fulfilling the civic purpose of higher education. The Democracy Commitment similarly focuses on civic engagement at community colleges, and the American Democracy Project is dedicated to producing civically engaged graduates at 4-year colleges and universities. These groups have joined together with a shared mission of engaging students in civic learning and democratic practice for the benefit of all students.

Unfortunately, many of the civic reform movements in higher education are optional rather than part of students' educational requirements for completion. They are usually an additional component rather than the central theme of the pathway to success. A recent movement, however, has challenged educational systems at all levels—K-12, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities—to commit to putting civic learning at the core of education. It is argued that if this challenge is met, the benefits can be far-reaching for the country and the economy (*AACU, 2012*). The state of Massachusetts has already stepped up to this challenge by mandating that civic engagement at all 2-year and 4-year colleges be measured along with other more traditional standards such as graduation rates (*Smith, 2012*).

In order for citizens to have equal opportunity to engage in the democratic processes that govern our country, regardless of their

level of educational attainment, all educational institutions need to share the responsibility. Broader dialogue may result when a larger number of educational institutions bring their voices and perspectives to the table. A result may be a comprehensive pipeline that offers students civic engagement training throughout their educational experience, thus leading to lifelong engagement regardless of level of education.

As mentioned previously, future research should explore the additional factors beyond the background characteristics included in this study that may be linked to the graduated levels of civic engagement for adults not enrolled in school. Parents' education and income as well as individuals' activities in high school were not included in this study and have been found to be strong predictors of civic engagement in school and later in life (*Kirlin, 2003*). Therefore, future research should explore these variables and their link to the civic engagement of high school graduates and associate's degree holders. Future research should also include a wider range of civic engagement indicators, especially registering to vote and voting, often the most accessible form of engagement in terms of money and time.

Community college leaders should use these comparative findings to better understand their student populations. Since the engagement of associate's degree holders is lower than that of bachelor's degree holders, community colleges should provide greater support, training, and opportunities to their students while they have them on campus. Additional support and greater opportunities for civic engagement cannot do harm, but will likely have benefits for students while in college and later in life, serving to lessen the gap in civic engagement between educational attainment levels.

## **Conclusions**

This study supports the case for America's colleges to continue their commitment to educating a citizenry that can be well informed and thus better face the challenges of a participatory democracy. If community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities commit to this cause, the political inequality within the United States may be lessened. By educating and organizing their students, community colleges are providing opportunities to low-income, minority, and often marginalized individuals so they can build the habits of advocating for their rights and the rights of others, persuading others, communicating effectively, and voting, to name a few. These efforts may lead to a change in the system that has historically oper-

ated more favorably for high socioeconomic status individuals. In addition, focusing on adolescents while in school helps develop these habits of engagement, which then become more firmly established later in life (Levine, 2007). If colleges at all levels provide equal opportunities for students to engage politically in and out of class as well as in their community, the voices of all citizens may have a chance of being heard in the roar of the crowd.

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# **Exploring Faculty Members' Motivation and Persistence in Academic Service-Learning Pedagogy**

Alexa Darby and Gabrielle Newman

## **Abstract**

This qualitative study provides a theoretical framework for understanding faculty members' motivation to persist in utilizing academic service-learning pedagogy. Twenty-four faculty members from a private liberal arts university in the south-eastern United States were interviewed about the benefits and challenges of teaching academic service-learning courses and the factors influencing their motivation to continue. Bandura's (1997) model of motivation, which emphasizes the roles of forethought and retrospective reasoning, was adapted to illuminate the faculty members' motivational cycle. The study examined faculty members' cognized goals, outcome expectancies, perceptions of success, and perceived causes of difficulty in the academic service-learning experience and elicited their recommendations for enhancing faculty members' motivation to continue using this pedagogy. Drawing on these voices and perspectives, we proposed a theoretical framework for understanding faculty members' motivation for persisting in teaching academic service-learning courses and offer recommendations for universities seeking to strengthen faculty members' continued commitment to this pedagogy.

## **Introduction**

In higher education, faculty members' goal of providing students with experiential learning that genuinely engages them often leads them to academic service-learning (*National Survey of Student Engagement, 2010*). According to the National Survey of Student Engagement, service-learning is a "high-impact practice" employed across the disciplines to offer students authentic learning environments and opportunities to connect with faculty members and community partners in ways that can be life changing. Academic service-learning is defined as "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities" (*National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2011, p. 1*). The benefits of academic service-learning are numerous; however, its challenges can cause faculty members' commitment to the pedagogy to flag. The pur-

pose of this study was to apply motivation theory to identify the main factors that contribute to faculty members' motivation to utilize academic service-learning pedagogy.

## **Benefits and Challenges of Academic Service-Learning**

Research has shown that faculty members employ academic service-learning pedagogy because it enables students to gain a deeper understanding of the course material, the challenges faced by the community, and their personal responsibility in society (Abes, Jackson, & Jones, 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Eyley & Giles, 1999; Hammond, 1994; Hardy & Schaen, 2000; Hesser, 1995; Simons & Clearly, 2006). O'Meara and Niehaus (2009) found that faculty members described the value of academic service-learning pedagogy in terms of their teaching, their personal identity, the institution, and their community partner. Student outcomes are the primary reason faculty members utilize academic service-learning; however, they also continue to use it because it enables them to make a difference in the community and foster relationships between the university and the community (Abes et al., 2002; O'Meara, 2008; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009).

Academic service-learning courses have the potential to unite a faculty member's three primary roles of teaching, research, and service. These courses also provide opportunities for students, faculty members, and the university itself to partner with and participate in the community (Ward, 2003). In fact, establishing reciprocal relationships between universities and community partners is critical for the success of academic service-learning initiatives (Arlach, Sanchez, & Feuer, 2009).

Despite the many benefits of academic service-learning, it also presents a variety of challenges that may deter faculty members from continuing its use. Faculty members identified issues of "time and logistics" (Abes et al., 2002, p. 10) as the most common deterrents to continuing the integration of service-learning in their courses. They reported difficulties balancing the time demands required of an academic service-learning course with their many other university commitments, and they often struggled to match community and student needs in service-learning projects (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007).

Support available to assist faculty members in addressing these challenges includes advice from colleagues, professional conferences, institutional faculty development opportunities, profes-

sional journals, mentoring, and access to community service offices (Abes et al., 2002). Bowen and Kiser's (2009) research highlighted the importance of faculty fellows programs that teach faculty members about academic service-learning pedagogy and assist them in developing a course syllabus. Faculty members receive a stipend for participation in such programs and must teach their designed academic service-learning course at least once. Bowen and Kiser found that faculty members were more likely to continue using the pedagogy once they had completed the program. They also found that as faculty members continued using academic service-learning pedagogy, they needed "support in different forms and at more advanced levels" (p. 39).

Researchers agree that colleagues' support is critical for faculty members teaching academic service-learning courses (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Bowen & Kiser, 2009). Which colleagues provide the most valuable support has been a topic of some debate. Abes et al. (2002) described the value of faculty members from various disciplines across the university providing support, while Banerjee and Hausafus emphasized the importance of department chairs, deans, and fellow faculty members who teach academic service-learning courses offering recognition and assistance to faculty members teaching these courses.

When Forbes, Wasburn, Crispo, and Vandever (2008) examined the motivators and incentives for faculty members to employ academic service-learning at research universities, they found that "lack of recognition of service learning with regard to promotion and tenure would be a disincentive to a large portion of the respondents" (p. 38). Two key factors that encouraged faculty members to use academic service-learning were the availability of a faculty training program and university assistance in finding community partners. Additionally, the faculty members in this study felt it was imperative for both faculty members and community partners to be recognized for "successful service-learning projects" (Forbes et al., 2008, p. 39).

In addition to faculty development programs, some institutions have started to offer release time or sabbaticals for faculty members who practice academic service-learning to conduct scholarship and/or program development (Campus Compact, 2012). With the increase in faculty incentive programs, Campus Compact emphasized the importance of identifying which incentives are desirable to faculty members. To do so, researchers and institutions must first understand the factors that maintain and increase,

as well as those that reduce, faculty members' motivation to use this pedagogy.

Previous research has investigated the benefits and challenges of academic service-learning pedagogy for faculty. However, as service-learning continues to be institutionalized and to mature as a discipline, theoretical approaches are needed to connect concepts and guide future research. A theoretical framework will illuminate the process through which faculty members choose—and continue to choose—academic service-learning pedagogy. This understanding of process is vital for informing future service-learning research and practice, as well as providing universities with tools to promote and sustain faculty members' long-term commitment to the pedagogy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Scholars in the field of psychology examine the construct of motivation from a variety of physiological, cognitive, and behavioral approaches. Social cognitive theory provides a unique perspective on motivation that bridges the behavioral and cognitive psychological approaches. Social cognitive theory was selected as the framework for this qualitative study because it offers a broad theoretical lens that provides an understanding of motivation as linked to both the self and the environment.

Social cognitive theory emphasizes the importance of interactions between individuals and their environments. Bandura (1989) explained that social interactions consist of mutual interactions between individual behavior, the environment, and personal factors such as cognition, an interaction he calls "triadic reciprocal causation" (p. 1175). Within social cognitive theory, the concept of motivation accounts for individuals' "goal-directed behavior instigated and sustained by expectations concerning anticipated outcomes of actions and self-efficacy for performing those actions" (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008, p. 139). Though numerous definitions of motivation have been offered, all share the basic premise that motivation "gets us going, keeps us working, and helps us complete tasks" (Schunk et al., 2008, p. 4).

Although Bandura's (1997) theory of motivation is widely accepted in the field of psychology, there are nevertheless criticisms of his work. Those who believe in a biological or genetic basis for behavior argue that Bandura overemphasizes social and environmental factors at the expense of recognizing the impact of biology and other inherent developmental differences (Grusec, 1992;

Woodward, 1982). Such scholars argue that individual behavior may be relatively consistent across changing environmental and social conditions and, conversely, that behavior may vary drastically in the absence of other changes. Moreover, Bandura's work has been criticized for reducing complex behaviors to an oversimplified learning process (Rottschaefer, 1991). Despite such criticisms, however, the theory's ability to account for interactions among individual behavior, cognition, and environmental factors made it the most appropriate choice for this study.

The researchers applied Bandura's (1997) model of motivation to investigate faculty members' motivation for teaching academic service-learning courses. In his model, Bandura emphasized the importance of forethought and retrospective reasoning in regulating motivation, with specific attention to the interaction of an individual's cognitive goals, outcome expectancies, and perceived causes of success or failure. Through this regulation process individuals affirm or alter their motivation. The purpose of this qualitative study is to draw on the voices and perspectives of academic service-learning faculty members to develop a theoretical framework for understanding faculty members' motivation to persist in utilizing academic service-learning.

## Research Methods

### Participants

The researchers interviewed 24 university faculty members (six male and 18 female) who had taught academic service-learning courses at a private liberal arts university in the southeastern United States. The university had 364 faculty members. Of these, 191 were male and 173 were female; 74 were full professors, 140 were associate professors, 112 were assistant professors, and 38 were lecturers. The first author, an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the university, had taught approximately 28 sections of academic service-learning courses over a 7-year period. The second author is a recent graduate of the university with a degree in psychology who completed two service-learning courses.

Participants were recruited through the university's academic service-learning email list, comprising approximately 75 faculty members with an interest in academic service-learning. At the time of data collection, 30 to 35 core service-learning faculty members were teaching academic service-learning classes on a regular basis. These courses vary in the type of service required, which may be

project-based, direct service to clients, or a combination of both. The service hours required for these courses range from 20 to 35 hours.

