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Note from the Editor . . . Issue 23(2)

Shannon O. Wilder, Editor

An "occasional" section in *JHEOE* features "Dissertation Overviews" showcasing emerging scholarship in the field through summaries of recently completed dissertations. This issue features Farner's qualitative single-case study presenting an adaptive "braid" model for understanding and implementing community engagement on the institutional level, particularly through the impact of the actions of a "critical mass" of boundary spanners. What struck me about Farner's study is her observation that participants "advance community engagement efforts through action (rather than rhetoric)" (p. 150). Meditating on these words, it is the *action* of engagement and how those actions are understood, analyzed, and evaluated, that is omnipresent in this issue of the *Journal*.

To engage—the verb—means to become involved and immerse oneself in an action or occupation. It is the product of the various actions of engagement—immersion in community-based participatory research, service-learning in varied contexts, reflective dialogue between university-community partners, educational outreach that saves lives, to name a few—that is presented by the authors in this issue. How we, as engaged scholars, take action and make meaning from those actions rather than rely on rhetoric alone is an interesting perspective from which to examine the scholarship in this issue.

Leading off, the "Research Articles" section features Rodriguez and McDaniel whose community-based participatory research study analyzes focus group discussions between immigration researchers and practitioners (partners). Their discussion of the challenges and subsequent opportunities associated with conducting CBPR in the immigration field provides a useful primer to scholars interested in putting CBPR approaches into action. Additionally, the findings from a dialogue between researchers and practitioners are also echoed in Shannon, Borron, Kurtz, Weaver, Otto-Wang, and Gilliam's article, "Translating Across Registers: Pragmatist Inquiry in Engaged Scholarship." The authors dissect how pragmatist inquiry can be used as a framework for community-engaged research through an analysis of a reflective conversation between university and community partners unpacking their collaboration on a previously conducted photovoice study of food bank clients. These conversations between university faculty and partners in both articles illustrate the various tensions and successes in this work, and provide valuable insight for other research teams and collaborators seeking to employ a CBPR or community-engaged research framework.

Finally, Lehmann's study on the influence of spirituality, an underexplored and potentially misunderstood dimension of student engagement in service and service-learning in higher education, rounds out the research articles featured in this issue. This quantitative study examines dimensions of spirituality as predictors of intention to serve among students at a faith-based institution, with implications for more spiritually diverse populations at other nonfaith-based institutions.

The "Reflective Essays" featured in this issue examine aspects of leadership in community engagement from varying perspectives, such as, the leadership role of boundary spanning individuals; and the role of potentially boundary spanning institutions like public libraries that can serve as sites for community-based scholarship. First, Schyndel, Pearl, and Purcell present a critical analysis drawing comparisons and distinctions between Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) boundary spanning model and Dostilio's (2017) community engagement professional's competency model. This essay, which also outlines areas for future research, calls for

employing these complementary models as a way to more broadly examine, understand, and support those individuals doing community engagement work at institutions. Conversely, Taylor, Pratt, and Fabes widen the lens from the individual to the institution, making the case for aligning the goals of public libraries—which often already function as community centers responsive to community needs—with the goals of community-based research. The authors present a compelling argument for how community-based research conducted between university researchers and libraries can inform programming, provide benefits for families engaged at the library, and benefit developmental scientists who are partnering with libraries.

A robust "Projects with Promise" section features a number of articles examining service-learning and other community-based learning experiences in a range of contexts (i.e., from county probation services to grant writing for non-profits), but from previously understudied outcomes and with an attention to community impact. Each article in this section describes community engaged work—whether engaged teaching and learning or engaged scholarship—along with the formative assessment and research associated with the project's impact. Bigelow and Rodgers describe and analyze the student learning outcomes and partner impact of a service-learning experience that places students with non-profit agencies through the Social Entrepreneurship for Poverty Alleviation (SEPA) grant-writing program at Austin College. Similarly, Ananth, Willard, and Herz analyze outcomes related to civic professionalism, or the ways professionals in all settings contribute to the public good, through a service-learning experience working with probation and criminal justice partners. In anticipation of the upcoming 2020 election, Rank, Mushtare, Tylock, and Huynh present a valuable study measuring the impact of a voter mobilization campaign through interdisciplinary service-learning courses during the 2016 election cycle. In a "Handwashing Educational Toolkit," the authors representing multiple university and community partners describe the iterative development and impact of a program designed to improve the health outcomes of farmworkers facing pesticide exposure, and the participatory process to connect farmworker outreach partners and university researchers. Finally, Doberneck and Dann present a visual tool for representing and measuring voice, authority, and aspects of collaboration in community-university-partnerships using the "Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool." The authors present multiple examples of the abacus's application and uses as another tool to more fully understand and describe crucial elements of university-community collaboration that are often difficult to measure and assess.

We hope that you will find much inspiration for your own scholarship as well as a diverse collection of work in this issue that spurs you to action. In addition, JHEOE underwent a facelift this summer with a redesign that conserves paper when articles are printed, but that also improves screen readability for those browsing online. On behalf of the editorial team of JHEOE, we hope you enjoy the new "look" of the Journal, but find it is still the same quality scholarship that we have been publishing since 1996. Many thanks once again to the associate and managing editors, reviewers, and authors whose time, talent, and effort have resulted in this new collection of scholarship advancing our field.

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Community-Based Participatory Research as a Tool for Improved Understanding and Practice of Newcomer Integration

Darlene Xiomara Rodriguez and Paul N. McDaniel

Abstract

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is used as a community-engaged research practice because of its inclusion of community perspectives. The participatory approach enhances validity of community-engaged research, facilitates effective work with communities, and acknowledges accurate understanding of community characteristics. We sought to understand CBPR within the field of immigrant integration. For this study, we conducted three focus groups with immigration researchers and practitioners at two international conferences held in the United States in 2016. These venues were selected for their inclusion of both practitioners and researchers interested in or actively working on immigrant integration policies and practices. They also provided a sample inclusive of researchers from academic, public, nonprofit, and private institutions and practitioners from nonprofit and public sectors. The findings yielded information on challenges, opportunities, and best practices for university–community partnerships to utilize CBPR in improving immigrant integration.

Keywords: immigration, immigrant integration, welcoming city, community-based participatory research (CBPR)

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is often used as a community-engaged research practice because of its inclusion of community perspectives (Archer-Kuhn & Grant, 2014). This approach is in part a response to the sentiment that any gaps between research and practice may result in irrelevant theory and invalid practice (Anderson, Herriot, & Hodgkinson, 2001; Schiele & Krummaker, 2011). Schiele and Krummaker (2011) argue that because practitioners and researchers have distinct worldviews, researchers often produce information that practitioners cannot use. CBPR attempts to bridge this gap by requiring members of the two groups to work together to identify needs and develop applied solutions to addressing those needs.

Perhaps the most important aspect of CBPR is that it endeavors to avoid the pitfalls of "parachute" research. Parachute research occurs when researchers who are not members or residents of the communities they are studying enter a community for a short period and make incomplete determinations about their work or findings because they do not have full knowledge of the lived experiences of those who reside in those communities long-term. Because they are not invested, literally or figuratively, in the daily lives of those communities, the long-term implications of such research for the people and communities involved may compromise the potential for others, including local researchers, to provide useful or even compelling research. Consequently, communities may experience increasing difficulty in studying areas of great importance because segments of society no longer trust *any* type of investigation or investigator (Castleden, Sloan Morgan, & Lamb, 2012). Smith, Schuch, and de Hernandez (2016) define CBPR as

> the scientific inquiry conducted in communities in which community members, persons affected by condition or issues under study, and other key stakeholders in the community's health can be full participants in each phase of the work: conception–design–conduct–analysis–interpretation–communication of results. (p. 129)

Similarly, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2009) describes CBPR as

> a potent approach to conducting research with—rather than on—communities. CBPR builds capacity at the same time that it collaboratively studies locally relevant issues and concerns. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change.

The purpose of this article is to examine, through the lens of CBPR, how various community stakeholders, intentionally or unintentionally, are utilizing this technique to inform the study of immigrant integration practices. To uncover the utility of CBPR in studying immigrant integration, and therefore impacting the practice of immigrant integration, we examine the perspectives of immigration practitioners (those who work with and on behalf of immigrants) and researchers (those who study directly and indirectly immigrant populations and immigrant-receiving communities) who have been involved in this work throughout the United States. Specifically, our focus in this case is on the research and practice perspectives of those involved, directly or indirectly, with Welcoming America and its Welcoming Cities member network. Welcoming America, a leader in the welcoming movement, is a global nonprofit organization based in Decatur, Georgia, in metropolitan Atlanta, that organizes a network of local community-based organizations, city and county municipal governments, and state organizations (Housel, Saxen, & Wahlrab, 2018; Huang & Liu, 2018; Kim, Levin, & Botchwey, 2018; McDaniel, 2018; McDaniel, Rodriguez, & Kim, 2017; McDaniel, Rodriguez, & Wang, 2019; Rodriguez, McDaniel, & Ahebee, 2018). Welcoming America has spearheaded the welcoming movement to help government, business, and nonprofit leaders and agencies promote, plan, and implement immigrant integration. The aim of Welcoming America is to make communities more inclusive across the nation and the world. Welcoming America has made the cornerstone of their organization the Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative, commonly referred to as "Welcoming Cities." Currently, Welcoming Cities includes around 100 affiliates as part of the initiative, and each is using this framework to implement its own strategies to improve job creation, economic growth, and social cohesion in local communities.

Through a CBPR university–community partnership with Welcoming America, we identify challenges and opportunities to the study and practice of immigrant integration and the role of CBPR in mitigating the former and advancing the latter. To do this, we gathered original data via three Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved focus groups at two convenings of immigrant practitioners, researchers, and policymakers, hosted in 2016 by Welcoming America and its regional affiliate, the Welcoming Economies Global Network. The article proceeds as follows: We describe the literature pertaining to CBPR; examples of its implementation in multiple disciplines; and the challenges, limitations, and opportunities noted in the literature. We then describe the methodology used in this study and the long-term CBPR partnership among the authors (university-based faculty), Welcoming America, and Welcoming Cities affiliates. Next, we describe the findings from the focus group discussions and then offer a broader discussion. The article concludes by extracting insights and providing recommendations for practitioners and researchers, and ultimately for policymakers.

Community-Based Participatory Research as a Methodological Framework of Community-Engaged Scholarship

To make research more relevant to practice and theory building, practitioners and researchers have sought ways to reconcile their different worldviews by working together to identify needs and develop applied solutions to addressing those needs. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is one example of an established method through which this may be accomplished. Building on the definitions of CBPR

provided in the Introduction, in this section we describe CBPR's use and implementation in research settings to further contextualize our subsequent discussion regarding researcher and practitioner perspectives on such work.

Knowledge production has often been relegated to scientists and researchers, excluding practitioners in the field who can better inform research practices. This often results in a disconnect between the ideal and reality. Consequently, in the social sciences, traditional research is at times perceived as a means by which to test irrelevant phenomena, and the results turn out to be unusable for real-life practitioners (Golden-Biddle et al., 2003). This disconnect has led some researchers to warn of a gap between practice and research that may result in invalid practice and irrelevant theory (Anderson et al., 2001; Schiele & Krummaker, 2011). However, as Sandmann (2017) observes, recent research has evolved from past paradigms and has developed a "sophistication in research design and methods that enables deeper and more rigorous exploration of outstanding questions in community engagement," which "reflects the evolution of methodologies across the conduct of scholarly thought and practice" (p. 1). Furthermore, methodologies are facilitating the "co-creation of knowledge through democratic practices with and across their full range of participants: institutions, community members, faculty members, students, and administrators" (pp. 1–2). Sandmann (2017) further notes that CBPR is becoming a mainstay, although it is not always conducted with "authentic community engagement"—which speaks to the limitations of planning and implementing rigorous community-based and community-engaged research.

The utilization of CBPR is a natural fit for community–university partnerships because it relies on trusting and respectful relationships, which deepen levels of collaboration, based on mutual interests because of transparent and authentic communication and respect for diverse perspectives and organizational orientations (Archer-Kuhn & Grant, 2014). Programs built along these lines widen theoretical knowledge through positional knowledge obtained through experience—experience that is not always imparted through strict academic literature. Conversely, they also help to inform and improve practice knowledge by testing academic theories. By valuing researchers and practitioners equally, these partnerships deepen researchers' sensitivity and increase their ability to reflect on the tasks and how their values and orientation inform their decision-making. This level of exchange and deepening understanding further informs coinquiry and allows partners to move beyond surface-level goals and build a path for continual partnerships (Banks et al., 2014).

CBPR's use as a methodology in community-engaged research has grown in recent years, emanating from many disciplines. This methodology has particularly been used in the fields of health care, public health, and understanding and addressing issues of health disparities and health equity. However, most CBPR research acknowledges the inherent necessity for multidisciplinary partnerships in cultivating a robust CBPR team (Arrieta, Hanks, & Bryan, 2008). Using their CBPR work on health disparities among vulnerable populations in Charlotte, North Carolina, Tapp and Dulin (2010) explain CBPR as an emerging model of research to enhance research practices by involving key stakeholders, including community members. They, and other colleagues, further describe their CBPR work on improving health outcomes in a Hispanic population, relating that a CBPR framework was crucial in identifying health conditions that negatively affect the Charlotte Hispanic community. This framework has led to developing a community-based intervention that improves overall community health, along with disseminating findings to all stakeholders involved (Dulin, Tapp, Smith, Hernandez, & Furuseth, 2011). Their work has developed "innovative and replicable strategies to improve community health in disadvantaged communities such as newly arrived Hispanic immigrants" (Dulin, Tapp, Smith, Hernandez, Coffman, et al., 2012), as well as a broader understanding of the social determinants of health outcomes for such populations (Schuch et al., 2014). Another example is work by Arrieta et al. (2017), who describe their experiences at a university in the U.S. South in forming a CBPR team to address and alleviate health disparities. CBPR has also been implemented in community–university collaborative work on translational research education programs (Williamson et al., 2016), in attempts to identify new approaches to primary ovarian insufficiency (Cooper et

al., 2011), in efforts to improve emergency preparedness and disaster resilience among high-risk populations (Gagnon, O'Sullivan, Lane, & Paré, 2016), and in efforts to address systemic engagement by universities to work with communities in finding systemic approaches to community change (McNall, Barnes-Najor, Brown, Doberneck, & Fitzgerald, 2015). CBPR has also been used in archaeology (Atalay, 2012). Further work has described the pedagogy of including students in community-engaged work such as on a CBPR team (Carbone & Ware, 2017).

Challenges that come with the use of CBPR as a methodology include the lack of tangible and intangible resources, like funding or access to needed groups. Similarly, there is a lack of knowledge of "how to best access evidence, critically evaluate it, and best translate it for the use of [end users]" (Bellamy et al., 2008, p. 57). Others have stated that due to lack of knowledge, skills, abilities, or simply training and supervision, some actions may be too difficult, complicated, or technical for all parties to engage in (Bellamy et al., 2008).

Israel, Schulz, Parker, and Becker's (1998) in-depth review of research that had employed CBPR identified three major types of challenges CBPR faces: developing the partnerships it requires; methodological issues; and broader social, political, economic, institutional, and cultural issues. Table 1 lists the major challenges and recommendations that Israel, Schulz, Parker, and Becker (1998) identified for each of these three areas.

Based on the findings of Israel, Schulz, Parker, and Becker (1998) and other research, D'Alonzo (2010) has laid out 11 strategies for building community partnerships utilizing CBPR. Her aim is that by unpacking each of these strategies, community well-being will be strengthened because practitioners and academics can work together in more efficient, strategic, and mutually reinforcing ways. We offer a partial list of these strategies: involve the community in identifying the research questions; recognize considerations related to the community setting; recognize the likelihood of conflicts between researchers, practitioners, and target communities; and prepare for commitment and training issues among practitioners.

We argue that these specific strategies are especially applicable for CBPR projects that seek to promote immigrant integration. Immigrant integration is "a process wherein immigrants and the communities in which they settle—both the individuals and institutions—mutually adapt to one another" (Jiménez, 2011, p. 4). Because CBPR promotes social and economic justice by engaging current and former disenfranchised communities and institutions into the research process (Kennedy & Monsen, 2016), it holds an inherent appeal for those who see research as having a social mission to improve the world (Price, Kready, Mogul, Cohen-Filipic, & Davey, 2012). Many projects in the area of immigrant integration apply facets of CBPR, sometimes without using the term, as a way to level the power dynamics between the researcher and practitioners and the people and communities they serve. Such a participatory approach enhances the validity of CBPR, since it facilitates the work with and on behalf of communities across differences (Viswanathan et al., 2004).

CBPR is also a strategy to cultivate long-term research partnerships among researchers and practitioners within local communities, rather than relying on parachute research conducted by researchers who are not members or residents of the communities they are studying—which alludes to the challenge of cultivating trust among communities and researchers. In many cases, such research may be the only practical method for better understanding particular problems and devising solutions to overcome such problems—such as immigrant and refugee integration in the United States.

The issues and challenges of parachute research are found throughout the social sciences. Several examples are discussed below. As Castleden et al. (2012) observe regarding the study of indigenous populations,

> social scientists (including geographers) and health researchers have built careers studying various aspects of Indigenous peoples' lives. While it is reasonable to assert that positive, relevant, and useful research out comes do occur in Indigenous research, and geographers have certainly contributed to some of the "good stories" about researchers that circulate in Indigenous communities, those stories are certainly outweighed bythe "bad stories." (p. 161)

Table 1. Challenges and Opportunities for Cultivating Community-Based Research

Developing Community Research Partnerships	
Challenges • Trust and respect • Distribution of power and control • Differences in perspectives, priorities, assumptions • Funding • Different emphases on task and process • Time frame for study • Who represents community and what is "community"	**Opportunities/Recommendations** • Jointly developed operating norms • Identification of common goals and objectives • Democratic leadership • Presence of community organizer • Involvement of support staff/team • Researcher role, skills, and competencies • Prior history of positive working relationships • Identification of key community members
Methodological Issues	
Challenges • Scientific quality of research • Proving intervention success • Ability to fully specify all aspects of research up front • Achieving balance between research and action • Time demands • Interpreting/integrating data from multiple sources	**Opportunities/Recommendations** • Methodological flexibility and different criteria for judging quality • Involvement of community members in research activities • Conduct community assessment/diagnosis • Development of jointly agreed-upon research principles • Conduct educational forums and training opportunities • Involve partners in the publishing process • Create interdisciplinary research teams
Broader Social, Political, Economic, Institutional, and Cultural Issues	
Challenges • Competing institutional demands • Risks associated with achieving tenure and promotion in academia • Expectations/demands of funders • Political/social dynamics within the community • Deterrents to institutional, community, social change	**Opportunities/Recommendations** • Broad-based support: top down and bottom up • Provision of financial and other incentives • Actions promoting policy changes

Note. Adapted from "Review of Community-based Research: Assessing Partnership Approaches to Improve Public Health" by B. A. Israel, A. J. Schulz, E. A. Parker, and A. B. Becker, 1998, *Annual Review of Public Health*, *19*, 173-202.

They also observe that parachute researchers may collect data at a time they choose, convenient for them, and subsequently exit with minimal communication before, during, or after their study.

Regarding an example of "parachute" research from medical research, Heymann, Liu, and Lillywhite (2016) note that

> these practices have been pejoratively labeled "parachute" research: fully equipped research teams from other countries arrive at the site where research is needed, conduct their research independently of others, and then leave. Parachute researchers reduce the effectiveness of emergency responses by neglecting to share their data with the public health teams from the affected country in which they're working, while also missing an opportunity to enhance the capacity of host-country scientists, which could help prevent future outbreaks. (p. 1504)

Bastida, Tseng, McKeever, and Jack (2010) provide another example of parachute research and lack of trust by "researched communities," noting that

> it is well established that minority participation in clinical trials, epidemiologic research, and intervention studies have lagged behind that of the majority population. This lack of participation is partly explained by the level of suspicion and mistrust found among minority communities regarding their participation in clinical, medical, or behavioral research. Whether the mistrust is based on actual empirical data, such as the Tuskegee Experiment, or the impressions resulting from "parachute" research when community members feel that their participation only serves the purpose of advancing the researcher's career, these concerns need to be recognized and addressed within the health promotion and education profession. (p. 16)

With the above context in mind, we now turn to a description of our methodology and data, which is followed by a presentation and discussion of findings regarding the challenges and opportunities for research about newcomer integration and perspectives on potential best practices from researchers and practitioners regarding the utilization of CBPR in such work.

Methodology and Data

This study itself has employed a CBPR framework. The authors have a long-term relationship with Welcoming America and many Welcoming Cities affiliates across the United States going back to 2013, which has resulted in scholarly output from multiple projects (McDaniel, 2018; McDaniel, Rodriguez, & Kim, 2017; McDaniel, Rodriguez, & Wang, 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2018) as well as pieces for broader public dissemination (Kerr, McDaniel, & Guinan, 2014; McDaniel, 2014, 2016; McDaniel, Rodriguez, & Kim, 2018; Rodriguez, 2016). Through conversations over time with individuals involved with Welcoming America and other organizations promoting strategies for immigrant and refugee integration, and through active participation in Welcoming America events and convenings, the questions regarding ways in which to better plan and implement researcher–practitioner partnerships in local places emerged. Thus, the concept for this study of researcher and practitioner perspectives on the study of newcomer integration developed. It has been driven from the outset by questions emerging from the community of researchers and practitioners about how to more efficiently and strategically study the topic of immigrant and refugee integration, and subsequently more effectively inform its practice. Through partnerships with Welcoming America and the Welcoming Economies Global Network (WE Global Network), we were able to plan and hold a series of focus groups at these organizations' annual convenings. These convenings were attended by a variety of practitioners and researchers from across the United States and from other countries.

Specifically for this study, we conducted three IRB-approved focus groups at two different international conferences that included immigration researchers and practitioners. Two focus groups were held in April 2016 at Welcoming America's Welcoming Interactive convening in Atlanta, Georgia. In these, 18 participants gathered, nine participants in each focus group. The third focus group gathered 25 participants at the Welcoming Economies (WE) Global

Network annual convening in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in October 2016. The composition of each focus group was approximately evenly split between self-identified researchers and practitioners. No person was a participant in more than one focus group.

We chose these venues because they targeted and included both practitioners and researchers interested in or actively working on immigrant integration policies and practices. These conferences are also centered on the welcoming movement and how receiving communities can become more welcoming to newcomers. As a result, they provided us with a sample that was inclusive of researchers from academic, public, nonprofit, and private institutions, as well as practitioners from the nonprofit, public, and private sectors. Participants in the conferences and the focus groups have varying levels of practice and research orientation: micro level (individual), mezzo level (communities and/or organizations), and macro level (policymaking). The scope of the organizations that employ participants encompasses local, state, national, and international reach. Some serve primarily economic migrants, and others serve refugees. All had worked on research designed to identify ways to facilitate the integration of immigrants in a society, including both traditional immigrant-receiving destinations like Chicago, New York City, and San Francisco, as well as nontraditional, emerging immigrant-receiving destinations like Atlanta, Charlotte, and Nashville.

The questions we posed in the focus groups were geared toward research about immigrant integration. First, we inquired about participants' target area for practice and research within the welcoming movement. Next, we asked what practitioner or academic outlets they used to gather information about "welcoming." Then we sought their perspectives on challenges and opportunities for the study of newcomer integration. Based on the responses to these questions, we present overall recommendations for ways CBPR may be an effective model for local university–community partnerships to identify effective strategies to remedy the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that focus group participants identified. Indeed, we illustrate that many of the themes emanating from the focus group discussions align with challenges and opportunities for conducting community-based participatory research the literature has previously identified (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Israel, Schulz, Parker, Becker, Allen, et al., 2008).

Perspectives on Challenges of Immigrant Integration Research

We present and discuss the findings in this section through the lens of the multiple *challenges* that emerged as themes across the three focus groups. Participants identified several challenges: conducting research about local integration initiatives; finding a focus for a research topic; collaboration; and dissemination of findings. Understanding the challenges participants identified in their researcher and practitioner involvement with immigrant integration helps to inform *opportunities* for more efficient researcher–practitioner collaboration.

Challenges of Conducting Research About Local Integration Initiatives

One of the primary steps of research is to determine the population to study. In this particular case, it is immigrants and native inhabitants of constructed communities. *Constructed communities* are those where external forces, rather than personal choices, bring people together (Reimers, 2013). Participants in all three focus groups described difficulty recruiting participants for their research studies. One researcher participant remarked, "Just finding respondents was a huge challenge for us. We're fairly well networked with local providers but I was really amazed that it was so hard [to recruit newcomers]" (WE Global Network). Some researcher participants said they had found that communities they wished to study had received a multitude of requests for research (Welcoming Interactive). From the other side, a member of a nonprofit said,

> We get five requests [to participate in research] a week or something, and some of them are so labor-intensive on our side that we simply cannot execute them. We're working on a system for prioritizing these requests, but . . . [we always wonder] what's the purpose of the data, how is it ultimately going to benefit [our] client base? (Welcoming Interactive)

Similarly, another practitioner who worked at a nonprofit noted,

> Ultimately, at the end of the day, we're judged by whether or not we met our mission, and for us it's serving Latino families. . . . Will we ever see the data? Is it ever going to make Juan or Isabella's life any better at all? If you can't answer that question, we often have to walk away because we have grants that we have to adhere to. (Welcoming Interactive)

This leaves little time for research. One practitioner, working at a community-based nonprofit in Philadelphia, said she found that over the course of 9 years she was "flooded with requests" to participate in research and that she was quite choosy herself about the projects to which she would give her time. Although this participant identified her desire to know that a scholar would be "thoughtful" about a project, another practitioner said that relationships were key. She said that her organization has had less trouble recruiting participants in Philadelphia, where it had operated for a decade, than in other cities. She observed that people

> want there to be integrity to the process and you want people to trust that what they say is going to be taken seriously and they're not going to ever hear from you again because God knows that happens a lot. (WE Global Network)

One researcher affiliated with a research university said that she seeks to address the concerns of people she would like to study by (1) offering to volunteer in their offices and (2) giving frequent updates about research:

> I do mostly interviews with city officials both elected and appointed but also community advocates working on nonprofits, funders, consulate folks and I do get some of that, like who are you, what do you want from us because oftentimes they feel like we take stuff from them and we're not giving back so I think we as researchers need to be more ethical. I offer and say things like I'm happy to come back and volunteer. I'm hardly ever taken up on it but . . . it gives me an extra opportunity to look around the organization. I think whatever we can do to make sure we share that research back, I always check in with folks, give them updates along the way, maintain a website so they see what's happening, maybe that also is making people a little bit more willing to share their expertise with us. (WE Global Network)

Another problem participants identified with respect to recruitment is that some of the communities being researched are very small, which makes it difficult to promise anonymity. One researcher said that no matter how much attention she paid to the "ethical nitty-gritty," there are only a few service providers in any given city, which makes it difficult to protect their identities:

> Another thing is anonymity like comparing two cities that have only a few service providers and you interview them and then you're reproducing the results, I've gone through all of the ethical nitty-gritty but it's still obvious who it is from the report and unless I aggregate my cities . . . I think it's just a key challenge. (WE Global Network)

A third issue lies in the nature of some collaborative research. Researchers who had explored research questions that would require them to receive feedback from both service providers and their clients reported that this carried its own challenges. Clients might be scared to talk to strangers, and service providers cite their busyness. Indeed, some researchers reported that it is very hard to try and get all the different entities involved in the community to get together and collaborate. It could therefore be challenging to find respondents to participate in the study on both ends of the spectrum: the ones living in the community who might be scared to talk to strangers and the staff members who might refer you to others as they are "too busy."

Other problems had little to do with the researcher or practitioner participants themselves. These included gaining IRB approval for those who were members of academic institutions even before embarking on a new research project in the community. One researcher said,

> Another challenge and it's more of just a hurdle but it is a significant one is IRB approval, you know, at academic institutions and I think it's more of a matter of being aware of the amount of time that it can take. (WE Global Network)

Relatedly, some researchers emphasized the complicated ethical issues their research raised, as some sought to research very vulnerable populations like refugees and undocumented immigrants. Finally, a number of researchers and practitioners cited the challenge of funding, which one participant pointed out can be particularly difficult when interpreters constitute a significant cost.

Challenges of Finding a Focus for a Research Topic

Finding a focus for a research topic may be a challenge when researchers and practitioners work in isolated silos. However, community partners can play a role in shaping a researcher's area of focus. Practitioners suggested that researchers should go to a nonprofit and ask, "What do you want to know?" and then build a bridge between the nonprofit and research world. As one practitioner observed,

> as a practitioner I have so many research ideas I couldn't execute and I had so many researchers contacting me who were doing what I considered to be boring questions or at least well-trod territory and so it was so frustrating that I had no mechanism for proposing research ideas. . . . I had individual relationships with certain professors who would occasionally be interested in potential topics but other than individual thoughtful professors who had a real curiosity about the work I didn't know of any mechanism and maybe one existed that I was unfamiliar with as a practitioner and somebody who's never worked in an academic setting. There was no mechanism for saying, this is a really important under-studied area and somebody ought to look at it . . . I couldn't find any research and so the only reason I did it myself was because I couldn't find any research and I couldn't find anybody who was willing to conduct it. If there were a mechanism for practitioners to propose research questions that would be awesome. (WE Global Network)

Another practitioner said:

> Now, we are in the Boston area so we have the luxury of having a university on every corner, but I think [the] nonprofit [industry has] a big role to play in helping shape the research agenda. . . . We went to the immigrant serving organizations and we said, "What is it that you would really like to know?" . . . And then we were also talking to the individuals at the various universities . . . and said, "Is this something that you would be interested in doing?" . . . it can be a bridge built between non-profits and the research world. There are a lot of researchers who are particularly interested in current issues . . . I would encourage people to think about that and for the academic folks to reach out to the non-profits in your area or your medium, you know, the areas that you are interested in and have a dialogue between the two of you. (WE Global Network)

This practitioner proposed that dialogues between researchers and practitioners could be very valuable.

A researcher from the 2016 Welcoming Interactive, an anthropologist affiliated with a research university, described "collaborative methodologies" in which researchers determine their research question through "consultation or collaboration" with either nonprofits that serve immigrants or city governments. On the other hand, she pointed out that she has a distinct agenda from either of these types of partners, and that this has made it difficult to reach accord. Her research team had spent 3 years trying to identify a set of research questions:

> A lot of the people that we spoke to in the beginning expressed this same kind of doubt that you did about working with researchers because their experience has been researchers who come in and extract information and then go home. The only solution to that problem is to have a different re-

> search model, which is that the research question cannot be decided before the researcher arrives. . . . There's all this great research in anthropology about collaborative methodologies. It's hard to do, but the idea's really simple, that the research question cannot be decided before the work starts. The question has to be the result of some kind of consultation or collaboration. In our case, it's really hard to do that because non-profits and cities have different agendas and university researchers have different agendas, so we've just been spending three years trying to identify a series of questions that we can all work on. (Welcoming Interactive)

A practitioner explained the challenges of working with researchers from the point of view of a nonprofit:

> There are some barriers in between researchers and nonprofits. The cultures don't mesh super well. . . . On top of all of the variables that are already aforementioned around confidentiality and that type of thing, I feel like there needs to be some kind of macro conversation or a safe space where practitioners and researchers can talk around. . . . (Welcoming Interactive)

Another practitioner who had participated in a partnership between the institution that employs her, a local nonprofit, and the city government said that the three partners were like "different planets":

> We spend a lot of time trying to figure out if we're talking about the same thing, and . . . I would say three years into this research partnership, and we've had a number of conflicts, and so we're starting to realize that those conflicts are due to the fact that we have these different institutional organizational cultures. (Welcoming Interactive)

Challenges With Collaboration

Who constitutes or convenes a group of people within a community was another issue that researchers and practitioners identified in relation to their own work. As previously noted, Reimers (2013) defines constructed communities as those "in which people are brought together by external forces rather than by personal choice." Bloemraad and de Graauw (2017) pointed out that constructed communities pose particular difficulties for researchers. First, there is the challenge of refugee resettlement, which faces obstacles in integrating people suffering possible traumas. The refugee infrastructure is also characterized as a loose patchwork of initiatives intended for integration, making collaboration among the various agencies more difficult. A practitioner from the nonprofit sector also articulated that when serving the Latino community, it was difficult to obtain collaborative grants because staff members have to be hired to be involved in CBPR, and, in particular, for interpreting purposes.

Another issue in working with immigrants, as Bloemraad and de Graauw (2017) show, is the difficulty of working with certain groups of immigrants such as undocumented immigrants to avoid drawing the attention of federal, state, and local institutions. In communities where significant numbers of immigrants lack documentation, research that does not address their needs may be inadequate to guide policies and programs that would benefit them. Also, establishing the necessary collaborator networks between the communities, research institutions, universities, nonprofits, and government institutions is always difficult, which compromises the effectiveness of CBPR. Furthermore, one participant identified the challenge of federalism and scale as a barrier to interfacing with others due to various levels or scales in which they must operate. For example, some cities are welcoming to immigrant populations, but may be located within states that are not. The varying agendas toward immigrants at the community, state, and national level make it difficult for various stakeholders to collaborate. On the other hand, a practitioner who works at a Latino-serving nonprofit said that her organization was ill-equipped to perform research and that they would like to see more collaboration:

> I wish that there were some way there could be collaborative grants given, and maybe there are, between nonprofits and researchers, because you almost have to hire another staff member at the nonprofit level to speak the language of research and to be that liaison

> between the trench workers and what is being sought. We need data to better serve our clients, you need data to help us better serve our clients as well as to build the knowledge base of everyone, but it seems like we're not meeting in the middle. I'm just curious what could drive forward some constructive [collaboration]. . . . Because a lot of times we just get passive aggression when we ask "Why are you doing this?" . . . we just get pissed off twice a week because our time is used up and we really don't see an argument made as to how does this ultimately benefit [our] clients. (Welcoming Interactive)

Practitioners and researchers also suggested that once established, collaborations themselves could be challenging. Researchers and practitioners have different backgrounds and perspectives. They navigate and manage different assumptions, timelines, and expectations. One researcher noted, "I wanted to raise a different kind of challenge, [specifically] managing expectations from . . . the people we're trying to help with the work [which is difficult because] mostly they're not researchers" (WE Global Network). Another researcher added that practitioners were always surprised at how slowly academic research works. She might be in the midst of an interview and the participant will imagine findings will be available in a month when in reality the processes of additional interviews, analyses, peer review, and publication will take years. This meant that practitioners may have a shorter time horizon for the work than researchers, which could put them at odds in getting needed work completed. Moreover, when the findings are made available, so much time may have elapsed that they have lost relevance or utility, as one researcher describes:

> I always find it interesting when I talk with folks and they're interested in finding out what your results are. They have to understand that we academics move pretty slow, like, "Oh, can I see the publication next month?" "No, it doesn't quite work that way." And I have to explain I'd be happy to do it but I have 200 interviews that I need to get transcribed and coded and written up and there's peer review. Maybe two years down the line or a year down the line, right, so sometimes the immediacy of the topic and . . . the fact that we are beholden to all these kinds of procedures to go about our work ethically, to get peer reviewed, I find that a bit of an obstacle. (WE Global Network)

Another researcher said that she had difficulty obtaining good information because people who participate in her research did not want to share information that might not support "welcoming" policies on the part of agents of the state. As she said, this limits information that could improve programs that might enhance welcoming:

> It's really politically incorrect to be against welcoming, and so it limits the space to be critical and to do it better. I've discovered that with folks . . . they don't want to undercut the momentum. That's tricky. I found that tricky in terms of research, really getting people to be critical without undermining the progress. That's something to come to terms with I think . . . yeah, we want to be welcoming, but when we start getting into how it actually works, it's really messy, so as a researcher it's really hard to start sorting through all of that. With that I'll find this tension of not wanting to . . . I'm not trying to say it's bad, right, or say it's a horrible idea, but how do I really reflect on what could undermine this energy? To me that's a huge thing I've been struggling with. (Welcoming Interactive)

Another researcher agreed, saying,

> I think that people really fall down this sort of economic rationale for it, which is a slippery slope . . . because we can't be critical [of programs that support integration], we can't think about doing it better, because [it will be difficult to get funding in the future]. They want to say how it's generating revenue [for the city or state] . . . and it's very uneven. I'm sure that immigrant groups are doing it, but this immigrant group is like 10 people in an apartment and they're not generating any revenue really. I don't

> know. I'm just saying that most of it as research is tricky. Getting these metrics is going to be really, really hard. (Welcoming Interactive)

Challenges With Dissemination of Findings

Researchers and practitioners suggested that an important challenge for community-based research is producing research products that contribute to scholarship as well as to a general audience's knowledge in a timely manner so that findings can benefit the community. One practitioner who had worked with the American Immigrant Policy Portal highlighted the challenge of research dissemination. As he explained, many articles regarding immigrant integration are behind a paywall, preventing their usefulness to many communities. Another practitioner highlighted the same issue: "Ninety percent of what I wanted to access I had no institutional access to and it was an incredible, frustrating situation to be in when you know there is research out there that could help you do the work better" (Welcoming Interactive). One researcher said that her research team had identified this problem and was creating briefs and PowerPoint presentations for a general audience and making them available on her website:

> We publish our results in various ways and one of the ways that we've found to be pretty effective is to do briefs that are written for a general audience. . . . We also have a website that we post everything to, our updates, our PowerPoints and people who engage in the research with us really appreciate that we are providing the results as we go along so that they can see the process of the research activity because they like to be involved. (WE Global Network)

However, there is no evidence that this is the norm, and practitioners may not know where to find the information researchers have obtained.

Another researcher identified a barrier to making findings available to practitioners and communities, which is that her career path requires peer-reviewed publications, a limitation that may block or limit her from publishing the same findings in another forum:

> For academics, when you're untenured like myself, when you want to get tenured you've got to publish in peer review journals and you're not as much encouraged to do this wide dissemination policy relevant work, right, so that's something that I always struggle with because our peer reviewed work is not readily available to folks who are not academics. So what can we do to give them access without violating whatever contract we signed with our publisher? (We Global Network)

Other challenges involved with the dissemination of information, as highlighted by Smith et al. (2016), is building trust among the immigrant communities, as well as finding the right set of community events at which to disseminate such information. However, some agencies have mitigated this issue by finding ways to engage with immigrant communities and various partners, as Smith et al. (2016) describe in their own research in Charlotte. Further, according to a participant in the second focus group, it is difficult to disseminate the information to research partners because it is not just for the nonprofit or university partnership. Rather, they must also include the city as a partner, which forms a three-way partnership. As one participant said:

> We have a research partnership which is not just university and non-profit, but there's also a city, there was a city partner, so it's like a three-way partnership, which I think we all underestimated because they really are different cultures and different planets. We spend a lot of time trying to figure out if we're talking about the same thing, and . . . I would say three years into this research partnership, we've had a number of conflicts, and so we're starting to realize that those conflicts are due to the fact that we have these different institutional organizational cultures. (Welcoming Interactive)

These institutional partners have differences in culture, and thus, when working as partners, they spend much time trying to figure out if they are on the same page and talking about the same thing.