Participation was voluntary, and each participant was entered into a raffle for a \$50 gift card. Participants must have taught a minimum of one academic service-learning course. The 24 faculty members who volunteered for this study were from the departments of communications, computing sciences, education, english, engineering, foreign language studies, history, human service studies, leisure sports management, public administration, public health and human performance, and sociology.

Participants included three full professors, 10 associate professors, seven assistant professors, and four lecturers. The average number of years of teaching academic service-learning courses was 8, with an average of eight academic service-learning sections taught per faculty member. Faculty designed their academic service-learning courses with the intention of providing direct service, project-based service, or a combination of both. Faculty and students providing direct service worked on-site with the community partner and its clients. Those providing project-based service worked on a product that would benefit the community organization, such as a website.

**Table 1. Participant Demographics**

Participant	University rank	Years teaching	Number of academic service-learning sections	Type of academic service-learning (direct, project-based, or both)
Alfred	Lecturer	4.5	12	Project-based
Alice	Lecturer	3	5	Direct
Audrey	Associate	12	12	Direct
Bella	Assistant	8	3	Direct
Brian	Associate	19	15	Direct
Catherine	Associate	12	12	Direct
Clara	Associate	12	12	Direct
Claudia	Senior Lecturer	6	18	Both
David	Assistant	1	1	Project-based
Fiona	Associate	10	12	Project-based
Genevieve	Full	10	6	Both
Harper	Associate	7	14	Project-based
Janette	Associate	10	12	Direct

Jasmine	Associate	3	6	Project-based
Jillian	Assistant	5	8	Project-based
Jocelyn	Associate	6	5	Direct
Joanna	Assistant	3	3	Direct
Juliet	Associate	4	8	Direct
Margaret	Assistant	4	4	Project-based
Monica	Senior Lecturer	4	4	Project-based
Parker	Assistant	1	1	Project-based
Patrick	Full	14	10	Project-based
Piper	Full	30	20	Direct
Penelope	Assistant	5	4	Both

## Data Collection and Analysis

After receiving Institutional Review Board approval, the first author conducted individual interviews with each faculty member to identify the rewards and challenges of teaching academic service-learning courses. In the interviews, which lasted approximately 1 hour, each participant was asked to provide demographic information and answer questions pertaining to their motivation to teach academic service-learning courses. The demographic section of the interview included questions about university rank, number of years teaching academic service-learning courses, number of sections of academic service-learning courses taught, and number of different courses taught. In the questions pertaining to motivation, participants were asked to outline how they became involved in teaching academic service-learning courses, explain their original motivation for teaching these courses, describe the first academic service-learning courses they taught, and list the challenges and rewards that influenced their motivation to teach academic service-learning courses. For example, participants were asked, “How did your motivation stay the same or change as you continued to teach academic service-learning courses?” and “What factors contributed to this staying the same or changing?” Finally, participants were asked to recommend strategies to sustain faculty interest in and commitment to teaching academic service-learning courses.

Researchers ensured the quality or trustworthiness of interview studies by making certain that the interviewer and interview questions were not leading and by having an audit trail (Roulston, 2010). The interviewer in this study adhered to the interview protocol and asked all participants the same questions. Additionally, all interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the researchers main-

tained an audit trail by providing detailed descriptions of the interview and analysis processes.

After the interviews were transcribed verbatim, the researchers conducted open coding, identifying relevant fragments in each transcript in response to the analysis questions (Boeije, 2010). The following analysis questions guided the coding of the transcripts.

1. What are the overall benefits of academic service-learning?
2. What are the challenges to motivation for faculty members?
3. What factors increase faculty members' motivation?
4. What factors decrease faculty members' motivation?
5. How do faculty members maintain their motivation?
6. What professional development supports would increase faculty members' motivation to continue their academic service-learning practice?

Codes were then placed in a table to enable an examination of patterns, known as categories. Categories are "a group or cluster used to sort parts of the data" (Boeije, 2010, p. 95). While examining the categories, the researchers created a visual display to observe how the categories interacted. This process led to the identification of four themes: (1) faculty members' goals, (2) faculty members' expectations, (3) faculty members' perceived successes, and (4) faculty members' perceived challenges.

Once the themes were established, the researchers applied Bandura's (1997) model of motivation, as illustrated in Figure 1, to the findings. Bandura described individual motivation as a cycle with an anticipatory cognitive process that involves using forethought and retrospective reasoning. Forethought encompasses individuals' goals and belief in their ability to achieve a desired outcome. Retrospective reasoning involves the individual appraising the success and failure of the situation. Bandura emphasized within this motivational cycle the role of cognized goals. These are goals with current value that provide individuals with "direction to their behavior and create incentives to persist until they fulfill their goals" (Bandura, 1993, p. 130). In this study, cognized goals helped illuminate faculty members' overall purpose for employing academic service-learning pedagogy.

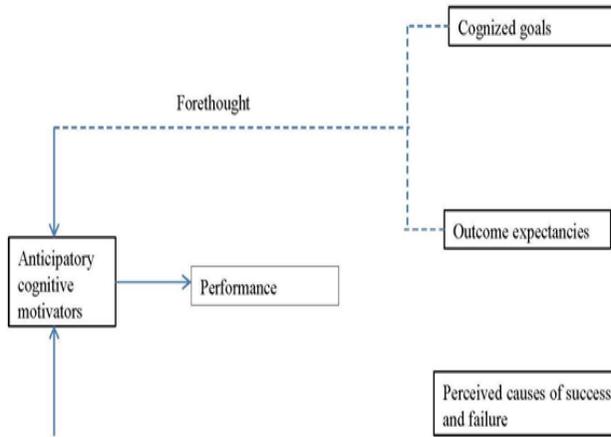


Figure 1. Bandura's (1997) Model of Cognitive Motivation

Similarly, Bandura (1997) also highlighted the significance of outcome expectancies in influencing motivation, explaining, “People act on their beliefs about what they can do, as well as on their beliefs about the likely outcomes of performance” (p. 130). When individuals think about outcome expectancies, they are determining what they need to do to achieve a cognized goal and what the likely outcome of their actions will be. Both while an action or performance is occurring and after it is completed, individuals use retrospective reasoning to determine perceived causes of success or failure. These components collectively determine an individual’s level of motivation. The following section outlines how faculty members’ cognized goals, outcome expectancies, and perceived causes of success and failure interact in maintaining their academic service-learning motivation.

## Findings

As illustrated in Figure 2, the researchers used Bandura’s (1997) terms but modified the structure of the model. The modified version illustrates how faculty members’ motivation is contingent on a cycle of reflection that occurs before and after an academic service-learning course. In this motivational cycle, faculty members’ preexisting cognized goals and outcome expectancies shaped their reflections on the perceived causes of success or failure. Faculty members began the academic service-learning course using forethought to formulate their goals and expectations. As the

experience unfolded, the faculty members' successes and failures in relation to their students, community partners, and perceived university support led to retrospective reasoning. Anticipatory cognitive motivators, in the form of cognized goals and outcome expectancies, fueled their motivation to pursue the academic service-learning experience and provided a framework through which to examine its successes and failures. The faculty members' overall level of motivation was determined by the connections between these key components.

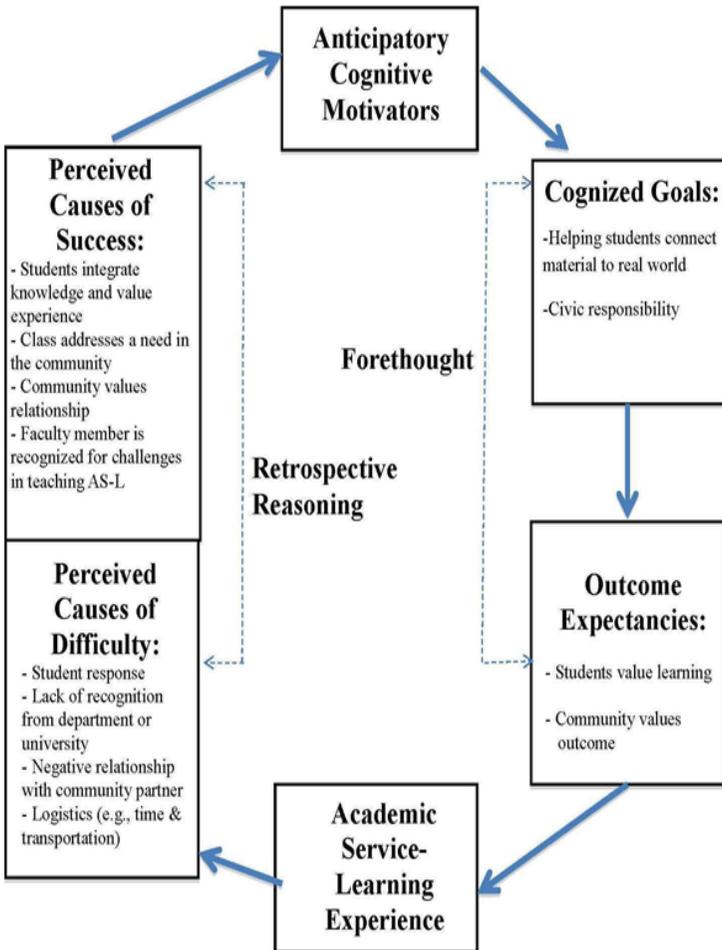


Figure 2. Adapted Bandura (1997) Model

## Cognized Goals

The primary cognized goals of faculty members using academic service-learning pedagogy were to provide students with real-world experience and to teach students civic responsibility (Table 2). A civically responsible person is “concerned about the welfare of others, not only at a personal level but also at societal and global levels” (*Da Silva, Sanson, Smart, & Toumbourou, 2004, p. 230*). According to Bandura’s (1997) model, cognized goals provided faculty members with both direction in selecting the pedagogy and incentive to continue its use. All 24 participants in this study identified their primary rationale for using academic service-learning pedagogy as the opportunity to provide students with real-world experience embedded in a course.

**Table 2. Cognized Goals and Number of Participants**

Cognized Goals	Theme	Number of participants
Students	Real-world experience	24
Students and community	Civic responsibility: Awareness of community issues Charity Social justice	15

Fifteen of the 24 participants reported that they also utilized this pedagogy to teach students about civic responsibility in one of three areas. Three faculty members identified a cognized goal of raising students’ awareness of the issues facing people in the local community. Two faculty members identified a goal of civic responsibility and charity by inspiring students to give back to the community by contributing either time or money. The largest group, 10 faculty members, sought to teach students about civic responsibility and social justice by helping them recognize their personal responsibility to advocate for the fair treatment of all people in society.

Miranda, an associate professor who teaches college students entering the teaching field, identified a cognized goal of connecting classroom learning with real-world experience. Her students worked in a public school classroom over the course of a semester. Reflecting on this experience, Miranda noted:

[Students] frequently have said that [the academic service-learning experience] brings the text to life, it brings the content to life . . . it helps them understand what we're talking about because they can read about [classroom pedagogy] and think they have a sense of it, but then when they actually see it play out, they understand not only the nuances but also the complexities.

Miranda's cognized goal provided the direction for student learning, as her students integrated their experience in the public schools with the discipline-specific knowledge they discussed in her class. Miranda's goal is associated with future teachers; however, the same cognized goal was expressed by each of the faculty members in this study.

The second most frequently mentioned cognized goal was teaching students civic responsibility. Faculty framed civic responsibility in terms of raising students' awareness of problems facing the local community, inspiring them to give back to their community with contributions of time or money, and encouraging them to accept responsibility for ensuring the fair treatment of all individuals in society.