Discussion

Community-Based Participatory Research for Local Immigration Researcher–Practitioner (University–Community) Partnerships

Much of the work facilitating newcomer integration occurs at a local level in communities, municipalities, and metropolitan areas. Within this context, although some cities share similarities, there are also many differences from one city to the next. Because cities exist within a unique context of multiscalar economic, social, cultural, political, and spatial factors transcending micro, mezzo, and macro levels, different histories and experiences of receiving diverse types of foreign-born populations, and different experiences and time frames of implementing integration strategies (or lack thereof), such as becoming Welcoming Cities affiliates, it is not yet appropriate or feasible to comprehensively evaluate the entire Welcoming Cities network as a whole. At present, research and evaluation of Welcoming Cities and the welcoming movement must primarily be done on a case-by-case basis through mixed-methods research, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Although some aspects of a Welcoming City and its impact can be looked at quantitatively, other aspects of being a Welcoming City can be gleaned only through in-depth qualitative research. In particular, interviews with key stakeholders directly and indirectly involved with a Welcoming City initiative are important at different stages of implementation. Focus groups with community members are also important to gauge program impact and reach from the perspective of different sectors of a community.

From what we have observed regarding researcher and practitioner perspectives on the study of newcomer integration, a CBPR approach is a promising route for research, monitoring, and evaluation of a Welcoming City's development; implementation of policies, programs, and practice; and its impact. Ultimately, CBPR involves a partnership approach to research that equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and researchers in all steps of the research process, and in which all partners contribute expertise and share decision making and ownership in the process. The aim of CBPR is to increase knowledge and understanding of a given phenomenon and integrate the knowledge gained with interventions and policy and social change to improve community. In many CBPR projects, the community participates fully in all aspects of the research process, with many CBPR projects starting within the community itself. "Community" is often self-defined but can include geographic community, community of individuals with a common issue or problem to solve, or a community of individuals with a common interest or goal to achieve.

CBPR encourages collaboration of formally trained research partners from different disciplines who provide expertise that is seen as useful to the investigation by the community and who are fully committed to a partnership of equals, producing outcomes usable to the community. Equitable partnerships require sharing power, resources, credit, results, and knowledge, as well as a reciprocal appreciation of each partner's knowledge and skills at each stage of the project, including problem definition, research design, conducting research, interpreting the results, and determining how the results should be used for action. This approach to applied research differs greatly in many ways from the traditional academic "ivory tower" approach. One of the principal differences is that instead of creating knowledge for knowledge's sake, CBPR is an iterative process, incorporating research, reflection, and action in a cyclical process. Although CBPR has most widely been used in community health research, the principles of CBPR may be applied to many aspects of work related to building stronger, more inclusive communities, including in the realm of immigrant and refugee integration and receptivity.

Conclusion

Benefits and Lessons Learned From Conducting CBPR in the Immigrant Integration Field

Using CBPR for immigrant integration efforts would lead to increased comprehension of local immigration dynamics. As Smith et al. (2016) demonstrate through their work with a partnership between trained researchers and nonprofits in Charlotte, such studies enabled the understanding of how Latino immigrants navigate their daily lives without Social Security numbers, resources and support services the community uses,

and the spaces and services they consider trusted and safe. CBPR also brings cultural and language sensitivity to service delivery. For instance, the organization Smith et al. (2016) studied informed the community advisory board members and partners about the results of the study, allowing for effective dissemination of the information, as well as facilitation of the interventions among community groups to be culturally appropriate. For example, all researchers used Spanish to address members of the Latino community who participated in the study. Incorporating various integration programs and research in CBPR, such as the NUEVO Dia Dialogue Programs, allows the community to engage in dialogue and better identify what aspects of the community need to be addressed to serve Latinos efficiently.

CBPR ultimately helps to create linkages for dominant and immigrant-serving institutions, but also for the multiple partners included, such as the community, the state, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations. According to Smith et al. (2016), these aspects of immigrant integration help enhance job success of new immigrants. In addition, CBPR findings are vital for providing support to the immigrant workforce, particularly in public speaking, collaboration, writing, and leadership. Further, CBPR projects facilitate better understanding of communities, thereby allowing for the promotion of immigrant civic engagement and creating a foundation to promote cross-cultural interactions and inclusivity. Such interactions and inclusivity are the hallmark of community-based decision making and collective progress. Finally, of particular importance for researchers such as faculty at universities, CBPR can be a useful methodology when performed appropriately to link areas of research, teaching, and service. Avenues for future research include identifying and evaluating examples of effective CBPR university–community models for facilitating researcher–practitioner collaboration on local immigrant integration and receptivity and the challenges, opportunities, and best practices encountered and implemented.

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About the Authors

Darlene Xiomara Rodriguez *is assistant professor of social work and human services at Kennesaw State University. Her research focuses on the nonprofit sector's role in facilitating immigrant integration. She earned her Ph.D. in public administration and policy from the University of Georgia.*

Paul N. McDaniel *is assistant professor of geography at Kennesaw State University. His research interests focus on the processes and impacts of immigrant settlement, adjustment, integration, and receptivity in cities and metropolitan areas, particularly in the United States. He earned his Ph.D. in geography and urban regional analysis from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.*

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Understanding the Intersection of Spirituality and Service Engagement Among Undergraduates From a Reasoned Action Approach

Curtis Lehmann

Abstract

Service engagement is critical to many higher education institutions. Past research has looked at spiritual change as a result of service engagement, but few studies have looked at how spirituality might contribute to engagement in service projects, particularly from a reasoned action approach. This quantitative study looked at God concept and religious motivation as predictors of intention to serve with two particular projects being offered at a faith-based university, an inner-city experience and a tutoring service. Participants were 305 ethnically diverse undergraduates. Data were analyzed using multiple regressions. The spirituality variables were associated with attitudes, social norms, and moral evaluations toward both service projects, as hypothesized. However, the spirituality variables were not significantly related with intention to serve for either service project. The findings suggest that spirituality may shape beliefs about service projects but may have little effect on intention to engage in service projects, at least in certain cases.

Keywords: service projects, community engagement, attitudes, religion, spirituality

Student engagement in prosocial service has emerged as an essential feature of the university experience. Many universities have indicated that developing civic-minded students is part of their mission (Jongbloed, Enders, & Salerno, 2008). Community service projects have even become embedded within the classroom setting in a phenomenon known as service-learning, which has been studied extensively with well-known positive outcomes (Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009; Yorio & Ye, 2012). Alternatively, service engagement can be organized outside the classroom with university-level policies, such as a service hour requirement, that uphold service project participation as a prerequisite for graduation. The current study is an investigation of how spirituality may influence engagement in community service projects among undergraduates at a Christian university. To introduce the significance of service for higher education, a review of the service-learning literature is provided to elaborate the context of the current study. Although this study examined intention to engage in service projects required at the university, not service-learning within a classroom setting, this review may help the reader understand the purpose of engaging students in service.

University-Based Service-Learning

Service-learning has emerged as an effective means of connecting course material with real-world experiences in higher education. Unlike typical community service volunteering, service-learning projects are part of a college course's curriculum and learning objectives (Zlotkowski, 1998). Service-learning provides reciprocal benefits for both the academic institution and for the community being served (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). The academic institu-

tion benefits by an improved image in the community (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001) and improved student learning outcomes across several domains (Conway et al., 2009).

In regard to academic outcomes from service-learning, three meta-analyses have found positive impact on academic outcomes, including GPA, academic motivation, and cognitive development, regardless of whether the meta-analysis included only controlled outcome studies (Celio et al., 2011) or included less methodologically rigorous studies (Conway et al., 2009; Yorio & Ye, 2012). An illustrative example is that of a longitudinal study by Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, and Yee (2000), who found that students who participated in service-learning projects had better GPAs, writing skills, critical thinking skills, and leadership skills than students who did not participate in service-learning courses.

Academic gains are not the only benefit of service-learning. Service-learning has also been shown, in a meta-analysis, to deepen understanding of social issues and increase personal insight (Conway et al., 2009; Yorio & Ye, 2012). Participation in service-learning can foster a strongly prosocial identity in students. Moreover, participation can improve attitudes toward self, including positive self-esteem, evaluation of one's own abilities, sense of control, and self-efficacy (Celio et al., 2011). Students who engage in service typically become involved with individuals from economic and ethnic backgrounds other than their own, allowing greater exposure to diversity and building awareness of one's own privilege (Jones & Abes, 2004). The relationships that formed between students and the community members whom they served gave the students a sense of personal responsibility to strive to make conditions more equitable for those people and others like them (Mitchell, 2015). Among alumni interviewed about their participation in service-learning courses, some reported that the experience instilled a moral obligation to serve that remained even years later (Jones & Abes, 2004).

Despite the many benefits of service-learning, some researchers have pointed out potential downsides. Grusky (2000) argued that, without reflection and intentional action, service-learning can potentially reenact historical and cultural injustices. One concern is that community partnerships may actually be unidirectional, with students serving and then "moving on" without building infrastructure for the agency and the population being served (Brown, 2001; Cuban & Anderson, 2007). Another concern is that students may remain oblivious to certain types of privilege, such as race and sexual orientation, even if they come to appreciate their economic privilege (Jones & Abes, 2004). Other downsides have included poor preparation by the agency, scheduling difficulties, and poor selection of sites (Rosing, Reed, Ferrari, & Bothne, 2010).

Spirituality and Service-Learning

An additional outcome of service-learning to consider is the deepening of spirituality. Here we consider spirituality to be broadly inclusive of religious beliefs and practices, ethical integrity, sense of purpose, mysticism, and transcendence (see Welch & Koth, 2013). Evidence on spiritual outcomes of service-learning is primarily theoretical, but one quantitative study of undergraduate students that utilized structural equation modeling found that service activities were predictive of "vocational calling," which was operationalized as a sense of purposeful and meaningful involvement (Phillips, 2011). This finding indicates that service can produce effects on students' perceptions of career and work, including seeing work through a spiritual lens.

Other analyses of service-learning have discussed various other possible benefits that may be included as a spiritual outcome. Service-learning has been seen as an opportunity for moral growth and for appreciating the connections between civic engagement and spirituality (Dalton, 2006). Louie-Badua and Wolf (2008) emphasized that service-learning provides an opportunity to experience interconnectedness, a chance for "opening your heart," and expansion of self-inquiry and self-knowledge. Service-learning projects have been perceived as good opportunities for Christian students to practice acting out their beliefs at their university, rather than merely contemplating or pondering them (Schaffer, 2004). Welch and Koth (2013) argued for a metatheory of spiritual formation through service, indicating that transformation and transcendence can occur through encounters with the unknown other. Koth (2003) has argued that failure to include spirituality in service-learning is a missed opportunity for

deepening contemplative practices among students and strengthening the long-term commitment to serve.

Of course, another important consideration regarding service-learning is how spirituality may impact initial engagement in service. Praetorius and Machtmes (2005) found in a qualitative study that spirituality was an important motivator for volunteers at a 24-hour crisis hotline. Volunteers in that study noted their desire to "give back," to achieve a new perspective of the perceived challenges and difficulties in one's own life, and to recognize the interconnectedness among us all as part of social fabric. Hunsberger and Platonow (1986) similarly found that volunteering was more likely among those with intrinsic religious motivation than those with extrinsic motivations.

Spirituality also is relevant for the opportunity for engagement in service-learning, as the faith beliefs of faculty have been shown to be related to the decision to initiate a service-learning component to courses (Helm-Stevens et al., 2015). Moreover, differing characteristics of the spirituality of participants may in turn impact the effectiveness of service-learning (Park, Helm, Kipley, & Hancock, 2009).

At the same time, the notion of spirituality being a motive for service bears a potential risk of seeing the community from a deficit perspective, lacking in spirituality or faith, that might reinforce structures of privilege. Volunteer service projects in general can potentially engender the belief that problems being faced require only individual, rather than sociopolitical, responses (Brown, 2001). This lack of systemic understanding can also be present when motivated by spirituality. Approaching service-learning as an exercise in spirituality or as a means of evangelism can exacerbate this misunderstanding, perhaps even leading personal spirituality to be seen as the antidote to all of life's problems. A faith-based institution that emphasizes social justice may minimize some of these problems through missional emphasis (Cuban & Anderson, 2007), but individual volunteers may nonetheless hold spiritual commitments that do not acknowledge systemic injustice.

Spirituality as a motivator for service could thus facilitate positive engagement or perhaps lead to reinforcement of systemic injustice. Given this potentially critical role in outcomes, spirituality ought to be studied further for its role in motivations for service.

Service and the Faith-Based University

Considering the possible motivating effects of spirituality on service, as well as the academic, institutional, altruistic, and spiritual outcomes of service-learning, it is not surprising that service-learning programs would be instituted at faith-based universities. The research literature includes a number of theoretical arguments on the relevance of service-learning for faith-based institutions (Hesser, 2003; Radecke, 2007; Schaffer, 2004). However, it is important to note that students' spirituality can vary considerably, even at a faith-based university, in a manner that might affect student perceptions of service projects.

Rather than focusing on the effects of engaging in service on spirituality, this study looks specifically at spirituality as an influence on intentions to engage in specific service projects at a Christian university. Although service at this institution is a requirement for graduation, students still have choice in the projects they participate in. Therefore, understanding the factors shaping which projects are pursued may be important in setting appropriate faith outcomes. The current study explores the relations between an individual's spirituality and their intentions to engage in a service project at a university setting.

To properly understand this project, findings on the relationship between spirituality and prosocial behavior will first be reviewed, focusing on specific constructs within spirituality that might underlie these relationships. Following that, the theoretical lens being used in this study to explain these relations with service projects is reviewed. The primary backdrop of this study is a Judeo-Christian religious understanding of God and religion, but the aim has been to identify constructs that may apply to other religious traditions.

Spirituality and Relation to Prosocial Behavior

Many social, cultural, cognitive, and developmental factors contribute to determining prosocial behaviors, but spirituality would seem to be particularly relevant. Although some have argued that there is no necessary

causal effect of religion on morality and that morality is a concept in and of itself without the obligations and beliefs of a specific kind of religion (McKay & Whitehouse, 2015), the relationship between spirituality and morality remains of interest to researchers and the general public alike. Examining the broader relationship between spirituality and various types of prosocial behavior could provide a better understanding of the relationship between spirituality and service projects.

Empirical studies on the relationship between spirituality and prosocial behavior have found a modest but robust relationship (for a review see Saraglou, 2013). Ruiter and DeGraaf (2006) found that religious attendance was associated with greater volunteering with both religious and nonreligious organizations. In a literature review, individual religiosity, as well as parental religiosity, was found to be associated with increased religious and secular philanthropy (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011). Faith maturity has been found to add unique predictive variance toward prosocial behavior above and beyond personality self-ratings (Ciarrocchi, Piedmont, & Williams, 2003). Developmentally, religion plays a role in initial volunteering, which was associated with later volunteering with both religious and nonreligious institutions (Johnston, 2013). The results of that study also indicated that increased religious belief and attendance resulted in a greater likelihood of engagement in religious institution volunteerism.

The motivational dimension of religion might affect internalization of values, as Hardy and Carlo (2005) found that prosocial values mediated the relationship between religion and prosocial behaviors. Einolf (2013) found that daily spiritual experiences were a significant predictor of volunteering, charitable giving, and helping individuals one knows personally, even among those who did not identify with a religious congregation. This suggests that spiritual motivations may be important for helping behaviors among those who are not conventionally religious.

Another paradigm for studying the relationship between spirituality and morality is cognitive priming. Numerous priming studies have investigated the effects of religious priming (e.g., using words like "church" or "God") on prosocial and antisocial behaviors. Shariff and Norenzayen (2007) found that priming concepts related to religion increased generosity in an anonymous dictator game. Similarly, Pichon, Bocatto, and Saraglou (2007) found that prosocial behaviors were more likely when positive religious words had previously been subconsciously primed. These authors found that religious concepts by themselves can unconsciously activate prosocial behavioral schemas. Although not focusing on prosocial behaviors, Randolph-Seng and Nielsen (2007) found that cheating was less likely when participants were primed with religious words. Fishbach, Friedman, and Kruglanski (2003) found that priming participants with a temptation, or a desired behavioral action, not only influenced the activation of overriding religious goals but also affected goal-congruent behavioral choices in line with the religious goals.

Multidimensional Approaches to Relations Between Spirituality and Prosocial Behavior

Researchers studying spirituality have long recognized the need to study constructs related to spirituality multidimensionally (e.g., Hill & Pargament, 2003; Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2009). The dimensions of spirituality have included closeness to God, religious motivations, and religious support (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002; Hill & Pargament, 2003), as well as God concept, religious coping, locus of control, and spiritual well-being (Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004), among many others.

God concept. One facet of spirituality that may relate to prosocial behaviors is *God concept*. Morewedge and Clear (2008) found that anthropomorphic God concepts, whereby a person perceives God as having human characteristics such as being accepting, caring, and comforting, was related to the evaluation of violations of the Ten Commandments as being morally wrong, as well as being against their religion. The finding suggests that beliefs about God are associated with the formation of a moral code by which one lives.

Studies where concepts of God are primed have found an influence on prosocial behavior. In one study, participants who were primed with God concepts gave more money to a stranger in an anonymous dictator game, and this was not dependent on self-reported religiosity (Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007). Similar to this finding but with an important distinction, Lin, Tong, Lee, Low,

and Gomes (2016) found that priming God concept increased intention to engage in prosocial behaviors, but only for those who professed to believe in God.

Providing a theoretical interpretation of the past research on religious beliefs and prosociality, Preston, Ritter, and Hernandez (2010) argued that a supernatural principle for prosocial actions based on belief in God can have a different effect on prosocial behavior than a religious principle that emphasizes the religious group. By following the supernatural principle, the individual is likely to consider engaging in virtuous behaviors rather than simply protecting ingroup members. Thus, beliefs in God may more broadly influence prosocial behavior.

Religious motivation. Another relevant dimension of spirituality for prosocial behavior is the motivation for religious involvement, which can be intrinsic or extrinsic (Gorsuch & Venable, 1983). Hunsberger and Platonow (1986) found that intrinsic religious motivation predicted the intention to volunteer in service projects. In that study, Christian orthodoxy was not a significant predictor, indicating that motivational factors, rather than beliefs, underlay the relationship. Looking at religious motivation as a possible threat to evaluations of behaviors as moral, due to the attribution of the behavior to the religious benefit the person would receive, Gervais (2014) found that religious motivation (e.g., asking oneself, "What would Jesus do?") for a vignette prosocial behavior was associated with decreased likelihood to perceive the prosocial act as moral. The findings suggest that religious motivation may relate to service engagement, given that it distinguishes those who participate in religion due to internalized values from those who participate for external gain.

Spirituality and the Reasoned Action Approach

One challenge in relating spirituality and service engagement is identifying a theoretical approach that can aid in the interpretation of findings and developing interventions for increasing enrollment. The current study utilized the reasoned action approach (RAA) as a theoretical framework. The RAA has been supported by numerous studies across various domains showing that it is highly predictive of both behavioral intentions and actual behavior (for an overview see Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The RAA argues that all behaviors are most strongly determined by beliefs that are specifically related to each particular behavior, rather than by broad attitudes toward general behaviors. This theory is useful precisely because it narrows down the potential pathways of influence to specific beliefs about the behavior.

In the reasoned action approach, the specific behavioral beliefs have been grouped into three categories: attitudes, social norms, and perceived control. *Attitudes* were defined as the evaluative beliefs regarding the experiential consequences of a behavior that were rooted in either a hypothetical or past response to the behavior. *Social norms* were defined as the interaction between the beliefs of how others perceive the individual's involvement in the behavior and the individual's motivation to comply with those norms. Finally, *perceived control* was defined as an individual's perceived level of difficulty in performing the behavior, along with their perception of control in performing the behavior. Attitudes, social norms, and perceived control uniquely contribute to predicting intentions to engage in the behaviors (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Moreover, meta-analyses have shown that the intention to engage in a behavior is causatively linked to the actual completion of the behavior (Sheeran, 2002; Webb & Sheeran, 2006).

Although the RAA has been refined over several decades, some researchers have argued for further expansion. For instance, Augustine (2009) found that moral evaluations predicted behavioral intentions, even when controlling for attitudes. One research study that utilized this approach was conducted by Ortberg, Gorsuch, and Kim (2001), who studied the effects among a Christian congregation of two interventions targeting either attitudes or moral evaluations toward blood donation. They found that each intervention influenced only the associated predictor, confirming the independence in construct validity of attitudes and moral evaluations. Given the potential relevance of moral evaluations for engagement in service, this study included this variable alongside the RAA variables.

Although evidence supporting the theory is considerable, the aspect of the RAA that is understudied is what broader influences form and contribute to the beliefs that the RAA posits underlie behavior. These beliefs

are likely impacted by numerous sources of influence, such as media, parental influence, peer influence, academic culture, and, finally, spirituality and religion. Although religion may have little relevance to certain behaviors, behaviors with a greater moral component could be expected to be influenced by spirituality and religion.

In the current project being proposed, spirituality will be measured as God concept and religious motivation. As noted above, these constructs have been found to relate to moral behaviors, sometimes with theoretical explanations provided post hoc. By utilizing these constructs alongside the RAA variables, including moral evaluation, it might be possible to clarify the relationship of these variables to service engagement.

The significance of this project would be in identifying possible causal pathways that can be investigated experimentally in the future. By identifying how specific behavioral beliefs are related to spiritual constructs, it may be possible to conduct experiments where participants may be primed with specific spiritual constructs (by reading or listening to sermons, for example) and measure how this priming impacts the RAA variables and the behaviors or behavioral intentions to engage in service.

Hypotheses

The study hypotheses were as follows: (1) The reasoned action approach variables would be related with intention to engage in service. (2) Moral evaluations would add unique variance in predicting intention to engage in service, after controlling for the reasoned action approach variables. (3) Spirituality, measured as God concept and religious motivation, would be associated with attitudes, social norms, and moral evaluations. (4) Spirituality, measured as God concept and religious motivation, would be associated with intentions to engage in service.

Method

Participants

The participants were undergraduate students at a Christian faith–based university in Southern California who were recruited from the online Psychology Department Research Participation System. Study participants were enrolled in lower division psychology courses, where there is a requirement to complete up to 3 hours of research participation or an equivalent alternative. Students were granted 0.5 hours of credit for participating in this study. There was a total of 311 participants, though four were removed due to less than 50% response and two others were removed due to being multivariate outliers, leaving a sample size of 305.

The mean age of participants was 19.1 years (SD = 1.78), with a large majority being female (80.7%). The sample was ethnically diverse, with White (48.0%) being the largest group but Asian Americans (21.1%), Latino/as (18.4%), African Americans (4.6%), and multiple ethnicity/other (7.9%) being fairly well-represented. Reflecting the lower level classes from which they were recruited, most of the participants were freshmen (63.6%), with sophomores (17.1%), juniors (14.1%), and seniors (5.2%) also being represented.

Procedure

The study was approved as exempt status by the institutional review board prior to collection of data. Data collection occurred in two phases. In the first phase, occurring in January through March 2016, 163 participants were collected and were asked questions related to service projects available later in the semester. In the second phase, 144 participants were surveyed from October through December about willingness to participate in service projects the following semester. This two-phase data collection process was due to low sample size during the first phase, which led to a lack of statistical power for the study. In a given semester at the university, there are approximately 450 students, so that approximately a third of all students across two semesters participated in the study.

Participants were able to select the study from the online Psychology Department Research Participation System, where they were linked to an online survey. The questionnaire began with an opportunity for informed consent. Participation was voluntary and all participants were offered alternative methods of earning credit through their courses. Those who consented were presented with a questionnaire that consisted of 52 closed-ended items and generally took less than 15 minutes to complete. No identifying information was collected.

Measures

The questionnaire, available online at *http://bit.ly/2XwvocB*, included the measures in the following order: demographic, inner-city project items (i.e., attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control, moral evaluations, and intentions toward inner-city service project), tutoring project items, single-item measures of spirituality, a God concept scale, and the Age-Universal Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiousness Scale. Demographic data included the participant's gender, age, ethnicity, class level, living situation, and total number of university service units acquired so far.

Intentions. The intention to engage in the service project was challenging to assess, as participants were likely to have varied in their prior knowledge of what the service project encompassed. For this reason, participants were given a description of the service project, which was provided by the university office responsible for service projects. The Inner City Project was described as follows:

> This urban immersion provides an opportunity for students to embark on a four-day experiential learning trip in the heart of [Inner City]. Participants become acquainted with the social realities of diverse communities in [Inner City], while developing a biblical understanding of justice, compassion, reconciliation, and stewardship. Open to students of all backgrounds and interests, [Inner City Project] challenges participants to think critically about issues that affect the disenfranchised while learning about their involvement or contribution to these problems. [Inner City Project] endeavors to encourage a more comprehensive understanding of the world around us, and examine the implications of the privilege or disadvantage that social location provides.

Likewise, the Tutoring Project was described as follows (identifying information is excluded):

> [Tutoring Project] has a long-standing relationship with [the university]. The mission . . . is to establish and sustain neighborhood based learning centers . . . where at-risk children and their families are equipped to thrive academically, socially, and spiritually. The [Tutoring Project] is located at [Church] and serves K-12th-grade students daily. Students commit to serving for 10 weeks at one of the following time periods. . . . [Specific days of the week and times were provided.]

Providing details about each project allowed the students to become acquainted with the service project and to form beliefs related to their intention to engage in these projects. The inner city was Los Angeles, located about 25 miles from the university, and thus most students who attended did not have extensive familiarity with the cultural context. This program had been in existence at the university since the LA riots but was altered prior to the study to include three service projects, rather than only cultural immersion, to encourage service-oriented learning (Ender, 2016). The tutoring project was located in a building about half a mile from the university. Note that it is possible, and perhaps likely, that prior knowledge about these projects existed (e.g., based on experiences of friends) and so the related behavioral beliefs may not reflect only the descriptions. The study did not assess whether the participants had any prior familiarity with the service project.

The intention to engage in the project was assessed by a single item querying the participant's intent to volunteer on specific dates within the upcoming semester on a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely). As an example, intention to serve on Inner City Project was assessed, "I will volunteer with the [Inner City Project] this semester, on either March 19–22 (Saturday to Tuesday) or April 9–12 (Saturday to Tuesday)." Previous research has shown that intentions are strongly related to actual behavior (Sheeran, 2002; Webb & Sheeran, 2006), suggesting that intentions to engage in service projects would be informative of actual behavior.

Attitudes. Attitudes were assessed with semantic differential scales utilizing discrepant adjectives to describe the engagement in the service project (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Participants rated how they felt about volunteering for each of the service projects on a scale ranging from 1 to 7 with two sets of polar anchors: *boring/fun* and *pleasant/un-*

pleasant. As an example, "Volunteering with [Inner City Project] would be (Unsatisfying/Satisfying)," with *unsatisfying* being a 1 and *satisfying* being a 7. The attitude toward each service project was then calculated as the average of the two items, after being reverse scored as appropriate, with higher values indicating greater favorability.

Social norms. Social norms toward each service project were assessed with two items that assessed the participant's perceived norms among a group they were likely motivated to conform with (i.e., "people close to [him/her]"). Responses were on a 7-point scale with polar anchors of "inappropriate/appropriate" and "should/should not." For example, "Most people whose opinion I value would think it is (inappropriate/appropriate) to volunteer with [Inner City Project]." The social norm toward each service project was then calculated as the average of these two items, after being reverse scored as appropriate, with higher values indicating more favorable social norms.

Perceived behavioral control. The participant's perception of their behavioral control over volunteering for the service project was assessed with two items. Responses were on a 7-point scale with polar anchors of "easy/difficult" and "no time/plenty of time." After reverse scoring the items as appropriate, the perceived behavioral control score for each service project was computed as the average of these two items, with higher values indicating higher perception of control. An example item was "I think that I would have (No Time/Plenty of Time) to volunteer with [Inner City Project]."

Moral evaluations. Moral evaluations were determined with two items, scored on a 7-point scale, that had polar anchors of "moral/immoral" and "no good young people should do/all good young people should do." One such item read, "Volunteering with [Inner City Project] is (moral/immoral)." For each service project, a moral evaluations score was calculated as the average of the two items, with the moral/immoral item being reverse scored. Higher scores on this scale thus indicated higher perception of the morality of the action.

God concept. This study utilized a 10-item God concept scale (Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004, adapted by Lehmann, 2009; Lehmann & Gorsuch, 2017). This scale was found to have two distinct factors, resulting in a 7-item Christian God concept subscale and a 3-item wrathfulness subscale (Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004). For this scale, adjectives are presented with synonyms in parentheses to help clarify the intended adjective (e.g., God is kind [loving and forgiving]; God is fierce [critical and cruel]). Each item was rated on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree), with certain items reverse scored as appropriate.

Using the data obtained from this study, an exploratory principal axis factor analysis was conducted, and the results were consistent with a two-factor structure with items loading on the expected factors. The Christian God concept and wrathfulness scales correlated at -.16. The alpha reliabilities of the 7-item Christian God concept scale and the 3-item wrathfulness scale were .87 and .69, respectively.

Religious motivation. The study also included the Age-Universal Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiousness Scale (Gorsuch & Mcpherson, 1989; Gorsuch & Venable, 1983), which used a 7-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) to measure motivations for religiousness. The scale included items such as "I go to church because it helps me to make friends" and "Prayer is for peace and happiness." In this study, the alpha reliability was .81 for the 8-item intrinsic subscale, .77 for the 3-item extrinsic personal subscale, and .64 for the 3-item extrinsic social subscale.

Results

In order to ensure generalizable results, responses were tested for multivariate outliers using the full set of variables and robust estimates of center and dispersion. Two outliers were removed due to Mahalanobis distance scores greater than 10. Removal of these two participants left a sample of 305 participants.

Descriptive statistics of the study variables were computed and are presented in Table 1. Mean scores on the intent variables indicate that participants tended to be neutral or undecided in regard to their intent to volunteer for both service projects, with an overall trend toward being slightly unlikely to participate. Mean scores on measures of attitudes, social norms, and moral evaluations toward both projects tended to be favorable, but perceived behavioral control

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Inner City		
Intentions	3.31	1.53
Attitudes	5.35	1.19
Social norms	5.48	1.18
Perceived behavioral control	3.99	1.16
Moral evaluations	5.81	0.89
Homework Tutor		
Intentions	3.82	1.65
Attitudes	5.70[a]	1.21
Social norms	5.89[b]	1.16
Perceived behavioral control	4.19	1.23
Moral evaluations	6.14[a]	0.79
God concept		
Christian God concept	6.61[b]	0.61
Wrathful God concept	3.70	1.50
Religious motivation		
Intrinsic	5.32	1.00
Extrinsic personal	4.81	1.29
Extrinsic social	3.07	1.22

Note. All of the scales above had a range of 1–7. N = 305.
[a]M < 1.25 SD from range endpoint. [b]M < 1.0 SD from range endpoint.

was lower, indicating that participants perceived their ability to serve on these projects to be limited. Also note that the sample was highly religious, as expected at a Christian college, although variance can be seen in religious motivations among the sample.

To investigate the bivariate relationships of the RAA and spirituality constructs with intention to serve on each project, correlation coefficients were calculated and are presented in Table 2. These correlations show that each of the RAA constructs, including moral evaluation, was significantly related both to the Inner City intention and the Tutoring intention. Moreover, this analysis revealed that the measures of spirituality utilized were not significantly related to the intentions, except extrinsic social and Tutoring intention.

To test the hypothesis that the reasoned action model would predict intent to volunteer for the service projects, multiple regression analyses were run; the results are presented in Table 2. The reasoned action approach model, identified as Model 1, was significant and strongly predicted both service project intentions. In this model, attitudes and perceived behavioral control (PBC) were the strongest predictors, with social norms being a marginal predictor of inner city intention and not significant in predicting tutoring intention.

Table 2 presents analyses of the expanded reasoned action approach, which included moral evaluation, under Model 2. Moral evaluation did not add significant variance in predicting either of the service projects. This was contrary to hypothesis, which predicted that this variable would add unique variance for predicting intentions. Table 2 also presents, under Model 3, the results of a regression analysis of the spirituality variables to predict service project intention. Contrary to hypothesis, this analysis

Table 2. Intention to Volunteer: Raw Correlations, Standardized Betas, and Multiple R^2

	Inner City Project—Intention				Homework Tutoring—Intention			
		Parameter Estimates				Parameter Estimates		
Predictor	*r*	*Model 1*	*Model 2*	*Model 3*	*r*	*Model 1*	*Model 2*	*Model 3*
Attitudes	.490***	.33***	.31***		.368***	.19**	.20**	
Social norms	.386***	.10*	.07		.249***	-.04	-.03	
PBC	.461***	.32***	.32***		.605***	.55***	.55***	
Moral evaluations	.334***		.08		.121*		-.04	
Christian God concept	.045			-.03	-.058			-.05
Wrathful God concept	-.076			-.07	-.085			-.09
Intrinsic	.050			.04	-.051			-.03
Extrinsic personal	.107			.13*	.054			.04
Extrinsic social	-.100			-.12	.124*			.11
Whole Model (R^2)		.35***	.35***	.03		.39***	.39***	.03

*Note. Model 1 is the established reasoned action approach model. Model 2 is the RAA model with moral evaluations included. Model 3 is the set of spirituality predictors included in the study. Parameter estimates are standardized betas. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.*

was not significant for both service projects, indicating that spirituality was not predictive of intention.

To investigate the relationship between measures of spirituality and the reasoned action predictor variables, multiple regressions were run with Christian God concept, wrathfulness, intrinsic, extrinsic personal, extrinsic social, and certainty of belief in God as independent variables, with the attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control, and moral evaluation toward each service project as dependent variables. The results of these regressions are presented in Table 3. As hypothesized, the regressions were significant for predicting attitudes, social norms, and moral evaluations toward both service projects. Additionally, the regressions were not significant for the perceived behavioral control toward each intention, consistent with the hypothesis.

Discussion

The results supported the hypotheses that spirituality would be associated with attitudes, social norms, and moral evaluations, but not perceived behavioral control, toward engaging in two particular service projects available at a university. In the current analyses, God concept and religious motivation accounted for 5–10% of the variance in these variables. This finding is consistent with past research findings that spirituality is interconnected with prosocial behavior, providing ethical justifications (Parboteeah, Hoegl, & Cullen, 2008), moral communities (Graham & Haidt, 2010), and moral decision making (Szekely, Opre, & Miu, 2015).

The current study expands on past findings by contextualizing the effect of spirituality from the reasoned action approach. The RAA highlights that behaviors are the product of intentions, and that intentions are dynamically influenced by beliefs about the anticipated experience of engaging in the behavior (i.e., attitudes), perceived evaluations of valued social groups (i.e., social norms), and personal beliefs about the ability of the individual to engage in the behavior (i.e., perceived behavioral control). Though conclusions based on these results must be tentative, given that this study is cross-sectional and specific to a particular context, the findings are consistent with the notion that spirituality may shape the underlying attitudinal and normative perceptions of service projects, but not the perceptions of behavioral control.

Table 3. Standardized Betas and Multiple R2 of Spirituality Variables With Attitudes, Social Norms, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Moral Evaluations

	Attitudes		Social Norms		Perceived Behavioral Control		Moral Evaluations	
Predictor	**Inner City**	**Tutoring**	**Inner City**	**Tutoring**	**Inner City**	**Tutoring**	**Inner City**	**Tutoring**
Christian God concept	.119	.113	.202**	.128	-.020	.008	.100	.149*
Wrathful God concept	.016	-.020	.037	-.046	.007	-.083	.092	.066
Intrinsic	.229**	.130	.025	.092	.094	-.064	.165*	.038
Extrinsic personal	.004	-.049	-.030	.003	.112	.061	.107	.078
Extrinsic social	-.041	.075	-.070	-.015	-.041	.025	-.090	-.063
Total spirituality (R2)	.103***	.048*	.055**	.045*	.020	.014	.087***	.049**

*Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.*

The intentions to engage in the service project were strongly predicted by perceived behavioral control and attitudes toward the service project. The findings indicate that the perception that one would enjoy the service and that one had control in regard to one's ability to participate were strong determinants. For the tutoring project, the role of attitudes, although significant, was surpassed by the effect of behavioral control, which included the belief that the tutoring experience would be easy and that the individual had "plenty of time" for the service. To put it tersely, if they believed they "could," then they most likely "would," at least in intention.

The current study tested an expanded reasoned action approach, including moral evaluation as a predictor, but this variable did not improve on the standard RAA model of intention. The findings indicated that moral evaluations of service projects did not play a significant role in determining intention to engage in the service project, which is surprising given that service is often perceived to be a moral action. Thus, the participants did not seem to intend to participate for overly moralistic reasons, such as a desire to "save the world." Similarly, a variable that often provides a unique effect, social norms, was not a significant predictor in the model. These findings may have been a unique factor of the context of the study and the particular service projects involved.

Given that spirituality was associated with these underlying RAA variables, except for perceived behavioral control, one would expect that spirituality would be associated with intent to engage in the service project. However, the association of the spirituality variables with the intentions to serve was found to be not significant. Thus, the hypothesized relationship between spirituality and intention to serve was not supported.

Two interconnected explanations for the lack of association between spirituality and intentions seem reasonable. The first is that the effect of spirituality on attitudes, social norms, and moral evaluations ranged in effect size from 5% to 10% of the variance explained, which reflects that these variables are shaped by numerous other factors. The second is that intentions were uniquely predicted by perceived behavioral control, with which spirituality was not associated. Therefore, it seems reasonable that a small, trivial relationship between spirituality and intentions may exist but may not have been detected due to lack of statistical power.

Given that the projects occurred midsemester, students may have found that their schedules were already full, and they could not make this commitment. If the study had investigated service projects that were less subject to perceived behavioral control—for example, projects available during spring break—a small to moderate effect of spirituality on intentions might have been apparent. Other factors may have shaped perceived behavioral control, such as self-efficacy in regard to tutoring or parental restrictions about traveling to an inner-city setting. From the onset, it was not expected that spirituality would be directly associated with perceived behavioral control, so it was not surprising, given the importance of perceived behavioral control for predicting intention to serve, that spirituality would not be strongly associated with intention to serve.

The low association between spirituality and service intentions indicated that students were not motivated primarily or strongly by a desire to enact their spirituality in the context of the service project, such as through evangelism or social justice. Thus, students as a whole, despite high levels of intrinsic religious motivation, were not approaching the service project simply as a spiritual mission; rather, they had multiple motivating factors. Numerous other factors likely affect intention to engage, including the university mandate to complete 120 hours of service projects, the perceptions of alternative options, and the relevance of the project for career goals, among many other influences.

Moreover, given that past research has theorized (Hesser, 2003; Radecke, 2007; Schaffer, 2004; Welch & Koth, 2013) and demonstrated empirically (Park et al., 2009) that engagement in service-learning can have positive effects on spirituality, the finding that spirituality may not influence intention to engage in a service project, at least in certain circumstances, might actually be perceived as a positive, as this indicates that these opportunities for spiritual growth will not be limited only to those who already have a more developed spirituality. If spirituality is not related to volunteering, then all people, regardless of their level of spirituality, might be able to experience spiritual growth and change through service.

Limitations and Future Directions

The primary limitation of the study is the uncertainty of whether its findings are generalizable to other service projects and university contexts. The study was conducted with particular existing service projects, rather than generic descriptions of volunteering opportunities. This methodology served to ground the project in a real context and to possibly reduce social desirability bias due to vague notions of volunteering. Moreover, the university where the research took place has a mandate for students to participate in service projects. This university also has strong commitments to the Christian faith, holding chapel three times per week, though it remains open to students of any religious tradition. Thus, the findings apply to students at Christian universities and may not be generalizable to students of other religious backgrounds. Nevertheless, this study demonstrates that spirituality may play some role in influencing perceptions of service projects. Researchers should continue to investigate this topic, utilizing various other study designs to investigate the role of spirituality and religion in influencing willingness to volunteer for service projects. In particular, it is important to investigate the effect that certain spiritual perspectives, such as fundamentalism or wrathful God concept, might have on the outcomes for the agencies and those being served, including the possibility of reinforcing hierarchies.

A secondary limitation is the use of intentions as a proxy for actual engagement. Although the author initially had hoped to assess actual engagement, doing so proved too cumbersome to accomplish in this study, given challenges in obtaining participation records from the relevant campus department. Future research should attempt to study actual service engagement, to investigate whether spirituality is associated with this volunteering and rule out the possibility that spirituality may be related to the underlying RAA variables solely due to social desirability.

Finally, the study did not give clarity in regard to the specific dimensions of religiousness that are associated with the particular constructs of the RAA. The selection of God concept and religious motivation as predictors was conceived in the notion that beliefs about God would shape perceptions of actions, including both attitudes and moral evaluations, and that religious motivation would shape social norms and moral evaluations. However, the inconsistency in the significance of the predictors did not bring clarity in regard to the role of these variables. Future research would benefit from utilizing measures of spirituality that are more proximal to the service projects, such as religious support, fundamentalism, and daily spiritual experiences.

Conclusion

This research study advances the understanding of the role of spirituality in forming the beliefs that underlie the intention, and subsequently the behavior, to engage in a service project. Although spirituality was weakly associated with beliefs about service engagement and not associated with the intention to serve, this surprising finding actually indicates that lower spirituality might not be an obstacle to service participation. In fact, this research suggests that the benefits of service engagement on spiritual development may be available to spiritually diverse students. As a result, universities should focus more on decreasing practical barriers to participation, such as conflicts with school schedules, rather than being concerned about appealing to the spirituality of the potential participants. It is the author's hope, given the substantial benefits of service engagement for students, faculty, the university, and the community, that this research encourages ongoing attempts to include service within the university, either as a part of the curriculum (i.e., service-learning) or as a mandate for graduation (i.e., service requirement).

About the Author

Curtis Lehmann *is associate professor at Azusa Pacific University and is a licensed psychologist in California. His primary research interests include spirituality and mental health, including suicide, posttraumatic stress, and stigma toward mental illness and addiction. He obtained his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.*

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Translating Across Registers: Pragmatist Inquiry in Engaged Scholarship

Jerry Shannon, Abigail Borron, Hilda E. Kurtz, Alexis Weaver, Sarah Otto-Wang, Vista Gilliam

Abstract

Inquiry is a central concept within pragmatism, defined generally as the process of collectively defining problematic aspects of current social practices and developing better alternatives. Translation—defined broadly as the labor of negotiating, transforming, and synthesizing diverse experiences—is a critical but understudied component of pragmatist inquiry. In this article, we articulate how translation occurred across multiple registers in a collaborative community-engaged research project involving university researchers and a regional food bank, focusing on translation as logistical, affective, and positional labor. Our analysis demonstrates how reflexive attention to various forms of translation across the research process can enrich socially engaged research.

Keywords: pragmatism, translation, food insecurity

Pragmatist inquiry has enjoyed a modest resurgence in social research over the last decade (Barnes, 2008; Biesta, 2010; Harney, McCurry, Scott, & Wills, 2016; Morgan, 2014). Rooted in community-engaged methods and anti-foundationalist approaches to knowledge production, pragmatist research focuses on provisional knowledges that are useful to a specific historical moment, rather than on comprehensive theoretical frameworks with robust metaphysical footings (Biesta, 2010). Through a process of inquiry, pragmatist research draws multiple stakeholders into conversation to develop new and more beneficial alternatives to current practices. Pragmatist inquiry brings diverse groups into conversation to develop shared understanding and new ideas.

In this article, we argue that *translation* is a central but understudied aspect of this process. Although it is invoked in related work in actor-network theory (ANT), translation is a term rarely used by Dewey, James, Rorty, or other prominent pragmatists (Barnett & Bridge, 2013). In ANT, it refers primarily to the transformation of knowledges through networks of human and nonhuman actants (Best & Walters, 2013; Callon, 1984). Our use of translation goes beyond its use in ANT, where the term foregrounds the process of scientific research, to include other registers, ranging from affective interactions between participants to logistical arrangements among geographically dispersed actors.

We examine the role of translation within pragmatist inquiry through reflection on a community-engaged research collaboration between the Atlanta Community Food Bank (referred to here as the food bank) and researchers at the University of Georgia, conducted in spring 2017. The food bank was beginning a new initiative called Stabilizing Lives intended to develop new supports to help households reach economic and social stability. Such supports included increased access to food pantries and connections to related social services around housing or health care issues for clients of those pantries/food insecure households. Food bank staff were intrigued with the housing first model of support (Tsemberis,

Gulcur, & Nakae, 2004; Woodhall-Melnik et al., 2015) and wanted to explore ways in which the food bank could play a role in reducing stressors related to food insecurity so that clients could focus attention on other pressing concerns.

In order better to understand how clients experienced various stressors, food bank staff partnered with a team of researchers at the University of Georgia (UGA) to develop a research design that involved clients at five partner food pantries. UGA researchers collaborated with food bank staff to develop a mixed-methods research project soliciting input from a group of staff, volunteers, and clients (collectively recognized as planning teams) at multiple food pantries. Planning teams used interviewing, photo-elicitation, and concept mapping to collectively identify potential new conceptual frameworks and service models for pantries within the food bank's network.

In this article, we draw on the Stabilizing Lives research project as a case study to consider the work of translation in three distinct registers: (1) translation as logistical work, (2) translation as affective work, and (3) translation as positional work. In line with the goals of pragmatist inquiry, each of these components was essential in bringing the previously marginalized voices of food pantry clients to the table and facilitating a productive conversation about new models of food assistance within their communities.

We hope that this account of a staged research process broadens the ways pragmatist inquiry is understood as a paradigm for engaged research, highlights the central role of translation in research designed for social change, and informs the design of future community-based inquiry projects. Through an exploration of the role each of these played in supporting the Stabilizing Lives research project, this article offers insight and future guidance to those pursuing engaged, pragmatist-informed research.

Pragmatism, Inquiry, and Translation

The design of our research was broadly informed by previous work in participatory action research (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007), community-engaged scholarship (Robinson, Block, & Rees, 2016; Sieber, 2006), and the culture-centered approach to health communication (Dutta, 2008, 2010). Each of these traditions prioritizes nonhierarchical, process-focused research practices that engage participants as coinvestigators, specifically in the context of articulating and prioritizing problems and developing solutions (Dutta, 2008).

Beyond these influences, the project was conceptually grounded primarily in the pragmatist concept of *inquiry*. Within pragmatist thought, inquiry is "a process by which beliefs that have become problematic are examined and resolved through action" (Morgan, 2014, p. 1047). Staff at the food bank had recognized that the provision of emergency food to thousands of metro area clients was not meeting the clients' needs. The massive logistical work performed by the food bank was not directly assisting clients out of poverty or alleviating the need for emergency food. Thus, the very inception of the project was rooted in a pragmatist recognition of the need to look beyond existing institutional practices to find new insights into how to play a more transformative role in the lives of the clientele.

Within the pragmatist tradition, inquiry requires active reflection to fashion new and more useful truths (Morgan, 2014). Truth, or the truthfulness of a given theory, is gauged not through its coherence with a broader framework of metaphysical thought, but through its ability to describe and usefully inform individuals' interactions with the world. For many pragmatists,

> ideas [don't] already exist in perfect form but [emerge] contingently and experimentally in response to the particular needs and practices of people as they [live] out their lives in a given place and time. Ideas [are] like knives and forks, implements to accomplish particular tasks, and not transcendent truths. (Barnes, 2008, p. 1544)

Pragmatism thus emphasizes the importance of *praxis*, the interplay of action and reflection that constitutes and revises human knowledge (Bridge, 2014).

For John Dewey, one of the major figures of early pragmatism, social practices could be separated into two broad categories: habit and inquiry. Dewey viewed habit as "the beliefs that we have acquired from previous experiences [that] can adequately handle the demands for action in our current cir-

cumstances" (Morgan, 2014, p. 1046). These established—but still fallible—truths unconsciously guide everyday human action. Inquiry begins when habit is no longer judged sufficient, whether through changing circumstances or the identification of previously unrecognized problems. Through a process of inquiry, diverse parties can collectively identify problems and develop new solutions to social problems. In Dewey's view, diverse parties included "all those who are affected by the indirect consequences of transactions to such an extent that it is deemed necessary to have those consequences systematically cared for" (Dewey, 1927, p. 16-17, as cited in Barnett & Bridge, 2013, p. 1027).

If inquiry draws from diverse, collective experiences of stakeholders, then *translation* is a core part of this process. Translation is not a narrow intellectual cognitive exercise but calls on and is constituted through a set of embodied practices rooted in everyday life and practical concerns. We define translation as the labor of negotiating, transforming, and synthesizing diverse experiences and perspectives with the goal of developing shared understanding and new sets of practices. The work of translation is fundamental to bringing together diverse parties to develop new language and practices to produce more beneficial outcomes (Barnett & Bridge, 2013; Hepple, 2008). Most straightforwardly, translation involves *logistical labor*, drawing on technological tools for the representation and sharing of participants' words and experiences across media and domains, as well as tools for managing the logistics that bring stakeholders together at the table. Translation also involves *affective labor*, the work of fostering trust and mutual understanding among diverse stakeholders (Harney et al., 2016), as well as empathizing with others' experiences and backgrounds. Lastly, translation involves *positional labor*, being mindful of the institutional contexts and interests relevant to a research project and reflexively sharing past experiences and expertise. Through this article, we reflect on these various forms of translation and the ways they supported and sustained the process of pragmatist inquiry in the Stabilizing Lives research collaboration.

Methods and Context

The goal of this research was to better understand the obstacles facing clients and trade-offs made between food needs and other concerns such as housing, transportation, and/or health care. To that end, we engaged with a range of actors to identify practices and procedures that would better serve the food bank in its efforts to support its clientele. Given its emphasis on the contingent and historically situated nature of knowledge, research in a pragmatist paradigm is often a hybrid mix of discourses and methods (Feilzer, 2009; Morgan, 2007, 2014). Our hybrid mix of methods included photovoice and concept mapping (Haque & Rosas, 2010) in combination with focus group conversations and individual interviews.

A full description of our research project and results is available in a related publication (Kurtz, Borron, Shannon, & Weaver, 2019). In brief, researchers from the University of Georgia (Jerry, Abigail, and Hilda) collaborated with staff from the Atlanta Community Food Bank (Alexis, Sarah, and Vista) to better understand the factors affecting clients' daily food provisioning strategies. Working at five different agencies across Metro Atlanta, we asked clients to submit photos of their "food worlds"—the ways they procured, transported, prepared, and ate foods—and talk about these photos in one-on-one interviews. At each agency, a planning team of clients, staff, and volunteers sorted client-selected photos into groups based on themes using concept mapping methodology (Haque & Rosas, 2010), and the whole team discussed issues raised by the photos in each grouping. In a final design summit, the research team and partner agencies shared our findings and brainstormed implications for new food assistance programs.

To better understand the role of translation in the project, food bank staff and UGA researchers agreed to jointly author a methodological reflection on our work together. To accommodate professional demands on the time of the food bank staff, rather than organize a multisite writing process, we staged a research team conversation among members of the team as the basis for this methodological reflection, held soon after the conclusion of the formal study. The conversation (which was then transcribed) touched on the research process, our partnership, the collaborative processes, multidisciplinary and experiential positionalities, and observations that constituted all facets of the project. UGA researchers then

used this conversation as a foundation for collaboratively writing this article, soliciting input from food bank staff throughout the writing process.

Translation as Logistical Labor

Our research included multiple research sites and rounds of meetings, making this a logistically challenging project. The work of translating schedules and data to allow for the research to proceed was performed through a combination of dedicated staff time and technological tools. In the three subsections below, we discuss how translation helped us plan for and implement this research.

Meeting at a Distance

Digital technologies played pivotal roles enabling the translation of knowledges, techniques, and experiences among the research team throughout the project. The sprawling design of our project, which involved multiple stakeholders and meetings at five different sites across the metro area, complicated project planning and communication. Digital tools played a key role in translating across this distance, allowing UGA researchers and food bank staff to be present with each other, either virtually or physically.

Given that the research team was based in Athens and the food bank team partners were 80 miles away in Atlanta, it was obvious at the outset that teleconferencing technology would be essential. We came to rely on Zoom (http://zoom.us), a videoconferencing software that enables meeting participants to participate from more than two locations. The research design was crafted and refined over the course of a series of teleconferenced meetings. Once the project was under way, food bank staff and UGA researchers could meet to coevaluate progress to date, reflect on preliminary impressions and findings, and refine processes moving forward as time permitted.

Pragmatism highlights the importance of embodied research practices in supporting processes of inquiry. Teleconferencing paired with a shared Google drive created the effect of being in the same room with a shared filing cabinet during meetings actually held over a distance of 80 miles, from two or three different offices. These crucial digital technologies translated distance into meaningful and productive copresence. When the researchers and food bank partners could not be in the same room, engaging in proximate and embodied research evaluation, videoconferencing enabled us to listen to spoken language and body language as we worked to translate between action and reflection. The visual dimension of videoconferencing seemed to strengthen the emerging research relationships.

During the reflective group conversation, we began to discuss our respective roles in the process. One of the food bank staff expressed direct empathy with food pantry clientele, signaling that she had personally experienced food insecurity as a child. She began to choke up a bit as she recounted how she felt during that time, and slid her chair to the side, off camera. Because we could see her face and her body language as she wrestled with her feelings in the moment, the UGA researchers were able to respond in a way that (we hope) showed care and concern for her well-being, as well as to reflect out loud on the ways in which her positionality was vital to the project. Hilda responded to what this staff person had shared, thanking her for sharing her experience and continuing:

> That's really powerful. This is actually a . . . really important part of what's going on in the academy that people bring a wide range of knowledge gained in different ways, and different life experiences to open up academic questions. . . . I think we're at a really important and generative kind of intersection between those two spaces.

Had we been on an audio-only call, we might not have understood the nature of the conversational interaction and would have been poorly positioned to respond as a result.

We can see embedded in this exchange one of the key premises of pragmatism: Knowledge production is a shared and embodied exercise. Relying on videoconferencing for team meetings played a role in the development of relationships of candor and trust among members of the research team who were embedded in different institutions. In this particular instance, the technology enabled a secondary line of affective communication to occur, through body language, silence,

and glances among others present. That line of communication concerned the emotional stress of going without food and how that embodied experience creates a powerful base of shared understanding between people whose current circumstances differ widely. We were also aware of the limits of this tool. Videoconferencing provided temporally bounded contact: natural social interaction taking place before or after a scheduled meeting was limited to our respective locations and immediate colleagues, rather than the collective group. Still, videoconferencing deepened the embodied and experiential knowledge being produced and relayed in this short encounter.

Collecting Participant Photographs

Teleconferencing technology and Google Drive's virtual shared filing cabinet addressed challenges common to research projects and were digital improvements on analog modes of practice. They played pivotal roles in making the project feasible from a fiscal and logistical standpoint. Managing and sharing photographs from clients was an additional challenge. Although the request to participants seemed simple—take photos of your food world and submit them to us—figuring out a way to share these photos with the project team in a timely manner was not, as we needed to collect these photos before our follow-up interviews. Even further, we wanted to retrieve the photos in ways that did not impose additional burdens on pantry staff or volunteers.

This problem was eventually solved by creating a project-specific Google Voice phone number. We knew that many participants had smartphones with built-in cameras, and we also knew that food bank staff had the means to provide those who did not with a digital camera. Through a Google Voice number, participants could text their photographs from their smartphones, keeping their submissions private and their contact information accessible to the research team alone. A research assistant monitored the Google Voice number and retrieved and sorted the photographs received. By acting as a medium through which photos could be created and shared with the broader research team, both the phones and the Google Voice number supported the process of translation in this project. The Google Voice number also provided a way for the research team to communicate directly with clients, as we could send text messages directly to clients or answer questions they might have. In this way, the technology allowed us to be virtually present with these clients, even as they were dispersed across the metropolitan area. This number gave these participants an outlet for sharing photos reflecting their own personal perceptions and experiences. At the same time, due to the more impersonal nature of this system, it was still difficult to build rapport or address concerns about sending something "wrong" or overly revealing, particularly as this took place after only a single in-person meeting with the research team.

Accommodating Schedules and Timelines

Getting all parties to the table is a key aspect of pragmatist inquiry, given its focus on developing shared framings of problems and collectively identified solutions. However, translating complex schedules and research timelines into operational work schedules can be complicated and time-consuming in its own right. This project called for schedule coordination with staff, volunteers, and clients at five different pantries for multiple focus groups and individual interviews, resulting in a coordination of 40+ individual schedules. Each individual had their own sets of responsibilities and time commitments. Food bank staff, particularly Sarah and Vista, were primarily responsible for coordinating these meetings, and their labor of translating complex daily schedules into potential meeting times made these conversations possible. This involved coordinating schedules with clients who had shifting availability due to work schedules (often involving multiple jobs) and childcare as well as working with pantries to schedule meetings around regular food distributions.

As Alexis stated in our conversation, the fact that our meetings took place during the workweek, and often during the daytime, made them difficult for some clients:

> We want the right clients there, and how do you work around their work schedules? At one point Melissa [a pseudonym] came back, and was like, I don't know. She felt very . . . Because she went back to work [after having a baby], and we didn't realize she was going back to work. She felt very, I don't know, excluded? Or like it wasn't worth her . . .

> I don't know. There was something about, I don't know. Just because of our timeline. There were ways that we scheduled meetings that I wish we had been able to figure out better how to do more evenings, or weekends, or things that met with the clients' schedules better.

At the same time, food bank staff were also coordinating with a graduate student and Jerry to gauge availability of UGA's seven-member research team, which included faculty with regular teaching commitments and graduate and undergraduate students with their own coursework. Although technological tools assisted with this task, we had to try several options for managing these complex schedules, including listing open times from every member of the research team and creating Google Calendar invites. In the end, our most effective strategy was for the UGA research team to identify multiple available time windows that food bank staff could use to coordinate with planning team members, storing notes on this process on a Google document. Unfortunately, this often meant that the research collaborators and food bank staff schedules were prioritized over those of the clients.

Beyond times for specific meetings, this research also required translating expectations for research timelines and processes. For the food bank, past informal research with clients had operated on a timeline of weeks rather than months. This was the first time the food bank had undertaken such an extensive research endeavor. A research project that covered 6 months, though relatively short by academic standards, was thus a new experience, but one many staff found valuable. As Alexis stated,

> Internal food bank staff around them getting to hear directly from clients, and see that their work is actually . . . has a connection. But then also I think what the agency staff said in the meeting is they would never have had time to do this kind of research themselves, but they've acknowledged how important it was. For me, that was incredibly valuable. That they got to really hear, and dig deep even though they may have thought they were doing that from a completely other perspective.

For the UGA research team, the inverse was true: The process felt more rushed than a standard academic project, which would have provided more space for working with clients specifically on photo collection and interpretation. Many members of UGA's research team were also funded only for a single 16-week semester, limiting the time scale in another way and reflecting institutionally influenced boundaries around the length of the project. During our final conversation, Jerry asked whether the potential benefits of a longer project would have outweighed time costs:

> You could easily have had a whole 'nother meeting to kind of continue to develop some of this stuff that Alexis was talking about, but I felt like with the clients that we have, there would have been problems, and just the logistics involved. There would have been some point, which that was kind of too much as well. Even in the ideal world with what there had been, would you have clients do that in that many meetings, and have to come to that many things, and that would've been more intensive. The ideal world, yeah, we would've had more time at the front end and more time at the back end. But I'm not sure if that would have even worked if we had the resources and time.

The pragmatist imperative to get diverse parties to the table to collectively identify problems and develop new solutions to food insecurity created a robust set of logistical problems. We addressed these issues by using digital technologies and negotiations among stakeholders, translating our conversations, research materials, schedules, and expectations into a workable process of inquiry.

Translation as Affective Labor

In common usage, *translation* is the act of transforming written or spoken language, but in our project, it also often involved the work of identifying and representing affective elements of individuals' past and present experience. Through photos, discussion, and observation, we tried to do the affective work of incorporating these unspoken aspects of participants' experience into the research.

Photo-elicitation

Harper's (2002) overview of photo-elicitation as an interview technique highlights three interrelated ways that photos figure in interviews. Most straightforwardly, photographs serve as visual inventories of the people and things in a person's life-world. Photographs also capture views of social relations and events "that are a part of collective or institutional paths" (Clark-Ibanez, 2004, p. 1511). And finally, photographs offer views into intimate zones of experience that might otherwise not be surfaced in a research interview.

It is widely understood that using participant photographs as an interview prompt not only provides structure to an interview, but engages participants in a way that can build rapport across the interview encounter. The participant-driven photo-elicitation (PDPE) interview can be seen as an encounter of translation, from lived experience through photographs into an interview as conversational encounter and then into research insights. Clark-Ibanez (2004) notes that "photographs act as a medium of communication between researcher and participant," albeit one that does not necessarily "represent empirical truths or 'reality'" (p. 1512). In the process of pragmatist inquiry, PDPE interviews can provide new and unexpected insights generative of new theories and practices.

Despite their value, our research team negotiated varying expectations for clients' photographs throughout our project. The photos created by clients were different from what food bank staff were expecting. They had initially hoped to stage an exhibit of photographs at a later date and expected that the photographs would show obstacles to food security and situational trade-offs. Their hope was that an exhibit of such photographs could translate the lived experience of food bank clientele into prompts for institutional and broader policy discussion and change. Most of the photographs, however, were of food—food at the table, on display in a food pantry or store, food being prepared in a kitchen or served in a home. From the food bank perspective, these photos did not explicitly address some of the more complex structural factors impacting household food insecurity and raised questions about how well clients understood the expectations for the research.

> *Alexis:* I think the first time I saw them I was a little disappointed. Just because I was expecting . . . well, I was not expecting. I was hoping for something closer with the way the Witnesses to Hunger project has done, and things like that. I think what I liked was then. . . . For me, one of the things that was compelling wasn't just what people said in the interviews about the photos that they took, but also about the photos they didn't take, and I know how you visually capture something that somebody hasn't taken a picture of, but that was really powerful for me.
>
> *Vista:* Do you think they really understood [pause] the photo [pause] taking the pictures? Do you think they really grasped that at all? I'm asking a question. Honest.
>
> *Jerry:* No, that's good.
>
> *Abigail:* I think that they in varying degrees yes, I think that they understood. However, what I heard often, and I know you're there. I saw you shaking your head. What I heard often was almost like this being very timid, or not wanting to necessarily capture what their actual experiences, because of a sense of either stigma, or shame in what they felt like. . . . I think in many ways they thought we wanted something very perfect. They thought we were looking for something, whereas we just wanted them to share anything with us . . . they were hesitant to share certain things, because they didn't want to be judged as a result of it.

A few minutes later, Alexis and Vista clarified their expectations further.

> *Alexis:* I was more disappointed not in the quality of the photos, but in the fact that they were all pictures of prepared food. That was my biggest disappointment. That it was actually more directly food related than non-food related. I sometimes think that some of that was the way that the setup. I know that it's helpful to look at the families with the pictures of their groceries,

> but I think it also sort of set people in a particular direction that . . . it wasn't the quality of the photos. It was actually the content.
>
> *Hilda:* The content. Okay.
>
> *Vista:* I was looking for a photo of someone opening the refrigerator, and just taking a picture of it. It could've been bare. That would've spoke so loudly, you know? How many times have you gone to your fridge, and there's nothing in there. That's the truth.

These interactions reveal how the expectations for client photos created tension throughout the project—for clients who sought to meet institutional expectations and for food bank staff who desired wide-ranging and emotionally resonant images. The university research team, while also somewhat disappointed in the lack of variety in client photos, found them to be powerful tools for conversation during individual interviews and focus groups.

From a research perspective, conversations about participants' photographs can range widely beyond the image itself, triggering social meanings well beyond what an interviewer might have thought to ask during an interview where such photos were not present. Clark-Ibanez (2004) and Kurtz and Wood (2014), for example, demonstrate that PDPE interviews surface meanings that might have remained hidden in a more standard question-and-answer interview format. So, for example, one of the research participants' deck of photographs included many photographs of beautifully plated Latin American food—enchiladas, taquitos, and the like. The presentation of this food seemed important, so the researcher asked about the occasions for these meals. In the conversation that ensued, the participant described an extended family network in the area, and the practice of gathering at one another's homes for holiday meals and birthdays. Asked which holiday or birthday had occurred within the photographing period, the participant replied that none had occurred, but she wanted to demonstrate her ability to cook meals from her native country as part of the research project. The conversation that ensued yielded insights into some of the ways in which pride, self-esteem, and gratitude are complexly implicated in the receipt of emergency food. Research interviews between university researchers and people who are living in poverty and in need of food pantry assistance are fraught with uneven power relations and complicated orientations to hunger, frustration, and social stigma. Conventional interviews could have become mired in simplified discursive patterns related to any of these, if researchers had relied on an exogenous research literature to pose interview questions. Using photo-elicitation was vital to disrupting an uneven balance of power and privilege and inviting participants to contribute their own understandings of relying on emergency food to the research project. Using the participant's photographs as a prompt, and engaging in an open-ended conversation about where and why she took them, led to research insights about living in relation to the stigma of poverty, allowing us to translate these lived experiences to communicable findings.

In the reflective group conversation, Vista evoked some of these very strengths of photo-elicitation interviews when describing her goals for the project:

> One of the goals I have was to tap into the individual to find out how they really think. How they really feel about not having enough. Enough to eat, or the different struggles that they go through . . . how certain people can make you feel, or what will stop you from going to the pantry. Is it pride, or sometimes pride does keep you from going, because you don't want to be looked down upon, so I really wanted to tap into those people, and really get to know their hearts, and to see what we can do to help them to feel in such a way that they're not intimidated.

Vista signals her own knowledge that feelings and behaviors related to emergency food assistance are complex, social, and deeply linked to sense of self. From a pragmatist viewpoint, such affective and embodied knowledge is critical to processes of knowledge construction.

The intersection of different modes of knowledge production—disembodied and discursive in the academy and embodied and affective in this research field—calls for careful translation. Participant-driven

photo-elicitation interviews served as a key, and we would say necessary, device for effecting this translation. Operating in a slightly different register, as concerns arose over the content of clients' photographs, researchers tried to work with both food bank staff and clients to translate expectations and communicate the value we saw emerging from this process.

Observation

Observation was a critical component of translation and collaborative knowledge production, generated and shared by the collective project team (researchers and staff). During reflective group discussions, we shared observations about the participants, discussing forms of body language, types of comments, and distinct interactions. The richness and authenticity of such observations are dependent on the role of researchers who fit the model of "an engaged practitioner skilled in the art of relationship building, listening, collaborating and acting with others" (Harney et al., 2016, p. 318). Observation by itself does not equate to insider knowledge of individuals' lived experiences and held knowledge (Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman, 2015). Throughout the data collection period, we reflected on and learned from the different knowledges of pantry operations held by food bank staff, pantry personnel, and UGA researchers, all of which shaped our perceptions of behavior by pantry planning teams. Researchers triangulated observations with interviews and personal interactions to translate the lived experience of participants into sharable research findings.

For example, during the reflective group discussion, we began talking about the interactions we observed among the various participants at the interagency summit, which included approximately 75 key stakeholders—clients, staff, volunteers, community partners, and researchers. The summit was a day-long event at the conclusion of the project, and the food bank provided a breakfast and lunch to all participants. Alexis and Vista brought up a particular observation they had of a client filling his plate during breakfast:

> *Alexis:* We talked about that actually a little bit also from the perspective of how people engaged with the food at the summit. . . . I'm not saying we were doing it from a place of malice, but there was still a judgment component of our conversation, and we had to sort of stop ourselves.
>
> *Vista:* My friends, and one young man came up, and it was so much food that he had like six pieces of bacon, and two sausages. I didn't mind him eating all that he wanted, but I didn't want him to waste it either. He's like, "Oh my god, there's food. Let me get all that I can right now." . . . I was about to say, why don't you go ahead, and eat that, and when you finish you can come back . . . but I've seen so many of the clients just kind of . . . It's like a squirrel. You're gathering up your nuts, 'cause you don't know what the next day gonna look like, or winter is coming, and there won't be enough. I've seen so much of that.
>
> *Alexis:* I think the flip side is, people who aren't experiencing that. How they observe those kinds of things happening. Good. Pretty good learning for us.

In her final comment in this part of the longer conversation, Alexis notes the importance of embodied experience for making sense of such an encounter. Vista signaled that she responded negatively to this behavior at first and wanted to signal to the man to not take so much food at once. In other words, she was responding to, and ready to reinforce, a set of social norms related to institutional practice. Then she drew on a more empathetic positionality, in which she looked at the situation from the client's perspective. From that perspective, piling a plate high with an extra helping of food on the first pass through a buffet line made quite a bit of sense. Alexis signals a recognition that persons without that embodied experience would be likely to negatively judge such behavior. Ingrained institutional perspectives on food insecurity and, more broadly, on behavior around food for food-insecure people are partial at best and arguably inadequate. The multistage research project being reported on at the summit had surfaced the complex variations in attitudes and behaviors of food-insecure people toward food that were not directly understood or appreciated by many staff in the food bank itself. In the moment, and in

the telling of the moment, Vista and Alexis effectively drew on different positional perspectives to translate their understanding of the man's encounter with the buffet line.

Translation as Positional Labor

Each member of our research team has a unique background with respect to food insecurity, and we are all also embedded in specific institutional contexts. Doing the reflexive work of identifying and articulating our positionality was thus a key part of this process.

Forms of Expertise and Partnership

The UGA research faculty in this project—Abigail, Hilda, and Jerry—have been involved in previous projects that revolved around various aspects of food insecurity and food accessibility. As a result, they brought expertise to this project based on theoretical frameworks, empirical understanding, and observations. Although this was valuable in the development of the research design, the ongoing dialogue within the team revealed the valuable cultural and social capital of the food bank staff, who better understood the everyday workings of the food bank and partner pantries. The complementary forms of expertise helped the team gel into a research partnership, rather than a client–funder relationship, one which required the translation of knowledge and experience into a form that others could understand. As one example, we came to see Vista in her community outreach capacity as playing an essential role translating between domains of knowledge across the project:

> *Jerry:* So, from our perspective we don't know kind of the whole layout of the day-to-day how these agencies are operating. Kind of what's possible, what's not possible. Providing some perspective on what the different policies might be about how often people can come to these kinds of things . . .
>
> *Vista:* I think one of the roles I felt [I had] was to come in and make sure the clients felt comfortable in sharing. That was one of my main things I wanted them to be able to feel relaxed. It was okay to share, so that's one of the reasons why I wanted to be there. To make sure they see that face, and they would open up, and give me the information that you need to be able to do the research for to help us do our part . . .
>
> *Hilda:* Vista, what you were saying, I think that was really, really key. Because we're a bunch of outsiders, you know? Driving from Athens, and they don't know us from Adam, so it was really, really vital. It couldn't have moved forward without you doing that, you know what I mean? That kind of bow between the two of you interpreting the site, the field site if you will for us, and then giving us entrée, and reaching out in this authentic and authenticating way to the research participants. That's a really vital role that only so many people are positioned to play, so I'd like to say that's a real key factor from my perspective.
>
> *Abigail:* There are unique personalities that have a lot of credibility, have a lot of sensitivity to understanding what the needs are at very much of that local level . . .

Beyond issues of expertise, the balanced nature of this project made defining our working relationship difficult at times. The food bank provided funding to UGA for this research project, primarily to cover the cost of two graduate research assistants who helped with interviewing, prepared materials for each meeting, and assisted in analysis. For UGA researchers, this was an unusual model because the research was neither funded by an outside third party (e.g., federal agency or foundation), nor was it a project where we acted as a consultant completing a preidentified analysis for the food bank as a client. From the food bank's perspective, collaboration with academic researchers was also a new experience. Although our shared goal was a working relationship as coresearchers, receiving funding from the food bank produced some anxiety for UGA researchers about ensuring that the research process and outcomes met the food bank's expectations. Jerry voiced this concern in our conversation:

> *Jerry:* We weren't just coming in to have you tell us what to do, and we do work for you. It felt more col-

> laborative than that, but I felt a lot of pressure to make sure that at the end of this process you felt like you were getting your money's worth. That was the question I was putting in the back of my mind.

Although Alexis quickly replied that she "wrote the check and forgot about it," translating expectations for roles and responsibilities, along with research outcomes, was a consistent component of this research process.

Positionalities

As Vista continually negotiated dialogue and activities with food pantry clients throughout the duration of the project, she and Alexis both translated the projects' goals and findings into a form that could transform the food bank as an institution as well as partner food pantries. The food bank staff thus occupied multiple positionalities, which included representing the institution itself to outside pantries, as well as seeking to effect change within it. For example, Alexis described the pressures of the food bank to raise support and funding:

> At the institutional level . . . there's [the] marketing communications department, or developmental department [saying], "Oh, we need a client story. We need it right now." So then it's like calling an agency, and doing an interview, and it's felt like taking a story to go get money. . . . We only tell the stories that have a good bow at the end . . . "We had a hard time, we came through the bank, and, yay, we love the food bank!"

The goal of pragmatist inquiry is to create new habits that address problematic situations, but, as the quote above illustrates, this creates tensions for those who must convince others of the value of current practices while also seeking to reform them. In this sense, translation was needed between the mission and goals of a nonprofit organization and the potentially more critical perspective of social science research.

Vista, who readily acknowledged this challenge, described her desire to reintroduce the client back to the organization to address the "silent" stigma that continues to persist—helping to clarify who they are, what they experience, and what they need:

> I kind of want to reintroduce the client back to the organization. I think our focus has gone off a little bit, and if that's what we're really here to do is to serve the people, then they really need to get to be reintroduced to the clients, the people, again.

Alexis also described her surprise at the stereotypes and disparity of perceptions toward clients on the part of staff and volunteers within the food bank:

> When we started doing some presentations to the food banks back in the fall about the work we were trying to do . . . we were shocked to find that the people who were working in the organization with us had the same stereotypes and impressions about people in need, and so it was still this very "the person is broken." It's not thinking about things that like the system side, but, "It's your own fault if you've gotten into this situation." Or "If you have a job you won't need to use a food pantry." That stuff came up over, and over again from staff, and we were sort of shocked that we also work at the food bank and don't have that opinion. Another goal for me was to basically show people how hard people are working who are using the food pantry, but it's not some . . . fighting that large stereotype. I think we have gotten so removed to this point from the core work of what we do that we all fall into those same stereotypes that are out in the community. . . . So, for us, this is even newer work than we realized that it was.

Alexis and Vista were thus both insiders representing the food bank but also outsiders to parts of the organization they sought to influence. By managing this insider/outsider status, both worked to translate the stories, images, and ideas from this research in ways that could develop new sets of practices for the food bank and its partner pantries. In their paper on process pragmatism, Harney et al. (2016) explain that inquiry "becomes part of an ongoing process of sustaining a local alliance of organizations working together for the

common good. . . . Pragmatism is a philosophy focused on practice" (p. 318). That is, inquiry is an approach that challenges us to think about our epistemological and political practice as researchers and staff. Here Alexis and Vista point to a necessary shift that must take place in the nonprofit culture in order for this process to work: The organization must acquire the ability to translate between its own multiple and sometimes competing goals.

Concluding Reflection

Pragmatist inquiry has significant potential as a framework for community-engaged research, due to its focus both on bringing diverse voices to the table and on the key role of praxis in creating relevant, actionable research. In this article, we argue that translation is a crucial but understudied aspect of this process. We use the musical metaphor of registers to describe the ways that translation was interwoven throughout our research process, incorporating various types of labor but also combining to sustain our larger project. The three registers we identified in this study are summarized in Table 1, and are by no means exclusive. First, translation was aided by technological tools that allowed us to be virtually present with one another, share and respond to photographs, and negotiate complex schedules and timelines. In other cases, translation was personal and affective, helping construct meaning from conversations and photos in interviews and focus groups and reflexively observing the behaviors of others involved in this research. Lastly, translation often required members of the research team to recognize and communicate the role of personal expertise as well as each person's positionality relative to their institutional context. In all cases, translation meant grappling with differences in position, background, expectations, and experience that complicated efforts to jointly develop new models for the food bank and its partner pantries. Reflexive attention to the process of translation across these registers allowed us to identify areas where we were more or less successful at bridging divides within our research team.