Like Miranda, Juliet had a cognized goal of providing her students with real-world experience. In addition, she wanted to teach her students to be civically responsible by developing their awareness of challenges facing the local community. Juliet explained this goal for guiding future teachers: "It's not just knowing the students you teach, but it's knowing the community where they're living." Juliet wanted to help teacher candidates better serve the students in their classrooms by fostering an understanding of the local communities in which their students live.

Two faculty members expressed a cognized goal of teaching civic responsibility in terms of giving back through charity; however, they also emphasized the importance of raising students' awareness of community needs. Harper teaches a service-learning course in event management in which the students plan a fundraising event for a local organization, such as the Boys and Girls Club. Harper shared, "It's more just understanding the agency and helping raise funds for them, but the bigger goal is that they will hopefully become aware of the needs in the community and hopefully in the future we'll have a greater sensitivity about the needs in the community." Through the process of raising money for an organization, Harper hoped his students would gain a better understanding of their community's many needs.

Ten of the 15 faculty members addressed civic responsibility in terms of instilling a sense of social justice in their students. Social justice entails understanding the issues faced by various individuals and groups in the community and advocating for the fair treatment of fellow human beings. Genevieve, who teaches education courses, emphasized this point:

That was my goal: to have them break through some of the biases and stereotypes and really get a better understanding of the values of another culture and how to communicate and how to really become advocates for social justice in the community and in the classroom.

Genevieve sought to teach her students course content while also raising their awareness of the stereotypes they hold about various groups and cultures. Through this heightened awareness, Genevieve strived for her students to value and advocate for those who are disadvantaged.

Faculty members' instructional cognized goals were twofold: (1) teaching students course content in a real-world setting and (2) teaching students to become civically responsible citizens. All faculty members wanted their students to have real-world experience to apply to the course material. Fifteen of the 24 faculty members emphasized the importance of teaching civic responsibility by raising awareness of local issues, inspiring students to donate their time and/or money to community organizations, and encouraging students to advocate for the fair treatment of all people. These cognized goals in turn influenced the faculty members' outcome expectancies for their academic service-learning courses.

## **Outcome Expectancy**

The faculty members' outcome expectancies allowed them to examine their own abilities and predict what was achievable for themselves, their students, and their community partners over the course of the semester (Table 3). As outlined above, faculty members expected students to be able to transfer knowledge gained in the classroom to their real-world experience and to increase their sense of civic responsibility. Within the continuum of costs and benefits for community partners, faculty members expected community partners not only to value their relationships with students, faculty members, and the university, but also to view the students' participation as beneficial for their organization.

**Table 3. Outcome Expectancies and Number of Participants**

Category	Theme	Number of participants
Students	Transfer of knowledge	24
Students and community	Students gain civic responsibility, community partners value and perceive the benefits of the relationship	11

Claudia, who teaches a foreign language academic service-learning class, framed her outcome expectancies around her ability to teach students the language in a way that enabled them to use their skills in the real world. She explained, “It just reaffirms that I’m meeting my goal for my students to be comfortable using their language with native speakers, and it doesn’t matter if you don’t conjugate your verb correctly.” Claudia’s cognized goal of authentic learning led her to expect her students to be able to use their foreign language skills in the real world.

For other faculty members, outcome expectancies were defined not only by the application of disciplinary knowledge to the real world, but also by the students’ capacity for leadership and civic responsibility. Fiona, an associate professor, attributed student success in her communication course to the students’ growing awareness of what they personally had to offer:

They’re seeing that they’re needed. Their leadership is needed in the community. And it’s not needed just in terms of communication materials, but it’s needed in terms of just human beings that we need for you to step up and to continue this service work. . . . We need you to fill these gaps when you leave here, not just for your profession but for helping the community.

Fiona’s outcome expectancy for her students was to use their leadership skills for the betterment of society. She wanted her students to leave the university understanding that they possessed both the power and the responsibility to help their community.

Faculty members expected students to gain real-world experience and community partners to find their relationship beneficial. The nature of the relationship with community organizations varied based on whether students were providing direct service, project-based service, or a combination of both. Whatever the

type of service—which varied by course and organization—faculty members’ outcome expectancies centered on the community organizations’ reporting that the students’ service met their organizational needed.

Alfred, who teaches a policy course that develops projects for community partners, explained:

I want to have a good relationship with the partners. . .  
I want us to be helpful to the community. In the policy analysis class, I want our projects to be helpful, which is hard sometimes to work out. . . . It’s just trying to make sure that what we’re doing is useful in some way to them and it’s going to vary from agency to agency what that is or project to project what that is.

Like other faculty in this study, Alfred expected his academic service-learning course to provide his community partner with needed assistance from his students and for their course project to be useful for the community partner.

The faculty members’ cognized goals and outcome expectancies for their courses spurred forethought that increased their motivation to use academic service-learning pedagogy. These cognized goals and outcome expectancies also framed their retrospective reflections regarding the successes and failures of their course.

## **Perceived Causes of Success**

Faculty members evaluated the success of their academic service-learning courses in relation to their cognized goals and outcome expectancies. Success occurred when the goals of students, community partners, and faculty members align and when the community partner found the collaboration helpful in increasing the organization’s capacity to serve (Table 4). For the goals to align, students need to value the experience and integrate the information learned in class with their experiences with their community partner. When community partners reported to faculty that the benefits of their relationships with students and faculty outweighed the costs, they supported the faculty members’ cognized goals and outcome expectancies.

**Table 4. Perceived Causes of Success and Number of Participants**

Category	Theme	Number of participants
Students	Value the experience, integrate class knowledge into the service-learning experience	8
Community Partner	Value student and faculty relationships, create a meaningful collaboration	12

Faculty members judged their teaching in an academic service-learning course to be effective when students valued what they learned. One student in Catherine's research class marveled:

I had no idea research could matter this much to people. I thought it was just a bunch of silly concepts and now I understand that we have something to tell this community about how people perceive diversity on their campus.

When this student and others recognized the importance of their research class, Catherine felt supported in her cognized goals and outcome expectancies. This student demonstrated the value of the academic service-learning experience by recognizing the importance of the course content and understanding how she could apply it to make a difference in the local community.

The faculty members' perception of success in an academic service-learning class, unlike traditional college classes, also depended on their relationship with the community partner and on the course's ability to meet that organization's needs. Monica, a senior lecturer, noted that the community partner needs to be invested in the collaboration and to articulate a specific need. She stated, "So for us, for me, it benefits a lot to have a partner that's willing, that has a need and that the students can satisfy that need." Monica's perception of success was thus affected by her cognized goal and outcome expectancy of meeting a community need, which increases the likelihood of the community partner valuing the collaboration.

Once faculty members had established a partnership with a community organization, they tended to work with that organization for a number of years. Jocelyn explained, "I think with the long-term partnership, there is some motivation in just the existing partnership with a sustained relationship and so there's a sense of

commitment both ways, and we want to just keep that going.” As evidenced by Jocelyn’s and Monica’s responses, the relationship between the faculty member and community partner is a crucial component of faculty members’ perceptions of success in the academic service-learning experience.

The success of an academic service-learning course relies on the commitment and skill of faculty members, students, and community partners. Faculty members need to frame the academic service-learning experience with reference to the community organization’s needs, the disciplinary objectives of the course, and the students’ needs. Students have to integrate the course material with their observations of the real-world setting and understand the importance of collaborating with the community partner. Community partners should have a stake in their relationship with the course, the students, and the faculty member. Faculty members compare their observations of all these factors with their goals and outcome expectancies to engage in retrospective reasoning. When these factors align, such reasoning reinforces the faculty members’ purpose in teaching academic service-learning courses; when the faculty members’ purpose is validated, their motivation increases.

## Perceived Causes of Difficulty

Faculty members teaching academic service-learning courses often experience success, but they also confront challenges. Departing from Bandura’s (1997) model, the faculty members in this study characterized challenges in teaching academic service-learning courses not as failures, but as problems to be explored. These challenges included students’ negative responses to academic service-learning experiences, the university’s lack of support, and difficult relationships with community partners (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Perceived Causes of Difficulty and Number of Participants**

Category	Theme	Number of participants
Students	Negative student attitudes, lack of integration of course material in the real world	7
Community	Failure to make a difference, lack of communication between faculty member and community partner	7
University/Department	Lack of support and/or recognition	5

The students' lack of motivation, negative feedback, and inability to integrate the course material with their experiences in the community proved to be the most discouraging aspects of the teaching experience. Additionally, faculty members expressed concern about the lack of recognition and support they received from their department and/or university for the additional workload involved in teaching academic service-learning courses. Faculty members were also discouraged when they felt they were not making a difference in the community and/or when they had a negative relationship with a community partner.

Faculty members expressed frustration when students failed to recognize the importance of collaborating with the community. Penelope identified one of her biggest challenges as "student apathy and lack of commitment." Similarly, Jillian explained that her motivation "changes with the pushback from students. That just makes me feel like crap that somehow they don't see the value or they're trying to negotiate with me." Students' lack of commitment to the course discouraged faculty members, causing them to perceive the academic service-learning experience as difficult as opposed to rewarding.

Although such difficulties were challenging, participants explained that negative reactions also motivated them to explore the issues and search for solutions. Faculty members approached these challenging student situations in a variety of ways. Alfred stated, "It motivates me to push that kid a little harder, check in on them and make sure they're working on it because . . . I want us to be helpful to the community." Conversely, Brian explained, "As I've gotten older what I come more and more to realize is finite resources of, okay, I've got so much time here and I could keep trying to pull you kicking and screaming or I could have a whole richer, more meaningful conversation with these folks. I'll choose B." Thus, faculty members consistently learned from these difficult situations, leading them to restructure their approach to working with students and realign their anticipatory cognitive motivators.

Similarly, negative feedback from students and lack of departmental and university support for the demands that academic service-learning pedagogy places on faculty members presented another challenge. Audrey explained:

Sometimes you feel like you're doing all this work and then you get your evaluation back at the end of the semester and there are students who write things on there like "I liked the service learning but it took up

too much of my time.” That can be discouraging and the thought does go through your mind, Why bother? Because this is a lot of extra work for me and if my students don’t appreciate it and if it’s not appreciated from colleagues in my department, then I could as easily teach a regular course and save myself the 10 hours a week in doing the extra stuff.

Bella echoed Audrey’s description of the intensity of utilizing academic service-learning pedagogy, stating, “Sometimes I just get tired. I just want to teach a regular course. Um, ’cause it’s a lot of extra work.” Faculty members need to develop strategies and support structures to deal with the challenges associated with this pedagogy if they are to maintain their motivation over the long term.

## Recommendations for Support

The faculty members in this study noted that although their anticipatory cognitive motivators remained strong, support in addressing the difficulties in academic service-learning would nevertheless be helpful. Reflecting on these challenges, faculty members recommended implementing a variety of supports. Suggestions ranged from organizing faculty discussions about service-learning to offering grants to support the creation of academic service-learning courses to providing course release time for faculty members who utilize academic service-learning pedagogy (see Table 6).

**Table 6. Support and Number of Participants**

Category	Theme	Number of participants
Faculty support	Mentors, support groups, and discussions with experienced faculty members	22
Funding	Grants, incentives, and support for research	13
University support and recognition	Center for academic service-learning, course release time, encouragement from department leaders, recognition from colleagues, and academic service-learning assistants	19
Communication with community partner	Working in the community, maintaining communication throughout collaboration	7

The faculty members emphasized the need to create dialogue among those teaching academic service-learning classes to share positive and negative experiences. The availability of teaching

assistants, funding for grants, and other incentives would provide additional forms of support. The university currently supports faculty members through a center for academic service-learning and a faculty fellows program. Faculty members requested more support from departmental administrators and greater recognition from their colleagues. In addition, because faculty members at times found it challenging to reach and work with community partners, they requested additional assistance in this area.