Our case study provides one model of the role of translation in pragmatist inquiry, and additional examples may be found in other research contexts. For example, in many projects, the process of data preparation and analysis is a form of translation, whether deciding how to structure quantitative analyses or coding qualitative data. The composition of the research team, founded on UGA's partnership with the food bank and covering multiple food pantries across a large metropolitan area, influenced our research project in multiple ways. The registers of translation we identify in this project are applicable to a wide variety of research settings, but the specifics of their articulation will likely vary by time and place.

When seeking to involve diverse community stakeholders in engaged, actionable research, the labor of translation is a fundamental component of the research

Table 1. Summary of the Three Registers of Translation Identified in This Article

Register	Summary	Examples
Logistical	Coordinating research details among researchers and facilitating communication.	Video conferences; photo submission by clients; scheduling research team meetings, interviews, and focus groups
Affective	Understanding and representing affective elements of clients' and researchers' shared experiences	Sharing and collectively interpreting photos; observing and interacting with others in focus groups and the concluding design summit
Positional	Recognizing researchers' varied forms of expertise and their institutional contexts	Communicating research expectations with planning teams; discussing institutional expectations and constraints

process. Through this article, we argue that attending to this process—identifying how and where translation occurs and identifying strategies to do it more effectively—is a critical component of the research process and can empower diverse groups to more effectively develop collective solutions to social problems.

About the Authors

Jerry Shannon *is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and the Department of Financial Planning, Housing, and Consumer Economics at the University of Georgia. He studies accessibility to food and affordable housing, with a specific interest in community-engaged research that fosters healthier and more equitable communities. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.*

Abigail Borron *is an associate professor in agricultural communication at the University of Georgia. Her areas of research include culture-centered communication and university engagement among underserved populations. She received her Ph.D. from Purdue University.*

Hilda E. Kurtz *is a professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Georgia. Her research interests include alternative food politics and networks, food sovereignty, certification schemes, and innovative approaches to the emergency food system. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.*

Alexis Weaver *is community impact manager for the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Her area of interest focuses on the relationship between food security and household economic stability, as well as integrating the voices of the unheard and marginalized into systemic decision-making processes. She earned an M.S. in community and regional planning (concentration in participatory planning) from the University of Texas.*

Sarah Otto-Wang *is community impact coordinator with the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Her research focuses on building equitable communities by fostering cross-sector collaborations that sustainably address systemic poverty and enhance food security. She earned an M.S. in public policy (concentration in urbanization and food security) from Georgia State University.*

Vista Gilliam *is community impact coordinator with the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Her experience includes facilitating relationships with food-insecure families, working with food pantries to improve service to those families.*

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Public Libraries as a Context for the Study of Learning and Development

Michelle Taylor, Megan E. Pratt, Richard A. Fabes

Abstract

Public libraries are ideal contexts for supporting child development and family involvement (Families and Work Institute, 2015; IMLS, 2013). Families with children often attend public libraries to participate in educational programming and experiences, yet university-based developmental scientists who study how people develop and adapt across the lifespan have not fully recognized them as a significant context for the study of learning and development. This reflective essay suggests that developmental scientists and public libraries can achieve mutual benefits through joint research and evaluation efforts within the library context. We illustrate this type of collaboration through a firsthand account of a university–library partnership developed to support family engagement in library settings that promotes optimal parenting and enhances children's school readiness.

Keywords: public library, early learning, community partnership

Today's public libraries are built on a long history of providing free, equitable, and equal access to information for all people in the communities they serve (American Library Association, 2014). Despite adapting to social, historical, and technological changes over the decades, their core value remains the same: to serve as a community anchor that meets the local needs of individuals across all ages and stages of life, including children. In the early 2000s, many were writing about the demise of public libraries (Bruccoli, 2007). Shrinking budgets and a fear of decreasing interest in reading paper-based materials took a huge toll on this long-standing community institution. However, since that time, public libraries have adapted their service model to address a wider range of community needs. This expansion includes offering more experiences that encourage knowledge and skill building, often in the form of programming (Wiegand, 2015). For example, in 2012, there were 92.6 million attendees at the 4 million programs offered by U.S. public libraries (Swan et al., 2014). This represents an increase of 37.6% in attendance from 2004. Programs for families with children include storytimes, school readiness classes, hands-on activities (e.g., makerspaces, robotics), and parenting classes; libraries also provide enriching children's spaces with books and materials (e.g., puppets, puzzles) that encourage learning through play and hands-on exploration. These changes are supported by efforts from the American Library Association (ALA) campaign titled *Libraries Transform* designed to increase public awareness of the value, impact, and services provided by libraries. This campaign's key message states, "Libraries today are less about what they have for people and more about what they do for and with people" (ALA, 2016, "Key Messages").

Despite the demonstrated value of public libraries to families with children, and a focus on providing educational programming and experiences, there remains great untapped potential for university-based developmental scientists who study how people develop and adapt across the lifespan to recognize and engage with libraries as a significant context for the study of learning and development. Reflecting on our own experience developing a university–library partnership,

we argue that greater collaboration between developmental scientists and public libraries can produce mutual benefits through joint research and evaluation efforts within the library context. On the one hand, libraries can benefit by strategically developing and refining library-based programming that effectively promotes the well-being of families with children. On the other hand, developmental scientists can benefit by broadening their understanding of learning and other developmental processes within ecologically valid, informal learning settings that reach a broad segment of the population. In this reflective essay we will (a) discuss how the expanding and changing role of the public library in the 21st century positions it well for partnership with developmental scientists; (b) highlight the intersecting goals of developmental scientists and public libraries that support engaged scholarship; and (c) provide an example of a university–public library partnership conducting community-based research focused on improving the lives of families with young children.

Changing Role of Public Libraries in the 21st Century

Public libraries adapt and evolve according to the changing needs of their communities. This has been reflected in recent years by a shift from serving primarily as book-lending institutions to institutions that provide varied and innovative learning experiences, including programming targeting families with children (Gouzie, 2013; IMLS, 2013; Naidoo, 2014). Indeed, in recent years libraries have been increasingly recognized as ideal contexts for supporting the development of children (young children, youth, and teens) and family involvement (Families and Work Institute, 2015; IMLS, 2013).

With a long history of serving as community anchors, public libraries exist within nearly every U.S. community. For example, 17,219 library branches reach approximately 96.4% of the population (Swan et al., 2014), and over 90% of Americans age 16 and older report visiting a public library at some point in their lives (Zickuhr, Rainie, & Purcell, 2013). There is also agreement within communities that libraries are important; according to a recent survey, 65% of U.S. citizens 16 and older say that closing their library would have a major negative impact on their community, and about one third say that closing their library would have a major negative impact on them and their family (Horrigan, 2015). Libraries appear even more valued by patrons who identify as racial/ethnic minorities, female, parents of minor children, or low income (Horrigan, 2015). Moreover, libraries can play a significant role in fostering literacy, particularly among those segments of the population that need special assistance in developing literacy skills, such as young children (Celano & Neuman, 2001).

Public libraries have a long history of providing children with a rich set of literacy-focused experiences. In step with increased awareness of the science of early childhood development, which highlights the need for experiences that support the *whole* child (i.e., all domains of development are interrelated; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000), public libraries are also increasingly offering programming that targets developmental domains beyond literacy (IMLS, 2013). For example, some libraries are offering experiences that encourage learning across many developmental domains, including social–emotional (e.g., self-regulation activities), physical (e.g., music and movement activities), and cognitive (e.g., science- and math-focused activities). However, although libraries are providing more stimulating materials and experiences that support children's learning and development (e.g., books, videos, technology, programs), research suggests that currently many of these efforts are subtle and thus not always effectively communicating to parents and caregivers the process of learning. For example, librarians often model literacy skills for parents during storytimes and provide learning materials and activities to support learning without explicitly explaining the important features to parents, describing why particular practices matter, or helping families develop skills they can use at home (Families and Work Institute, 2015).

Indeed, creating and providing high quality, developmentally appropriate experiences for families with children in informal community-based settings, like public libraries, which are distinct from other traditional learning contexts (e.g., home, school), is a challenging task. Increased recognition of the value of these community spaces as welcoming learning environments has led to increased attention from funding agencies, educators, policy makers, and developmen-

tal scientists, who see the great untapped potential of these spaces for promoting and understanding development in context (Bell, Lewenstein, Shouse, & Feder, 2009; Schauble, Leinhardt, & Martin, 1997). Thus, there is great potential for developmental scientists and public libraries to work together to bring about more explicit and intentional strategies to effectively support learning and development in these settings.

Taken together, public libraries' openness to adjusting service delivery to meet the needs of their communities, alongside a growing awareness of the need to understand and capitalize on experiences within these informal learning settings, means that great potential exists for collaborative efforts between developmental scientists and public libraries focused on improving community-based supports for families with children.

Capitalizing on Shared Goals

Building from a shared view of supporting life-long learning and a desire to improve human lives, developmental scientists and public libraries are well positioned to develop productive university–community partnerships that support effective library experiences for families. In addition to strengthening the effectiveness of library-based experiences for communities, such partnerships can also provide space for developmental scientists to move the field forward in terms of increasing understanding of how the processes that take place within relatively understudied ecological settings result in positive outcomes (Bornstein, 2015; Overton, 2015; Vandell, Larson, Mahoney, & Watts, 2015). Another commonality between the goals of library institutions and developmental scientists is a shared focus on promoting well-being across many stages of the lifespan, ranging from infancy to late adulthood. Both fields also recognize the importance of intergenerational experiences in families and communities, and share a focus on the need to address issues of equity, particularly in terms of learning how to promote thriving for all individuals in a given community.

Successful university–community partnerships are developed over time (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010) and characterized by trusting relationships (Christopher, Watts, McCormick, & Young, 2008), open dialogue (Weerts, 2005), and mutual goals that directly benefit the community (Fear, Creamer, Pirog, Block, & Redmond, 2004). Rather than hastily joining forces once funding has been awarded for a project, truly transformational partnerships include community partners from the beginning and view them as key decision makers and contributors through every step of the process. Although developing this type of partnership takes considerable time, it ensures a balance of power among all parties, providing the opportunity for all voices to be heard (Clayton et al., 2010).

Once successful partnerships are created, they provide a strong foundation and motivation for engaging in community-based research (CBR) projects. CBR provides a useful framework for collaboration between developmental scientists and public libraries, in which mutual benefits can result from research and evaluation performed with the shared goal of improving the lives of families with children. According to Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, and Donohue (2003), "CBR is collaborative, change-oriented research that engages faculty members, students, and community members in projects that address a community-identified need" (p. 5). CBR can be understood in terms of three critical elements (Strand, 2000; Strand et al., 2003). First, CBR projects are collaborative. Similar to the relationship building necessary for maintaining university–community partnerships, CBR requires the joint investment and mutual effort of academics and community stakeholders. This collaboration should start early, ensuring community partners are involved in every step of the research process. Academics often bring content knowledge, research experience, and university resources, and community partners also have unique expertise. The focus of CBR should stem from this community expertise and aim to solve a "real world problem" identified by the community (Strand et al., 2003). Second, CBR recognizes and values the unique knowledge partners bring to the work, putting equal emphasis on the content-specific knowledge of faculty and the local experiential knowledge of community partners (Strand et al., 2003). In doing so, all partners are able to stretch their current understandings through a process of joint discovery and knowledge building to come up with innovative ways of solving real-world problems. Finally, CBR addresses community needs and reflects a commitment to social change (Strand et al.,

2003). Results of CBR projects may serve a multitude of purposes, including improving programming, identifying problems, and addressing needs. New discoveries can be used to make plans, refine practices, and implement new ways of doing. This requires the identification of long-term goals and engaging in a dynamic process of reflection and refinement over time.

In this reflective essay, we argue that the development of successful developmental scientist–public library partnerships creates an ideal context for this type of work. We have identified two areas of concern that are particularly suited for this type of collaboration: (a) efforts toward creating and improving programming in public libraries to understand what works in library contexts for promoting family involvement and supporting child development and (b) addressing issues of equity and inclusion in public libraries for diverse families with children.

Providing Effective Programming

One promising area for collaboration between developmental scientists and public libraries is improving the effectiveness of library-based learning experiences. One example of such a collaboration is *Learning Labs*, a national network of innovative spaces across 24 libraries and museums. In response to a 2010 presidential initiative to make STEM education a national priority, a public–private partnership between the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supported the creation of Learning Labs. Learning Labs are spaces where adolescents, with assistance from knowledgeable mentors (such as community experts), can interact with peers to engage with a variety of digital media and other tools (Association of Science-Technology Centers, 2014). The design of these spaces was heavily influenced by ethnographic research conducted by Ito et al. (2009), who observed that when adolescents were engaging in interest-driven online learning, they were thinking and experimenting in new and innovative ways (e.g., experimenting with their roles) compared to behavior seen in product-driven learning (e.g., required assignments, graded work). Informed by this research evidence, Learning Labs were intentionally designed to promote *connected learning*, or learning that builds on an individual's socially relevant interests to develop knowledge and skills related to future educational and developmental goals (Association of Science-Technology Centers, 2014; Ito et al., 2013).

In addition to helping to build library-based experiences from the ground up, there is also room for developmental scientists to support the refinement of existing programs developed by library professionals. Public libraries are unique in their capacity to create individual programs tailored to local constituent needs. This has led to a variety of locally created library programs that widely differ by community. Developmental scientists offer expertise to assist with evaluating programming efforts to effectively gather and analyze the data needed to engage in systematic refinement of programs to ensure they are effectively benefiting families. Moreover, funders increasingly require evidence of programming effectiveness. Thus, by supporting developmental scientists in collecting, analyzing, and translating research-based evidence, libraries increase their capacity to secure funding from outside agencies and foundations.

An example of improving existing library programming is the Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) program, which builds on traditional storytime classes, a cornerstone of early childhood library programming. The development and evaluation of the ECRR program is a joint venture undertaken by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and the Public Library Association (PLA) in collaboration with early childhood literacy experts in the developmental science field. Traditional public library storytime programs are typically directed exclusively to children (e.g., a librarian reading a book to a group of children sitting on a carpeted area). Library professionals and developmental scientists recognized the need to improve upon this existing model to further enhance the parent and caregiver learning potential by more explicitly addressing the adults in the room. Specifically, the ECRR program involves training library professionals to lead *enhanced* storytime sessions that involve the participation of both parents and children. In these sessions, parents are led through early-literacy activities with their children while being taught how to apply and expand on these learning strategies in their daily interactions with children once at home. A notable strength of the ECRR program is its

strong foundation in high-quality research. In 2000, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), one of the most prolific and rigorous entities of child research, published a report that provided a comprehensive synthesis of findings regarding the importance of early childhood experiences in the development of literacy and empirically driven recommendations for how best to support children in developing early literacy skills (National Reading Panel & NICHD, 2000). ECRR developers partnered with the NICHD, as well as individual early literacy developmental science experts, to inform each of the ECRR program components. The ECRR program draws heavily on high-quality research to teach parents and caregivers what types of early experiences are most important to their children's literacy development, as well as provide families with the tools they need to actively promote these skills outside the storytime room. In sum, ECRR is a strong example of how developmental scientists and public libraries can work together to enhance existing library-based programming.

Providing Equitable Opportunities

Public libraries provide affordable and accessible spaces and services for all community members. Indeed, the ALA (2015) states that—regardless of age, education, ethnicity, language, income, physical limitations, or geographic barriers—libraries must ensure that all citizens can access the information they need. However, libraries struggle to provide equal collections, programs, and services for diverse patrons (Naidoo, 2014). At a national level, for example, it appears that low-income and racial/ethnic minority families are less likely to view libraries as community anchors and White, educated women are more likely to use library services than any other population (Horrigan, 2016). This suggests that libraries must work not only to develop inclusive programming that meets the needs of diverse families and encourages repeated visits, but also toward getting families in the door.

Despite overall lower usage of library services among some populations, underrepresented families who do visit libraries view public libraries as important institutions. For example, families living in poverty are more likely to visit a library than other community spaces, such as a bookstore, museum, zoo, or theater (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). In addition, low-income families tend to use libraries for different reasons than their wealthier counterparts: They are more likely than advantaged families to report using the library for services such as training, job searches, and interactive learning opportunities (Celano & Neuman, 2015). Although public libraries play an important role in the lives of families who need them most, there is still a need for increased efforts to engage families and remove barriers to accessing library resources and services to counterbalance inequalities in learning experiences prevalent among low-income and otherwise underrepresented populations; this is another area where developmental scientist–public library collaboration would be fruitful.

Recent research has addressed how to better connect and engage diverse families with public libraries. For example, Sirinides, Fink, and DuBois (2016) investigated the availability and accessibility of early learning opportunities in libraries in underresourced neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Study results highlighted perceived family barriers to attending libraries, such as a view of branch libraries as more out-of-date compared to further-away central libraries, concerns about staff's ability to work with children, and hours of operation that conflict with working-parent schedules (i.e., closed in the evenings). Further, current developmental scientist–public library partnership efforts appear to be effective in overcoming barriers to find ways to engage diverse families with library services. For example, the Colorado State Library Project, Supporting Parents in Early Literacy through Libraries (SPELL), used research to develop solutions for engaging low-income families in early literacy programs (Colorado State Library, 2015). After engaging in an extensive environmental scan to identify public library programs and practices that successfully engage hard-to-reach, low-income families, the SPELL project created a set of recommendations for public library practitioners, such as ending overdue fines for board books and picture books that deterred families from using their local library. In addition, recognizing that travel to library locations is often a challenge, SPELL recommends public libraries deliver library services beyond the walls of library spaces by partnering with organizations that already work with vulnerable families (e.g.,

neighborhood centers, Title I schools).

Developmental scientists can also support the public library workforce by increasing their child development and family processes knowledge and skills. A skilled library workforce is integral to the success of libraries to support families with children. Recent service model shifts have resulted in staff being increasingly called upon to facilitate learning opportunities. Consequently, the workforce needs greater support to skillfully facilitate the library experience (Gonzalez, 2010). Indeed, the ALA (2009) found that among libraries nationally, nearly 60% reported not having enough staff to help patrons, and roughly 50% reported their staff lacks the necessary skills to meet patron demand. This may be due, in part, to the uniquely interdisciplinary nature of librarianship that requires a wide range of skills and expertise. Adding to this complexity is the fact that libraries serve individuals across the full life span, each with unique developmental needs and interests. We believe that developmental scientists can play an important role in supporting library staff's interactions with diverse families with children by implementing, improving, and creating high-quality professional development focused on culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate practices.

Through various strategies addressed above, supporting the participation of diverse families in public libraries not only holds great potential to achieve public library goals, but stands to benefit developmental scientists as well. For example, there is great concern regarding the growing income-achievement gap and a desire to create feasible solutions to this problem. Public libraries are ideal settings to understand inequities in access to learning experiences at the community level and to test novel solutions to such problems, which may be generalizable to other informal community institutions. Moreover, developmental scientist–public library collaborations are well suited to advancing the field of child development, particularly addressing an important mesosystem, the intersection of home and community settings for diverse families. By engaging in research at the library, developmental scientists can gain insight into community-based strengths, identify barriers to engagement, and test new ways to support all families in a given community. For example, a library may test offering its programming at a popular local community center located in a largely Latino neighborhood, adding more Saturday and later afternoon classes, or changing policies so that low-income families do not have to pay late fines, which may be perceived as a barrier.

The Partnership for Family–Library Engagement: A Case Study

Developing a University–Community Partnership

The Partnership for Family-Library Engagement is a university–community partnership between university developmental scientists and public library professionals at Scottsdale Public Library aimed at supporting family engagement in library settings that promotes optimal parenting and enhances children's school readiness. The early learning coordinator at the public library reached out to the local university for guidance after receiving feedback from funders that all future investments were to be allocated to evidence-based programming. The library was looking for feedback and guidance regarding the quality of their programming and what it means to become "evidence-based." Over the course of a year, developmental scientists and library professionals built a strong partnership based upon mutually shared interests and clearly defined goals. Relationships were built and trust was established through a series of meetings where partners got to know one another and the individual interests and expertise that each possessed. Developmental scientists brought the infrastructure and resources from the university, research knowledge and skills, and educational expertise. The library staff brought knowledge of the local community and its needs, grant-writing experience and skills, and language and literacy content knowledge. Developmental scientists, along with several graduate students, spent considerable time in the library observing programming, learning about the supports and resources public libraries provide to the community, and gaining an understanding of the many roles of library staff. During meetings, developmental scientists and library staff spoke about program effectiveness and discussed strategies for understanding whether library programs are achieving their intended goals for families with children. Shared goals were quickly defined. The library had already identi-

fied a community need, providing quality early-learning experiences for families with children ages 0–5 years, and was looking for support with improving upon their existing efforts. The developmental scientists, who study how children learn and develop within context, possessed a common desire to provide families access to community-based programs and experiences that would support parents as their child's first and best teachers and enhance children's learning and development.

Providing Effective Programming Through CBR

Over the past 5 years, the Partnership for Family–Library Engagement has worked collaboratively to refine and evaluate several enhanced storytime programs designed to provide parent education and support children's emerging social–emotional, cognitive, and language/literacy skills. Program improvement efforts began with developmental scientists and public library professionals working closely together to clearly define the desired outcomes of enhanced storytime programming. Once program goals were identified, a theory of change, connecting key program components and processes to measurable outcomes, was created. Next, in an iterative process, this theory of change guided refinement of existing program components and practices to achieve the desired outcomes. Once all parties were confident the programming was high quality (i.e., based on research, using best practices, and aligned with clear measurable outcomes), partnership members were ready to begin documenting evidence of program effectiveness.

Working collaboratively, partnership members developed an internal library grant proposal to collect pilot data from families pre- and post–program participation using survey methodology. Collecting detailed personal information from families was a new endeavor for the library staff, and because of the unique nature of public libraries as open, accessible, nonthreatening community spaces, this task was undertaken with extreme caution and sensitivity. A developmental scientist and the public library early learning coordinator attended each program session, where they introduced the partnership and its shared goals and clearly explained the purpose of the research study. Families were invited to participate and could easily opt out without any pressure or stigma. Over the course of a single program year, data was collected on 276 families across six community locations (five public libraries, one neighborhood center). Findings from these efforts provide preliminary evidence of program effectiveness. Specifically, public library enhanced storytime programming was associated with positive change in parent knowledge, beliefs, and reported behavior (Taylor, Pratt, van Huisstede, & Gaias, 2016).

Building on this positive momentum, the partnership began working to secure funding for further research and evaluation efforts. This includes a currently in-progress 3-year randomized control trial funded by the Brady Education Foundation to examine the efficacy of a public library enhanced storytime program on linguistically diverse low-income families with children. This work has begun to explore the qualities of parent–child interactions within the public library context and how they are related to parenting and child outcomes. This type of research is critical for understanding how developmental and family processes within informal learning settings contribute to family and child well-being in underserved populations. These efforts are also important because library funding is highly variable across communities, with much funding for programming dependent upon small grants and foundation support that require programs to demonstrate evidence of effectiveness (Weigand, 2015). Partnering with developmental scientists can increase public libraries' capacity and potential for securing future funding, something our partnership has successfully accomplished.

Moreover, as university partners, we have benefited from gaining a better understanding of the needs and assets of library professionals and the communities they serve. For example, we have also improved our understanding of what effective programming involves within public libraries, which differ from home or formal preschool settings. Public libraries offer developmental scientists the opportunity to apply their expertise and skills to a broader range of authentic practical problems and everyday settings that expand our theories, assumptions, and methods. Specifically, public libraries vary from traditional educational settings in that attendance is fluid (i.e., public libraries are open accessible community spaces), children represent various

ages and stages (e.g., families often have multiple children), and parent participation is often required in some capacity. This type of research in public libraries is critical for understanding how developmental and family processes within informal learning settings contribute to family and child well-being over time and across contexts (e.g., Haden et al., 2014).

Providing Equitable Opportunities

Working together, the partnership has benefited from better understanding how public library programs operate by engaging in a systematic process of aligning program goals with measurable outcomes that impact the local community. This program refinement and evidence-building work has been particularly valuable to library programming efforts aimed at increasing diversity and inclusion. For example, findings from the preliminary evaluation revealed that families who participate in programming tend to be regular library users with little financial hardship (Taylor, Pratt, van Huisstede, & Gaias, 2016). This data has been integral for understanding whom the library is already reaching and provides support for additional efforts aimed at engaging underserved and hard-to-reach families, a new goal of our ongoing partnership.

In addition, we also recently completed a study of library youth staff's perceptions of programming for families with children. Findings revealed that because of new enhanced storytime programming, many library youth staff are viewing themselves as educators for the first time and would like increased support for interacting with diverse families and supporting child development (e.g., incorporating state early learning standards into their instruction; Taylor, 2017). In response to these findings, the partnership developed an interactive enhanced storytime training for staff and provided professional development focused on increasing the cultural competence of library youth staff across several local library systems.

Conclusion

Families tend to view libraries as part of their educational systems, as resources that promote literacy and school readiness, and as pathways to economic opportunity and community activism (Horrigan, 2015). Indeed, the majority of families that have ever used the public library view their experiences favorably (Zickuhr et al., 2013). We contend that, considering the positive view and accessibility of libraries across the United States, developmental scientist involvement is critical for libraries to realize their full potential as promoters of child development and family engagement. With the changing times, public libraries are developing ways to shift their service models to engage families with children by providing programming and experiences beyond traditional book lending. Considering that developmental science and public library fields share common goals, developmental scientists are well positioned to support this process, as well as learn from it to further the field of child development and family studies. We encourage a "call to action" for developmental scientists to partner with public libraries to support the new experiential types of learning occurring within libraries and engage in practices to effectively promote engaged scholarship and fuel an excitement for learning.

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About the Authors

Michelle Taylor *is an assistant professor of child development at California State University, Long Beach. Her primary research interests include examining contextual and relational influences on young children's learning and development. She received her Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles.*

Megan Pratt *is an assistant professor of practice at Oregon State University. Her research examines how early learning in both formal (e.g., child care) and informal, community settings (e.g., libraries) supports families with young children. She received a Ph.D. in human development and family sciences from Oregon State University.*

Richard Fabes *is the John O. Whiteman Dean's Distinguished Professor and school director in the T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics at Arizona State University. His research interests include children's adjustment to school, peer relationships, emotional development, and gender and adjustment. His Ph.D. is from Oklahoma State University.*

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Extending Our Conceptualization of Boundary-Spanning Leadership for Community Engagement

Trina Van Schyndel, Andrew J. Pearl, Jennifer W. Purcell

Abstract

In this reflective conceptual essay, we critically examine two complementary models related to leadership for community engagement—the boundary-spanning model (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010) and the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a). Both models organize and present prioritized activities necessary for individuals to advance community engagement. We believe an exploration of points of convergence and divergence between the models will lay the groundwork for continued inquiry and allow for further refinement of both models, with the aim of supporting the professional development of community engagement professionals (CEPs).

Keywords: boundary-spanning, leadership, community engagement, professional development, CEP

"Simply put, boundary spanning is not confined to an individual job description, but applied to broader institutional strategies to engage with external partners" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010, p. 638).

"We cannot separate the identity of a partnership from the behaviors of the people who constitute that partnership, just as we cannot claim institutional orientations that are not consonant with the orientations of the people within those institutions" (Dostilio, 2017b, pp. 380–381).

In this reflective conceptual essay, we examine the existing boundary-spanning literature in order to propose a detailed research and practical agenda for advancing a conceptual framing of boundary spanning related to the professional development of community engagement professionals (CEPs) in higher education. The preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a) is conceptually similar to the boundary-spanning model developed by Weerts and Sandmann (2010) in that both models organize and present prioritized activities necessary for individuals to advance community engagement in higher education. However, we believe an exploration of points of convergence and divergence between the two models will allow for further refinement of both models and lay the groundwork for continued inquiry into the professional development of CEPs. This essay emerged from an ongoing research agenda centered primarily on boundary spanning in higher education community engagement, and even though this is not an empirical research study, we were purposeful in our analytic approach. Each of the three authors independently reviewed relevant literature, after which we engaged in purposeful and detailed discussions about the two models, working toward agreement, similar to Merriam's (2009) description of investigator triangulation.

In order to lay the groundwork for this research agenda, we begin by providing a summary of key foundational literature around boundary spanning, including literature from the management field that informed the creation of the Weerts-Sandmann boundary-spanning model (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010) focused on individuals working in higher education community engagement. We also briefly summarize how others have sought to

expand upon the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model and how the conceptualization of boundary-spanning individuals is tied to the concept of CEPs. We then briefly describe the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a), as well as areas for constructive critique of this CEP model. From there, we explore points of convergence and divergence between the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model and the preliminary competency model for CEPs. Finally, we outline our thoughts on how these points of convergence and divergence lead to a research and practical agenda designed to further the professional development of CEPs.

A Boundary-Spanning Model for Higher Education Community Engagement

In order to better contextualize the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model and its application to higher education community engagement, we provide a brief overview of the foundational boundary-spanning literature from the management literature, followed by a detailed explanation of how Weerts and Sandmann (2010) developed their boundary-spanning model. To conclude this section, we review a selection of the higher education boundary-spanning literature that was influenced by the work of Weerts and Sandmann (2010).

Foundational Work on Boundary Spanning

Inspired by Friedman and Podolny's (1992) suggestion that boundary spanning is best viewed at both the individual and organizational levels, Weerts and Sandmann (2010) first applied the concept of boundary spanning to higher education community engagement through an empirical investigation of multiple case studies at research institutions, ascribing the concept to individuals who represent the external community in their roles within the university, as well as those who represent the university within the broader, external community. These individuals need to be well-versed in the language, priorities, and needs of both the community and the university, as well as able to effectively communicate between both sets of stakeholders.

Weerts and Sandmann (2010) based their application of boundary spanning on some of the foundational boundary-spanning work in the organizational management literature. The need for boundary-spanning behavior makes sense only in the context of understanding how organizations are defined. Essentially, the defining characteristic of a formal organization is the distinction between members and nonmembers, existing to the extent that some persons are admitted whereas others are excluded, allowing boundaries to be drawn by observers (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). In order to maintain relationships among these emerging formal organizations, boundary spanners end up playing a central role in the relationships between members and nonmembers, meaning that they often have to engage in and manage role conflict, and they often become a dominant conduit of organizational influence (Friedman & Podolny, 1992).

To effectively manage these relationships, boundary spanners essentially perform two primary functions: information processing and external representation. *Information processing* refers to an organization's ability to adapt to environmental contingencies, depending in part on the expertise of the boundary spanner in selecting, transmitting, and interpreting information that originates external to the organization (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). *External representation* refers to an organization's ability to cope with environmental constraints based on the boundary spanner's ability to achieve a compromise between policies within the organization and environmental factors. These contextual factors further extend the boundary spanner's ability to strategically make decisions and recommendations to overcome environmental constraints or to create conditions in which the organization's autonomy is rarely challenged (Aldrich & Herker, 1977).

According to Tushman and Scanlan (1981), "the ability of an individual to span a boundary is predicated on their having the work-related expertise required to communicate effectively on both sides of the communication boundary" (p. 293), which occurs in a two-step process. First, the boundary spanner identifies outside units and the information within those units that is relevant to the organization. The boundary spanner then processes the information and distributes it among the appropriate internal users.

In their seminal work on organizational boundary-spanning roles, Aldrich and Herker (1977) made a series of hypotheses,

of which several have direct applicability and relevance to higher education community engagement. For example, Aldrich and Herker (1977) commented that an organization's ability to adapt to and work within environmental contingencies and constraints is dependent on a variety of skills and abilities possessed by individuals who work as boundary spanners. Specifically, the boundary spanners should have expertise in selecting, transmitting, and interpreting information, as well as the ability to find compromise between potentially conflicting organizational and environmental policies.

Aldrich and Herker (1977) also hypothesized how organizational factors would impact boundary spanners. For example, organizations that operate in heterogeneous environments and those whose important elements are highly concentrated would require relatively greater proportions of boundary spanners, as would organizations that operate in rapidly changing environments.

Of particular relevance to higher education community engagement, Aldrich and Herker (1977) hypothesized that boundary-spanner roles are more likely to be formalized when critical external factors are recognized and valued by the organization. In a higher education context, this suggests institutions that place a high value on engaging with the community, by acting as an anchor institution or through earning the Carnegie Foundation's elective Community Engagement Classification, may have more specifically defined roles for community engagement boundary spanners. Similarly, these institutions may adopt organizing structures or strategies from other institutions that are viewed as successful.

From this series of hypotheses (Aldrich & Herker, 1977), several questions relevant to higher education community engagement emerge. For example, continued attention should be given to how to develop the expertise and abilities necessary to be a successful boundary spanner in higher education. Additionally, the landscape of higher education is widely varied in terms of institutional type; therefore, it is important to consider what types of institutions (size, control, mission, etc.) require more, less, or different types of boundary-spanning roles. Finally, if we are to consider the fit of individuals within their organizations, it is important to match the boundary-spanning skills of the individual with the needs of the institution in which they work.

Applying Boundary Spanning to Higher Education Community Engagement

Influenced by Friedman and Podolny (1992) and previous investigations into how institutions facilitate and support two-way interactions between their campuses and the community (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008), Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) original boundary-spanning model conceptualized the work of boundary-spanning individuals along two axes, one being their primary focus (institutional vs. community), and the other being the nature of their tasks (technical and practical vs. socio-emotional and leadership). By overlaying these two axes, four roles of boundary spanners emerge (see Figure 1): Community-Based Problem Solver (focus: community; tasks: technical and practical); Technical Expert (focus: institution; tasks: technical and practical); Engagement Champion (focus: community; tasks: socio-emotional and leadership); and Internal Engagement Advocate (focus: institution; tasks: socio-emotional and leadership).The Community-Based Problem Solvers are primarily focused on issues of relevant technical and practical tasks within the community. These individuals provide site-based problem support, the acquisition of resources, and the development of partnerships. At a university, the individuals in these roles may be field agents, outreach staff, and clinical faculty members. It is these individuals who "are on the front lines of making transformational changes in communities; they typically focus on problem support, resource acquisition, and overall management and development of the partnership" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010, p. 643) and play an integral role in building and managing the relationships between the community and the university. Because of their roles and the tasks they are required to perform, they are often placed in positions in which their ability to remain neutral is tested.

Technical Experts are the individuals who place their primary emphasis on knowledge creation for applied purposes. Primarily faculty members, they engage in technical and practical tasks focused predominantly at the institution. The knowledge they create can be based within a single discipline or in multidisciplinary collaborations. Generally less adept at building and sustaining reciprocal community partnerships than the

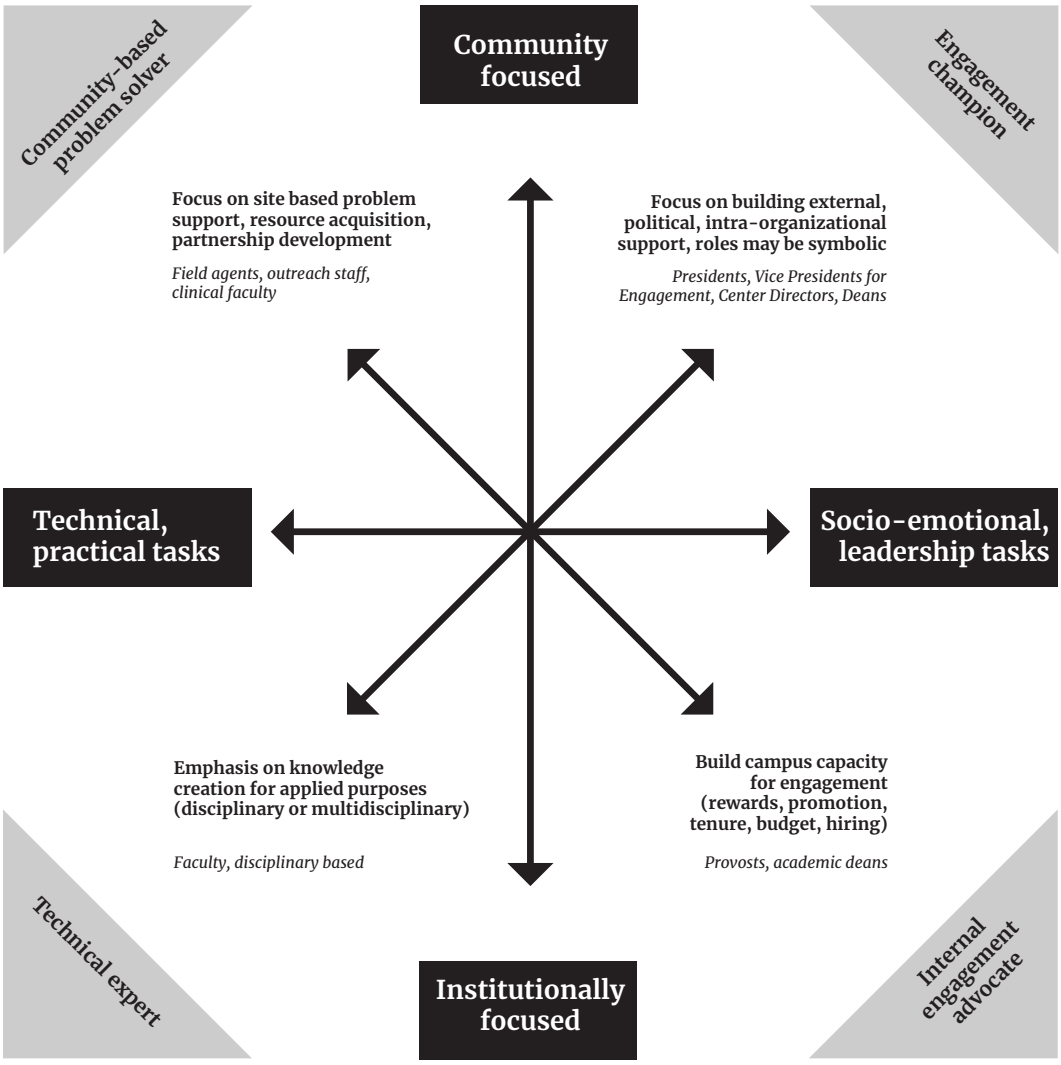

Figure 1. Boundary-Spanning Model (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010)

Community-Based Problem Solvers, the Technical Experts are the boundary spanners with the greatest propensity to use disciplinary or academic terminology that can often lead to difficulty in translating the analytic methods and results of the research. Because of this, the work of the Technical Experts is often complemented by the expertise of the Community-Based Problem Solvers.

The Engagement Champions are community-focused boundary spanners who e mphasize socio-emotional and leadership tasks. These individuals build external, political, and intraorganizational support. These roles often carry with them symbolic weight and are therefore often filled by university presidents or other executive leadership, community engagement center directors, and deans.

The Internal Engagement Advocates are focused on the socio-emotional and leadership tasks at the institution. They work to build overall campus capacity for engagement, including affecting policies related to promotion and tenure. Internal Engagement Advocates are often provosts or academic deans.

Expanding on the Boundary-Spanning Model for Higher Education Community Engagement

Inspired by the work of Weerts and Sandmann (2010), several researchers have extended the research on boundary spanning in higher education community engagement. Adams (2014) extrapolated and conceptualized boundary spanning from the perspective of the community partner. Sandmann, Jordan, Mull, and Valentine

(2014) developed an instrument intended to connect the individuals who serve in boundary-spanning roles to the behaviors in which they engage. This measurement model paves the way for better understanding of organizational effectiveness and fit for boundary spanners, as well as issues of motivation and satisfaction.

Purcell and Pearl (2017) revisited the original boundary-spanning literature from the management field in order to identify areas for continued empirical inquiry, such as the development of competencies for boundary-spanning individuals (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). The conceptualization of boundary spanners is similar to other conceptualizations of individuals whose work is not easily categorized. Sturm (2010) created a taxonomy of five types of institutional intermediaries who serve boundary-spanning functions: program intermediaries, cross-institutional role intermediaries, problem-solving intermediaries, funding intermediaries, and knowledge intermediaries, each with a different approach to affecting multilevel sustainable change. Whitchurch (2013) described third-space professionals as those who operate in the area between the academic and professional domains, and often move beyond established boundaries in order to focus on broad-based projects. Bartha, Carney, Gale, Goodhue, and Howard (2014) refer to *hybrid-hyphenateds* as institutional actors who are committed to community engagement and operate "in the middle ground of campus–community partnerships," indicating they are "those working in or aspiring to para-academic, intermediary, coordinating, and administering positions at the interface of campus–community partnership development and in the interspaces of the university" (n.p.). Based on these broader conceptualizations, the work of individuals serving in boundary-spanning roles is clearly complex and often intersects with both the community and the university. The SOFAR framework (students, organizations in the community, faculty, administrators on campus, and residents in the community) is a useful model for illustrating the relationships and interactions involved in community–university partnerships (Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009). It is also evident there is no one role or job title from which to draw to consider how these types of individuals might develop professional competencies. However, there have been efforts to develop competency models for those boundary-spanning individuals that exist within the higher education community engagement field in recent years. Blanchard et al. (2009) identified 14 competencies for community-engaged scholarship that are broadly applicable to faculty work, and that include various knowledge, skills, and abilities categorized into levels of novice, intermediate, and advanced (basic knowledge of community engagement history and principles, understanding of community issues, ability to write grants and articles related to community-engaged scholarship, understanding of the policy implications of community-engaged scholarship, mentoring others doing community-engaged scholarship, etc.). More recently, McReynolds and Shields (2015) identified multiple competencies for scholar-practitioners (cultural competency, partnership development, strategic leadership, faculty development, risk management, program assessment and evaluation, etc.) that vary according to four roles: organizational manager, institutional strategic leader, field contributor, or community innovator. Similarly, Suvedi and Kaplowitz (2016) spoke to competencies for extension workers and the importance of developing both process skills (e.g., program planning, program development, and program evaluation) and technical skills (e.g., day-to-day tasks working with farmers and other extension constituents). Further advancing the literature, Doberneck, Bargerstock, McNall, Van Egeren, and Zientek (2017) identified 20 graduate and professional student competencies, which are divided into eight dimensions that provide organization and scaffolding for competency development among students (knowledge of history and variations in community-engaged scholarship, developing and sustaining partnerships, approaches to community engagement, communicating with public and academic audiences, etc.). Finally, the team of research fellows who developed the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a) focused on the knowledge, skills and abilities, attributes, and critical commitments that occur across six primary responsibility areas for CEPs (leading change within higher education, institutionalizing community engagement on a campus, facilitating students' civic learning and development, administering community engagement programs, facilitating faculty development and support, and cultivating high-quality partnerships).

A Preliminary Competency Model for Community Engagement Professionals

Below, we describe the impetus behind the development of the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a), provide a brief description of the research project that led to its development, and give an overview of the six main responsibility areas identified in the model, as well as the competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills and abilities, attributes, and critical commitments) associated with each of these responsibility areas. Finally, we take up the call for continued constructive critique of the model by introducing a comparison between this model and the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model, with the goal of fostering continued growth and support for the professional development of CEPs.

The Campus Compact Project on the Community Engagement Professional

In partnership with Campus Compact and the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE), Dr. Lina Dostilio and a team of 15 research fellows set out to collaboratively create greater understanding of those individuals known as community engagement professionals (CEPs). According to Dostilio and Perry (2017), CEPs "are professional staff whose primary job is to support and administer community–campus engagement" (p. 1). Further, Dostilio (2017b) posits

> community engagement professionals (CEPs) are charged with administering the implementation of community engagement and are in a central position to shape the synergy between institutional priorities, values, and the engagement strategies that are developed; stress certain orientations of engagement to which faculty and students are introduced; and sculpt the support they offer and the approach they take to working with others (e.g., faculty, students, community partners, and institutional leaders). (p. 370)

The work of CEPs involves students, staff, faculty, leadership, and community members alike, and they are often called to operate in the spaces between the university and community. The collective work of the research fellows led to the development of a preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a). Notably, this work is conceptually grounded in the work of Welch and Saltmarsh (2013), who identified the emergence of a second generation of CEPs as the field continued to grow and evolve, requiring more purposeful development of knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions to facilitate their work. Using the preliminary competency model as a guide, Campus Compact recently launched a micro-credentialing program for CEPs in order to provide

> civic and community engagement professionals with opportunities to earn formal recognition for the knowledge and skills they develop throughout their careers. It provides a framework for community engagement professionals to grow and achieve in the field in ways that encourage effective, inclusive, and equity-based partnerships and practices. (Campus Compact, 2019)

However, the purpose of the preliminary competency model for CEPs is not to prescribe how professional development for CEPs should take place, but rather what is necessary for these individuals to be effective—with a specific focus on their knowledge, skills and abilities, attributes, and critical commitments. As is rightfully acknowledged in the presentation of the model, it is preliminary, and the researchers welcome periodic and systematic refinement and revision of the framework. Doing so not only emphasizes the dynamic nature of the field, but also acknowledges the importance of how individuals from different demographic backgrounds and identities interact with competencies identified in the model. A static and prescriptive view implies that there is a "right" way to be a CEP, but it is the hope of the authors "that the professional development pathways created in response to this project honor multiple forms of integration and balance didactic education with professional socialization, mentorship, experiential learning, and critical self-reflection" (Dostilio, 2017a, p. 52).

Initial steps toward the development of this model included literature reviews conducted by the research fellows in six key practice areas of higher education community engagement: institutionalization, organiza-

tional change, faculty development, student civic learning and development, community partnership development, and program administration and development. In addition to the six areas of practice, the preliminary competency model is also informed by an intentional inclusion of critical perspectives and commitments necessary to the work of CEPs. These literature reviews were influenced by the work of McReynolds and Shields (2015), Bartha et al. (2014), and the research fellows' own perspectives on community engagement as critically reflective and relational. From these literature reviews, the research fellows developed a list of characteristics of CEPs that were then further refined and validated through sessions at several conferences held by professional associations focused on community engagement, as well as a survey sent to more than 400 CEPs. In the end, six responsibility areas for CEPs remained, and one practice area—critical practice—morphed into *critical commitments*, which are applied across knowledge, skills and abilities, and attributes for each of the six responsibility areas.

Core Responsibility Areas and Corresponding Knowledge, Skills and Abilities, Attributes, and Critical Commitments

The preliminary competency model for CEPs includes six responsibility areas: (1) Leading Change Within Higher Education, (2) Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus, (3) Facilitating Students' Civic Learning and Development, (4) Administering Community Engagement Programs, (5) Facilitating Faculty Development and Support, and (6) Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships. Each area of responsibility is briefly described below, drawing on the work of research fellows as represented in Dostilio (2017a).

1) Leading Change Within Higher Education. Hübler and Quan (2017) define institutional change as a "complex process that can be led by people with or without positional authority that results in deep cultural transformations of existing norms" (p. 101). In particular, they emphasize the importance of collaboration, integration, and the building of relationships as necessary for CEPs seeking to envision, lead, and enact change.

2) Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus. Weaver and Kellogg (2017) identify the need for CEPs, in order to tie community engagement as a cross-cutting approach to achieving institutional goals, to be politically savvy, relationship-builders, focused on data and assessment, and able to effectively communicate.

3) Facilitating Students' Civic Learning and Development. Benenson, Hemer, and Trebil (2017) discuss how CEPs foster and support students' civic learning through direct work with students, as well as through their influence on other faculty and staff members who impact the civic learning of students. These authors also identify the importance of CEPs' engaging in critical self-reflection as practitioners.

4) Administering Community Engagement Programs. Farmer-Hanson (2017) articulates how the work of second-generation CEPs is often focused on the support, development, and evaluation of a variety of individual and broadly considered community engagement programs, necessitating a wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities, and dispositions that call to mind project management.

5) Facilitating Faculty Development and Support. In their discussion of the facilitation and support of faculty development, Chamberlin and Phelps-Hillen (2017) not only identify the importance of recruiting and providing contextualized, pragmatic training for faculty members, but also how CEPs can facilitate how community engagement work can be integrated into issues of workload, promotion, and tenure.

6) Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships. Martin and Crossland (2017) begin by framing and discussing their definition of high-quality community-campus partnerships in order to effectively identify the knowledge, skills and abilities, and dispositions that are essential for CEPs to build mutually beneficial relationships with the community.

We should also note that these responsibility areas do not exist in a vacuum, and there are several competencies that are common among multiple, if not all, of the areas. For example, effective communication, relationship building, and the ability and/or propensity to embrace the community's perspective can be found in several areas.

Limitations and Utility of the Preliminary Competency Model for CEPs

Although the preliminary competency model for CEPs is intended to be applied

narrowly to CEPs, we acknowledge several limitations to this application. In addition to CEPs, these competencies also apply to other individuals involved in community–university partnerships. Indeed, individuals involved in community engagement will often navigate a variety of professional roles throughout their careers, and they may not always function in the role of a CEP. Therefore, consideration of how these competencies relate to non-CEPs is necessary. Further, depending on institutional context, defining the role of a CEP as professional staff may be too narrow and inadvertently ignore existing roles of those who do the work of community engagement, especially when, in reality, the work of community engagement is often dispersed among various staff members and academic faculty through informal leadership roles (Liang & Sandmann, 2015; Purcell, 2013). Finally, we must ask: If an institution does not have an individual who would be considered a CEP according to the preliminary competency model for CEPs, does this mean that it is not capable of achieving institutionalization of community engagement or demonstrating this through recognitions like the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification? If we provide a normative model for what institutions should be doing with regard to institutionalizing community engagement, are we in turn sending an implicit message that there is only one "correct" way to do community engagement?

Despite these limitations, we believe the model outlined by the research team provides an excellent framework for understanding necessary competencies for multiple individuals involved in community–university engagement, including CEPs as well as non-CEPs. Beyond CEPs, the SOFAR framework (Bringle et al., 2009) provides insight into additional individuals who fill significant roles in higher education community engagement. For example, faculty members, particularly academic faculty members, have a direct impact on community–university partnerships, as they are most often the ones teaching service-learning courses or managing community-based research. And although they may be the technical experts in these partnerships (to use the phrasing from Weerts & Sandmann, 2010), they also are often placed in the position of managing, supporting, and administering the partnerships in which they are engaged. Therefore, the preliminary competency model for CEPs may inform their work.

At colleges and universities, many staff members who have primary responsibilities other than supporting and managing community–university engagement are nonetheless often indirectly involved in these partnerships; thus the preliminary competency model for CEPs may also be useful for this group of individuals. For example, faculty development responsibilities may be housed in a center or office focused specifically on teaching and learning, where staff members are not experts in service-learning or community engagement; however, staff members in those offices nonetheless require the necessary expertise to best guide faculty members in the appropriate pedagogical approaches to service-learning, as well as the knowledge to help these faculty members document and demonstrate appropriate measures of quality, significance, and impact for their work.

Although students do not necessarily have primary managerial responsibilities for community–university partnerships, they often play critical roles in community engagement. We believe the competencies outlined in the preliminary competency model for CEPs are also applicable to the students involved in partnerships as both participants and student leader-facilitators. Although performing work differing in scope from that of CEPs and other stakeholders within the institution, students can often be the drivers of community-engaged work. For example, they can play an integral role in service-learning courses and peer-leadership development programming.

For graduate students interested in pursuing future careers as CEPs, the preliminary competency model for CEPs can provide a useful framework for career development of future educators and scholars because "doctoral education . . . rarely provides future faculty with even 'glimpses,' much less 'portraits,' of what engaged scholarship looks like" (O'Meara, 2008, p. 7), and myriad barriers prevent graduate students from getting involved in community engagement (O'Meara & Jaeger, 2006). Some institutions are working to professionalize and credential community engagement among graduate students (Matthews, Karls, Doberneck, & Springer, 2015), and integrating the preliminary competency model for CEPs would be beneficial in these programs.

Administrative leadership roles within colleges and universities are often positioned to influence community–university partnerships through the implicit and explicit messages these individuals deliver to the community about the university and the ways in which they seek to implement the institutional mission and strategic vision. Knowledge of the competencies within the preliminary competency model may provide those in these leadership roles with better understanding of how the work they do influences the partnerships facilitated by others within the institution as well as those within community organizations.

Finally, community organizations and community members engaging with higher education institutions would also benefit from the information provided in the preliminary competency model for CEPs. The concept of boundary spanning has been demonstrated to be a useful framing for community partners (Adams, 2014). As they engage in boundary-spanning behaviors, having a parallel set of competencies for engaging in these partnerships could be useful for community partners.

The development of the preliminary competency model for CEPs should be seen as a "first step in a multiphase inquiry" (Dostilio & Perry, 2017, p. 2). Dostilio and the team of research fellows expressed the hope that "the findings here and of future phases of the project will open up myriad researchable questions about CEPs that can be undertaken to build a knowledge base about this group of stakeholders so key to community–campus engagement" (Dostilio & Perry, 2017, p. 2). In considering multiple stakeholders in higher education community engagement and how they collectively function as conduits of organizational influence, we would expand the utility and influence of the preliminary competency model for CEPs and the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model by considering how the two models could be integrated with regard to competency development for individuals involved in community–university engagement. Therefore, within the remainder of this reflective conceptual essay we aim to provide constructive criticism of the preliminary competency model for CEPs by comparing and contrasting it with another model, the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model, with the goal of ultimately strengthening professional development for CEPs and non-CEPs alike.

Points of Convergence and Divergence Between the Two Models

In the sections below, we suggest three different ways of considering how the preliminary competency model for CEPs and the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model might share points of convergence, as well as divergence. First, we offer a comparison of the two models along the lines of boundary-spanning roles. Then, we similarly offer a comparison of the two models along the lines of the two boundary-spanning axes. Finally, we explore how boundary spanning as an action may be an inherent part of the preliminary competency model for CEPs.

Alignment of CEP Responsibility Areas With Boundary-Spanning Roles

According to the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010), the Internal Engagement Advocates are the individuals who hold leadership positions within the institution and have the positional or influential power to create the infrastructure and policy conditions conducive to supporting community engagement. They are focused primarily on the institution and are largely responsible for socio-emotional and leadership tasks and are often provosts or academic deans. However, the Internal Engagement Advocates generally do not have specific responsibilities to support and administer community–university engagement, and those responsibilities would almost certainly not be included as their primary jobs. Therefore, they would generally not be considered CEPs. However, many of the competencies outlined in the preliminary competency model for CEPs would be useful to their boundary-spanning roles. In particular, the competencies under the responsibility areas Leading Change Within Higher Education and Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus are especially salient.

The Engagement Champions are boundary spanners focused on socio-emotional and leadership tasks and are more oriented to the community. According to Weerts and Sandmann (2010), they often provide critical symbolic support for the institution's engagement mission and communicate that message to external audiences. It is equally important that this symbolic support is also reinforced with other structural

or institutional support to avoid tokenizing community engagement work. University presidents and other executive leaders (e.g., vice president for engagement) often serve as Engagement Champions, as do directors of community engagement centers. Presidents and other executive leadership are less likely to have direct management responsibilities over community–university engagement and would therefore not necessarily be considered CEPs according to the Dostilio and Perry (2017) definition. However, like many who serve as Internal Engagement Advocates, the Engagement Champions would also benefit from the preliminary competency model for CEPs, including the competencies under the responsibility areas Leading Change Within Higher Education and Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus. The center directors who serve as Engagement Champions, however, very closely match the definition of a CEP, making the entire preliminary competency model for CEPs directly relevant for them.

The Community-Based Problem Solvers are the boundary spanners who primarily provide site-based problem support, resource acquisition, and partnership development. They are community oriented, and their task orientation is primarily technical and practical. The Community-Based Problem Solvers are often field agents, outreach staff, or clinical faculty members. Individuals who serve in these roles may or may not be CEPs according to Dostilio and Perry's (2017) definition, depending on their individual job descriptions. From the preliminary model, the competencies under the responsibility areas Administering Community Engagement Programs and Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships seem most likely to be especially relevant.

The Technical Experts are the boundary spanners who are more oriented to the institution and perform primarily technical and practical tasks, with an emphasis on knowledge creation. This boundary-spanning role is most closely associated with academic faculty members. Though the Technical Experts may not be classified as CEPs based on Dostilio and Perry's (2017) definition, the competencies under the responsibility area of Facilitating Students' Civic Learning and Development are particularly relevant, as are, to a lesser degree, those under Facilitating Faculty Development and Support. For the Technical Experts who also are tasked with managing the partnerships in which they are engaged, the competencies under the responsibility area Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships are also useful.

Alignment of CEP Responsibility Areas Along the Boundary-Spanning Axes

In addition to considering how the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a) relates to each of the roles conceptualized in the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010), each of the six responsibility areas in the preliminary competency model for CEPs should also be considered along the two axes that constitute the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model—one axis focused on technical and practical tasks versus socio-emotional and leadership tasks and the other axis focused on a primary orientation to either the in-

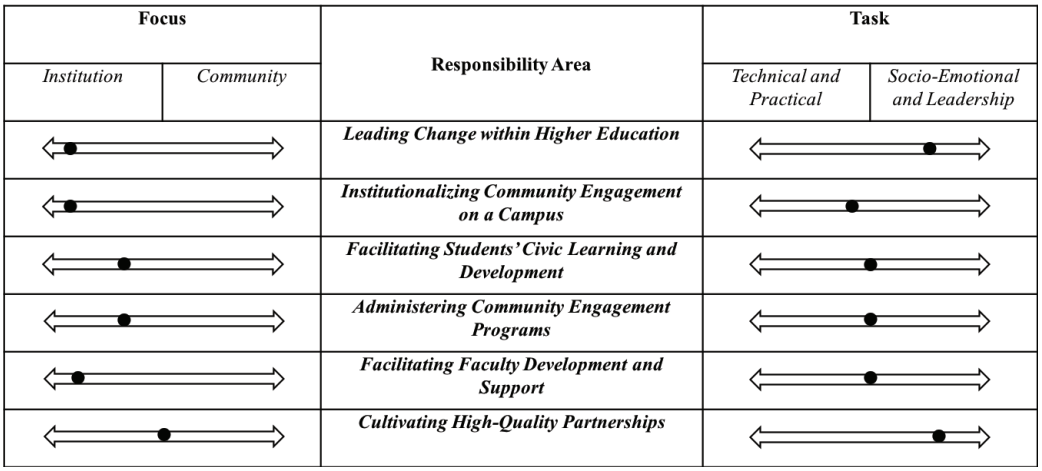

Figure 2. Alignment of CEP Responsibility Areas Along the Boundary-Spanning Axes

stitution or the community (see Figure 2).

As shown in Figure 1, a majority of CEP responsibilities are biased toward a focus on the institution. Leading Change Within Higher Education, Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus, and Facilitating Faculty Development and Support are all almost exclusively institutionally focused. For Facilitating Students' Civic Learning and Development, the focus is primarily toward the institution; however, in order to provide students with an appropriate understanding of how to work with the community to achieve positive learning experiences, there also needs to be a degree of focus on the community. Administering Community Engagement Programs also requires more of an institutional focus based on the knowledge, skills and abilities, and attributes described by the research team; however, CEPs are also called to embrace community partners as coeducators. Institutional focus and community focus are fairly balanced in Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships. The overall balance toward an institutional focus deserves further consideration. Although it follows logically that CEPs are employed by institutions and therefore should be more focused on the needs of their employers, those who serve in boundary-spanning roles often experience role conflict (Friedman & Podolny, 1992), which may create tension between CEPs and their institutions.

In terms of task orientation, the overall balance is much more even. The responsibilities of Facilitating Students' Civic Learning and Development, Administering Community Engagement Programs, and Facilitating Faculty Development and Support all require a fairly equal attention to technical and socio-emotional tasks. In other words, CEPs not only have to have the technical and practical knowledge and expertise to support community engagement; they also need to be able to influence their peers and other stakeholders that the work is valuable. For example, in order to effectively administer community engagement programs, CEPs need the ability to collect and analyze data, as well as the ability to understand and communicate what that information will mean to various stakeholders. With their heavy emphasis on relationship building, the responsibility areas Leading Change Within Higher Education and Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships both tend toward socio-emotional and leadership tasks, whereas Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus often asks CEPs to undertake slightly more technical and practical tasks as they navigate formal policies and procedures.

Boundary Spanning as Supplementary to the Preliminary Competency Model for CEPs

Among the skills and abilities described for the Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships responsibility area is being "able to communicate across boundaries and roles, and between internal and external stakeholders" (Dostilio, 2017a, p. 51). Although not using the specific phrase "boundary spanning," the sentiment is certainly consistent with the definition identified by Weerts and Sandmann (2010). Above, we discuss how the six responsibility areas in the preliminary competency model for CEPs might be conceptualized on the task and focus axes of the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model, as well as how the four boundary-spanner roles might be able to draw on and utilize the competencies within the six responsibility areas, depending on their roles and responsibilities. These discussions have focused on boundary spanners; however, another important component is to think about boundary spanning as an action and a potential element of each of the six responsibility areas.

The connection to the responsibility area Cultivating High-Quality Partnerships is clear, in that boundary spanners must be able to actively cross boundaries between the university and community, but boundary spanning may also be considered as a skill or ability useful for the other five responsibility areas. For example, in order to engage in Leading Change Within Higher Education, CEPs need to be "able to articulate connection between institutional mission and community engagement" (Dostilio, 2017a, p. 46). This skill involves representing the community in the university, as well as representing the university in the community, and it is certainly a boundary-spanning behavior. To Institutionalize Community Engagement on a Campus, a certain degree of internal boundary spanning is required in order to manage relationships among and between administrators and faculty members, as well as represent the community at the institution and advocate for community engagement as an institutional funding priority. In many ways, CEPs who

work to Facilitate Students' Civic Learning and Development could consider boundary spanning as a personal attribute, one that is used to inspire their students. Helping students understand how community-based learning experiences can contribute directly to their learning goals while also addressing identified community issues teaches students to span boundaries and balance priorities. For CEPs who need to develop the competency Administering Community Engagement Programs, boundary spanning can serve as a skill or ability (in the need to assess and evaluate the impact of partnerships on all stakeholders), as well as a personal attribute (in the need to embrace community partners as coeducators). Similar to Institutionalizing Community Engagement, the competency Facilitating Faculty Development and Support requires internal boundary spanning to address the motivations of a variety of faculty members across the disciplines, as well as the many demands on faculty time. This competency also requires CEPs to build up the boundary-spanning abilities of the faculty with which they are working.

Notably, this essay does not specifically address the role of the critical perspectives and commitments that are necessary for CEPs, which is such an integral part of the preliminary competency model. This should not be interpreted as a lack of connection to boundary spanning in higher education; in fact, the question of what it means to be a critical boundary spanner deserves much more focused attention, particularly given the near eventuality of role conflict for boundary spanners (Friedman & Podolny, 1992).

A Research and Practical Agenda on Boundary Spanning and CEPs

We believe the boundary-spanning literature in higher education community engagement is ripe for continued exploration, specifically exploration aimed at better understanding the competencies, professionalization, and leadership development of individuals who engage in boundary spanning. The preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a) serves as a complement to this work. We believe there is a significant overlap between the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model and the preliminary competency model for CEPs, and by examining the broader context of individuals doing community engagement through both lenses, we will be better equipped to prepare and support those who are engaged in this work.

As outlined above, the three ways of considering how the preliminary competency model for CEPs and the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model might share points of convergence, as well as divergence, inform what we believe should be a future mixed-methods research agenda focused on boundary spanning and CEPs. One strand of research in this agenda could focus on identifying and describing different boundary-spanning roles held by CEPs, with a focus on either those four roles identified in the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model or a focus on new roles informed by those original four roles and additional exemplars. Variations across these roles could pull from the six responsibility areas described in the preliminary competency model for CEPs, as well as any additional responsibility areas identified in future research on the model. Expanding the parameters of who is a CEP, including greater differentiation among CEPs and the various roles they hold across organizations and throughout their career span, would contribute to the creation of a more expansive set of professional development opportunities for CEPs.

Another strand of research in this agenda could focus on identifying and describing in more detail framing each of the six responsibility areas in the current preliminary competency model for CEPs as taking place along the two axes that constitute the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model—the first axis focused on a continuum from performing technical and practical tasks versus socio-emotional and leadership tasks and the second axis focused on a continuum of a primary orientation to either the institution or the community. Figure 2 provides an initial framework for understanding where the responsibility areas of the preliminary competency model might lie along the axes of the boundary-spanning model. These assumptions are testable, which would provide empirical and more nuanced insight into both models. This conceptualization would allow for greater understanding of how the work of CEPs is organized, as well as the competencies necessary to do the type of boundary-spanning work done by CEPs.

Further, as we consider boundary spanning as an action, one that may fall under

the skills and abilities a CEP may require, another strand of research may focus on determining if boundary spanning should be considered a necessary skill and ability within each of the six responsibility areas of the preliminary competency model for CEPs. Utilizing the complementary strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research methods could enable a greater understanding of how the work performed across these six responsibility areas is organized, how this impacts necessary CEP competencies, and whether boundary spanning as an action is a necessary CEP competency across all six responsibility areas. This knowledge would contribute to informing decisions regarding what types of professional development opportunities are needed for CEPs across the various responsibility areas they inhabit.

Additionally, we acknowledge that "for engagement to work effectively, multiple boundary spanning roles—community-based problem solvers, technical experts, internal engagement advocates, and engagement champions—must work in harmony" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010, p. 651). The preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a) is a valuable tool for beginning to understand how individual actors in various CEP roles can strive toward working in harmony to further the institutionalization of community engagement across higher education campuses. Furthermore, in some ways, CEPs are required to act as boundary spanners between the professional organizations with which they associate and their institutions. Dostilio (2017b) discusses how a "CEP's orientation is going to be influenced by the ideas of the professional association he or she most frequently consults" (p. 379). In their capacity as boundary spanners in this relationship, CEPs are largely representing professional organizations, as well as the values espoused by those organizations, within their institutions. They are able to communicate, translate, and contextualize the most current research and scholarly thinking on their home campuses to inform their roles as administrators and thought leaders. Conflict management is a common issue for those who occupy boundary-spanning roles (Friedman & Podolny, 1992; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010). Therefore, it is important to consider the conflict that may emerge between CEPs and may also happen when a CEP's role at the institution comes into conflict with the values of the professional organization with which that individual most closely associates. Further research should focus on examining not only the work of individual CEPs and how this is influenced by professional associations, but also on how groups of CEPs work together across the institution and between the institution and community to encourage, support, and facilitate community engagement.

A number of additional key questions can continue to guide this research and practical agenda: Are there consistent competencies necessary for higher education community engagement boundary spanning? If so, how do we purposefully cultivate these competencies and empower community engagement boundary spanners to prepare them as leaders, especially as they operate within increasingly complex multiversities? How do we facilitate building these harmonious working relationships among boundary spanners? Within these complex networks, how do we communicate the scholarly value of the work of boundary spanners among their academic peers and other institutional colleagues?

Several first steps to answering these questions include gaining a better understanding of boundary spanners' perceptions of their roles as community engagement boundary spanners, the expectations they have of their own professional competencies, and how they are prepared to successfully perform their boundary-spanning roles. As evidenced by the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a), effective CEPs function as boundary spanners with requisite knowledge and abilities for each of the four boundary-spanning roles identified by Weerts and Sandmann (2010). This awareness of self and of individual role(s) is fundamental to each of the six responsibility areas. The Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model is an apt foundational framework from which CEPs can develop their complex and nuanced professional identities. For example, the competencies within the responsibility areas Leading Change Within Higher Education and Institutionalizing Community Engagement on a Campus presume an awareness of the key players, positions, and processes that exist as part of an institution's overall commitment to community engagement. Understanding of the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model informs the execution of CEP competencies in that CEPs

are tasked with leading the development and implementation of strategies to institutionalize and enhance community engagement on a campus. Furthermore, recognizing the existing boundary-spanning roles and the stakeholders who function in these capacities enables CEPs to better navigate change and refine development strategies. Thus, familiarity with and application of the Weerts–Sandmann boundary-spanning model is, minimally, a corequisite step for developing the competencies defined in the preliminary competency model for CEPs (Dostilio, 2017a), but ideally it is also essential to a foundational prerequisite knowledge base for further developing one's capacity as a CEP.

Individually—as a chief institutional officer, operational support staff member, or change agent leader—or collectively as a comprehensive CEP team, each of the boundary-spanning roles must be understood and reflected within the context of a university's overall efforts. Therefore, we suggest future research into CEP competencies organized according to each boundary-spanning role such that we may understand the unique combinations of competencies common across all roles and those emphasized in certain domains. Such knowledge will inform CEP development strategies, curriculum, and professional and organizational outcomes associated with each. In reflecting on the CEP roles, Dostilio and Perry (2017) posit, "We have seen a distinct progression from what used to be primarily instrumental responsibility to more complex, transformational, democratic, and change-oriented work" (p. 10). Therefore, an understanding of how these competencies manifest within specific organizational types and contexts informs the ongoing refinement of the model. Refinement and focus of professional competency models are essential for clarity, yet potentially detrimental if too narrowly analyzed, particularly in cases such as the CEP, in which effective performance occurs in a networked system spanning multiple boundary types. It remains imperative to avoid a limited, overly narrow conceptualization of the CEP as we seek to further professionalize the role. Expanded application of the boundary-spanning concept will provide a more nuanced understanding of the facilitating role CEPs play between the university and the community and will ultimately provide insight on CEP career trajectories, particularly in this climate of changing faculty and administrator roles. Accounting for the numerous stakeholders involved in community–university engagement and the complicated connections among these stakeholders will help facilitate more effective and impactful partnerships.

About the Authors

Trina Van Schyndel *is a doctoral candidate in the Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education program at Michigan State University, where she is also earning her graduate certificate in community engagement. Her research interests focus on how a professional identity as a community-engaged practitioner-scholar is fostered through participation in professional communities, such as professional associations, while in graduate school. She earned her M.S. in natural resources from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, with a focus on program evaluation of residential environmental education programs.*

Andrew J. Pearl *is the director of community engagement research and publications at the University of Alabama's Center for Community-Based Partnerships. His research interests include motivations for and the impacts of community engagement of students, faculty members, and institutions. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia's Institute of Higher Education.*

Jennifer W. Purcell *is an associate professor of leadership studies at Kennesaw State University. Her research explores capacity building for community engagement in higher education, including strategies for developing community-engaged scholar-leaders, organizational infrastructure, and policy to support campus–community partnerships. She earned her Ed.D. in adult education from the University of Georgia, with foci in leadership and organization development.*

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The SEPA Grant-Writing Program: Regional Transformation Through Engaged Service-Learning

Nathan Bigelow and Donald Rodgers

Abstract

This article describes the Social Entrepreneurship for Poverty Alleviation (SEPA) grant-writing program at Austin College. The SEPA program provides a service-learning experience in which students spend a summer writing grants with local nonprofit agencies. In the hope that others might choose to emulate our efforts, what follows is a detailed overview of SEPA's founding and operation. Also included is a three-part assessment of the program focused on student learning, grant-writing outcomes, and the role the program plays in building bridges between the college and its surrounding region.

Keywords: internship, grants, partnership

David Orr (1992) asks his students to consider how their liberal arts education prepares them to *reside*, not merely dwell, in their community. By committing to a place, Orr argues, the inhabitant and local community become "parts of a system that meets real needs for food, materials, economic support and sociability" (102). In this spirit, colleges and universities engage in innovative community partnerships that deliver high-impact learning opportunities to students (e.g., Archer-Kuhn & Grant, 2014; Beran & Tubin, 2011; Braskamp, 2011; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Butin, 2010; Gerstenblatt, 2014; Harkavy, 2004; Hollander, 2004; Kuh, 2008; Stevens, 2014; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008).

Through decades of innovation and experimentation in course design, we now recognize a wide range of service-learning models. Heffernan (2001), for example, found six categories that capture most service-learning experiences: (1) "pure service-learning," where service is itself the intellectual core; (2) discipline-based service-learning courses, where specific knowledge frames the experience; (3) problem-based service-learning courses, where students act as consultants working for a client; (4) capstone courses, typically used to bridge theory and practice; (5) service internships, with both agency and student benefiting from the experience; and (6) undergraduate community-based action research, often as independent studies with close faculty supervision.

Grant-writing internships, at least ones similar in design to the SEPA program described in this article, do not fall easily into any one of these categories; rather, they are informed by several. When students are placed with agencies that match their disciplinary focus (a public health student being matched with a breast cancer screening agency, for example), Heffernan's second category, focusing on discipline, makes sense. Grant-writing programs also feature strong elements of problem-based service-learning, as students see themselves as consultants sent into the field with skills and the ability to help their assigned agency (even if students do not always see the reverse, in the education that agencies provide for them). In fact, the mutual benefits realized in these programs make them align most closely with Heffernan's service internship model of service-learning. Nonetheless, factoring in the contribution of disciplinary and problem-based approaches

more fully captures how this program fits within the field of service-learning programs.

These categories of service-learning open a door to high-impact pedagogical practices that promote engaged learning (e.g., Arendt & Westover, 2014; Bowen 2005; Wehlburg, 2006). Bowen (2005), summarizing the literature, offers four necessary characteristics of engaged learning. First, students must actively participate in the learning process. That is, they must experience a spark that then drives their desire to learn. The second dimension requires engagement with the object of study. In other words, students must consider deeply the subject at hand, perhaps through close reading, historical analysis, cultural anthropology, or whatever particular method the matter requires. Third, students must understand the context of their study. The goal here is multidisciplinarity—the ability to synthesize or translate their existing knowledge to different settings. The final expectation is for students to develop an engagement with the human condition through a social/civic experience. This requirement is perhaps the greatest goal of service-learning.

The service-learning opportunities that come with grant writing (which incorporate discipline-based, problem-based, and service [applied] internships) meld nicely with the pedagogical opportunities contained in engaged learning. Disciplinarity allows for a meaningful engagement with the object of study, which is critical to engaged learning (Arendt & Westover, 2014; Bowen, 2005). When the learning experience is problem-based and applied, students are found to learn more (Shulman 2002; Wehlberg 2006). Finally, the internship model, by its very nature, has the potential to promote engaged learning (Revere & Kovach, 2011; Shulman, 2002; Walqui, 2000), especially when it happens through civic engagement (Korgen & White, 2010). In summary, the type of experiences enabled by grant-writing service-learning programs, like the one addressed in this article, have the ability to spark engaged learning and provide a transformative educational experience.

Other Grant-Writing Programs

There is very little scholarship on the service-learning potential of community grant-writing initiatives. A notable exception is an article on the Community Grant Writing Project (CGWP) at Willamette University (Stevens, 2014). This innovative program conceives of community grant-writing as an intensive writing experience within a poverty and public policy first-year seminar course.

Prior to this grant-writing experience, students in the CGWP are immersed in a multidisciplinary exploration of the myriad issues surrounding poverty. In addition, they learn about the partner agencies' mission and initiatives through time spent in the field volunteering and through agency visits to their classroom. Students are sorted into teams, and then in the grant-writing portion of the course they benefit from specialized writing instruction, periodic presentations to agency partners, and reflection papers where they consider issues of poverty, or perhaps their career goals, through the lens of their service experience. Assessment of this dynamic program shows not only positive results for student learning, but also success in securing grant funding for partner agencies.

Although the SEPA program differs in terms of mission, scope, and design (as described in detail below), many of the elements that make CGWP a success have been considered for incorporation at Austin College. One specific example is our work to integrate the grant-writing experience into the college's writing requirement. The writing curriculum at Austin College requires students to complete a series of foundational and advanced writing classes across the curriculum. Unlike the CGWP at Willamette, grant writing fits better as an upper level writing experience (which asks for applied work) at Austin College.

The Social Entrepreneurship for Poverty Alleviation (SEPA) Program

The remainder of this article describes and evaluates the Social Entrepreneurship for Poverty Alleviation (SEPA) program at Austin College, a private liberal arts college of approximately 1,300 students in Sherman, Texas, 60 miles north of Dallas. Each summer the program pairs approximately 20 students with area nonprofit agencies. Through a focus on grant writing, students are able to practice and apply their academic training in meaningful service to the community. They go into the field with not only a passion to help, but also a clear idea of how they can best help. The total amount of student-generated grant funding

over the past 6 years stands at $855,977 and has averaged $8,734 per student. These funds, provided to a resource-deprived region (described in more detail below), are a material legacy left behind by each student.

Founding

In summer 2011, President Marjorie Hass laid the groundwork for an overall strategic plan that was to incorporate a plank stressing the meaningful engagement of Austin College in the life of its surrounding region. The final version of the text read,

> Global Vision, Local Engagement: We will serve as an accelerator for the cultural and economic growth of our surrounding region. We will make better use of the unique opportunities our location provides for learning, service, and scholarship. Concurrently, we will build international partnerships that have a local impact and further build on our long-standing reputation as a leader in international education.

Reflecting back, President Hass recalled:

> It was necessary to break down barriers and recognize the inherent connection between the college and region . . . I wanted to find a way to share with the community, in the most meaningful way possible, the talents of our students. (Personal communication, June 15, 2017)

In preparation for the plan's unveiling, she invited Donald Rodgers, associate professor of political science, to design an academic program that would help meet this goal. Early in this process, Rodgers consulted with the Texoma Council of Governments (TCOG) about ways the college could leverage the skills of its students in service of the community. TCOG is a voluntary organization of local governments that works with private and public sector agencies to advance quality of life and economic development in the region.