Many of the participants had applied with their community partner for a grant related to a specific initiative (e.g., books for a school library). Although the faculty members valued this type of grant, they emphasized the need to make additional funding available. Jasmine explained, “One thing that could help faculty is—and we already have the [Community Partnership Initiative] grants—but some sort of grant opportunity where you can take the money to benefit the client.” Some faculty members advocated increasing the Community Partnership Initiative Grant award limit, as many of their projects required more funding than allowed by grant guidelines. Additionally, since applying for a grant doesn’t guarantee funding, the faculty members suggested providing a small discretionary fund for each service-learning class to help pay for gasoline for student transportation, money for an end-of-semester celebration, and some form of compensation for the community partners.

Faculty members also recommended allowing them to accrue release time as a form of recognition for the extensive time commitment required to teach an academic service-learning course effectively. One faculty member noted that at another university, “if you taught three service learning courses, you got a course release as a reward. . . . I thought that was phenomenal.” Another major concern for faculty members was the impact of teaching academic service-learning courses on the promotion and tenure process. One participant stated:

There should be some degree of recognition among people who are evaluating files or making decisions about raises and things like that, not that service-learning is better than other kinds of teaching or that students necessarily learn more, but that to do service-learning, well, there’s a lot of time invested.

Faculty members also suggested allowing them to apply for a teaching assistant to handle some of the logistics that consume so much of their time.

Faculty members benefit from hearing what their colleagues are doing, and a common theme throughout the study was the need for more structured opportunities to interact with other faculty teaching academic service-learning courses. The year-long Service-Learning Faculty Scholars Program at this university invites faculty members to meet on an ongoing basis with a faculty fellow and other university colleagues who want to learn more about academic service-learning pedagogy. Additionally, participants noted that informal lunch meetings with colleagues were especially helpful in enabling them to share ideas, ask questions, and discuss challenges.

The participants proposed creating a mentoring and/or faculty partnership program to address the need for faculty interaction. Brian suggested:

I think that different people are at different places and need different kinds of mentoring at different times. . . . And maybe it's not, it's not mentoring so much as perhaps partnering. You know, we create a structure where people get \$100 [on their university card] or something just to have some money to eat together or have coffee together or whatever. To have more intentional kinds of conversations around the kind of things that we've been talking about today: How do you do X or do you have any good readings about this? And not discipline specific but more the pedagogy kinds of stuff; I'm pretty convinced that the pedagogy transcends disciplines. And good teaching transcends the disciplines. So how do we help people be better teachers of that particular kind of pedagogy? And partnering might be a better word than mentoring.

The faculty did not think the pairings should be randomly assigned, but should instead happen organically. One suggested having "three or four people that get together and can talk about how they try to blend theory and practice or how they deal with obstacles." Such conversations assist faculty in creating their own support network.

## Cycle of Motivation

In approaching each new academic service-learning teaching experience, faculty members used forethought in formulating their cognized goals and outcome expectancies. During and after the course, faculty members retrospectively reasoned about the actual outcome of the academic service-learning course. This reasoning in turn helped increase or decrease their motivation, leading to decisions about how to approach the course the next time around. With each decision to continue using academic service-learning pedagogy, faculty members used forethought in framing their cognized goals and outcome expectancies for the next academic service-learning course.

This motivational cycle was continuously influenced by three factors: forethought, the academic service-learning experience itself, and retrospective reasoning. The understanding of motivation as a cycle helped explain the participants' statements that difficult experiences do not necessarily weaken their anticipatory cognitive motivators to utilize academic service-learning pedagogy. Instead, these difficulties motivated them to explore new approaches to overcome these challenges in the future.

Patrick demonstrated this cycle when he discussed his current level of motivation. "Honestly, it's a little lower right now. And why that is, is because I guess I know how good it can be and I don't yet have the partner and the project that's that good." Patrick previously evaluated an academic service-learning experience as successful based on his cognized goal and outcome expectancies of having a meaningful collaboration with a community partner. As a result, his anticipatory cognitive motivator is his belief that he must find the right partner to make this pedagogy most effective. Because he doesn't currently have a partner with whom to forge this type of meaningful collaboration, his anticipatory cognitive motivators have caused his motivation level to decrease, leading him to reevaluate his cognized goals and outcome expectancies.

## Discussion

Bandura's (1997) model of motivation provided the framework for understanding faculty members' motivation for and continued commitment to academic service-learning. Participants expressed their motivation to utilize academic service-learning pedagogy by referencing anticipatory cognitive motivators contingent on forethought, the academic service-learning experience, and retrospective reasoning. The process of forethought involved formulating

cognized goals and outcome expectancies. Faculty members' primary cognized goals were for students to connect the course material to the real world and to learn to be civically responsible.

Outcome expectancies for students in academic service-learning courses included acquiring disciplinary knowledge, valuing the academic service-learning experience, and learning civic responsibility. Additionally, faculty members had outcome expectancies for their community partners, expecting them to value their relationships with students and faculty members. During and after the academic service-learning experience, faculty members' retrospective reasoning allowed them to examine their perceptions of success or difficulty based on student and community partner responses as well as on recognition and support from their university and/or department.

The components of forethought, the academic service-learning experience, and retrospective reasoning shaped faculty members' anticipatory cognitive motivators for the subsequent academic service-learning experience. These findings are crucial in providing a theoretical understanding of the motivational process that sustains faculty members' commitment to academic service-learning pedagogy. Understanding this cycle enables faculty members and institutions to strategically intervene in the cognized goals, outcome expectancies, and retrospective reasoning associated with academic service-learning courses to enhance faculty motivation.

The application of Bandura's (1997) model of motivation extends previous research by capturing the cyclical nature of motivation, illustrating how the factors referenced in the literature may reinforce, undermine, or challenge faculty members' motivation. As in previous research, the researchers found that the factors motivating faculty members to employ academic service-learning included helping students connect course material to real-world experiences and developing their sense of civic responsibility, while also making a difference in the community (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Eyer & Giles, 1999; Hammond, 1994; Hardy & Schaen, 2000; Hesser, 1995; O'Meara, 2008; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Simons & Clearly, 2006). Also as in previous research, faculty members in this study identified the relationship with the community partner as critical to the success of the academic service-learning experience for both faculty members and students (Arlach et al., 2009).

A consistent theme in the literature on academic service-learning is the intensive time commitment required to teach these courses. A key difficulty for faculty members is balancing the

time demands required for an effective academic service-learning experience with their other university commitments (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007). Although this remains an ongoing challenge, participants who found the time demands challenging viewed course release time and teaching assistants as possible remedies to ease these demands. The Campus Compact annual survey (2012) indicated an increase in the number of institutions providing release time and sabbaticals; however, participants in this study did not receive these incentives and indicated that such support would be extremely beneficial in increasing their motivation as well as in the planning and implementation of their academic service-learning courses.

Although Bandura (1997) described successes and failures as elements of the motivational cycle, the participants in this study did not view challenges as failures. Instead, faculty viewed negative responses from students, a lack of recognition from their department, and even difficult relationships with community partners as opportunities for reflection that strengthened their approach to academic service-learning and their overall teaching practice. The university programs described in this and other studies help faculty members obtain the support they need to alter their course design and/or approach to working with the community (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Bowen & Kiser, 2009; Forbes et al., 2008).

As colleges and universities seek to further institutionalize academic service-learning by creating more formal faculty support systems and programs, it is critical that they understand the complexities of faculty motivation and help faculty to achieve their cognized goals and outcome expectancies. Moreover, anticipating challenges will help faculty and administrators develop solutions that sustain faculty members' continued engagement with this valuable pedagogy.

The Campus Compact annual survey (2012) called for further research on the incentives faculty find most beneficial. Unique to this study, the faculty members recommended incentives in two main areas: assistance from colleagues using academic service-learning pedagogy and recognition and support from their institutions. All participants referenced the importance of continually reflecting on what was working and not working in their academic service-learning courses. Through reflection, they were able to respond to challenges by not feeling defeated by them and instead reaching out to colleagues and reading the literature on academic service-learning to help them reframe the situation and improve their practice.

Faculty repeatedly referenced the importance of institutional support. The faculty members in this study were grateful for the support they received from the Center for Service Learning and their community outreach staff member. Through a grant awarded to the center, faculty members, community partners, and academic service-learning students could apply for funding to assist with sustainable projects. The center's community outreach staff member dedicated a great deal of time to connecting faculty members with appropriate community partners and assisting faculty members when they could not reach the community partner. The center also coordinates networking lunches every semester.

Additionally, the institution selects a faculty member every 4 years to serve as the faculty fellow for service-learning. The faculty fellow conducts a year-long program for faculty members who want to learn about academic service-learning pedagogy and design an academic service-learning course. The faculty fellow also spends countless hours meeting individually with faculty members to celebrate successes and help them develop strategies to cope with challenges. Finally, the faculty fellow facilitates informal meetings and lunches that provide opportunities for faculty members teaching academic service-learning courses to discuss their experiences and share ideas.

Although the participants in this study thus received significant support, they nevertheless struggled with the realities of the pedagogy. Many faculty members accepted the challenges of teaching academic service-learning courses but still yearned for greater recognition and support from their departments and the university for the never-ending time demands and other unique challenges presented by this pedagogy. Institutions that continually strive to provide such support will improve faculty members' pedagogical practice and increase their ability to achieve their cognized goals and outcome expectancies, enhancing the relationships of faculty, students, and the university with the surrounding community.

Bandura's (1997) model of motivation illuminates the source of faculty members' motivation as more than simply successes and challenges. The participants in this study reported many of the same rewards and difficulties described in previous research; however, Bandura's model sheds light on the importance of the three motivational factors—forethought, the academic service-learning experience, and retrospective reasoning—in framing faculty members' anticipatory cognitive motivation for academic service-learning. Faculty members' cognized goals and outcome expectancies are critical to their understanding of success or perception of

difficulties in academic service-learning. The participants in this study emphasized that their continued commitment to academic service-learning was framed by their belief in the pedagogy (cognized goals), their outcome expectancies, and the successes and challenges associated with the experience. These faculty members were highly reflective about their own teaching practice, emphasizing that motivation is not contingent on one or two factors but on the continual cycle identified in Bandura's theory.

### **Limitations of the Study and Areas for Future Research**

The main limitations of this study were the small number of participants and the fact that all participants were from the same institution. Due to the nature of the institution, the first author had previously interacted with all of the participants in meetings about academic service-learning. Another limitation was that two participants had taught only one section of their academic service-learning courses; however, the average number of academic service-learning sections taught was eight per faculty member.

The researchers therefore recommend interviewing a larger number of faculty members from a variety of institutions. Additionally, future research should examine faculty members' motivation for academic service-learning at different points in their career, in particular comparing untenured with tenured faculty members. Since the faculty members in this study were volunteers who chose to continue using academic service-learning, it is also important to use motivation theory to examine faculty members' reasons for discontinuing the use of academic service-learning pedagogy. Finally, future research should examine faculty members' motivation at institutions with various levels of support for academic service-learning, including those that provide no support, moderate support, and extensive support for faculty members teaching academic service-learning courses.

### **Conclusion**

This study advances the theoretical understanding of how faculty members sustain their motivation and commitment to academic service-learning and provides suggestions for supporting faculty members. The cycle of motivation outlined in this study provides faculty members and administrators with a deeper understanding of faculty members' motivation for using academic service-learning pedagogy, beyond the benefits and challenges enu-

merated in the previous literature. In encouraging the continued use of academic service-learning pedagogy, it is important for faculty members and institutions to recognize the role of achieving cognized goals and outcome expectancies in upholding faculty members' motivation and commitment.

The faculty members in this study emphasized that identifying clear goals and envisioning outcome expectancies prior to undertaking an academic service-learning course constitute best practices in motivation for academic service-learning. Additionally, the faculty members encouraged reflection on the challenges and benefits of academic service-learning during and after the course, with the goal of finding ways to capitalize on the benefits and overcome or cope with the challenges.

This article documents the cycle of motivation as it is observed, but increasing motivation may require altering or influencing what happens in this cycle. Professional development programs play an important role in providing space for faculty to engage in supportive dialogue as well as to challenge one another in their goals and expectations. For example, if one's cognized goal is to teach students to accept responsibility for rectifying injustice, it is important to distinguish between such a goal as a realistic outcome of a semester-long course and as a lifelong journey.

Additionally, when faculty members confront difficulties in academic service-learning, guidance from experienced colleagues can help them examine how such challenges may undermine their cognized goals and expectations. By understanding the impact of such difficulties on their own motivational cycle, faculty members can choose whether to allow the challenge to deter them from pursuing the pedagogy or to alter their goals and expectations. By providing strategic interventions for retrospective reasoning, then, faculty members can form a community of mutually supportive learners for new and veteran faculty members alike. The application of Bandura's (1997) motivational theory enables academic service-learning scholars and practitioners to view motivation in all its complexity. It reveals motivation not as a sum of factors that encourage or discourage faculty members' persistence in the pedagogy, but as a cyclical process that continually influences faculty members' motivation with each academic service-learning experience.

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## **Scholarship of Engagement and Engaged Scholars: Through the Eyes of Exemplars**

Carol E. Kasworm and  
Nur Aira B. Abdrahim

### **Abstract**

How do leaders of the scholarship of engagement (SOE) experience and define this field? Although there have been a significant number of reports and national forums, the field continues to experience diversity of understandings and ambiguity in this discourse. To gain insights into these differing understandings of SOE, this study explored the perspectives of a group of elites, exemplars within the field of the scholarship of engagement. Framed in social constructivism, this study explored the exemplars' socially and culturally mediated experiences, beliefs, and symbolic interactions. Key findings suggested that the exemplars' journey and their understandings of SOE were interrelated to their current positionality. Two interrelated but different groups emerged from the data, representing a university-centric enclave and a community engagement-centric enclave. These two groupings suggested that they experienced different defining contexts and experiences as well as valued differing influential key terms and meanings for the work and their understandings of the scholarship of engagement.

### **Introduction**

**H**igher education represents a dynamic societal enterprise that has both embraced and been pressed by internal and external forces, leading to changing expectations, roles, and responsibilities. There have been a number of significant foundational discussions of the service and outreach function of higher education fostered by Boyer (1996), Spanier (1997), and the Kellogg Commission report, *Returning to our Roots* (Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, 2001), as well as the more recent Carnegie-Designation for Community-Engaged Universities ([http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/community\\_engagement.php](http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/community_engagement.php)). These discussions have presented changing understandings, perhaps typified by Sandmann's (2008) conceptual framework suggesting four stages of the contemporary evolution towards the concept of public engagement. Sandmann suggests, "The scholarship of engagement is still emerging from its definitional anarchy" (p. 101), and it is

still evolving as an interdisciplinary field for academic research (Giles, 2008). A significant aspect of this variance is the key actors' perceptions of the mission of engagement. For example, O'Meara (2008) explored seven delineated motivations for engagement by "exemplar" faculty, identified through their national service-learning awards. In addition, other studies have focused upon faculty and related concerns of rewards and institutional systems that support engagement, service-learning, and community development (Antonio, Astin, & Cress, 2000; O'Meara, 2002; Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010; Ward, 2003). Few studies have explored the individual meanings of engagement. One of the few identified studies noted that this third mission held many different meanings for the faculty and staff within institutions. Woods (2001) found that engagement was viewed as qualitatively different from other key roles. He suggested that faculty and staff must have personal investment in the philosophical and functional aspects of this mission to "build and maintain the capacity for engagement" (p. 119).

This current study built upon these efforts and focused upon the constructed beliefs of individuals identified as exemplars in the scholarship of engagement (SOE). Through their journey of immersion into engagement roles, this study examined exemplars' key beliefs and experiences, key institutional supports and barriers, and key understandings of engagement. Framed in social constructivism, this study explored the socially and culturally mediated experiences of exemplars as they developed their understandings and contributions to the scholarship of engagement within higher education (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Twomey Fosnet, 1996).

In this study, this enculturation into the discourse and meaning of engagement was socially constructed through specific communities within higher education, the experiential world of colleagues and regional stakeholders, and associational leadership and publications of engagement professionals. As suggested by Sandmann (2008), there is a dialectical interaction between the individual and the evolving sense of the meaning and actions of engagement in higher education. Packer and Goicoechea (2000) suggested that one's sense of identity and action in that identity involves becoming a member of a community, constructing knowledge in relation to expertise as a participant (legitimate peripheral participation), and also taking into account the culture of one's community and one's roles as part of participation. Through this dialectical frame, the nature of identity incorporates both the transformation of the person and of their social world; these individuals as exemplars are both actors and constructors of this world of engagement.

## Study Design

This study adopted a naturalistic qualitative inquiry process, drawing upon the tradition of qualitative case study research (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Merriam, 1998). The key research question was: What were the experiences of exemplars in the field of engagement regarding their own beliefs, involvements, and key influences? This study sought to identify individual understandings as distinctly unique and subjective, based within the community defined by “engagement exemplars”. Thus, the participants were chosen to represent a purposeful sample of elites – individuals who were identified as exemplars, individuals who have made significant contributions and were national leaders and innovators in the field of the scholarship of engagement.

The pool of potential participants for this study was identified by one of two methods. The first group was identified by one of the senior national leaders of the university engagement/community outreach field who nominated individuals known as leaders and innovators, representing a diverse set of backgrounds, roles, and institutions. The second pool of potential participants was identified through snowball sampling. For this second group, the researcher contacted the first group of interviewed participants seeking nominations of individuals they judged to be exemplars in the field of engagement. The final group of participants in this study numbered 16, with a breakdown of eight males and eight females.

As a collective, this group of SOE exemplars came from a variety of backgrounds, academic disciplines, and professional roles in higher education. Each participant was selected based upon their significant leadership, advocacy, educational outreach, service-learning initiatives, community-oriented research, and/or scholarly research in the field of SOE. These participants had engaged in significant collegiate and community endeavors for a lengthy period of time and provided major contributions recognized in the field by their colleagues. The majority of these exemplars were currently in either higher education administrative or faculty roles, with a few holding joint appointments in both administration and faculty. There was also one individual previously had held a higher education administrative position but was currently an adjunct faculty member with active engagement in several non-higher-education communities of practice.

All individuals provided consent for audiotaped telephone interviews. (The study had been reviewed and approved by the

university's IRB prior to its initiation). The interviews lasted from 40-70 minutes. The interview protocol focused upon the individual and their social reality—having them describe their understanding of the term *scholarship of engagement*, their career journey and key influences as they move towards their commitment to engagement as a primary focus of their work, their key supports and barriers, and their beliefs about their contributions. These audiotaped interviews were transcribed, and several interviews were reviewed by the specific interviewee for best representation of the interviewee's responses. Trustworthiness was established through three methods: framing the study in social constructivism; utilization of systematic qualitative data collection and analysis procedures, including collaboration of two researchers during the analysis process; and exploration of researchers' subjectivities and biases.

Analysis was conducted in the first stage with intercoder examination of transcripts for codes, themes, and categories. Because the field of SOE is based in varied practices, contexts, and beliefs, this first stage of analysis supported the study by drawing upon standpoint epistemology. Because this study was anchored in the individual's unique worldview perspective, it was evident in the transcripts that the key meanings of SOE were anchored within individual engagements in relation to their perceived context. Although the term *standpoint epistemology* became prominent through feminist research (*Harding, 1991; Hekman, 1997*), this study and others have moved beyond the positionality of gender and now also consider the positionality of the other figural roles, often in marginalized contexts. Given past understandings of service and engagement as a sometimes contested enterprise in the world of faculty roles, rewards, and recognition (*Vogelgesang et al., 2010; Woods, 2001*), those individuals holding positions embedded in engagement also held a unique standpoint that influenced the dynamics of construction of the knowledge of engagement and its position within their social contexts.

Because the first stage of the analysis suggested a more in-depth focus through positional analysis, the second stage of analysis was a comparative inductive examination of codes and themes of meaning structures of individuals between two delineated groups. For these two groups, within-group analysis as well as cross-analysis between groups was conducted, with examination of key themes for similar and differentiated understandings and experiences.

This study has limitations based upon the nature of the qualitative research tradition and its focus on the particularistic meanings

of individuals at one point in time. This study cannot be generalized to other SOE exemplars or professionals within the SOE field. Thus, this study provides insights and understandings of this select elite group in relation to their experiences and their perceived figurative meanings of the scholarship of engagement.

## Key Findings

Given the past diversity of definitions and understandings of the scholarship of engagement, this study sought to explore each exemplar's beliefs and constructed understandings in order to delineate potential common beliefs and understandings. Each exemplar's constructed meanings were often viewed as an evolving set of understandings. These individuals often suggested that over time they had redefined actions and standards of judgment for this work, as well as experienced forces that shaped and reshaped their understandings. Initially, these elite exemplars suggested that their own individual journeys within engagement were defined by differing terms: engaged scholarship; service-learning; civic or community engagement; civic empowerment; applied action research; public collaborative research; public scholarship, extension, community (public, urban) outreach; and research partnerships. As a collective, these exemplars held no monolithic definition, pathway, or understanding of the scholarship of engagement. Rather, each person's sense of engagement was cultural and positional, actively constructed and evolved from their unique past and current individual sociocultural roles and contexts.

## Positional Involvements and Perspective

Positionality and the related worldview of the field were at the heart of participants' constructed meaning for their place and role in the scholarship of engagement. In the analysis, these exemplars represented two broadly defined positional enclaves: university-centric exemplars and community engagement-centric exemplars. Each of these two groupings suggested differing influential enculturation experiences and thus differing emphases of definitions, values, and perceived impacts of SOE in relation to their career contributions.

What is a positional enclave? As noted by Crotty (1998), knowledge and beliefs about the world are developed and transmitted through interactive human communities. Social institutions do influence individual behavior and thinking through a "complex and social process of enculturation" (p. 79). Although all of

these individuals had careers in higher education, their formative career experiences and subsequent subcultures shaped differing worldviews. These individuals were enculturated into their understandings of their SOE through the tools and objects of their specific subcultures. These tools and objects included their products of work and the impact of their practices; their applied, collaborative, or theoretical scholarship; and their leadership, collaboration, and advocacy with others, both within their disciplinary profession and within national, regional, and local communities of practice.

These two enclaves held two different standpoints with certain common interwoven understandings. The university-centric enclave viewed themselves as dominantly anchored in a strong research culture with key expectations for actions related to conducting and disseminating research and with a broader background of understanding and commitment to engagement and outreach. The community engagement-centric enclave was dominantly focused upon working with people and communities, engaged in action connections in relation to scholarship. Their focus was upon a broadly based set of understandings of engagement with varied forms of research that created impact and change in individuals, community, and society (note Table 1 on the breakdown of participants by enclave group and gender).