Katherine Cummins (manager of the Community and Economic Development Program), the primary point of contact at TCOG, had recently been approached by Beverly Santicola (executive director, Center for Rural Outreach & Public Services, Inc. [CROPS]) about ways in which partnerships might form to help build capacity in local nonprofit agencies. (It is important to note that neither TCOG nor CROPS has a formal affiliation with Austin College.) With those conversations in mind, Ms. Cummins brought together this three-person working group to discuss programming that might originate from Austin College.

Two key questions motivated the discussion: (1) How do we make our liberal arts college and its students an asset to the community? (2) How do we make our community an asset to the college and its students? The idea was for students to become engaged learners through an extended service experience. The small working group recognized that in addition to a passion for social justice, a practical skill liberal arts students should have is the ability to write well. The identified community need was for dedicated grant writers who could help nonprofit agencies grow their capacity to deliver services. The group framed their partnership approach in terms of social entrepreneurship aimed at improving conditions for people struggling most in the region, and thus the program gained its name.

Operation of the Program

Fast-forward to summer 2018. The seventh cohort of students is in the field writing grants for agencies, yet the basic mechanics of the program have remained unchanged. At Austin College, a small team of faculty and staff (four people) contributes a portion of their time to administering the program. Three staff members in the Institutional Advancement Office work to recruit agencies, raise money for the program, organize student and agency applications, administer payment to students, track the progress of grant applications, and even teach sections within the grant-writing workshop (described below). One faculty member serves as the SEPA coordinator and is responsible for recruiting students, working to match students to agencies, organizing the workshop, supervising the student experience over the summer, running reflection sessions, and assigning grades.

Recruitment. Recruitment begins with an understanding of the changing profile of Austin College students. Since 2012, the percentage of Austin College students who are Pell Grant eligible rose from 22% to 27%. Of the 98 SEPA students over the same time period, 32% have been Pell eligible.

As such, summer work is a necessity for many of our students, and consequently the SEPA program has always paid its students a $2,000 stipend in exchange for 200 hours of work. Starting in 2018, students also receive a scholarship to pay for related course credit.

In the early part of the spring semester, student recruitment takes place with announcements in classes, e-mail notifications, and signage around campus. Perhaps the most critical role for the faculty coordinator is identifying potential participants and encouraging them to apply. Interested students submit an online application where they answer a variety of questions about their background, academic preparedness, and motivation for participating.

Also in the early part of the spring semester, interested agencies complete an online application that asks a number of questions assessing their suitability for the program. It is important, in terms of suitability to participate, for agencies to be well enough established that students are likely to have a meaningful experience, but also that they have unmet needs to which the students can contribute. As it turns out, many local agencies find themselves in this position. New agency recruitment, as well as relationship maintenance with existing organizations, is a year-round effort for program administrators.

Matching. In April, the administrative team meets to review applications, decide on participants, and do the matching. This process is more of an art than a science. Administrators primarily consider the substantive interests each student has expressed in the application, but they also consider their strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis the nature of the various agencies. Some agencies, for example, have a reputation for being warm and nurturing, whereas others operate at a fast pace. We expect different types of students to succeed in each of these environments and match them accordingly.

In addition, newer agencies are often less prepared for the grant-writing process generally. For these agencies, students will likely spend a good portion of the summer working with staff to articulate their story, create logic models, and organize records—before they ever begin actually writing grant applications. In more established agencies, this material likely exists, and the students will be searching for, drafting, and submitting grant applications right away. In even more established agencies, fund-raising routines already exist, and the student will perhaps work on grant applications to previously supportive foundations. Finally, experience suggests that it is useful to pair the strongest students in terms of writing and interpersonal skills (perhaps even students participating for a second time) with first-time agency partners. This will likely produce a good experience for the agency while allowing the experienced student to help SEPA administrators better understand their new partner. Knowing all of this, and understanding the preparation of each student, helps with successful matching.

Following this meeting, e-mails go out to all students letting them know whether they will be participating and, if so, with whom. Students not admitted find out what they might do to improve their application next time. The SEPA program very rarely turns down agencies that want to participate. In the few cases where this has happened, the agencies were so new that they did not have a physical location and had not yet begun to deliver any services to the community.

Grant-writing workshop. In the week following spring commencement ceremonies, participating students and representatives of the agencies (usually executive directors) convene on campus for a 2-day grant-writing workshop. During this intensive 16-hour training seminar, professional grant-writing instructors lead sessions with students and agency staff on a variety of topics: how to search for grant opportunities, strategically targeting and tracking progress with foundations, organizing and presenting institutional data, developing a case for support, and proper structuring of applications. The workshop instructors come from organizations that advise agencies on fund-raising campaigns. Beverly Santicola (one of the SEPA founders), of U.S. Government Grants, in Houston, and Carole Rylander, of Rylander Associates, fill this role for SEPA.

The workshop is a program requirement for both students and agencies. Agencies participating for the second or third time will often send different staff members to benefit from the training. We view the instructor stipend and food service costs associated with the workshop as an in-kind contribution to regional agencies by the SEPA program and Austin College.

Table 1: Characteristics of SEPA Grant-Writing Students

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of SEPA interns	7	8	21	22	18	22
Distinct majors represented	6	4	8	12	13	17
Distinct minors represented	5	4	10	13	12	12
Average GPA (at time of application)	3.20	3.31	3.48	3.36	3.34	3.37
Percent women	100	78	57	55	83	86
Percent non-White	43	11	38	45	44	41

Note. For purposes of comparison, in 2017 the average GPA of all students at Austin College was 3.14, with 37% identifying as not White and 53% women.

Summer contact. Before concluding the grant-writing workshop, students and agencies negotiate a work schedule and make plans for the beginning of the internship. Because not many Austin College students are from Sherman, SEPA administrators negotiated a reduced-rate housing option for students who wish to live on campus during the summer. In 2017, seven of the 22 participating students exercised this option. Other campus resources include a library subscription to Foundation Center Funding Information Network, a powerful grant-searching resource. This database is a critical component of the program and remains available, but accessible only on campus, to students and agencies year-round.

Students remain in contact with the faculty coordinator during the summer. In order to receive course credit, students must submit reports each time they finish a grant application or complete a significant activity. In addition, all participants join a closed Facebook group to communicate with each other and share success stories and frustrations. Interventions occur when students do not perform as expected or agencies fail to deliver the agreed-upon learning experience, but this has happened only twice in the program's history. Before the use of Facebook, students met on campus in the middle and end of the summer session for debridement sessions.

A Profile of Participants

Table 1 summarizes characteristics, by year, of participating students. The first two "trial run" years saw seven and eight students participating, respectively. Since then, the program has averaged just over 20. The SEPA program recruits students from across campus. In 2017, for example, participating students came from 17 of Austin College's 37 major disciplines. Students majoring in science disciplines participate at a lower rate for a variety of reasons, including summer research expectations. SEPA students are above average in terms of their GPA, which is not surprising given the application process. The racial composition of SEPA students is comparable to the college as a whole, although slightly more diverse overall. In terms of gender, notably more women than men participate. Interestingly, this gender gap (around 80% women) aligns with industry demographics. According to the Grant Professionals Association (2017), 88.3% of its members are women.

Since 2012, 57 different agencies have participated in the SEPA program. Table 2 lists all of these community partners and indicates their number of times participating. There are 21 agencies that have returned for at least a second time, and eight that have been with the program for 3 or more years. These multiyear partners tend to have had very good experiences with the program and provide high-quality learning environments for students. Recruiting first-time agencies helps advertise the SEPA program to the region, and admitting a diverse typology of organizations helps with student recruitment across campus.

The Texoma Council of Governments publishes a resource directory yearly (TCOG, 2017a). From this list, there are approximately 170 local nonprofit agencies identified by their mission as being "highly suitable" for the program (including the 57 who have already participated), with many more added yearly. This local nonprofit society is more than sufficient to provide opportunities for Austin College students, but also not so large that SEPA might go unnoticed in the community.

Table 2: Agency Participation in the SEPA Grant-Writing Program (2012-2017)

Agency	Years	Agency	Years
African American Museum	1	Pottsboro Area Development Alliance	1
AGE Museum and Learning Center	1	Pottsboro Area Public Library	4
Behavioral Concepts	1	Preston Voluntary Emergency Services	2
Bells 4A & 4B Economic Development Board	1	PVES Foundation	3
Callie Clinic	3	Reba's Ranch House/Texoma Health Foundation	1
Chahta Foundation	1	Serve Denton	2
Child and Family Guidance Center	1	Share: Taking it to the Streets	1
Children's Advocacy Center of Grayson County	1	Sherman Community Players	5
City of Denison–Main Street	6	Sherman Independent School District	1
Covenant Presbyterian Church Preschool	1	Sherman Symphony	2
Denton Assistance Center, Inc. Serve Denton	1	TCOG	1
Downtown Sherman Preservation	2	TCOG Area Agency on Aging	1
Family Promise of Grayson County	1	TCOG Energy Services	1
Fannin County Children's Center	1	Texoma Community Center	2
Friends of Sam Rayburn/Rayburn House	1	Texoma Craft Beverage Alliance Foundation	1
Grand Central Station	2	Texoma Health Foundation	1
Grayson College Foundation	3	Texoma Housing Partners	1
Grayson County Department of Juvenile Services	1	Texoma Senior Citizens Foundation	1
Grayson County Shelter	4	The HOPE Center	1
Habitat for Humanity Grayson County	2	The Rehabilitation Center	2
Home Hospice of Grayson County	2	The Salvation Army	1
House of Eli	2	The Sherman Museum	1
Keep Whitesboro Beautiful	1	Theatricks	1
MasterKey Ministries of Grayson County	2	United Way of Grayson County	2
Meals on Wheels of Texoma	1	Whitesboro Economic Development	1
Miniencounters Mini Therapy Horses	1	Women Rock	4
Mosaic Family Services	2	Women's Gift Exchange	1
New Life House	1	Young at Art	1
North Texas Youth Connection	1		

Table 3: A Profile of the Texoma Region

	Cooke County	Fannin County	Grayson County	Texas	United States
Total Population	38,437	33,915	120,877	24.26m	309.3m
Percent under 18	28.5	24.6	27.2	30.4	26.9
Percent over 65	15.9	17	15.6	10.4	13
Percent White	85.7	86	83.9	70.4	72.4
Percent Black	2.7	6.8	5.9	11.8	12.6
Percent Hispanic (of any race)	15.6	9.5	11.3	37.6	16.3
Percent low birth weight	8.3	7.7	7.6	8.1	6
Percent of adults smoking	NA	NA	27	19	15
STI (cases per 100k people)	214	214	258	422	83
Teen birth rate (births per 1k women)	70	64	64	64	22
Percent of adults uninsured	30	27	27	30	13
Percent over 25 with high school degree	75	90	80	72	92
Percent unemployed	6.6	8.8	8.1	7.6	5.3
Percent in poverty	14.8	17.2	15.7	17.6	14.4
Percent of children in poverty	19	20	19	23	11
Violent crime (incidents per 100k people)	381	223	265	512	100
Percent with access to healthy foods	17	33	47	62	92

Note. Information in this table comes from the TCOG's (2017b) Texoma Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy with data originating from the 2010 U.S. Census and the Robert Wood Lowe Foundation.

A Note on the Region

The Texoma region is located north of Dallas along the Red River border with Oklahoma and contains a mix of urban and rural areas. TCOG recognizes the region to encompass Grayson, Fannin, and Cooke Counties. The major cities are Sherman (population 41,500), Denison (23,700), Gainesville (16,300), and Bonham (10,100). A number of smaller cities and towns dot the region. A quick look at population characteristics in Table 3 shows significant demand for social-service-oriented nonprofit programming.

Many of these demographic indicators speak for themselves, but a few stand out as particularly concerning. Health indicators in the region are rather poor. High rates of smoking, low birth weights, high rates of STIs, low access to healthy foods, and a high level of uninsured people all represent problems that exceed national and usually state averages. Although poverty levels in the region are lower than the state average, they remain high in the national context, especially among children (Bray & Galvan, 2015).

Evaluating the SEPA Program

The SEPA grant-writing program is at a stage where preliminary program assessment is possible in at least three areas. What follows is an assessment of the program's impact on student learning, the community, and programmatic fund-raising efforts at Austin College.

Learning Outcomes

To evaluate student learning, a number of items are analyzed. Student feedback in the form of course/program evaluation provides quantitative and qualitative information from both students and agency partners. We also track senior exit surveys in the Political Science Department to compare SEPA students with other departmental graduates who are academically similar.

The quantitative part of the student and agency evaluations measures a number of items related to student learning and issues of responsible fulfillment of program expectations (see Table 4). There is very little variation in response to any of these questions. Students rate the program highly, as do agency partners.

The first four items offer students' evaluation of their own learning. On average, students rate themselves in the 4 range on this 5-point scale. There appears to be a slight trend upward over time; however, the difference of means across years is not statistically significant. In the few cases where students rated themselves at 3 or lower, a match was done with agency evaluation of the same student, and in each of these instances the agency rated the student higher (on Questions 12 and 13) than the students rated themselves on the four learning-focused questions. Similarly

Table 4: Evaluation of SEPA Grant-Writing Students

	2015	2016	2017
Student Self-Evaluation	**n = 15**	**n = 19**	**n = 10***
Learning Focused			
1. This internship gave me a realistic experience in grant-writing	4.1	4.5	4.5
2. The work I performed was challenging and stimulating	3.9	4.4	4.1
3. I am comfortable with finding grants and other funding resources for different projects/programs	4.0	4.6	4.7
4. I have more knowledge on finding relevant data or research required to write a successful grant proposal	4.3	4.7	4.6
Responsibility and Program Evaluation Focused			
5. I was given adequate training or explanation of projects	3.7	4.1	4.5
6. I had regular meetings with my supervisor and received constructive, on-going feedback	3.6	4.3	4.2
7. I was provided levels of responsibility consistent with my ability and was given additional responsibility as my experience increased	3.5	4.2	4.2
8. My supervisor was available and accessible when I had questions/concerns	4.0	4.7	4.1
9. I had a successful grant-writing experience	3.8	4.6	4.2
10. I received adequate training in grant-writing	4.1	3.9	4.5
11. Would you be willing to engage in a peer-to-peer grant training effort?	73%	79%	70%
Agency Evaluation of Student	**n = 15**	**n = 20**	**n =13**
12. The intern displayed initiative, imagination and effective communication	4.4	4.3	4.3
13. The intern has displayed growth in knowledge and understanding of organization's mission and services	4.5	4.5	4.7
14. The intern followed instructions and completed work assignments in a timely manner	4.6	4.4	4.6
15. The intern maintained professional demeanor and appearance	4.3	4.5	4.4
16. The intern followed organization's rules and regulations	4.7	4.7	4.8

Note. Scores represent the average rating on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. The final student evaluation item shows the percentage of students answering in the affirmative. Due to a turnover in program staff, follow-up surveys were not sent in 2017, resulting in a smaller than normal sample.

favorable evaluations appear on issues related to responsibility and general program evaluation. Although all of these quantitative responses indicate positive effects and reflect program vitality, they do not portray the transformative experience we believe occurs when students engage with the program. Insights into that aspect are provided by the open-ended, qualitative assessment that the students and agencies volunteer in their evaluations.

It is the hope of all engaged learners that they understand the social/civic context for the activities in which they engage. This understanding is at the heart of meaningful service-learning. The open-ended comments show that students are well attuned to the social context of their work and the role it has in shaping society. The following examples are presented because of their clarity, but these are representative of many similar comments:

> I had only positive experiences with [Agency] and everyone there. I got to meet several members of the Board, and staff, as well as regular patients that receive treatment there. I am thankful Dan took the time to take me to an additional meeting about grant-writing to give me further insight into the process. Most of all I see that Sherman has a strong non-profit presence and community. (Student program evaluation, September 1, 2016)

> Working as a proposal writer in the Grayson County area is an immense challenge. This internship immersed me in the unique socioeconomic climate of this area. There is extreme wealth and extreme poverty just miles away from each other in a relatively small population. This region does not receive the financial support or recognition that larger cities, such as Dallas, receive. The challenge I experienced this summer made me realize that grant-writing is not only standing up for the impoverished individuals of Sherman, but also fighting for an under-funded region. (Student program evaluation, September 1, 2016)

These reflections show sensitivity to the object of study and appreciation of context as well as the beneficial effects of experiential learning/service-learning. The comments of supervisors also identify the realization of engaged learning.

> [Student] was an absolute asset to [Agency]. She was diligent in using her time wisely and producing many documents that will be extremely useful in this coming year. In addition, she volunteered with [Agency] and participated in our work, which was not only was *[sic]* a blessing to us but also helped [Student] to "meet" the need. She saw that the children were real and I believe that her heart and perspective were changed. That perspective change definitely showed up in her writing. She is an accomplished writer. Already, I have used a lot of her writing in a case statement and used it for another grant proposal. For me, she helped to express what we deal with every day, not from inside the trenches, but a "looking in" perspective. Having fresh eyes and the ability to communicate effectively, is the icing on the cake. (Agency program evaluation, September 1, 2016)

Student comments also reveal practical motivations for participating. Although close observers will note the market value of a liberal arts education (e.g., Humphreys & Carnevale, 2016; Jackson, 2017; Sentz, 2016), students and parents are understandably anxious about preparation for the first job (Pearlstein, 2016). Representative comments, in this regard, include "I feel very confident that the skills I learned this summer will be assets in the workplace" and "I believe the skill set I gained from the SEPA program is transferable to any professional context, not just non-profit work" (student program evaluation, September 1, 2016).

Sorting through all student evaluations shows that four students over the years had clearly negative experiences with the SEPA program. One of these students internalized the negative experience, questioning their own preparation and skill. The other three externalized their frustrations. In each case, the primary frustration was that the partner agency was not prepared enough to be hosting a grant-writing intern. This is something that speaks to the matching process, previously discussed, which

ties directly to the success or failure of the learning experience.

Although SEPA students are drawn from across campus (see Table 1), the most common major is political science. Of the 98 total SEPA students, 28 have been political science majors. This weighting probably reflects the influence of faculty sponsors, both of whom have been from that department. This group of SEPA-affiliated political science majors presents an opportunity for outcome assessment.

We looked at departmental exit surveys of the 28 SEPA students in political science and compared them to a sample of 30 political science majors with the same GPA (both average and standard deviation). On many standard items, like self-assessed writing ability and understanding of theoretical concepts, the two groups did not vary significantly. However, notable differences appeared on the open-ended question of future plans. For the 28 SEPA students in political science, 12 were planning careers related to nonprofit or other service-based endeavors (including work with local agencies and organizations like AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps). Of the remaining 15, most (11) were going to graduate school, and four fell into a miscellaneous job searching category. In the comparison group, four were planning to enter nonprofit professions, seven were planning on grad school, and 19 were moving on to various jobs or searching for work.

The SEPA students self-selected into a service experience, so it is not surprising that they would also want to work in the nonprofit world following graduation, but the differentiation from the control group is rather dramatic. Furthermore, despite the endogeneity of this relationship, it is reassuring to see SEPA students pursuing a related career and to know that their participation in the program supplied them with connections, strong resumes, and a specific set of skills.

Contributing to Regional Transformation

The SEPA grant-writing program was born of the desire to transform the skills and creativity of Austin College students into tangible resources for the region's nonprofit agencies. Comprehensive data collection began in the second year of the program and carefully tracks how many grant applications students submit, as well as how many are funded. Table 5 summarizes these outcomes.

The most exciting finding is that students have indeed been successful in securing funds for their partner agencies. Each year the total grows, but in 2017 (the last fully reported year), the 22 students were successful in securing $229,500 in grant funding. Over the years, the total amount raised stands at $855,977; on average, each student secures $8,734 in grant funding during a summer of work. These outcomes have exceeded expectations. Responding to

Table 5: Summary of SEPA Grant-Writing

	2012*	2013	2014	2015	2016**	2017	Total
Number of students participating	7	8	21	22	18	22	98
Number of grant applications submitted	Unavailable	37	42	46	25	51	201
Number of grants funded	12	12	14	13	11	39	101
Percent of applications funded	Unavailable	32.4%	33.3%	28.3%	44.0%	76.5%	50.2%
Amount requested	Unavailable	$939,800	$1,176,708	$1,302,029	$486,470	$405,750	$4,310,757
Amount funded	**$33,547**	**$84,300**	**$113,650**	**$224,480**	**$170,500**	**$229,500**	**$855,977**
Average funds per student	$4,792	$10,538	$5,412	$10,204	$9,472	$10,432	$8,734

**In 2012 we were still learning what to track.*
***Due to a turnover in program staff, 2016 grant-tracking numbers are incomplete.*

a question about how she views the grant-funding success of students, President Hass remarked, "That our students are so successful at competing for and securing grant funding is a secondary [to student learning and community engagement], but very exciting, result" (personal communication, June 15, 2017). Asked to comment on SEPA's community impact, Susan Thomas, the executive director of TCOG, wrote:

> The increased grant funding SEPA has generated for local non-profits in our region is significant, but the significance grows exponentially when you monetize staff development (grant writing training) and increases in staff support with student service hours. We hear the same three capacity issues from almost every nonprofit we work with: the need for more financial resources generally and challenges raising funds, imbalance between work load and staff availability, and an ever widening knowledge gap as it relates to identifying, writing, and securing funding from grants. SEPA address each of these common organizational challenges, helping the students and agencies alike build quality of life in Texoma. (Personal communication, August 14, 2017)

The following comments from an agency that fights homelessness offer an example of how SEPA students help agencies overcome these organizational challenges.

> Because of [Student], we have found 23 potential foundations to write grants for! In total, she has found us $212,000 in potential grant opportunities. [Student] completed one grant, 8 LOIs, and started 12 grant applications for us. (Agency program evaluation, September 1, 2016)

When students succeed in getting grants funded, they feel a great sense of accomplishment. In reflecting upon her experience, a student from 2015 reported, "I'm excited that a grant proposal I wrote helped my organization secure $8,000 of funding for a community garden" (student program evaluation, September 1, 2015). More difficult to assess is the impact of students who were not immediately successful in securing funding. Perhaps their work writing logic models or organizing financial records contributed to fund-raising efforts after they left, but these results are challenging to track.

In recognition of its success working within the community, SEPA has been recognized in a number of ways. It earned the 2013 NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) Innovation Award and was recognized by *Borgen Magazine* as a college program committed to making a difference in the fight against global poverty. In 2016, the city of Denison named SEPA its "Partner of the Year."

Donor and Public Relations

The SEPA program is, in multiple ways, a practical asset to the college. Administrators reference it when they discuss the college mission, and development staff use it as a vehicle to raise money from individuals and foundations. In this regard, President Hass noted,

> I often talk to donors who are torn between giving to a social justice cause or helping the college, but SEPA allows them to do both. Not only that, but by funding a SEPA student, I like to explain how their gift compounds itself [in terms of students raising an average of $8,000 for their agency while being paid a stipend of just $2,000]. . . . I also find that fundraising for SEPA is a very good way to attract new donors to the college, who we then groom for involvement in future fundraising campaigns. (Personal communication, June 15, 2017)

In addition to fund-raising from individuals, program administrators team up with development staff and write grants to help support the SEPA program. As confusing as it may sound, our experience shows that it is possible to secure grant funding for a program designed to secure grant funding. Funding the program each year requires a combination of fund-raising from individuals, local foundations, and in some years assistance from other sources of money from around campus. In total, the program requires approximately $57,000 per year to operate. By far the most significant cost associated with the program is the $2,700 (stipend and scholarship for course credit)

that goes to each participating student. Additional costs include instructor stipend and food service for the workshop, which are less than $3,000 in total.

Next Steps

Although pleased with these three main areas of impact, the SEPA program continues to explore programmatic improvements. One, already mentioned, is to integrate the grant-writing activities into the college writing curriculum (see Stevens, 2014). Other ideas include growing the number of partner organizations and increasing the number of agencies returning to participate multiple times. This would be an important sign of program value to the community.

Also under consideration is a model for implementing the program during the regular semesters or, perhaps, extending student involvement from summer into the fall. This might involve the partner agency deciding to pay their student for continued work. Finally, the SEPA model has the potential to clone itself in other programs at Austin College. Nonprofit accounting (out of the Economics and Business Administration Department) as well as community behavioral health (out of the Department of Psychology) may consider partnership programs in the community that look very similar in design to SEPA.

Conclusion

Programming in higher education often involves uncomfortable zero-sum tradeoffs—resources directed one way and thus restricted in another. Our experience with the SEPA grant-writing program is entirely win-win. Students get a transformative educational experience as well as a paid summer job. Agencies, at no cost to themselves—beyond time spent hosting interns—get fund-raising training and student assistance that averages over $8,000 in new funding. Finally, through building bridges into the community, the college becomes a better neighbor while at the same time bringing positive attention to its programming. But most importantly, beyond all our success stories, lies the essential point of it all—the lives of people served by these agencies. It is through working with partner agencies that students are able to focus their talents and passions in meaningful service to their neighbors.

About the Authors

Nathan Bigelow *is an associate professor and chair of political science at Austin College. His primary research interests are on legislative politics and political campaigning at both the national and state level. He received his Ph.D. in government and politics from the University of Maryland.*

Donald Rodgers *was an associate professor of political science at Austin College. His primary research interests were on political development and democratization in Taiwan. He had received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Georgia. While beginning work on this article, Don died unexpectedly. This article is presented in his memory.*

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The Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool

Diane M. Doberneck and Shari L. Dann

Abstract

Community-engaged scholars, practitioners, and community partners often find the language of community engagement challenging. Words like *participate*, *collaborate*, *partner*, or *engage* fail to convey who in a community–university partnership has voice and authority in decision-making and responsibility for actions. The Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool was developed as a visual to address this challenge. The authors provide two case studies to demonstrate how this tool can be used to name steps in community-engaged projects, clarify voice and decision-making authority, and represent collaboration responsibilities at multiple project stages. *The Matter of Origins* evaluation example illustrates how the tool can be used in a community-engaged research setting. The GRAND Learning Network example demonstrates how the tool can be used in a more complex community-engaged teaching and learning context. In the conclusion, the authors acknowledge the tool's potential limitations and imagine possible adaptations of the tool for other community–university partnership contexts.

Keywords: stakeholder participation, community partner voice, community-engaged research, community-engaged teaching and learning, visualization tool, degree of engagement

For decades, community-engaged scholars, practitioners, and community partners have struggled to find meaningful language to describe the nature of their relationships. Common outreach and engagement terms like *participate*, *collaborate*, *partner*, *involve*, *engage*, and *cocreate* convey a sense of partnership but fail to explain exactly how community and university partners shared voice or authority in decision-making throughout their collaborative community engagement activities.

Multiple scholars have explored the nature of *participation* and sought to define it through visuals, typologies, and conceptual frameworks. For example, in 1969, Arnstein put forward the eight-rung Ladder of Participation as a visual to show a range of participation starting with *manipulation* at the bottom of the ladder and moving upward to *citizen control* at the top of the ladder (Arnstein, 1969). Hart later adapted Arnstein's ladder for youth participation to include two broad categories—nonparticipation (including Arnstein's bottom three rungs) and degrees of participation (including Arnstein's top five rungs; Hart, 1997). Both Arnstein and Hart made a distinction between the lower rungs, where, in reality, the partner's voice was not considered in decision-making, and the upper rungs, where partners had voice in decision-making.

Taking a similar tack, decades later, the International Association for Public Participation put forward its public participation spectrum, which focuses on defining the public's role in participation by clarifying the goals of participation and the promise to the public. This internationally popular spectrum ranges from *inform* through *consult*, *involve*, and *collaborate* to *empower* as potential goals of public participation (International Association for Public Participation, 2014). The International Association for Public Participation further developed their typology by matching public participation processes to the different places on their spectrum. For example, some

collaboration processes are more appropriate for *inform* or *consult*, whereas other processes are more appropriate for *collaborate* or *empower*. Other scholars, particularly those from agriculture and natural resource fields, have proposed additional continuums for public participation with collaboration or engagement processes matched to particular places on the continuum (Hage, Leroy, & Petersen, 2010; Kessler, 2004; Pretty, 1995; Reed et al., 2009).

Other scholars who have turned their attention to stakeholder involvement, collaboration, and engagement have focused more on the underlying motivations, frames, or paradigms that shape the rationale for participation (Reed, 2008). For example, Cornwall (2008) examined who participates, in what aspect or in which activities, and to what end. Fraser (2005) put forward four approaches: anti- or reluctant communitarians and economic conservatism, technical-functionalist communitarians and managerialism, progressive communitarians and empowerment, and radical/activist communitarians and transformation. Hage et al. (2010) examined the purposes of stakeholder participation in knowledge production by linking the approach to the nature of the problem (i.e., degrees of certainty) and norms/values consensus.

With a focus on community-engaged research, Herr and Anderson (2015) developed a six-place continuum of positionality in action research, with places on the continuum ranging from insider (1) to outsider (6). Their work illuminates the relationship between research and the partners in the research and describes validity criteria, knowledge contributions, and research traditions for each of the six places on the continuum. Also from the field of community engagement, Barker (2004) identified a taxonomy of engaged scholarship practices that frames engagement practice in terms of three parameters: theory, problems addressed, and methods.

With decades of participation definitions, typologies, frameworks, continua, and typologies, our theoretical understandings of participation and voice have deepened, but our ability to articulate how those understandings are translated into practice has lagged behind. Misunderstandings, miscommunications, and misrepresentations between university and community partners remain commonplace (Flicker, Savan, McGrath, Kolenda, & Mildenberger, 2007). These misunderstandings contribute to a variety of university–community partnership challenges, from delays in reaching project goals (at the minimum) to disrespect and broken trust (at the maximum). To address the need for practical tools to use in our own work with community partners and with our undergraduate and graduate students, the authors developed the Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool, an adaptation and expansion of the Degree of Collaborative Processes in Engaged Research figure developed by The Research University Community Engagement Network (TRUCEN) and published by Stanton (2008, p. 26).

Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool: How the Tool Works

Originally developed as a counting or calculating tool, the abacus has been found in ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, Greece, and China. All variations rely on pebbles, beads, or stones being moved to the left and right (or up and down) along a rod or beam—to connote more or less value visually. Strengths of the abacus are how abstract numbers are represented tangibly through concrete items such as beads and how the movement of the beads shows changes.

The Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool is not a tool for literally *counting* the amount of voice in decision-making or collaboration. Instead, the abacus tool is a visual or metaphorical tool used to account for the valence of the relationship between two collaborating entities—community and university partners. In other words, the abacus tool can visually represent whether, during each step of a shared project, the community or university partner has more voice in project decision-making or whether both partners share the work equally. Just like the original abacus, our abacus tool is composed of three parts: sides, rungs, and beads, each of which plays an important role in visualization.

Sides: The abacus tool has two vertical sides. One side represents the community partner voice and authority; the other side represents the university partner voice and authority.

Rungs: The abacus tool has multiple horizontal rungs connected to each of the sides. Abacus beads slide smoothly along

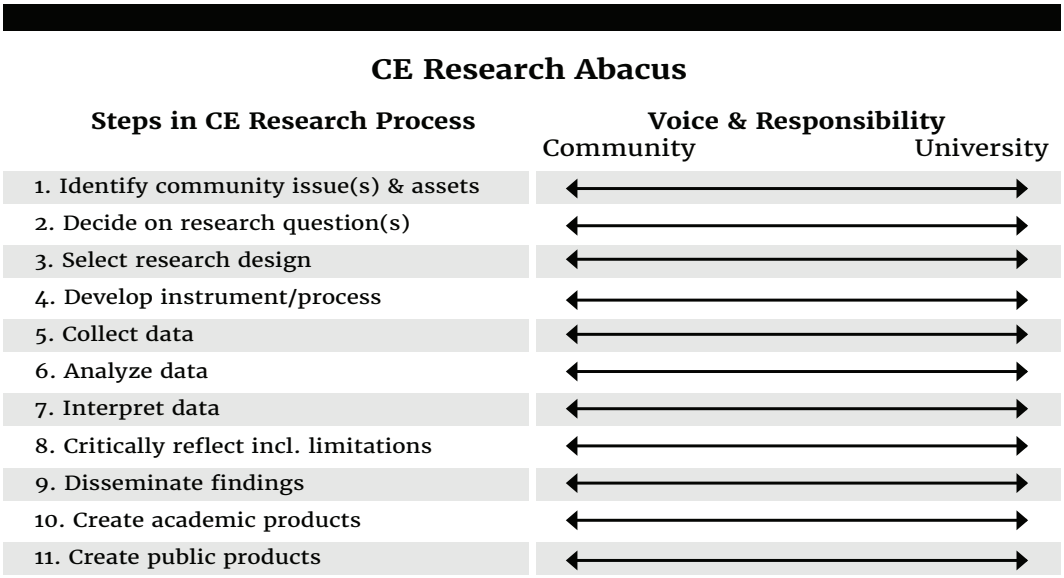

Figure 1. Template for degree of collaboration abacus for community-engaged research.

the rungs. Rungs represent the steps in the community-engaged scholarship process. The names of the rungs vary depending on the type of community-engaged scholarship (Doberneck, Glass, & Schweitzer, 2010). For example, a community-engaged research project may include the following rungs: (1) identify community issues and assets, (2) decide on research question(s), (3) select an appropriate research design, (4) develop research instruments or processes, (5) collect data, (6) analyze data, (7) interpret data, (8) critically reflect on research, (9) disseminate findings to partners and participants, (10) create scholarly products for public audiences, and (11) create scholarly products for academic audiences (see Figure 1).

In contrast, a community-engaged teaching and learning project may include these rungs: (1) identify community issues and assets, (2) identify context for learning—time and setting, (3) understand learners' needs, (4) identify learning objectives, (5) develop learning experiences, (6) identify evaluation questions, (7) design evaluation methods, (8) gather and analyze evaluation data, (9) critically reflect on experiences, (10) revise the programming, (11) create academic products, and (12) create academic products (see Figure 2).

Beads: The abacus tool has multiple beads on each rung. Beads are used to account for voice and authority in the decision-making process and collaboration responsibilities. The side with more beads has more voice in the decision-making process and more collaboration responsibilities. The side with fewer beads has less of a voice in the process and fewer collaboration responsibilities. Beads perfectly centered between the two sides represent a collaboration where both community and university partners have relatively equal voice in the process.

Examples of the Degree of Collaboration Tool in Practice

In a Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation Context

The Matter of Origins evaluation was a short-term, community-engaged research project, designed to evaluate the impact of a contemporary dance performance on audience members. Liz Lerman, a contemporary dance choreographer, and the Dance Exchange artists received funding through the National Science Foundation's Informal Science Education/Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research program area to support the implementation and evaluation of an art/science/engagement performance, with a focus on beginnings, matter, mystery, and math. After 3 years of consultations and collaboration with physicists from around the world, Liz Lerman and her fellow dancers choreographed *The Matter of Origins* as a "two-act contemporary dance performance exploring stories, images, and movement related to spiritual and scientific explanations of the origins of the universe" (Lerman, 2011). As a condition

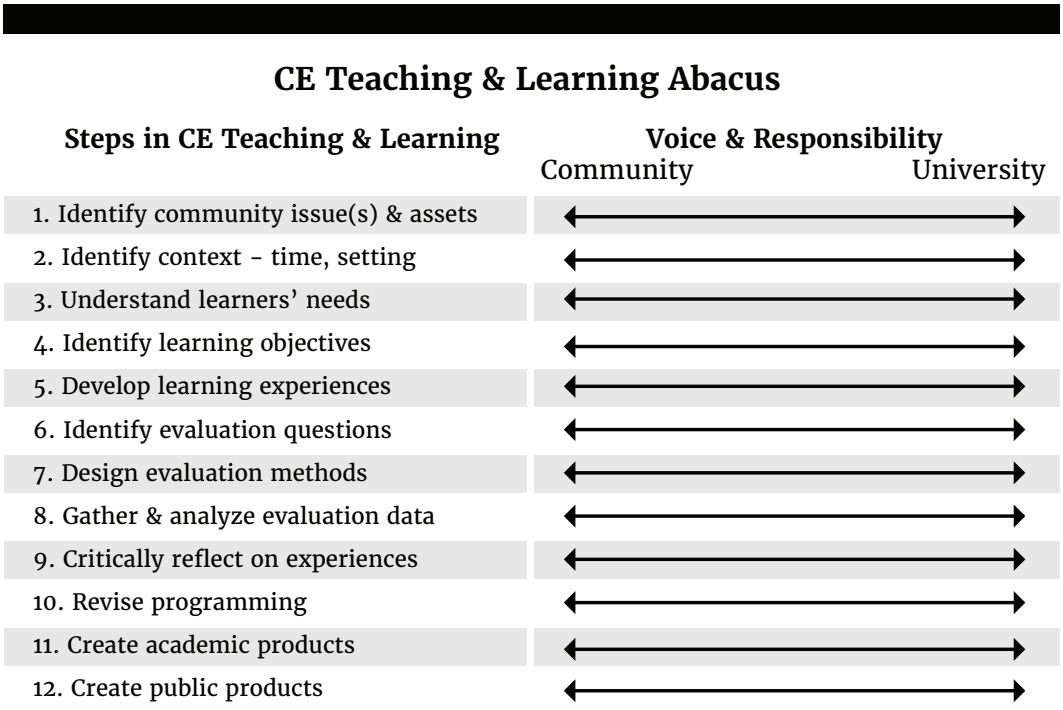

Figure 2. Template for degree of collaboration abacus for community-engaged teaching and learning.

of the grant funding, the National Science Foundation required an evaluation.

For this community-engaged evaluation, the university partners included a community engagement scholar, a statistician, a Ph.D. student in sociology, and an advisory board composed of theater, dance, physics, and information science educators—all of whom were associated with Michigan State University. The main community partners included Liz Lerman (choreographer), John Borstel (humanities director of the Dance Exchange), Amelia Cox (production manager), and multiple Dance Exchange professional dancers. With performances at five sites across the United States, site-specific community partners also included performing art center directors, local faculty and community leaders, and local dancers. In addition, the National Science Foundation, through its program officer, provided feedback at various stages of this community-engaged evaluation project.

Because of its interdisciplinary nature, *The Matter of Origins* evaluation project was guided by literature from multiple domains, including physics, history, religion, movement, informal science education, authentic assessment, emotional intelligence, creativity, reflection, and mixed research methods (Doberneck, Miller, & Schweitzer, 2011a, 2011b; Miller, Doberneck, & Schweitzer, 2011; Doberneck, Miller, & Schweitzer, 2012a). In addition, all community partners, including the National Science Foundation, were interested in understanding whether audience members from traditionally underrepresented groups were influenced more than other audience members.

The collaboration between Liz Lerman, the Dance Exchange artists, the Michigan State University evaluation research team, and the site-specific community partners was a challenging and rewarding partnership (see Doberneck, Miller, & Schweitzer, 2012b for a more thorough discussion of the relationship among partners). *The Matter of Origins* community-engaged evaluation project unfolded through dialogue, experimentation, and trust among the partners. After the project was mostly wrapped up, the university and the community partners were able to document the back-and-forth steps of the collaboration using the Degree of Engagement Abacus Tool (see Figure 3).

For the first step (identify community issues and assets), Liz Lerman and the Dance Exchange identified the grant opportunity to help fund the development, performance, and evaluation of an upcoming work, *The Matter of Origins*. They were entirely in the lead for this step, with university partners

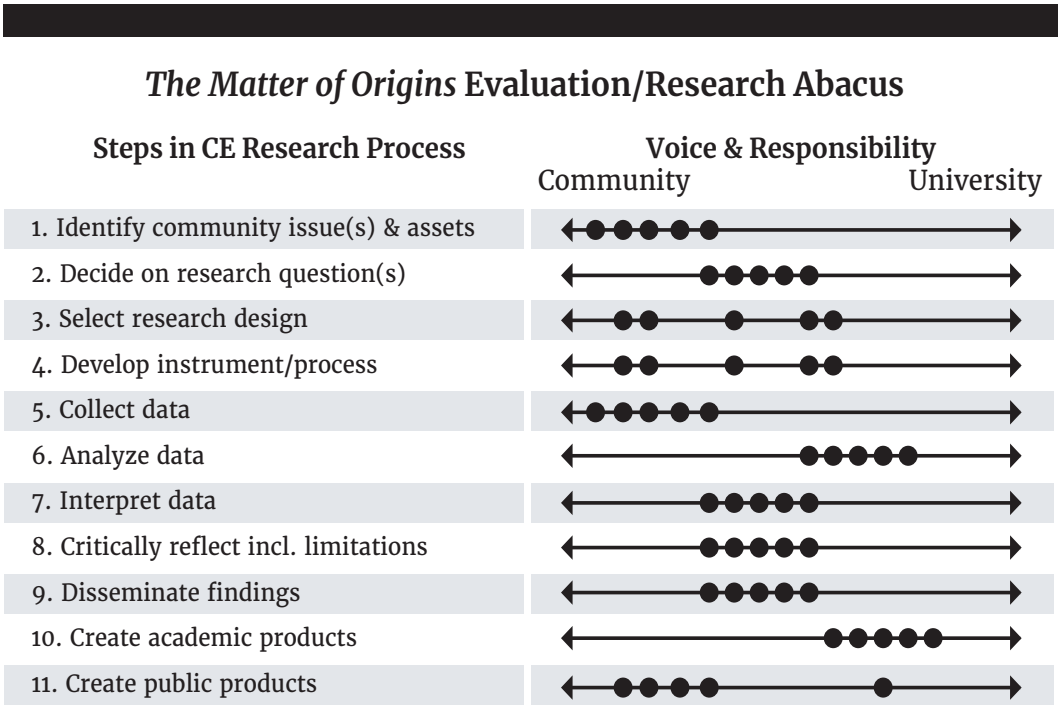

Figure 3. Degree of collaboration abacus for The Matter of Origins *community-engaged research project.*

engaged as the grant contract was in the final stages.

For the second step (decide on research questions), the National Science Foundation's Informal Science Education framework guided this step by defining changes in attitude, interest, knowledge, and behavior as areas for the evaluation's focus. Liz Lerman, Dance Exchange artists, and the university partners had multiple exchanges, in person, by phone, and by e-mail to further refine the research questions.

For the third step (select a research design), the university research team followed the National Science Foundation's advice about rigorous research design but also honored Liz Lerman and the Dance Exchange's commitment to the performance. In other words, the research design could not intrude into the audience members' experience of *The Matter of Origins*. Research designs were proposed and rejected multiple times. Through multiple iterations, rejections, and revisions, all partners agreed to conduct printed surveys preperformance, during intermission, and near the end of the second act. (Because Act 2 is a tea hosted by performers and incorporating conversation with the audience, the surveys were not a disruptive element.)

For the fourth step (develop instrument/process), Liz Lerman and Dance Exchange artists contributed ideas, edited instrument questions for accessible language (often translating academic-ese into language friendly for the general public), and influenced the size, shape, color, texture, and format of the instruments. For example, at one of the performance sites, the survey was printed on thick cardstock and shaped like a teacup. Three site-specific partners requested specific questions related to their campuses or performance venues. The university partners ensured the instrument questions mapped over to broader research questions and would generate data that could be compared across performance sites.

For the fifth step (collect data), the Dance Exchange and its local artists were fully responsible for data collection. Dance Exchange artists and local dancers at each of the five performance sites were oriented and trained on how to collect the data preperformance and at intermission. The Dance Exchange also trained local university and community leaders (called provocateurs) on how to collect second-act data. They then turned all of the data over to the university partners for analysis.

For the sixth step (data analysis), the university partners received boxes of surveys,

cleaned responses, and entered all of the data into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software. Qualitative data were entered into Excel and coded.

For the seventh step (interpret data), the university partners initially interpreted the data. Drafts of the data analysis and interpretation were shared with the Dance Exchange and discussed through phone calls. Through these conversations, key findings and themes were identified. In addition, site-specific evaluation reports were generated with slightly different emphasis depending on what each performance site had requested in the instrument development step. For example, one performance site was a university campus with a significant proportion of first-generation college students. Through this community-engaged evaluation, we added specific questions to understand the experience of first-generation audience members and included summaries in that site-specific evaluation report.

For the eighth step (critically reflect, including on limitations), Liz Lerman, humanities director John Borstel, Dance Exchange artists, and the university partners critically reflected on the evaluation process and the findings after each performance. Together, we discussed how the overall data collection process was working and made improvements after our experience each time. We also discussed how well the questions on the instruments were working, then made modifications. Some questions were revised. Over time, some questions were dropped entirely. These critical and reflective conversations became the glue that held the collaboration together.

For the ninth step (disseminate findings), Liz Lerman, the Dance Exchange, the National Science Foundation, and the university partners disseminated findings to their respective constituents, in their respective ways. In other words, all partners took responsibility for this step.

For the tenth step (create academic products), the university partners took the lead on developing multiple conference poster and paper presentations at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference and the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement. In addition, Dance Exchange artists choreographed a conference workshop, inspired by *The Matter of Origins* and the evaluation findings, for the annual Imagining America conference (Doberneck Miller, Borstel & Schweitzer, 2011). All academic products were reviewed by the Dance Exchange in advance of their presentation or publication.

For the final step (create public products), Liz Lerman and Dance Exchange artists used the evaluation findings in their keynote speeches, podcasts, press releases, and other dissemination to the art/science community. The university partners developed a practitioner-oriented idea book to help art/science practitioners evaluate their own projects in creative but rigorous ways (Doberneck, Miller, Schweitzer, & Borstel, 2011).

Because *The Matter of Origins* evaluation study was an organic, iterative, and emergent process, the partners did not use this tool as a planning tool. Instead, the Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool was used as a reflection and storytelling tool, to explain who had voice and authority at different steps of the engagement process. Without taking the time to carefully think through and document who had the most influence on decision-making and when, much of the richness of this community-engaged research project would have been lost.

In a Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Context

The GRAND Learning Network (GLN) is a long-term, community-engaged teaching and learning project; it is designed to foster place-based stewardship education among Michigan State University, K-8 public schools, and community partner organizations within mid-Michigan. The GRAND Learning Network focuses on water stewardship in seven school districts ranging from well-resourced suburban districts to underresourced urban and rural districts. The Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (GLSI) has funded the GRAND Learning Network, along with eight other place-based stewardship education hubs throughout Michigan (Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, n.d.).

The GRAND Learning Network is informed by place-based education (PBE), a field that has grown in its reach and empirical rigor in recent years. PBE is a means by which communities and learners partner to address local, real-world challenges and enhance local assets through direct experiences with

local places (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; McInerney, Smyth, & Down, 2011; Smith & Sobel, 2014; Sobol, 2008; Yoder, 2012). Like the other eight GLSI hubs, the GRAND Learning Network adheres to the principles and tenets of place-based stewardship education developed by the GLSI collaborators who promote "the pedagogy of place-based education to teach about the environment and to develop capacity for stewardship" (GLSI, 2016, p. 2). The GLSI principles further emphasize the importance of local environments; human–natural environment interaction; strong school–community partnerships; multiple ways of knowing; hands-on, experiential learning; student voice in democratic and deliberative processes; and tangible benefits to local environments (see GLSI, 2016).

The GRAND Learning Network has a complex network of relationships between Michigan State University, local K–8 schools, and local community partners, as well as regional and state partners. The GRAND Learning Network's hub has two distinct layers of collaboration and partnership that guide the community-engaged teaching and learning activities. Within the first layer, the Michigan State University partner brings schools, teachers, school administrators, and conservation partners together to identify opportunities and resources for teacher professional development (PD) around environmental stewardship and the Great Lakes. Teachers in grades K–8 who are interested in advancing education for their students in innovative ways help to plan and then attend professional development workshops where they interact with key partners, including state government agencies, local government officials, statewide nonprofit organizations, local nonprofit organizations, and businesses.

In the second layer, teams of teachers who have participated in professional development activities in the first layer develop ongoing community partnerships with local community partners associated with their individual schools. The teachers and schools reach out to local community partners with technical knowledge of watershed characteristics and potential stewardship opportunities and resources. This layer of collaboration and partnership is developed on a school-by-school basis, so that local assets are identified and mobilized to address the learning needs of the youth in each school. The focus is on developing and implementing experiential learning activities about stewardship for the youth at the school. At individual schools, teachers collaborate with their own community partners to involve students in watershed stewardship projects and learning in the community. Michigan State University faculty and staff play a supportive role, with the ultimate goal of building capacity at the school level so that teachers and schools maintain their own local community partnerships.

The Degree of Collaboration Abacus has served to explain collaboration at various steps of the engagement processes—at both layers of collaboration. The following section demonstrates how the abacus tool can be used to describe the collaboration at each layer.

First layer: GRAND's hub layer abacus. The first layer of the GRAND Learning Network includes Michigan State University's Department of Community Sustainability, representative teachers from the seven mid-Michigan K–8 school districts, and a wide array of community partner organizations. On the right side of the abacus, the university partners include a tenure-track faculty member and an educator who regularly works with teachers and is a former classroom teacher (Figure 4). On the left side of the abacus, teacher leaders, teachers, and community partner organizations represent the community partner perspective at this layer of collaboration (Danielson, 2006).

For Steps 1 and 2, the university and community partners shared equal responsibility. For example, in one program year, the content of teacher PD was identified when the teachers expressed interest in constructing rain gardens to manage stormwater runoff and to benefit local watersheds. At the same time, the university's Institute of Water Research was collaborating with GRAND Learning Network staff and wished to reach teachers about stormwater issues and water quality. Finally, the university and the county drain commissioner had talked about collaborating to bring table-top models of stormwater runoff into the classroom. The result of these joint discussions was to develop a Summer Institute professional development focused on these issues and assets.

During Steps 3 and 4, the GLN staff at the university took the heaviest load of making

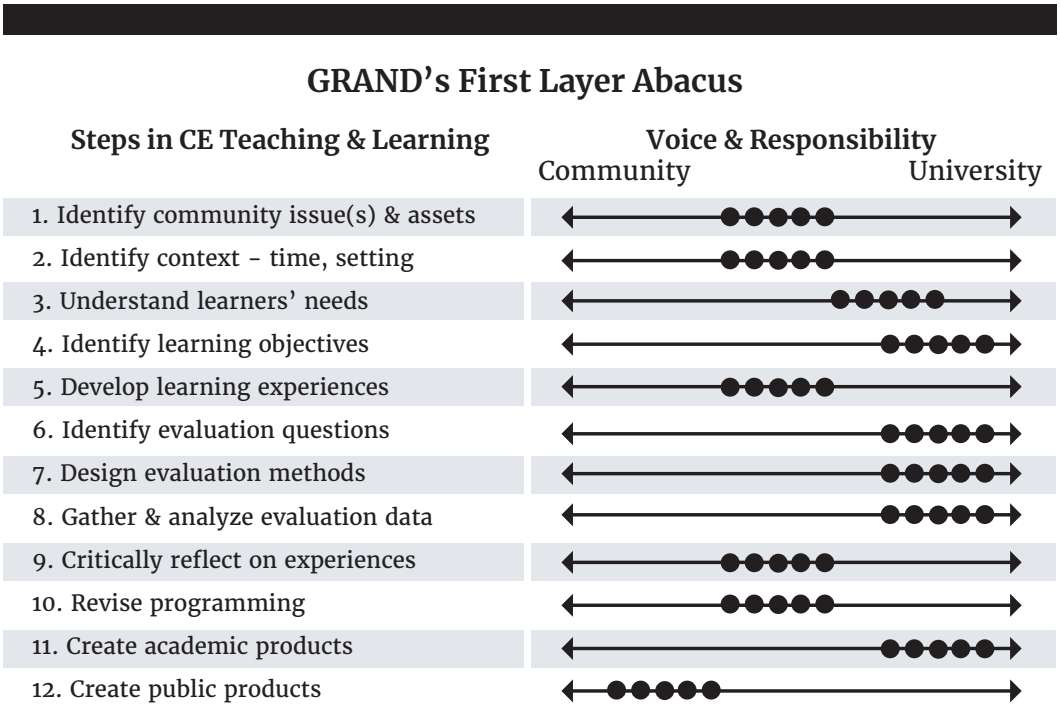

Figure 4. Degree of collaboration abacus for GRAND Learning Network's first layer of community-engaged teaching and learning

contacts with teachers to understand their needs as learners and to develop outcome objectives specific for professional development sessions. At the same time, the conversations among participating teachers and community conservation partners continued regarding Step 5—what the specific learning experiences of the professional development would entail. During these conversations, nonuniversity partners identified additional resources, including ready-made K-12 curricula regarding rain garden lessons integrating math and English/language arts. Being open to these emerging, collaborative conversations during these steps allowed university partners to listen clearly to school and community conservation partners.

During Steps 6–9, as might be expected, these nonuniversity partners were less interested in and had little time for designing and implementing evaluations of the professional development. Instead, the university partners took the lead on these steps, with support from the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative for evaluation protocols. Evaluation took the form of qualitative feedback from participants who responded to open-ended post-professional development questions. In addition, in Step 9, participants and GRAND Learning Network staff critically reflected upon teachers' responses and convened small-group meetings of experienced teachers to inform decisions about future Summer Institutes and about follow-up support to help teachers implement watershed stewardship within their classrooms. The insights from this critical reflection were in turn used in Step 10, particularly for each newly funded 2-year programming cycle.

In Step 11, the university partners played the primary role in developing academic outputs such as conference presentations at the North American Association for Environmental Education and white papers related to the evaluation of place-based education (Doberneck, 2010a, 2010b). In Step 12, some of the teachers presented about their professional development experiences and subsequent stewardship work in their own classrooms as practical, public products at the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative–sponsored Place-Based Education Conference in 2015.

Second layer: GRAND's individual school layer abacus. The second layer of engagement for the GRAND Learning Network consists of the collaboration between teachers and their respective community partners, with the university playing a supporting role.

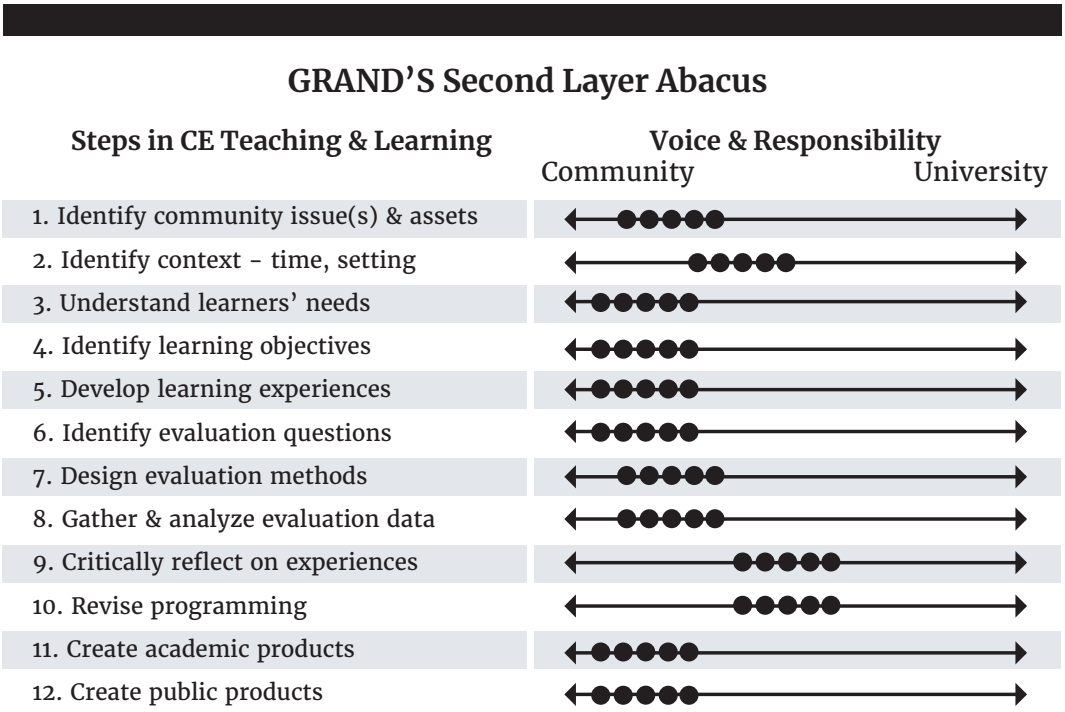

Figure 5. Degree of collaboration abacus for GRAND Learning Network's second layor of community-engaged teaching and learning

Teachers make the major decisions on how to partner with community and involve their students in place-based stewardship education. A few examples illustrate the diverse ways in which the teachers and community take the lead in this level of engagement (Figure 5).

One teacher at Holt Public School's Dimondale Elementary has used her water stewardship regarding stormwater runoff in various ways. Lisa Weise worked with community assets from the PD session (Step 1) to bring resources of the Ingham County Drain Commissioner's office to her classrooms; the commissioner's staff members prepared specific, very localized maps of the waterways closest to the school and weaving throughout the community, eventually connecting with the Grand River. Lisa and her colleagues worked tirelessly on Steps 2–10, relating this academic learning to core science requirements and other subjects. Students studied the local maps intensely. They conducted stewardship projects to plant native plants in the uplands near valuable wetlands in the Dimondale Outdoor Discovery Center bordering the school. Finally, high school students and elementary students alike spent days studying the watershed through River Days programming. Partners that worked together to plan these learning experiences and their assessments (Steps 1–8) included volunteers with native plant conservation organizations, anglers' organizations, and other Dimondale community members. Lisa and others reflect each year on the River Days program, and she has now developed capacity in other teachers and partners to continue this program, revising it (Step 10) as needed each year, as new community partners step forward. For one academic product, see Weise (2009).

Similar stories, where teachers in the community take the lead on all the steps of community engagement, include work at a rural school (Bath Community Schools), at two suburban schools (in DeWitt and Haslett, MI), and at an urban school (Lansing). In Bath, teachers used their PD experience to work with diverse partners and their students to enhance an existing wetland and to build a rain garden as a place for potentially polluting rainwater to run off the school parking lot and into an area deliberately designed to absorb the water and provide plants for pollinators and other small life (Derksen, Knapp, Wood, Hartland, & Rich, n.d.).

At Haslett Public Schools' Murphy Elementary, Zsa Mahon and many other

teachers worked with the Greater Lansing Regional Committee for stormwater management and labeled storm drains around the school. Students also reached out to community members with informational materials (printed flyer left hanging on doorknob or personal conversation with the materials) about the importance of keeping pollutants away from storm drains (Mahon, 2011).

DeWitt schoolteacher Cammie Jones, at Scott Elementary, developed working relationships with community members representing a different drain commissioner's office, the city Department of Public Works, a native plant grower, and more. Her students and community partners worked to remediate a problematic area that was eroding soil into a local drain (stream). This project had multiple cycles, as Cammie worked with community partners and her students to reflect critically on initial project calamities and to revise their stewardship work to improve a stream along the school property (Jones, Dann, Holtschlag, & Stephens 2016).

Finally, Wexford Montessori Academy teacher Kristan Small, in the highly urbanized Lansing School District, worked with her colleagues to plan a playground naturalization project. This involved the local Optimists Club, parent volunteers and the Parent Teacher Organization, Michigan State University student volunteers, the drain commissioner, and a local native plant grower. Students improved the playground, developed trails around a wetland, and communicated with neighbors about the importance of the school greenspace (Small, Dann, Holtschlag & Stephens, 2017).

In all of these second-layer engagement examples, the university partners played a minor role. The only steps that were, in part, shared with GLN university partners occurred when the collaborators were considering contextual and technical specifics of each school's stewardship site (Step 2) and helping teachers critically reflect on and revise programming (Steps 9 and 10). This critical reflection occurred both one-on-one with teachers and their colleagues, and during the collective gatherings that occur throughout the year at GLN PD sessions.

In terms of products from this engagement work, teachers took the lead role (with university partner support) in generating peer-reviewed, academic yet practical case studies (Steps 11 and 12). For example, Weise (2012) published an academic article in *Science and Children*. Four other teachers used artifacts from their teaching (photos, student work, assessments) and crafted case studies that are electronically published on the GLSI website (Derksen et al., n.d.; Jones, Dann, Holtschlag, Marckini-Polk, & Whitmore, 2016; Mahon, 2011; Small et al., 2017). Other public products prepared by teachers, their students, and community partners included presentations to school board meetings, letters and articles written by students with help of parents and teachers, and school website and newsletter articles.

Using the Abacus Tool at Different Project Stages

The Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool may be used in multiple ways, at different stages of community engagement projects. In the early stages, partners may use the tool to name the abacus rungs as a way of establishing a shared understanding of the different steps in the community-engaged research or teaching and learning projects. A clear visual with named steps is especially important for community partners who may be unfamiliar with basic steps in research or in processes of aligning teaching goals with activities and assessment. The placement of the beads on each rung reflects whose voice carries more weight and who is responsible for collaboration activities at each step of the process. Once the partners come to a shared understanding, the division of responsibilities may be formalized in a partnership agreement (i.e., memorandum of understanding, contract, partnership agreement) or described in a community engagement grant.

Midway through a project, the abacus tool may be used as a prompt for formative assessment and critical reflection. Partners may examine whether previously made decisions and commitments have been kept and decide whether adjustments in the remaining steps need to be made before the completion of the project.

At a project's conclusion, partners may revisit the abacus to consider whether it represents how the collaboration actually unfolded. If necessary, revisions may update the tool so that it depicts the actual decision-making and collaboration commitments. The abacus visual may be

included in final reports and academic articles focused on the collaboration and partnerships. For example, in providing advice about publishing community-engaged scholarship, Smith, Rosenzweig, and Schmidt (2010) note "explaining the roles of all participant researchers to provide a clear picture of *who did what and when* is helpful and important, especially since roles of the various researchers may shift over time" (p. 1126). "Manuscripts should describe which community partners were involved and the specific roles they played. . . . Authors should also describe how partners' involvement influenced the research design, data collection, and data analysis and interpretation" (Bordeaux, Wiley, Tandon, & Horowitz, 2007, p. 284). The Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool could be used to address these common challenges in publishing about community-engaged scholarship.

Finally, the abacus tool may be used as a teaching and learning tool to help undergraduate and graduate students understand different degrees of collaboration in community-engagement projects. Students often find it difficult to understand when and how community partners may have a voice in the community engagement process up front or to articulate how their community collaboration unfolded after the project has wrapped up. The Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool can help them articulate their community engagement experiences, with more detail allowing for more accuracy and transparency.

Limitations and Potential Adaptations

Despite its strength as a visualization tool for community-engaged scholarship, the Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool has several limitations that can be addressed through adaptations. First, community-engaged scholarship, particularly community-based participatory research, is intentionally iterative or cyclical in design, with certain steps repeating themselves before the project is complete (Fals Borda & Rahman, 1991). To address this, researchers may increase the number of rungs in the abacus to accommodate additional, iterative steps in the process. If needed, researchers may also label the sides of the abacus to identify and differentiate the different phases or iterative cycles.

Second, many community-engaged partnerships involve more than two partners. This is especially true for community-engaged teaching and learning, which frequently includes university administrators (at multiple levels), faculty members, students, community organizations (both leaders and staff), and the organization's clients or community residents (Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009 p. 16; Littlepage & Gazley, 2013). The traditional abacus tool, which shows two partners, may be adapted by replacing the beads with a stacked bar chart with different bar sections representing different partners' voice proportionally.

Third, community-engaged scholarship may involve different community partners at different steps of the collaboration processes. For example, one set of partners may be involved in the early framing steps and different partners in later dissemination steps. In such cases, the abacus sides may be sectioned and labeled with partner names that correspond to their associated steps.

Despite these potential limitations, the Degree of Collaboration Abacus Tool remains a powerful tool for clarifying steps in community-engagement projects, representing community partner voice and authority in decision-making, and reflecting collaboration responsibilities at different stages of community-engaged scholarship and practice.

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About the Authors

Diane M. Doberneck *is director for faculty and professional development, office of public engagement and scholarship in the Office of University Outreach and Engagement and adjunct associate professor in the Community Sustainability Department at Michigan State University. She organizes professional development about community engagement and researches community engagement in the reappointment, promotion, and tenure process. She received her Ph.D. in community and organizational resource development at Michigan State University.*

Shari L. Dann *is associate professor in the Community Sustainability Department and Extension specialist at Michigan State University. Her teaching and research interests focus on conservation and sustainability, including engagement processes and their evaluation, human dimensions of natural resource conservation, citizen science, and the inclusion of diverse stakeholders in community/civic participation. She received her Ph.D. in fisheries and wildlife from Michigan State University.*

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A Handwashing Educational Toolkit: The Product of a Dynamic Partnership Among a Student, Faculty Member, and Community Organization

AnnMarie Walton, Catherine LePrevost, Gayle Thomas, Mary Johnson Rockers, Allison Lipscomb

Abstract

Pesticide exposure represents a significant occupational health hazard for farmworkers, and handwashing is one strategy to reduce exposure via the dermal route. After learning about recent research findings regarding the lack of handwashing utilized by North Carolina farmworkers in the field, the North Carolina Farmworker Health Program approached the student and faculty member who conducted the research to partner and improve handwashing education, with the goal of reducing pesticide exposure among farmworkers. The resulting handwashing educational toolkit was the product of a participatory development project that engaged farmworker health outreach workers with university partners in every stage—from needs assessment to method and message selection and, ultimately, educational material development and evaluation. This promising project serves as a model for a sustainable partnership among a student, faculty member, and community organization and underscores the importance of respect, equality, and distributed power in collaboratively responding to a community-identified need.

Keywords: university-community partnership, sustained collaboration

Pesticide exposure is associated with both acute and long-term adverse health effects. In the short term, pesticide exposure can cause irritation of the respiratory tract, skin, and eyes. Pesticide poisoning occurs when a person has been exposed to high levels of pesticides over a short period of time and may result in nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, and dizziness. Long-term effects of lower level exposure include certain cancers, neurological problems, and reproductive issues (Hoppin & LePrevost, 2017). Even if farmworkers do not directly apply pesticides, they can be exposed to pesticides through breathing vapors and dusts from pesticide drift into unintended areas (inhalation); through the skin or eyes when handling treated plants and soil or touching contaminated equipment and clothing (dermal/ocular exposure); and through eating, drinking, and other hand-to-mouth behaviors with unwashed hands (ingestion; Krieger, 2010).

The dermal route of exposure is most significant for agricultural workers (Krieger, 2010). Scenarios whereby farmworkers may experience dermal exposure include being sprayed directly with pesticides, not washing hands after touching items containing pesticide residues, wearing pesticide-contaminated clothing, and using inadequate pesticide protective clothing and equipment while working. Furthermore, the skin covering some parts of the body is more likely to absorb pesticides because of its highly vascular nature and reduced skin thickness (e.g., the genitals, underarms, scalp, and forehead; Feldmann & Maibach, 1970). One recommended strategy for minimizing dermal exposure to pesticides is handwashing (Curwin, Hein, Sanderson, Nishioka, & Buhler, 2003).

The vast majority of farmworkers in North

Carolina receive pesticide training by video (Arcury, Quandt, Austin, Preisser, & Cabrera, 1999; Walton, LePrevost, Wong, et al., 2016). In a study where 94% of participants reported having received video-based training (Walton, LePrevost, Wong, et al., 2016), the video used was found to devote only 1% of training time to handwashing behaviors (Michigan State University Extension, 1994). Hands-on and face-to-face pesticide education may be provided by a farmworker health outreach worker as an alternative or a supplement to video-based training. Farmworker health outreach workers, who are employed by organizations such as nonprofits and migrant and community health centers, provide pesticide education as a part of their delivery of health and education services. Lessons on health and safety topics that are more engaging have been found to increase knowledge gains and decrease negative health outcomes (Burke et al., 2006). Therefore, face-to-face training provided by farmworker health outreach workers, when it is hands-on, may promote handwashing practice and reduce worker pesticide exposure.

A Land-Grant University Focused on Agricultural Safety and Health

As a land-grant university, North Carolina State University extensively conducts outreach and engagement through the North Carolina Cooperative Extension network. The Extension Toxicology Program, one of only four such programs among major land-grant colleges and universities in the United States, is housed in the Department of Applied Ecology. Since its inception in 1990, the Extension Toxicology Program has had a strong record of providing objective, science-based information, particularly related to pesticides and agromedicine, to the residents of the state and nation through innovative educational programming, demonstration projects, applied research, and peer-reviewed Extension educational and research publications. With its long-standing presence in the state, the Extension Toxicology Program and its faculty have established partnerships at the community, local, state, and national levels. A particular focus of the Extension Toxicology Program has been professional development for farmworker health outreach workers and the creation of crop-specific pesticide training materials for farmworkers (LePrevost, Storm, Asuaje, & Cope, 2014).

Collaboration Among a Student, a Faculty Member, and a Community-Based Organization

In summer 2014, the first author (AW), as a doctoral student at the University of Utah, conducted a multimethod observational study to understand the pesticide protective behaviors of Latino migrant and seasonal farmworkers in North Carolina. The second author (CL), a faculty member of the Extension Toxicology Program at North Carolina State University, with more than 10 years of experience working with the agricultural community, served as a member of AW's dissertation committee. In addition to providing content expertise, the second author leveraged her community presence and credibility to share her local networks with the student, making it possible for the first author to gain access to the community of interest more quickly and to be regarded with some level of trust. One of the seminal findings of this multimethod dissertation study was that farmworkers significantly overreported washing their hands before eating and drinking in the field, which could contribute to pesticide exposure through both dermal and ingestion routes (Walton, LePrevost, Wong, et al., 2016).

In fall 2015, the first author (AW) began to disseminate findings from her dissertation study not only in academic journals (Walton, LePrevost, Linnan, Sanchez-Birkhead, & Mooney, 2017; Walton, LePrevost, Wong, Linnan, & Mooney, 2017; Walton, LePrevost, Wong, et al., 2016) but also back to the farmworkers who had participated. Drawing from her own contacts and experiences within the agricultural community, the second author (CL) again suggested local and state organizations and audiences who might best utilize the findings from the dissertation study to effect change in farmworker behavior and resulting pesticide exposure. One such audience were the attendees of the North Carolina Community Health Center Association (NCCHCA) Special Populations Health Workgroup meeting. At the time, the fifth author (AL) was working as the Community Development and Special Populations Coordinator for the NCCHCA. It was through the Workgroup meeting that staff from the North Carolina Farmworker Health Program (NCFHP), including the fourth author (MJR), first heard about the dissertation study.

The North Carolina Farmworker Health Program (NCFHP) is a statewide Migrant

Health Voucher Program within the Office of Rural Health in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. NCFHP works with local agencies, including eight funded sites, to provide care throughout the state to meet the needs of geographical areas with localized densities of farmworkers. They provide enabling services, including outreach, case management, and health education. In 2016, NCFHP sites served more than 10,000 farmworkers in the state, including providing nearly 2,200 health education encounters.

After learning about the dissertation study finding related to the underutilization of handwashing by farmworkers in North Carolina, staff at the NCFHP reviewed their existing handwashing educational materials and methods. Finding the existing methods to be heavily didactic without visual or interactive components, NCFHP was concerned that their handwashing education did not make an impression on farmworkers. Subsequently, the fourth author (MJR) approached the first and second authors (AW and CL) to partner to improve handwashing education. NCFHP provided funds for the first and second authors to collaborate with the NCFHP sites to improve handwashing education provided by farmworker health outreach workers. The first author engaged in this collaboration as an independent contractor while working as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the second author participated through her Extension and service responsibilities as a faculty member of the Extension Toxicology Program at North Carolina State University. The NCFHP medical director, who is third author (GT), joined the collaboration as a liaison between NCFHP and the university partners (i.e., first and second authors).

Goal of the Collaboration

The overarching goal of the ongoing collaboration is to improve educational materials focused on handwashing and, ultimately, reduce pesticide exposure among farmworkers in North Carolina. Specifically, the university partners desire to translate research findings into safer practice among farmworkers in the field, and NCFHP seeks to examine and maximize the effectiveness of their handwashing materials and methods to reduce adverse health outcomes among the farmworkers they serve. An underlying goal of this collaboration is to cultivate an equitable and meaningful relationship between the partnering universities and NCFHP that extends beyond the current effort.

A Participatory Development Process: Engagement of Farmworker Health Outreach Workers

Farmworker health outreach workers at NCFHP-funded sites participated in every stage of the collaboration to improve NCFHP's handwashing education materials and methods—from needs assessment to method and message selection and, ultimately, educational material development and evaluation. First, the university partners conducted three focus groups at NCFHP-funded sites across the state to learn how farmworker health outreach workers currently delivered handwashing education, including the extent to which handwashing education was prioritized by the outreach workers, when and how often handwashing education was offered to farmworkers, what educational methods and materials were used by the outreach workers, and the topics addressed. During these focus group discussions, participating farmworker health outreach workers identified the methods that would be most effective as well as those that would be the most practical for implementation. They also shared the kind of information and training they would need to improve their delivery of handwashing education. During the focus groups, university partners presented a menu of methods for handwashing education. Participating farmworker health outreach workers described the advantages and disadvantages of each method and indicated their preferred methods. To afford all farmworker health outreach workers at the eight NCFHP-funded sites across the state the opportunity to provide input on handwashing education, the university partners subsequently distributed an online survey in which respondents prioritized methods and messages for handwashing education that had been identified during the three focus groups. Specific results from focus groups and the online survey are not reported here as they were collected specifically for educational material development, and IRB approval was not sought.

A Handwashing Educational Toolkit

The culmination of analysis of focus group and survey findings was the develop-

ment of a toolkit consisting of a set of complementary pesticide residue activities, one-on-one and group discussion questions, and fluorescent tracer supplies for farmworker health outreach workers to provide handwashing education to farmworkers. For each pesticide residue activity, the university partners created a training guide in English and Spanish detailing the learning objective, supplies needed, step-by-step instructions to carry out the activity, questions to facilitate discussion (one-on-one or group), and background information for the farmworker health outreach workers. Fluorescent tracer supplies came from a national supplier in premade boxed kits (less than $100 each) containing an ultraviolet flashlight, a bottle of fluorescent tracer gel, and a bottle of fluorescent tracer powder. The gel and powder, which are visible only under ultraviolet light, were used to simulate pesticide products and residues. The handwashing educational toolkit was cost-effective and easily replicable.

Adapted from a curriculum designed to educate pesticide applicators (University of Washington PNASH, 2007), the three pesticide residue activities in the toolkit included a handwashing challenge in which farmworkers examine the effectiveness of their current handwashing practices; a demonstration of how pesticide residues may transfer from hands to cell phones and, eventually, the face; and a simulation of invisible pesticide residues on fruits and vegetables that may be consumed when eating produce directly from the fields or that may contaminate hands and clothing during crop maintenance. In selecting these activities and designing the corresponding training guides, the university partners leveraged the information provided by the farmworker health outreach workers during focus groups and the follow-up survey, as well as the university partners' own expertise. Specifically, focus group and survey participants identified a hands-on activity using fluorescent tracer as a preferred method for handwashing education, and information provided during focus groups about what farmworker health outreach workers needed to know to provide handwashing education shaped the content included in the background information section of the training guide. The selection of the pesticide residue activities was informed by messages prioritized by farmworker health outreach workers, as well as the experience of the first author (AW) from her dissertation study of farmworkers' behavior in the field. She often observed farmworkers eating, drinking, and using cell phones without washing their hands. With expertise in informal science education and pesticide toxicology, the second author (CL) contributed curriculum development expertise and pesticide content knowledge.

Dissemination of the Toolkit to Farmworker Health Outreach Workers

During April and June 2016, the university partners introduced the toolkit to the farmworker health outreach workers affiliated with NCFHP. In two NCFHP professional development workshops, the university partners reported back findings from the focus groups and survey, introduced the toolkit components, and modeled handwashing education using the toolkit. In total, 71 farmworker health outreach workers became trained in using the toolkit through these workshops.

A Shift in Ownership in Dissemination and Evaluation of the Toolkit

In June 2017, one year after the university partners provided the initial workshops modeling the use of the handwashing educational toolkit, NCFHP staff presented the toolkit to a new cohort of farmworker health outreach workers in a third workshop. NCFHP staff have since undertaken the design and dissemination of an online survey of farmworker health outreach workers to assess toolkit effectiveness. In consultation with the university partners, the community partner has developed a survey that asks respondents to reflect on the handwashing educational toolkit and describe how often they have used it, its strengths, barriers to its use, recommended changes, perceived effectiveness of the individual activities, and farmworkers' feedback during its use. The extent to which the NCFHP has taken ownership of the toolkit, as evidenced by their training of new farmworker health outreach workers and evaluation of toolkit effectiveness, is an important measure of impact of the collaboration for both the university and community partners.