**Table 1. Participant Enclave and Gender**

	Male	Female	Total
First enclave: University-centric	6	1	7
Second enclave: Community engagement-centric	2	7	9
Total	8	8	16

The following section provides comparative descriptions on the positionality, career pathways, and definitional understandings of each of the enclaves (note Table 2 on the comparative synopsis of the two enclaves).

**Table 2. Key Differences Between University- and Community Engagement-Centric Enclaves**

Positional enclaves	University-centric	Community engagement-centric
Positionality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focused in a strong research culture with key expectations for actions related to the conducting and disseminating of research</li> <li>2. Broad background understanding and commitment to engagement and outreach</li> <li>3. Exemplars were tenured or tenure-track professors, with a small number in non-tenure-track roles.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focused upon working with people and communities</li> <li>2. Broad understanding of engagement as varied forms of research that created impact and change in individuals, community, and society</li> <li>3. Most exemplars in various SOE-related positions, usually higher-level administrative positions in higher education institutions</li> </ol>
Differing career pathways to SOE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through specific academic discipline with a clear connection and focus on student learning, a research endeavor, and/or community engagement (problem-solving)</li> <li>2. Focused on studying the scholarship component of SOE, mostly in the development and substantive aspects of the field and provided publications and conference presentations</li> <li>3. Transitioned between administrative roles and professorial roles, often seeking a tenured faculty role at a subsequent institution after establishing their initial career contributions through administrative or research-related positions in SOE</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developed interest and passion in SOE through early teaching roles and experiences, mainly through involvement in teaching service-learning</li> <li>2. Involvement in SOE is fostered through active research agendas in relation to engaged research plus job attachment to institutions that provided them with the relevant position and organizational support to ground their research focus into practice.</li> <li>3. Early attachment in various advocacy roles in promoting a component of SOE (e.g., service-learning, civic engagement) for their respective institutions, which then led into developing their commitment in the field of SOE</li> </ol>

Cultural and positional context	Four different cultural and positional contexts to define roles and work expectations. Individuals were either (a) in academic units with strong research environments and mixed negotiations for promotion and tenure, (b) housed in education units with a traditional research focus on scholarship of SOE, (c) research-focused non-tenure-track people in strong research-oriented institutions, or (d) problematic-situated or faculty who did either traditional scholarship and then SOE later or left initial institution for favorable SOE environment.	Most individuals had clearly defined roles and work expectations for engagement work. Thus, for many of them, work context was based in a commitment to SOE work. However, several individuals needed to meet the differing demands of their dual role as both SOE administrator and faculty member.
Definitional understandings and constructed meanings of SOE	Identified four themes representing their particular understandings and actions within SOE. These terms included: 1. Scholarship with engagement 2. Reciprocity with community 3. Research and generation of knowledge 4. Scholarly contributions	Constructed beliefs and meaning of SOE through five essential understandings: 1. SOE versus engaged scholarship 2. Community collaboration/partnerships 3. Meeting the needs of public goods 4. Teaching, service, and research missions 5. The “scholarship” component in SOE

## First Enclave: University-Centric Exemplars

The university-centric exemplars suggested three early influences in their journey in the scholarship of engagement. Most of the exemplars had been influenced by a major project or activity through engagement-related teaching, research, or service in their early adult years, by their early commitments to social justice, or by their earlier work in an academic discipline that also represented aspects of SOE. Thus, they viewed themselves as part of two professional fields, reflecting their earlier grounding in that specialty academic field as well as their membership in this emerging field of SOE.

**Three career pathways for SOE university-centric exemplars.** As these exemplars shared their career journeys, they suggested one of three paths to their current senior status in SOE. The first subgroup of individuals defined their SOE work through their specific academic discipline with a clear connection to and focus on student learning, a research endeavor, and/or community engagement (problem-solving). Their commitments to SOE were based in their beliefs about the impact and value of their disciplinary work in relation to engagement. In particular, these university-centric exemplars noted key figural experiences based upon previous negotiations of SOE work with their department chairs and deans as well as the SOE-related expectations of institutional promotion and tenure standards in relation to scholarship of engagement. Some experienced supportive understandings of SOE; for other exemplars, the products of SOE were not initially viewed as representing acceptable quality scholarship and impact.

A second subgroup in this enclave defined themselves as individuals who focused upon the scholarship of SOE. They viewed themselves as individuals who studied the field and practice of SOE rather than being in the day-to-day world of doing engaged work with a community of practice. These individuals studied the development and substantive aspects of the field and provided publications and conference presentations. Housed in schools or colleges of education, they focused upon the professional and scholarly developments of the field of higher education. Several members of this group identified the significant impact of financial support from external organizations, as well as the value of the National Forum on Higher Education and the Public Good (and specifically the Kellogg Forum; <http://thenationalforum.org/>) and the AERA preconference for emerging scholars.

The third subgroup in the university-centric enclave suggested they transitioned between administrative roles and professorial roles, often seeking a tenured faculty role at a subsequent institution after establishing their initial career contributions through administrative or faculty research-oriented positions. From an initial administrative role, one part of this subgroup often moved into a research institution after establishing their national reputation and thus, as suggested by one exemplar, “[I] gained tenure on my own terms.” Another variation of this subgroup was represented by several faculty who initially found that the research standards of their institution forced them to produce traditional scholarship to survive. They suggested that they had planned to focus on an SOE research agenda after tenure and often identified a different

institution with a more supportive SOE environment that they could transition toward in the future. Many also noted that they subsequently ended up in leadership or administrative positions with an anchor in SOE.

In this university-centric enclave, these individuals assessed their career pathways in relation to the cultural context of their institution; through the research-focus of their work and through their teaching/educative efforts, their disseminated projects or research through conferences and written forums; and their leadership/service either within their institution or to their colleagues within their field. At their later career stages (status at the time of this interview), the majority of these university-centric individuals held a tenured faculty position, with a few individuals holding an administrative leadership role focused on outreach, field studies (community outreach research), or student engagement. Of those university-centric individuals who held tenured positions, approximately half were also in administrative roles representing engagement, outreach, and/or service-learning. All of these exemplars reported ongoing generative endeavors through published research and writing, advocacy, mentoring, professional development outreach, or “reform [of] academic work systems to better support faculty community engagement.”

**The cultural and positional context for the university-centric enclave.** Most of the university-centric exemplars focused their key career decisions and scholarly contributions within the context of their institutional culture and the cultural role expectations for their particular career. All desired to be true to their passion about the importance and impact of the scholarship of engagement while also recognizing the standards of their institution and the related expectations of promotion and tenure for tenure-track faculty roles or key expected outcomes for their particular administrative/non-tenure-track role. Because most of these individuals were in research universities, the beliefs and expectations of this environment regarding research and the dissemination of research were figural. For example, one tenure-track scholar believed the culture of his environment included a “traditional focus on promotion and tenure as quality and quantity of publications in nationally ranked journals and the gaining of major grants.” Another individual in a nontenure role noted the importance for him of publishing and presenting in national forums as a key marker of being valued within this institutional research culture, as well as within his specific institutional leadership context. Thus, whether these exemplars were in a tenure-track position or in a non-tenure-

track role, the explicit cultural context focusing on promotion and tenure standards and the implicit expectations focusing on institutionally-valued research strongly influenced these individuals' decisions regarding the nature of their SOE involvement.

There were four differing subgroupings within this university-centric enclave regarding their understandings and actions within the institutional culture and their positional commitment to SOE. One subgroup of exemplars faced a mixed-support faculty environment for SOE by key institutional leaders (department chairs and deans) as well as colleagues who either valued or questioned the role of engagement as a viable contribution. These exemplars represented various academic disciplines (excluding education). Most of these individuals noted the significant influence of a key university person (an institutional leader of outreach, civic engagement, or service-learning who was outside their department). These leaders were perceived to be pivotal for the growth and success of these exemplars; they provided invaluable mentoring, validated the significance of the exemplar's work in SOE, and in some cases provided in-kind or financial support for their work. Some of these mentors were within the academic research culture, and other mentors were within the university engagement culture. As stated by one person, "To work with [this person]—they provided sort-of a template of understanding for me, to think about what engagement is about and what is this mutually beneficial reciprocal partnership."

In the case of an exemplar in engineering, the individual noted, "My case was going to be a test case as to the validity of service-learning as a scholarly endeavor." The individual shared that in this context, there was "a lack of understanding of what the scholarship of engagement was perhaps, or just the fact that I was different, or that my scholarly record looks a little bit different." As this person faced this promotion and tenure journey, there were negotiations (sometimes supportive and sometimes problematic regarding viable accomplishments) with three successive department heads. The final review for promotion and tenure was favorable, in part due to a dean who was more supportive and receptive to SOE. Many individuals suggested that the research university was set up for one track of productivity focused upon federal grants and traditional forms of research publications in top-tier journals. However, as noted by another exemplar pursuing promotion and tenure:

But luckily he [department head] was open minded and could see that some of the scholarship of engagement was...not only having impact but bringing a lot of publicity to the department, college, to the university, and so he actually turned out to be a pretty strong champion after we had a fairly decent long negotiation process.

A second subgroup of university-centric exemplars were housed in schools or colleges of education with strong traditional scholarship culture and expectations of a research university. Although education was considered an applied profession, these individuals found that they needed to perform “traditional scholarship,” that it was a significant gamble for their professional future to conduct community partnership scholarship of engagement. Most of this subgroup suggested that they conformed to the perceived standards and expectations of traditional scholarship for their institutional context; thus, unlike the first subgroup, they did not suggest a major involvement in negotiations with their administrative leaders regarding promotion and tenure standards. Rather, these individuals accepted the expectations and standards for traditional research scholarship and focused upon the examination of the current documented scholarship and practice of SOE. In addition, several of these exemplars also did focus a portion of their research on SOE-related topics. One individual noted that his initial institution was so “resistant to scholarship of engagement and civic engagement work...so I went somewhere with a good institutional fit.” Another person noted, “When I was seeking tenure – in part the work of doing [it] in the community – it was contested at that time. But I was probably a little naive and willing to take some risk and was fortunate to have certain people in certain places who were willing to be behind this.” Several individuals focused strategic attention and energies regarding their conduct of research and publications. For example, one individual shared that during both the third-year review and tenure consideration, “I had to sort-of make the case for different audiences that I was trying to speak through and speak to with my scholarship. Some of them are my disciplinary field... but I’ve other audiences such as practitioners and members of the community... so I think that’s how I sort of negotiated it.”

A third subset of exemplars were in non-tenure-track roles. They were part of this university-centric enclave because they held strong beliefs and had made major commitments to conduct research, publish, and present in national forums. One of

these individuals in a non-tenure-track role noted that he eventually chose to seek out a tenure-track position and promotion and tenure. Having faced earlier issues in his non-tenure-track world, this individual was an advocate at his new institution for the intellectual quality of scholarship of engagement and conducted a collegial debate for its recognition among senior faculty.

There was a final subset of tenure-track faculty who saw themselves as part of the SOE movement, but they also judged that they could not survive in their institutional culture with a dominant SOE research agenda. They realized early in their careers that they would be unable to work with the community as a partner and to conduct “mainstream forms of SOE” as tenure-track assistant professors in research universities. Some conducted traditional forms of scholarship at their research university (with later post-tenure work in SOE), and a few sought out a multimission-focused institution that was supportive of SOE scholarship. For example, one person moved from a more traditional culture to a supportive SOE institution. He then focused upon the scholarship of engaged scholarship, “creating knowledge around promising practice...and at developing theory and practice [of] how to actually help leaders do this kind of stuff.”

## **Second Enclave: The Community Engagement-Centric Exemplars**

The community engagement-centric individuals highlighted their early SOE career as being formed through key roles in working with people and/or communities and through service-learning, as well as involvements through the land-grant mission of their institution and/or through extension and outreach efforts. Many of these individuals spoke of their initial influential involvement in education (either from K-12, higher education, or extension outreach). Although they noted these formative experiences in SOE, most of these individuals suggested that their pursuit of postgraduate degrees and the related intellectual curiosity fostered through that experience were formative. This intellectual engagement either helped lay the foundation to refine their perspectives or helped influence their stance in defining and acting upon the scholarship of engagement. As their journey continued, most of these individuals found career homes in institutions that fostered and valued their engagement practices. Differing from the university-centric group, most of the community engagement-centric exemplars, with the exception of one individual, were currently in positions (half time or more) in administrative centers/

units within higher education institutions. Although several held a faculty appointment as part of their dual roles, their views and commitment to SOE were dominantly influenced by their administrative appointment within an organizational context/unit targeted to specific constituencies.

**Three pathways for SOE community engagement-centric exemplars.** Within this group of community engagement-centric exemplars, there were three different pathways. The first group described their journey in SOE through their teaching roles in public and boarding schools or in higher education institutions as a teaching assistant, then as a faculty member. In particular, these individuals described how their involvement with service-learning initially spurred their interest in SOE; they valued the experiences of teaching the service-learning courses and/or using the service-learning methods and strategies in their teaching. As their interest in SOE was influenced through their teaching, these exemplars described how their graduate studies in related fields (e.g., public health) were foundational in adding the component of “scholarship” into their work beyond their initial teaching roles. Another exemplar described the connection she made with other faculty on campus who were also teaching in service-learning and how her active participation in an on-campus engagement support center eventually led her to an appointment as the director of the same center. Exemplars in this group mostly credited the support of their academic advisers, leaders, and peers, as well as being part of SOE associations as instrumental in formatively leading them to their current administrative and/or leadership roles in SOE.

The second group focused upon their researcher roles as influential in shaping their pathway into SOE. Two of these individuals were engaged as researchers in K-12 environments, where they worked closely with teachers and students and studied the impact of engagement in K-12 teaching and learning. For these individuals, their research had profoundly influenced them into more in-depth commitment to SOE. Through this research, they began to see the value of engagement in uniquely impacting the community. One exemplar described how he began with a research interest in examining the different ways to engage students in the K-12 learning process. He cited a report by a teacher who told him about the “empty waste basket” story where the students who were taught using service-learning methods in a classroom began to value and take more pride in their work. As the story goes, “Now the waste paper baskets are empty because the students take their work home, they show it to their parents,...they really see the meaning

in the work that they're doing." This exemplar then was further drawn to investigate the service-learning approach and studied it as part of his dissertation work. In the case of another exemplar, she described how she carefully selected a niche area in science education and focused her research interest in studying the impact of engagement among K-12 students and teachers through her outreach position appointment. Another individual, who began as a faculty member, had more varied experiences, but pointed out how "unplanned life experiences" had progressively led him into the SOE pathway through his various research efforts, from a research-based daycare to national-scale community outreach programs. For this second group, the most potent support was the attachment to institutions that provided them with the relevant position and organizational support to ground their research focus in practice.

Lastly, the third group described how their administrative roles led them into their commitment to SOE. These individuals held advocacy roles in promoting a component of SOE (e.g., service-learning, civic engagement, extension) for their home institution and viewed their job responsibilities as part of evolving opportunities that fostered their dedication in SOE. One individual described how she was initially driven by a strong desire to elevate the legitimacy of service-learning and civic engagement in her university's appointment, promotion, and tenure process and continued to perform her advocacy roles in promoting recognition of a broader scholarship of engagement within her institution and nationally through her administrative role. In particular, individuals in this group were highly encouraged by the supportive culture and the mentorship of their key institutional executive leaders. Influenced by the passion and commitment shown by their leaders, these exemplars continued to dedicate their focus in the SOE arena and acted upon their advocacy roles through their administrative positions.

**The cultural context and positionality of community engagement-centric exemplars.** In comparison to the university-centric individuals, most of the community engagement-centric individuals worked in a different cultural context. In their respective positions, these individuals had clearly defined roles and expectations for engagement work. Most of them currently held administrative appointments in various SOE-related positions, usually higher-level administrative positions in higher education institutions. Examples of these positions included county extension manager; director of community engagement; and various administrative positions at community, public engagement, or service-learning

offices. Thus, for many of them, commitment to SOE work did not create a source of negotiation or of conflict between the individual and his/her superiors regarding particular work activities. As one individual described his role, he did not see a problem in his involvement with SOE and his institution "because my work is on engagement." Thus, work negotiations reflected a balancing and allotting of time between various roles and responsibilities assigned under their administrative job position. As one person suggested, "The negotiation has been [about] the percentage of time that I would devote to this versus to do it or not to do it." Another individual spoke of split roles in her job position, where half of the job was focused on assessment of learning outcomes and the other half was devoted to working with other faculty on integrating service-learning and civic engagement into the curriculum. Although most viewed their roles as full-time administrators, several community engagement-centric individuals also held dual-roles as both faculty member and administrator. For example, one individual spoke of a 75% appointment in an engagement position and a 25% appointment as a faculty member. He kept his research and publication agenda active in order to fulfill his 25% appointment as a faculty member.

Although most individuals suggested common understandings of their job focus, there was a small subgroup among these community engagement-centric individuals indicated some struggles in upholding their work in SOE. Like their university-centric counterparts, these individuals had encountered challenges related to promotion and tenure. For one individual, the conflicts were due to differing views on what contributions were counted as traditional extension work. For another individual, the struggle was about producing both traditional scholarship and scholarship of engagement in order to meet the demands of this person's dual responsibilities in an engagement role as well as in a faculty role. Both individuals described a fairly lengthy negotiation process with their superiors as a result of these conflicts.

In many regards, the community engagement-centric contributions were uniquely shaped by their job positionalities as advocates of engagement work. Several noted their instrumental roles in organizing national SOE conferences, engagement scholar workshops, campus-community partnerships, professional engagement services, faculty development programs, and new campus curriculum incorporating components of engagement.

Many of the community engagement-centric individuals also spoke of their contributions in terms of research and publications,

including books and chapters, handbooks, and journal articles. For those individuals who held dual roles in engagement and faculty positions, their publications were considered essential to keeping their research active and ongoing. Meanwhile, for those individuals whose job positions did not require them to publish and conduct research pursued these types of contributions as part of the “scholarship” aspect of their SOE work.

## **Definitional Understandings and Constructed Meanings**

### **University-Centric Exemplars Beliefs and Meanings**

These exemplars identified six key terms representing their particular understandings and actions within SOE: *scholarship with engagement, generation of knowledge, reciprocity, scholarly contributions, research, and community*. As these individuals delineated these key terms and meanings in relation to their place within SOE, they often linked their understandings of the terms to specific national discourses that impacted their beliefs and actions.

**Scholarship with engagement.** For most of the university-centric exemplars, this particular term was often used to define their SOE role, representing specific focal points of activity such as community-engaged scholarship, civic engagement, service-learning, community development, extension outreach, or the scholarship of “the scholarship of engagement.” (A few noted the evolution and preferred terms for their particular sector and role within the university in relation to the term “scholarship with engagement.”) Lastly, as noted by one individual, the frame of scholarship with engagement represented an “epistemology shift occurring in universities community is important to our ways of knowing, and thus engaged knowledge is an important way to advance that knowing.” Thus, many viewed this term within SOE as reflecting a more holistic understanding of their actions and of connections between generating knowledge and both the improvement of the learning of students and of the community.

Significant for this discussion, a number of the exemplars spoke to the particular complex development of the term and actions of “engagement” upon the varied constructs of “scholarship.” Many noted their own significant contributions to the development of a definition and negotiated understandings of the scholarship of engagement and of service-learning both at the national level and

at their own institutional level. Many spoke to advocacy and leadership in professional development in this arena. They defined their current roles in advocating and aiding both their own and other institutions to develop definitional policies, institutional understandings, and action plans for enhancement of the scholarship of engagement.

Some exemplars suggested that they were in the middle of a contested arena, facing the complex understandings, activities, and structures of SOE. This continued diversity of meanings presented difficulty in delineating just one common understanding for the multifaceted cultural and political roles of SOE within universities and higher education. As reported by one individual, “The battle [in the landscape of higher education] is changing from structures and programs... to [a changing] culture and to epistemologies. And with that shift in the battle... [the concern is] what [are the] norms...?” Thus, many of these university-centric exemplars saw themselves as part of a cohort of advocates and leaders who were in the middle of this changing landscape in higher education.

**Reciprocity with community.** For these university-centric exemplars, the term *reciprocity with community* had a potent connection in describing the relationship of the scholar to the work. Often these individuals would speak to the reciprocal flow of knowledge and expertise in partnerships. Many focused upon their interests in community-based assets, research with the community as partners, and valuing the community as an important contributor to these endeavors. As noted by one exemplar, it is doing research “with the community, rather than doing research on the community.” Another individual noted that SOE was “working with the community on real world problems...the importance of marrying scholarship or scholarly expertise together with local knowledge.”

Beyond the description of this relationship, many also noted a certain standard for reciprocity. Thus, SOE wasn't just the relationship or partnership; it was also a set of actions that brought high impact, usefulness of knowledge, sustainability, and relevance. As one exemplar suggested, SOE was having “high impact for the community partners. There is usefulness to the knowledge that is created in the scholarship of engagement... towards reciprocity of the relationship.”

Many of the university-centric exemplars also viewed the nature of scholarship as focused upon both local and scientific

knowledge, viewing knowledge as a mutually shared power base for action and understanding. As suggested by one exemplar:

[It] is often interdisciplinary and rests on the democratic partnership, participation by the public and the community partners. Trying to advance the common good... Universities were founded on that social charter...doing it for the public, rather than doing it to the public.

**Research and generation of knowledge.** All of the university-centric exemplars spoke to aspects of research and generation of knowledge in their definitions of SOE. Many focused upon the faculty role of research and the importance of generation of new knowledge through research at a research university. Others were focused upon civic/community engagement and the nature of knowledge generation in partnership with community for impact:

Scholarship of engagement connect[s] faculty and academic knowledge with local or community [knowledge]... so that it's not just the application of academic knowledge to solve a problem, but it's also the use of community or local knowledge to understand the issue and to create a solution.

Drawing upon the historic roots in action research or community-based research, a subset of exemplars expressed a more nuanced understanding, suggesting that research within SOE is based upon a framed understanding of methodology. One individual noted that research in SOE was “methodology of how you could construct a study in partnership with community, creating questions together, looking at work methods that are appropriate, interpreting findings together, and then looking at solutions together.” A few individuals also suggested the notion of research through an analytic lens, conducting research on the scholarship/research and practice of the scholarship of engagement. These individuals valued and understood direct partnership and involvement in the community, yet their work was defined in a more circumscribed manner of synthesis and theorizing of evidence in the field of SOE.

**Scholarly contributions.** Most of these exemplars felt a particular tug toward defining SOE in relation to its outcomes: They focused upon scholarly products or impact, as opposed to community impact. There were three figural understandings of scholarly

contributions within the university-centric exemplar group. One subgrouping was specifically focused upon products of generated knowledge that were publicly disseminated and peer reviewed. Another subgroup also acknowledged the first understanding, but were more focused upon the scholarly outcome of the community partnership of engagement. These individuals focused upon the delineated outcomes of community-generated knowledge and expertise as well as sustainable products from these efforts. Lastly, there was a subgroup focused upon service-learning in relation to scholarly contributions. Their interests were targeted to faculty class-based research for improved student learning, engaging students in learning in different ways, and impact upon the quality and nature of learning outcomes. As noted by one exemplar:

...to help students learn course content of the discipline much more deeply and effectively. Also develop [in the students] a discipline and sense of responsibility and bunch of skills they develop through community relationship that doesn't happen in the traditional classroom.

### **Community Engagement-Centric Exemplars' Beliefs and Meanings**

The community engagement-centric individuals also presented varied meanings and definitions of scholarship of engagement. Further, their perspectives were constructed through their specific institutional positions within higher education and influenced by their organizational key leaders. Some also reflected the influences of their educational background or prior work experience in certain areas related to SOE such as public health and service-learning. University-centric exemplars noted the influence of varied national written discourse about SOE, but only one of the community engagement-centric exemplars mentioned influences of scholarly writings in their constructed meanings of SOE (Boyer, 1990, 1996). Although the term the SOE was the key focal umbrella, this group include *engaged scholarship*, *community engagement*, *public scholarship*, and *research partnership*.

**Scholarship of engagement versus engaged scholarship.** These exemplars strongly focused upon the term, *scholarship of engagement* and the complexities of its subcomponents (scholarship, engagement) and how it connects to other related terms (engaged scholarship, community engagement). Each of them constructed their own SOE meanings based on the context of their

work. In particular, a subgroup of these individuals was exacting about distinguishing characteristics of the definition of scholarship of engagement as compared to engaged scholarship. As noted by one of the exemplars:

We're starting to differentiate between work that's being done in collaboration with a community partner [engaged scholarship] and work that is being done to study how the community partnership works and how they are successful in that kind of thing [scholarship of engagement].

Engaged scholarship was viewed as an understanding of engagement performed through teaching or research approaches that were considered participatory, applied, or community-based. Examples cited by these individuals included teaching using service-learning and conducting participatory research among teachers at schools.

Thus, the term "*scholarship of engagement*" was used to refer to the action of studying the process of engagement and its impact on the larger community. For example, one individual shared his work in SOE:

It's been about studying the impacts of community engagement on higher education system...it's really about the role of engagement in education more than it is about using an engaged paradigm in the research... My field is education, so I study the role of engagement in education.

This subset of individuals shared these distinctions mainly because they had made a shift in their work from conducting engaged research to examining the role of engagement in the community and how these views influenced the way they defined the SOE. One particular individual, however, had a strong preference for the term *community engagement* as opposed to SOE. For him, SOE was the work of "the people who study the process of engaging people and community." He found the term SOE too limiting to describe the whole process of engagement. In his view, a comprehensive engagement process should embrace both the general principles of SOE and of engaged scholarship; it should be inclusive as both a scholarly endeavor and a means of engaging the community.

**Community collaboration/partnership.** Across the board, all of the community engagement-centric individuals spoke to some

form of community collaboration and partnership as a central component in their definition of SOE. Similar to their university-centric counterparts, this group perceived the community as a major source of knowledge, as research partners, and as important resources for all engagement-based work. As one individual noted, it was a “two-way street of reciprocity” where “the development of academic resources, energy, and expertise [is] in addressing issues of importance to communities but also doing it in a way that benefits the scholarship as well as the community.”

**Meeting the needs of the community and for the public good.**

These exemplars also talked about how SOE should be designed to meet community needs and public purposes. In their views, SOE was not just about the process of engaging with the community, but should also include a purpose to benefit and address critical community needs. One scholar stated:

You can have a reciprocal partnership in which you're valuing each other's expertise, resources, time, skills, and being truly reciprocal, but you could be doing that for a private interest. . . . With the scholarship of engagement, there's that expressed assumption that work is being done for a public good to improving the environment, societal concerns.

Several exemplars mentioned that it was also essential not only to provide scholarly contributions to their own work and institution but to disseminate and share the knowledge with the community partners. As expressed by another exemplar, “They [faculty] really need to communicate and talk with and engage, if you will, the community into what they're doing— not just use the community for their research interest.”

**Teaching, research, and service missions.** Several exemplars also discussed their definitions of SOE from the triadic lens of the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. Engagement has traditionally been viewed as a strategy to fulfill the university's service mission. However, the work of SOE has evolved so that several exemplars now view it as the strategic approach to fulfill the three components of the university's mission. One exemplar deliberated:

Part of the engagement piece for higher education, and it's not just about fulfilling public service outreach mission, but it's also about fulfilling the research mission,

of doing significant research...And then, we also want to do quality teaching and engaging students with the external environment of outside the academy.

This individual and others further touched on how the engagement approach could increase the impact of research and teaching that contribute to scholarship. For example, one exemplar described “working with the community—where the community assets are brought to bear...the community participants can help us actually, help us do better research because of their expertise and knowledge and the assets that they bring.” Another exemplar also talked about engaged teaching and its impact to broaden her initial understandings of SOE. She stated:

When I first came into looking at service-learning, I was really focused on my students and what sort of change methods that I can use to enhance their understanding...And as I did more research on the issues, I just came to see that this scholarship of engagement is something much broader than what happens between students and teachers and, of course, classrooms.

Another exemplar suggested connections across all the different components of SOE as:

a type of scholarship that relates to teaching, research, work, service, or outreach, and it occurs when faculty are collaborating or in inquiry with community partners and are working on issues relevant to the community and that meets the mission of the university, however that’s defined.

**The “scholarship” in SOE.** Although some exemplars associated the notion of scholarship with systematic research methodology and written publications, they also suggested an understanding of a more community-oriented scholarship in their definitions. In their views, the product or outcomes of the scholarship of engagement must also produce impact or be useful to the community in order to be considered “scholarship”. For example, one exemplar nested her view of scholarship both within her scholarly work and within several facets of the community of engagement. She noted:

So I would say one product of my scholarship is a playground. Another product might be a presentation, a chapter in a book, or a refereed journal article. But I also think that the community also produces scholarship... We're using our knowledge together...to try to address the critical community needs together.

Other views of scholarship by these community outcome-centric exemplars included outcomes that could create meaningful learning outcomes that were openly accessible, open to critique, could be used as a foundation for others, and were based in peer validation by the community partners.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

Although there has been significant and varied discourse defining the scholarship of engagement, this study explored the constructed meanings from a group of elite leaders and researchers in the field. We performed this examination thinking that these individuals might share a more focused and unified definition of SOE. However it soon became apparent that exemplars held differing worldviews according to their cultural contexts. Using a frame of standpoint epistemology for this study, we sought to investigate the positionality of the individual in relation to his or her experiences within the field as well as the key individual meanings of the scholarship of engagement. The study findings suggested that the key constructed meanings of SOE were represented in two enclaves of these exemplars: university-centric and community engagement-centric. These two enclaves represented differing dynamics in the construction of individual beliefs and knowledge regarding the nature and specific elements of the scholarship of engagement within institutions of higher education.

The university-centric enclave was significantly influenced by the research tradition and particularly through the expectations embedded within the promotion and tenure guidelines of their university regarding scholarship. Although each exemplar in this group met the expectations for their role within a specific institution, each chose a particular path in that environment. Many followed a traditional research path, sometimes facing a conflictual or circuitous journey to their current position and place. Some of these individuals chose to move to a different institutional culture during their initial career, and others focused upon administrative and engagement advocacy roles with some involvement with research as part of a split role commitment in both administra-

tion and faculty. Although all noted many influences in their participation in SOE, most of the university-centric actors specifically identified the importance of key mentors and supporters (often in supervisory roles) in their early careers.

On the other hand, the community engagement-centric enclave was significantly influenced through their work focused upon engagement activities and collaborative partnerships, with research most often as an auxiliary role. Their actions and understandings were more often based in their specific institutional culture and expectations for engagement within their unit and/or institution and their own sense of the scholarship of engagement. These individuals did note their involvement in research and acknowledged its importance, but they negotiated their understandings of scholarship and of research from their own place and cultural context of engagement practices. These individuals also valued key leaders as supporters of their efforts but spoke to their institution, division, or unit's focus upon engagement and its support.

Several research and practical implications can be drawn from this study. First of all, it was found that there is no one common standard definition of SOE either from the national discourse or from an institutional policy perspective. Rather, these exemplars offered multiple definitions and understandings in constructed meanings and actions within SOE, selectively shaped by their institutional cultures, their individual roles, and their biography. They further noted their changing understandings and definitions over time with the evolution of the field of SOE as well as their own involvements in scholarship and practice. Thus, the complex and nuanced positionality and culture for each actor was reflected in each individual's understandings and beliefs about the meaning of the scholarship of engagement. Given the diversity of understandings, future research should explore and explicate the figural definitions, supportive pathways, and key markers for each of these two enclave cultures and positionalities. It was often apparent that the evolution of understandings of SOE also created additional multilayered understandings within institutional subcultures. Thus, future research and theory could explore how diverse SOE institutional subcultures strengthen or diversify the understandings and actions towards particular aspects of SOE.

In this study, it was evident that these two groups, university-centric exemplar and community engagement-centric exemplars, noted major influences from specific institutional contexts in relation to their key work roles, through key influentials in the university as well as in their professional associations. However, there

has been a lack of substantive research on the specific supports and mentoring provided by key leaders, institutional units, and professional communities that nurture both the individual and the cultural community of the scholarship of engagement. Thus, it would be invaluable for future research to study the forms and impact of influential contributions (mentoring, support, and financial assistance) by individuals and communities in shaping future leaders in the scholarship of engagement.

There are also a number of implications for practice focused upon significant experiences which may have supported and sharpened the ways the exemplars constructed their meanings of SOE. These exemplars often implicitly suggested that there was no one definition of SOE or path to conducting the research and the practice of the scholarship of engagement. However, the support of their key supervisors, key engagement leaders in the university, and colleagues in their institutional unit was often pivotal. In addition, many noted the impact of the literature and research as well as the key professional organizations and gatherings focused upon the scholarship of engagement. Because the early years of their careers were often pivotal, it would be invaluable to explicate the best practices for effective mentoring, collegial exchange, and support, as well as providing alternative forms of national recognition of key initial contributions in the early years of a career in SOE.

The final implication of this study is focused upon policy, which often reflects a particular constructed meaning of SOE—whether it is on the national level or within an academic institution, sometimes within a particular academic or working unit. More often the university-centric enclave parsed specific meanings for SOE, often anchored in figural terms based in institutional standards for research and scholarship. On the other hand, the community engagement-centric enclave drew upon figural terms in relation to engaging within a specific community; their commitments to the triad of teaching, research, and service of a public institution; and their belief that engagement makes a difference in the lives of students and the community. Both of these enclaves, at times, also reported potential differences of understandings and subsequent judgments about their role and their SOE contributions by supervisors of their work and by their cultural leaders. Thus, although there was a “stated policy,” there were a variety of forces that pulled and pushed individuals towards differing arenas and specifically differing understandings and expectations within the field. This study suggests the importance of creating SOE policies and practices based in consensus understandings of and support

for the scholarship of engagement. These exemplars demonstrated that they valued culturally supported SOE policies and practices based in the institution at large as well as within their specific sub-cultural work unit. Thus, clarity of policy and practices would be invaluable. Many of these individuals noted the continuing importance for advocacy to impact policy and practice within institutions and across all of higher education. Thus, institutions should continue to support key engagement leadership in providing the voice of both advocacy and of fostering continued evolution of this field of the scholarship of engagement.

This study presented the diverse understandings of SOE as explicated by the exemplars from two different enclave standpoints: university-centric and community engagement-centric. Based on these dynamic findings, this study highlighted the importance of recognizing multifaceted understandings within the SOE community in shaping future research and practices for this field.

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