Next Steps in Evaluation and Refinement of the Toolkit

While the community partner is conduct-

ing an evaluation of the toolkit effectiveness from the perspective of the farmworker health outreach worker, the university partners are seeking extramural funding to evaluate the efficacy of the toolkit as part of an educational intervention. The intervention would entail engaging farmworker health outreach workers who are not familiar with the toolkit in a professional development session to introduce the handwashing educational toolkit and underlying concepts of handwashing significance and best practices. In the proposed intervention evaluation, data would be collected from both farmworker health outreach workers and farmworkers before, during, and after the professional development session and subsequent implementation of the toolkit. The university partners have particular interest in the impact of professional development and toolkit implementation on farmworker health outreach workers' knowledge of concepts related to handwashing, self-efficacy in delivering handwashing education, and their use of learner-centered practices. They are also interested in the extent to which use of the toolkit by farmworker health outreach workers results in a change in knowledge, skills, and observed handwashing practice among farmworkers.

Toolkit refinement will occur in two phases: the first based on feedback from farmworker health outreach workers collected through the NCFHP survey and the second based on data collected by the university partners through the evaluation of the educational intervention. Feedback collected from the NCFHP survey of farmworker health outreach workers will inform the first phase of revisions to the toolkit. Potential revisions based on the types of feedback requested through the survey include the addition or deletion of individual pesticide residue activities, one-on-one or group discussion questions, and background information in the training guide. A revised toolkit would then be used in the intervention evaluation study led by the university partners, the findings of which would inform further refinement of the toolkit to maximize changes in knowledge, skills, and behaviors of both farmworker health outreach workers and farmworkers. In addition to efficacy data, the university partners will assess ease and practicality of use to inform broader implementation of the handwashing education intervention.

Fostering Sustained Collaboration

Beyond refinement of the toolkit and evaluation of the handwashing education intervention, the university and community partners have a commitment to sustained collaboration. Through the development and evaluation of the toolkit, the partners have gained a greater understanding of the expertise that each brings to the collaboration, as well as each partner's role within her organization and the organizational milieu. This understanding has afforded additional opportunities to work together. For example, the first author (AW) has referred nursing students to volunteer at a migrant health care clinic under the direction of the third author (GT), with the hope of a more formal clinical placement opportunity between a university and a community partner. Further, the collaboration among the coauthors has expanded from a narrow focus on handwashing education to a broad initiative to unite researchers, farmworker health outreach workers, and farmworkers to improve farmworker health. To this end, the coauthors have engaged farmworker health outreach workers in setting research priorities (LePrevost, Walton, Thomas, & Lipscomb, 2018). This effort has provided opportunities to share research findings and lessons learned from the collaboration with both discipline-specific and transdisciplinary engagement audiences (LePrevost, Walton, Thomas, & Lipscomb, 2017; Walton, LePrevost, Lipscomb, & Thomas, 2018).

Reflections From the Community Partners

After hearing the results of first and second authors' (AW and CL's) research on the actual practices of farmworkers regarding handwashing, the third and fourth authors (GT and MJR) and their colleagues at NCFHP felt that action was required to provide higher quality education to farmworkers to help them change their practices and decrease their exposures to pesticides. Although not many aspects of a farmworker's occupation are within his or her control, handwashing before eating, smoking, or using the bathroom is more often achievable. Because NCFHP includes a coalition of experienced farmworker health outreach workers, the organization was able to connect the university partners with those actually doing the daily work of educating farmworkers and allow them to work together to develop best practices in

handwashing education. NCFHP posits that farmworker health outreach workers' active role in the development of the toolkit has made them more invested in its success as an educational tool. At one of the initial trainings of farmworker health outreach workers, 100% of the participants ranked the delivery of the handwashing toolkit as excellent, and the majority ranked it as their favorite activity of that day. The participants commented on the practicality of the toolkit, as well as its being visual and interactive, and how much they were looking forward to incorporating it into their health education. In 2018, 72% of the farmworker health outreach workers reported implementing the handwashing educational toolkit to train farmworkers in the 2016 and 2017 growing seasons. The handwashing educational toolkit has since been incorporated in the annual summer training for all new farmworker health outreach workers. Furthermore, the ongoing collaboration will connect the university partners with the farmworkers who will participate in the evaluation of the toolkit as part of an educational intervention.

It is important for community partners to have ongoing, long-term dialogue with researchers and intervention designers. By sustaining communication and the working relationship with the university partners, the team at NCFHP felt like an equal partner and empowered to initiate an evaluation of the toolkit with farmworker health outreach workers in 2017. Beyond the initial design phase, community partners should continue to actively engage university partners in the evaluation and adaptation of educational materials so that the educational materials become a usable product that is continually updated to reflect changing outreach worker and farmworker needs.

Lessons Learned: The Student Perspective

It is only in hindsight, and now in a faculty role, that the first author (AW) can fully appreciate the value and modeling of mutuality and reciprocity that the second author (CL) shared during the dissertation process (Jaeger, Sandmann, & Kim, 2011). As a faculty member, the second author demonstrated a genuine respect for the skills and experiences that the first author brought as a student (with training in public health and community health education and the skills of a nurse clinician), and that respect led to both a personal and a reciprocal relationship (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). Encouraging faculty to model mutuality, respect, and reciprocity has been described before as a best practice for faculty working with students to do community-engaged research (Jaeger et al., 2011), but seeking opportunities for distributed power with one's mentor can also be a responsibility of the student.

Additionally, in her faculty role, the second author shared her professional networks and knowledge of local resources with the first author as a student. This provision of visibility to students is also a documented role of faculty mentors (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). From the retrospective perspective of the student, mutual sharing of connections, including the student's connections shared with the faculty mentor, are valuable. Students should be empowered to seek reciprocity to create meaningful relationships with their faculty mentors and to gain experience that will serve them in community-based work.

Coursework cannot adequately prepare students with all of the skills that they need to conduct community-based research (Jaeger et al., 2011). In this case, the process of dissemination of dissertation results through design, conduct, and analysis of focus groups and surveys came after the dissertation work. Learning extended beyond the structure of the university and presented the opportunity to continue to gain and refine skills that built on those developed through the dissertation process. The dissertation findings were transformed into practical solutions that served the needs of the community partner and made this work more impactful for both the student and the community.

Working together on this project also enabled the relationship between the first and second authors to begin to transition from student and faculty member into one of faculty colleagues through a process vastly different from the dissertation and in an environment in sharp contrast to the university. At the end of the experience, the first and second authors had not only a product that they had cocreated with the community partner but also a strong working relationship as faculty colleagues from two different disciplines at two different universities. Working together has allowed them to leverage the perspectives and resources afforded by their individual disciplines and institutions.

Much as Jaeger et al. (2011) argue that it is important for faculty to model for students how to interact with community partners in dissertation studies, faculty modeling of successful mentoring relationships built on mutuality and reciprocity is essential for students who will become faculty. The first author has had the opportunity to critically reflect on the relationships she seeks to create with her own students. She aims to have colearning, distributed power, and sharing of resources and networks at the core of those relationships.

Best Practices for University Partners to Promote Early and Sustained Engagement

Because the NCFHP first approached the university partners, the project clearly addresses an internally identified need that is a priority for the community partner (Minkler, 2004). This project, which emerged from the common goal of improving farmworker health through handwashing education, demonstrates early and sustained engagement (Earle-Richardson, Sorensen, Brower, Hawkes, & May, 2009). Thus far, sustained collaboration between the university and community partners owes its success to multiple strategies that have been previously identified as characteristics of successful community research collaborations, including understanding each other's goals, playing to each other's strengths, dedicating time to the project and the collaboration, integrating community knowledge, co-learning, and remaining flexible (Arcury, Quandt, & Dearry, 2001; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998). Partnering with the community from the outset ensures that the products of the project are responsive to the community's needs, that NCFHP has shared ownership of them, and that their use will be sustained.

Conclusions

As the partners prepare for project evaluation, it has been valuable to reflect on what has made this collaboration successful thus far. Grounded in respect and equality with a shared goal of improving farmworker health and responding to a community-identified need, the partners have cultivated a collaboration that is meaningful, ongoing, and dynamic. A foundation based on distributed power promises sustainability not only of the project but of the partnership.

About the Authors

AnnMarie Walton *is an assistant professor at the Duke University School of Nursing. Her research interests focus on occupational exposure to cancer-causing agents, and the pesticide protective behaviors of Latino migrant and seasonal farmworkers working in tobacco in North Carolina. She received her Ph. D. in Nursing from the University of Utah.*

Catherine LePrevost *is a faculty member and the agromedicine Extension specialist in the Department of Applied Ecology at North Carolina State University. Her research interests include effective teaching and communication practices in nontraditional learning settings, and in the practices of farmworker health outreach workers. She received her Ph.D. in Science Education from North Carolina State University.*

Gayle Thomas *is the medical director at the North Carolina Farmworker Health Program and faculty at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill. Her interests include teaching and supporting outreach workers, as well as training future physicians and nurses as they care for farmworkers. She recieved her MD from the University of California, Los Angeles.*

Mary Johnson Rockers *is a farmworker health operations specialist at the North Carolina Farmworker Health Program. Her experience includes managing behavioral health programming for farmworkers and providing technical assistance and training. She received her MSW from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

Allison Lipscomb *is the farmworker health data specialist at the North Carolina Farmworker Health Program. Her experiences include the development of a farmworker health outreach programs in Western North Carolina, as well as a variety of roles in farmworker health including outreach, program administration, technical assistance, training, and data analysis. She received her MPH from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

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A Service-Learning Partnership Between Cal State LA and the Los Angeles County Probation Department: Making the Case for Civic Professionalism

Akhila L. Ananth, Michael Willard, Denise C. Herz

Abstract

This article provides an overview of the structure and implementation of the Probation Service Learning Program at Cal State LA. We use post-term evaluation reflections completed by students and probation directors to offer insight into the broader application of service-learning programs in criminal justice–related agencies. The findings presented demonstrate that the Probation Service Learning Program at Cal State LA was partially successful. Students showed evidence of connecting civic and personal outcomes as well as personal and academic outcomes; however, the connection was less substantial for academic and civic outcomes. This study underscores the importance of fostering partnerships between academic departments and professional practitioners to build strong curricula, facilitate student transitions into the workplace, and contribute to the broader public good. Additionally, it offers "lessons learned" and recommendations for improving the use of service-learning to achieve a fuller appreciation of civic professionalism for students as they choose their career paths.

Keywords: service-learning, probation, criminal justice, student research, Los Angeles, civic professionalism

The use of service-learning has steadily grown at American colleges and universities since the methodology emerged from the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. More recently, service-learning has gained in popularity as a high impact practice (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005) that supports career development (Baetz, McEvoy, Adamson, & Loomis, 2012; Ellerton et al., 2014) and student success (Duggan, 2015; Furco, 2007; Kuh, Kinzie, Cruce, Shoup, & Gonyea, 2007; Lockeman & Pelco, 2013; Simonet, 2008; Zlotkowski, 2002). Employment rates in 2015 for young adults, though rising, remain lower than in 2008 or 2000 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015), indicating that the post-graduate employment market is more competitive than it has been in decades. In contrast to classroom-based curricula and conventional internships, service-learning can ease students' transitions from university training to the professional workplace while enhancing civic-mindedness (Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011) and commitment to a profession's public impact (Boyte, 2013).

Scholars have long called for educators to incorporate civic learning in institutions of higher learning. In the social sciences, this has typically involved cultivating student competencies in participatory action research (Brammer at al., 2012), in which students gain skills in listening, critical thinking, negotiation, effective communication around difference (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Jansen, Chioncel, & Dekkers, 2006; Morse, 1998), conducting research, and presentational and networking skills (Dudley, Robison, & Taylor, 1999; Flanagan

& Levine, 2010; Redlawsk & Rice 2009). However, professional experience alone without weekly reflections and faculty-led coursework, such as a traditional internship where students shadow a supervisor in the field and report to faculty only at the end of a term, can inadvertently encourage students to frame difference through stereotypes and generalize about complex social problems (Clayton & Ash, 2009). By contrast, in service-learning, classroom-based research skills are combined with reflection-based analysis and faculty guidance to produce more meaningful outcomes for the student, university, and community at large.

As part of a broader trend toward engaged student learning, the School of Criminal Justice & Criminalistics at California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA) partnered with the Los Angeles County Probation Department to create the Probation Service Learning Program in the academic year 2014–2015. The Probation Service Learning Program was developed to create a more direct pipeline for Cal State LA students to gain employment with the Los Angeles County Probation Department. Students were provided the opportunity to connect academic knowledge with direct experience in a criminal justice agency and to engage with the civic impact of the work. Likewise, the program offered the Los Angeles County Probation Department the opportunity to carry out small-scale, student-led evaluations of Probation Department programming and to "recruit" a skilled set of applicants to the department. Because this program appears to be the first of its kind with Probation, it also brings the broader Cal State LA campus increased publicity and access to professional networks. Thus, the program incorporated elements mutually beneficial to the School, participating students, the Probation Department, and the larger Los Angeles community.

In this article, we provide an overview of the structure and implementation of the Probation Service Learning Program at Cal State LA and summarize the results from postterm evaluation reflections completed by directors and students. Finally, we offer some insight into the broader application of service-learning programs in criminal justice–related agencies and organizations and discuss ways to further develop criminal justice service-learning instruction in order to achieve civic professionalism.

Civic Professionalism and Service-Learning

Scholars in many fields have turned to the "civic meaning of professions" (Yusop & Correia, 2012) that disciplinary degrees prepare and train students for (Day, 2005; Dzur, 2004; Harrington & Beddoe, 2014; Kimball, 1996; Peters, 2004; Rinehart, 2010; Sullivan, 1995; Sullivan, 2004; Sullivan & Benner, 2005). Many professions contribute to the greater good of civil society, but as professionals are socialized within the day-to-day routine of the workplace, this larger contribution can be overlooked. Similarly, students often see their education and degrees solely in terms of preparing them for a profession. Service-learning projects that overtly demonstrate professionals' contributions to society and the public good arguably help revive a more explicit civic understanding—and hence the "meaning" and value—of a criminal justice profession for students.

The experiences of students in the Probation Service Learning Program demonstrated the value and potential for the development of civic professionalism within a course curriculum. Civic professionalism aligns with the mission of a regional comprehensive university like Cal State LA, which has a strong emphasis on applied research across preprofessional degree programs, particularly in the area of health and human services. In particular, civic professionalism aligns with the mission of the Rongxiang Xu College of Health and Human Services, and it aligns with Cal State LA students' desire for more hands-on learning opportunities, a common theme heard in focus groups held with students across the university.

The Cal State LA Probation Service Learning Program is an opportunity to adapt what scholars refer to as *civic professionalism* (Boyte 2013), defined as a conscious awareness of how one's work or career directly benefits clients, stakeholders, and communities, often including reciprocal, participatory deliberation and work with community stakeholders. It is this sense of "work filled with public purpose" (Boyte, 2013) that we believe differentiates the students' work in the Los Angeles County Probation Department from more conventional internships. As we met with Probation Department directors to discuss and identify the "service" and "work" that students would do, we needed new models that moved beyond observing or shadowing.

To meet the definition of service-learning, student projects emphasized the Probation Department as a workplace that interfaces with a wide cross section of the general public and as an institution of civil society.

The structure of the Probation Service Learning Program emerged from an engagement with the terms of service-learning as practiced at Cal State LA. In its application, service-learning in criminal justice can vary widely (Davis, 2015). Well-cited research in the field defines service-learning as

> a course-based, credit bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility. (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, p. 112)

At Cal State LA, the formal definition of service-learning provides guiding principles for efforts across the campus:

> Consistent with the special mission to provide educational experiences that recognize diversity while emphasizing the knowledge, experience, and ethical concerns common to all people, service learning:
>
> - is a teaching and learning strategy that provides students with organized and meaningful learning experience outside the classroom designed to enhance their understanding of information, knowledge and theoretical principles shared in the classroom;
> - is a pedagogical model that links course content with a community service component that is designed to address the needs identified by the community whether local or global; and
> - has, as an integral component, the use of reflective activities intended to integrate course content and skills and knowledge with community involvement and to develop or strengthen students' commitment to social responsibility and civic engagement. (*Cal State LA Faculty Handbook*, 2018, "Service Learning Definition")

Additionally, service-learning in the School of Criminal Justice and Criminalistics is required to meet three core standards established by a departmental committee. It should be

> *1. Project-based.* Students are placed in an agency or organization to help develop and execute a project (e.g., carrying out research to find out important information or developing informational materials for organization).
>
> *2. Faculty-led.* Faculty members oversee student projects, tracking their progress through weekly written reflections and regular check-ins (through e-mail or in person). In this way, the faculty member mediates the relationship between student work and the agency/organization.
>
> *3. Community-oriented.* Student projects must benefit the organization/agency's work and connect to the betterment of the Los Angeles community at large.

In sum, service-learning in the School of Criminal Justice and Criminalistics equally emphasizes providing meaningful service and curriculum-relevant learning. Additionally, the focal projects in these courses are intended to mutually benefit the student and the partner agency.

Overview of the Probation Service Learning Program

The Probation Service Learning Program was launched in fall quarter 2014 and continued into spring and fall of 2015, 2016, and 2017. Students were selected using a competitive process modeled after the County hiring process for Probation positions. To solicit interest, an informational session was held 4 to 6 months prior to the start of the quarter, with applications due within 2 weeks after the session. Applicants were primarily criminal justice majors; however, many criminal justice minors also applied. The applicants were required to complete

the Probation exam and background checks used by the County for potential volunteers. Beginning in spring 2015, students were additionally required to submit answers to two short-essay questions to ensure their commitment and writing skills.

In total, 11 students in fall 2014, 10 students in spring 2015, eight students in fall 2015, 12 students in spring 2016, and nine students in fall 2016 were ultimately accepted for participation in the Probation Service Learning Program. Once selected, each student was assigned by Probation to a director. Students attended Probation's general volunteer/intern orientation and toured Probation-run facilities, including Central Juvenile Hall and various juvenile camps. Additionally, Probation directors attended a 3- to 6-hour training with Cal State LA faculty, who reviewed the tenets of service-learning and the expectations for their participation in the program. Following the initial meeting with directors, both students and directors attended a training to meet one another and develop projects guided by feedback from the faculty instructor. Importantly, directors received continuing education credits for their participation in the trainings, allowing them to fulfil state requirements for probation officers while preparing for the program.

In their meetings, students and directors developed projects that foregrounded community need and provided students with the opportunity to explore "a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility" (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, p. 112). In practical terms, projects were expected to apply the criminal justice concepts and theories the students learned in their coursework for the major, as well as generate evidence that could improve services for Probation Department clients. For example, one group of students conducted lobby surveys at a district office and learned that clients wanted a bulletin board, rather than a web page, for information about services and resources in the community. Focusing students' research on improving services could be understood within the typical institutional–bureaucratic procedures of program review, evaluation, and assessment. However, through one-on-one conversations, class discussions, and online conversations in the learning management platform (Moodle), faculty and directors in the Probation Service Learning Program guided students to consider how research for quality improvement ultimately served the greater good for clients and their communities. In sum, students were engaged in a process of experiential learning that was intended to combine both career development and civic learning.

Participating students were required to spend a minimum of 8 hours each week in their placement, including a mandatory weekly meeting with their director to discuss the student assignments, experiences, observations, and course project progress. (This requirement was set at 10 hours in fall 2014, but was reduced in spring 2015 so students could complete all their required hours in 1 day.) Additionally, the supervising faculty member organized periodic course meetings throughout the term. The first meeting, about halfway through the term, was used as a midpoint check-in with directors and students. Students also attended additional course meetings with the overseeing faculty member, particularly to prepare for the final presentations and papers. At the end of the term, students and directors copresented their projects to all the students, directors, and faculty members at a day-long meeting. Beginning in spring 2016, students were also required to submit a summary of their research project and findings.

Methods

A cornerstone of the Probation Service Learning Program has been the centrality of critical reflection activities. On a weekly basis, students and directors posted written reflections in forums on the course's webpage in response to questions about their experiences and observations. Directors were assigned Cal State LA handles and e-mail addresses, which enabled them to participate in online discussions. In spring 2015, reflections assignments included questions for the student to ask their director during weekly meetings; in this way, all the students in the course benefited from all the involved directors' perspectives in a virtual discussion space. Students were also required to respond to others' reflections, resulting in a productive online dialogue.

Based on Ash and Clayton's (2004) framework, we developed reflection activities that prompted students to analyze their service-

learning activities and experiences through academic, personal, and civic lenses:

> When engaged in academic analysis, students examine their experiences in light of specific course concepts, exploring similarities and differences between theory and practice. In analysis from the personal perspective, students consider their feelings, assumptions, strengths, weaknesses, traits, skills, and sense of identity as they are surfaced and sometimes challenged by service-learning experiences. And when examining their service-learning related activities from the civic perspective, students explore decisions made and actions taken in light of consequences for the common good, consider alternative approaches and interpretations, identify elements of power and privilege, and analyze options for short-term versus long-term and sustainable change agency. (Ash and Clayton, 2004, pp. 140-42)

We wanted students to explore the connections between the academic, personal, and civic perspectives. Accordingly, student learning outcomes for this course were categorized into three overlapping themes: civic and personal outcomes, academic and civic outcomes, and personal and academic outcomes. In the following sections, we review student perceptions of progress in these three categories. With regard to civic learning outcomes, questions were designed to guide students to consider how their experiences working in the Probation Department related to greater knowledge about and commitment to the civic purpose of improving client outcomes. The intent was for students to make connections between their personal interest in a career in criminal justice (and their service-learning work in the Probation Department) and their expertise as criminal justice majors and to consider how each provides them with the commitment and skills to contribute to the public good.

Findings

Student Reflections

Civic and personal outcomes. The civic and personal outcomes identified for the Probation Service Learning Program focused on the project's ability to (1) improve students' understanding of criminal justice practice and its mission of public safety and (2) impact students' personal understanding of what it means to work in Probation. To this end, students were asked to characterize the role of Probation in the criminal justice system and discuss whether their perception of this role had changed over the course of their participation.

Without exception, students' responses showed an increased awareness of what Probation does as an agency and the contribution Probation makes to the overall criminal justice system, and several students noted their inaccurate perception of Probation prior to the course. "[This experience] helped me understand what Probation is—I previously thought it was more limited but know its purpose is to rehabilitate and hold offenders accountable," noted one student. Another student wrote, "My thoughts on probation are different now that [I] worked with them. I saw that Probation is making an effort to help these kids out and not just lock them up." Whether from neutral or negative perceptions, these responses demonstrate changes in students' understandings of Probation's work. With regard to development of civic competencies, in the second comment the student's emphasis on "help[ing] these kids out" expresses an emergent awareness of having a personal ethic of care as part of one's professional practice. It also suggests the beginnings of a recognition of the importance of a Probation professional's interactions and communications with a client. As such it is instructive for faculty and Probation directors' future efforts to redesign the course.

For some students, their understanding of and affinity for a career in Probation was reinforced and/or grew during this experience. One student wrote, "The Probation Service Learning experience has helped me see the reason why I decided to choose this field. It reawakened my passion and desire to make a difference in at least one person's life." Another student wrote, "Probation Service Learning helped me realize probation work is interesting and challenging. . . . Having personal experience communicating and interacting with juveniles made me determined to apply to probation work." Those who still were unsure about applying to Probation expressed having a clearer vision of their

career trajectory after the course. "Before the Probation Service Learning Program," a student wrote, "I had no idea how I would start my career upon completion of my bachelor's degree. It has been one of the best decisions in my life." Another student noted, "I gained valuable insight by shadowing multiple probation employees and have a better understanding of the different job functions each have."

Throughout these examples students return to the importance of communication with clients. This underscores their recognition of the value and significance that the interpersonal dimensions of criminal justice professional practice can have for the Probation clients as they try to improve their lives. Such recognition of the importance of communication reflects personal growth with regard to their professional pathway and offers valuable evidence for faculty and directors to develop more explicit emphasis on these nascent elements of civic professionalism. We will return to the issues of care and communication as a part of the development of students' sense of civic professionalism in the "Lessons Learned" section below.

Academic and civic outcomes. The Probation Service Learning Program also focused on the intersection of academic and civic outcomes, which required students to reflect on the relationship between academic knowledge and criminal justice practice, and, in turn, the impact of this intersection on public good for communities.

With regard to academic and civic outcomes, we have mixed findings about students' connections between academic coursework, professional practice, and the public good after completing the Probation Service Learning course. Overall, student reflections focused more explicitly on the relationship between academic knowledge and professional practice and less on how academic knowledge and professional practice related to the public good. We note this in our discussion of representative examples from student reflections in this section, and we address it in "Lessons Learned" below. As with students' civic and personal reflections, there was significant evidence of emergent civic sensibility in their reflections related to academic and civic outcomes.

Some students articulated sophisticated understandings of the connection between the classroom and workforce but were less explicit about how and why that connection was important for ensuring that diverse members of the public are served equitably. For example, one student wrote,

> Academic knowledge is truly the foundation for professional practice. . . . At one point I did not fully understand why courses on theories and criminal justice were necessary, however, once you have an opportunity to interact with clients from all different walks of life and backgrounds, it becomes evident.

The student seems to be moving toward the realization that academic theory prepares one for participation in the workforce in a role where one will encounter diversity and possibly where diversity competencies (e.g., the ability to listen to and acknowledge diverse points of view) and knowledge of inequalities and inequities are important for better serving all members of the public.

A similar recognition is illustrated in a student's reference to evidence-based practices in the classroom. This student noted, "Practices that are based on empirical research are more likely to produce successful outcomes. . . . During my time at my assigned facility, I would . . . have conversations with staff about evidence based practices and its importance." Clearly the student demonstrates a competent if not advanced explanation of why empirical research is important when applied in the workplace for quality improvement.

Another student found that academic study helped shape their experiences in the field, commenting,

> My academic knowledge gives me a better perspective on the field and helped me understand a lot of what was going on around me. [. . .] During my internship I remember referring back to the things I learned in my research class and my stats class, as well as my child development classes.

These students were able to make direct connections between research and practice in criminal justice, as the course design intended.

What is unclear in these examples is whether or how fully students can explain the ways that improvement of professional

practice through theory and empirical research is successful in terms of the work of the Probation Department in the communities it serves. We believe it would likely be a short step for faculty and Probation directors to guide students to reflect about how quality improvement of services can result in tangible improvements for clients that also ripple out to their families, social networks, and communities.

Not all students, however, saw the linkage between the classroom and the practical application of theory and research. In some cases, students did not think the link was as strong as it should be, commenting that the degree program needed to focus more on probation issues in the classroom and generally provide more service-learning opportunities. One student described,

> I think the classroom environment and the actual criminal justice field have little in common, because in the classroom you learn the way things are supposed to be, but in the field, you get to experience it. Sometimes what you learn in the classroom rarely applies, and sometimes the opposite is also true. I had some clue about probation, but nothing like I experienced during my internship.

Another wrote,

> [O]nce a student graduates and pursues a career, a lot of what they learned in class becomes irrelevant, a lot of what we learn is forgotten a week after finals. I believe professionalism is taught by experiences outside of the classroom, and we should have more opportunities to practice professionalism in the classroom.

One student commented that the class would have been better if led by a practitioner rather than an academic. He stated, "What I learned in the classroom in no way prepared me for this experience. I think the relationship should be more hands on. I think a professor *[sic]* with a probation background would have been beneficial." Whether framed as a critique of the specific course or the current educational paradigm broadly, for many students the intersection between academic knowledge and criminal justice practice was not readily apparent. These last few reflections demonstrate how some students conceive of academic knowledge; however, the ways in which these academic knowledge concepts were used and understood in the Probation Service Learning placements appears limited. Although these reflections provide some evidence that students made the connection between academic and civic outcomes through these experiences, these connections were less evident than connections the students made between civic and personal outcomes or personal and academic outcomes.

Personal and academic outcomes. A third critical intersection of student learning outcomes for the Probation Service Learning course involved the impact of experiences on personal and academic outcomes. From this perspective, students were asked to reflect on how the course, as part of the degree program in criminal justice, impacted their personal goals and career objectives. The majority of the students saw themselves moving into careers that focused on rehabilitating offenders and contributing to public safety. A subsection of students noted that the experience helped them formulate a way to give back to the communities they grew up in. "With the experience I have," one student wrote, "I will be able to obtain a job with probation and continue to give back to my community." Another said she now knows she wants to "be a mentor and role model for those who I can relate to and help guide them positively by sharing my experiences with them." Connecting her upbringing to the course, one student noted,

> I currently work as a mentor for high-risk youth in the areas of Compton, Watts, and Inglewood. Many of my students have come up and told me I was a great influence in their lives. Therefore, I feel I would make some change in several youths' lives if I was to become a probation officer.

Students' personal connections to the communities they served helped bridge the academic and civic objectives of the course.

As the course instructors, the authors can attest to the personal transformations Probation Service Learning students experienced from the beginning of the term to the end. The majority of students seemed to emerge from the course with a palpable

new confidence in their experience, writing skills, and professional networks. Of the weekly reflections, one student wrote, "Moodle assignments help us better understand our journey." Much of the credit for these transformations is owed to the relationships between students and their assigned directors. When asked what they would take away from the course, a student wrote, "I will keep the advice I received from my director, DPOs, and supervisors [and the] great experiences I had with the department. I will also keep the confidence that I could do a research project from scratch." Another student wrote,

> I was able to talk to [my director] about other things besides the project and those conversations helped me grow personally and professionally. . . . Building that bond and having a professional we can contact even after the project is over is an invaluable experience.

Of his assigned director, another student commented,

> I loved that I was able to absorb every direction and advice that he provided for me. He truly is an inspiration and has encouraged me to push past my goals. Not only did I gain a professional insight to Probation, but he also taught me how to handle failure and how to bounce back from it.

The course provided students with opportunities to assess the connections between their curriculum, professional practice, community improvement, and their own personal growth.

Students made strong civic connections in terms of how their academic study related to a personal civic commitment to work in a field that allowed them to work in communities like the ones they came from. This strongly correlates with data on Cal State LA students from the Collaborative Institutional Research Project Survey (Higher Education Research Institute, 2016). In surveys administered to first-time, full-time freshmen, the students at Cal State LA rated the personal importance to them of "participating in a community action program," "helping others who are in difficulty," and "helping to promote racial understanding" higher than their counterparts at other, comparable institutions (Higher Education Research Institute, 2016). Cal State LA student results for civic engagement in the CIRP Survey are remarkably consistent with the evidence of civic outcomes in Probation Service Learning students' reflections, indicating that criminal justice students in the Probation Service Learning Program, which takes place near the end of their baccalaureate careers, had the same personal connections to civic issues that students bring with them to the university. This consistent correlation between Probation Service Learning students and the larger student population at the university underscores the merit of pursuing civic professionalism within their degree programs. It also provides strong evidence for the content focus in future revision to the course and instruction.

Director Reflections

The directors were extremely positive about their experience in the Probation Service Learning Program, and many expressed an interest in participating in future sessions. Directors spoke highly of their students and of having enjoyed working with them. They often described their students in one or more of the following ways: intelligent, able to grasp things quickly, receptive to new experiences, motivated, and inquisitive. Directors received the additional benefit of fulfilling internal requirements for continuing education and community service.

Directors appreciated the freedom and flexibility offered in the Probation Service Learning Program to align student experiences with Probation operations and offer students a glimpse of Probation from a deputy probation officer's point of view. The meetings were particularly appreciated; as one director commented, "The meetings provided a way to 'surgically' share experiences and mentor students toward a specific goal, making the experience more relevant to the student."

Based on comments from the directors, the Probation Service Learning appeared to be mutually beneficial to both students and directors/Probation. Directors indicated that the students provided valuable feedback about the practice they were observing. One director wrote, "I feel this program has had an impact on my professional practice. I am more observant of my office and of other operations." Another said that she gained a new perspective on her operation from her student's insights shared during weekly

meetings. Some remarked that students revitalized their office, offering opportunities for deputy probation officers and other staff to explain their work and act as mentors to students. A director commented, "The fact that I had to be . . . thorough . . . to provide my student with good information and build a strong foundation for her, made me more aware of my role." Tongue-in-cheek, one director wrote, "I realized it is hard work to mentor a new excited student." Although civic professionalism was not discussed explicitly with directors, these comments suggest the possibility of consulting them about emphasizing it more when working with students.

Finally, directors were optimistic about the impact on Probation of identifying and recruiting well-matched candidates. One director said he enjoyed hearing how students viewed Probation before and after the class. Another wrote, "It gives me hope that there will be some good employees coming to us in the future."

Lessons Learned

As indicated above, both Probation directors and students spoke highly of their experiences and articulated ways in which the experience was positive from their respective positions. Student reflections on their experiences provided evidence that the course impacted students' ability to think about the public good from the perspective of professional practice in Probation. Perhaps most important, the experiences offered students an opportunity to better understand the role Probation plays in community safety, how Probation operates within the criminal justice system, and the variety of potential career paths both within and outside Probation. Similarly, the directors enjoyed the experience, gaining a greater appreciation of their role as civic professionals and mentors to students interested in following their chosen career pathway.

Overall, findings showed that the Probation Service Learning Program at Cal State LA was successful. As with all experiments in higher education, however, particularly those that involve practitioners in the field, issues arise that require faculty to "return to the drawing board" for continuous course improvement. Below, we discuss ways in which the Probation Service Learning Program can better attain its goals, particularly the goal of civic professionalism. The proposed revisions fall into three categories: (1) defining the purpose of the course, (2) revision of course curriculum, and (3) managing student projects.

Defining the Purpose of the Course

In hindsight and based on evidence from students' reflections about their experiences in the program, revising the course to more explicitly relate to a definition of civic professionalism may be beneficial. Peters (2004), for example, defines the "civic dimensions of *educational practice* [emphasis added]" as enabling scholars to "link the work of scholarship—teaching and research—to the public work of democracy—the articulation, deliberation, and negotiation of public interests, ideals, problems, and issues, and the development and exercise of knowledge and power in addressing them" (p. 48). Clearly articulating and explaining the identities of criminal justice professors and Probation directors as "civic professionals" may help students to more fully and explicitly realize the connection and develop civic competencies. In other words, focusing attention on how these professions, by definition, contribute to the betterment of communities and the public good will model and illustrate the pursuit of a civic professional career for students choosing a criminal justice profession. As Peters (2004) explains:

> What makes professionalism more or less "civic" is not just the degree to which professionals' intentions can be shown to be "public-regarding" but the degree to which their practice can be shown to be so as well. To practice one's profession in a public-regarding way in a full and direct sense, professionals must view themselves as active participants in civic life. (p. 48)

Revision of Course Curriculum

When moving from curriculum design to teaching the Probation Service Learning class, the assumption was that students would develop greater civic-mindedness by executing a research project related to the improvement of services within the Probation Department, which ultimately serves the public good. Although that was discussed explicitly, it seems that it was not fully learned experientially. Students'

reflections demonstrate that that assumption about improvement of services only made it as far as improvement of services *within* the Probation Department. It seems that the connection was too abstract—though some projects like lobby surveys or work on community information fairs were more client-centered or community-based. Emphasizing the connection to improvement of the public good *in*, *with*, or *for* communities can be reinforced in other ways. Connection to communities and society in terms of impact on public health or other measures related to families or cohesion within a community could be made an explicit part of class readings and discussions with Probation directors.

Perhaps a shift in emphasis from faculty and directors' end goal of "civic-mindedness" to a more explicit ongoing goal of "civic professionalism *in practice*" would help to accomplish this. Students' connections to civic outcomes were more explicitly connected to personal outcomes—such as their consistent emphasis on the importance of communication with probation clients—than when they were asked to reflect to connect them to academic outcomes. Student reflections consistently emphasized communication with Probation Department clients, which holds great potential for revision of the course. Bringle and Steinberg (2010) define communication and listening skills as fundamental to civic professionalism:

> The civic-minded professional embarks on a career with a public-service orientation in mind, rather than a solely technical or economic/profit orientation to practice. . . . the civic-minded professional has a variety of skills in addition to professional knowledge and skills; among these skills is the ability to communicate well with others, and especially the ability to listen to divergent points of view. (p. 433)

Careers in the area of health and human services depend upon listening and communication skills, similar to the increased importance of patient-centered care in medicine (Epstein, Fiscella, Lesser, & Stange, 2010) and student-centered learning in higher education. Because Probation Service Learning students' reflections are also central to civic professionalism, it would be relatively straightforward to revise course outcomes to more explicitly focus on civic professionalism. Guiding students by explaining how the very same client-centered skills are necessary for developing greater capacity for civically professional practice would both allow for greater connection between civic and personal outcomes and build a stronger foundation for students to make connections between academic and civic outcomes.

Another area for revision targets students' ability to explain relationships between academic theory and its application for evidence-based improvement of criminal justice practice within a professional setting like the Probation Department. The connection between these two was not clearly evident in their reflections. Students' reflections showed emergent recognition of the importance of diversity competencies and diversity knowledge about structured inequalities, but it was clear that students need more explicit opportunities to connect the use of data and information to assess the impact of various practices and approaches on Probation clients and the wider community—do they, for example, improve outcomes for clients and increase public safety within the community?

Civic professionalism conceived of as part of a criminal justice professional's role underscores the relationship between their actions and the advancement of institutional mission and outcomes for clients and the community. In turn, this civic professionalism framework could be used to determine whether students develop greater ability to explain criminal justice professional practice in general and a more specific ability to explain the civic dimensions of criminal justice professional practice. Olson and Dzur (2004, pp. 151-152) identify value in this approach for several reasons. First, it contributes to a greater sense of personal integrity on the part of professionals because the reward and meaning of work is more explicitly connected to furthering the public good. This would resonate with the civic commitments that Cal State LA students bring to the university (Higher Education Research Institute, 2016) and with the reflections of Probation Service Learning students. A second reason centers on the importance of trust as central to human services work with clients. Sullivan (1995), an influential and frequently cited scholar in the literature on civic professionalism, emphasizes that the legitimacy

of many professions is based on reciprocal trust between professionals and the public (as cited in Olson & Dzur, 2004, p. 151). Reflection on civic professionalism would encourage students—as future criminal justice practitioners—to consider how the status in criminal justice professions is granted to them by "civil society's structure of legal procedures and reasonings" and that their "authority and autonomy . . . to solve key social problems are based on reciprocal trust" (Olson and Dzur, 2004, p. 151). Finally, Olson and Dzur assert that civic professionalism is valuable because it contributes to democracy itself when professionals find ways to foster engagement with the lay public (Olson & Dzur, 2004, p. 152).

Managing Student Projects

After 4 years of offering the Probation Service Learning course, one concern we have is around students' clarity (or perhaps lack thereof) regarding the difference between large-scale empirical assessments of criminal justice policy and the small-scale, less rigorous projects they undertake during their placement in Probation. For example, in May 2016, the County Board of Supervisors abolished the use of solitary confinement in juvenile detention facilities in Los Angeles County, citing empirical research highlighting the traumatizing impacts of solitary confinement. This change prompted several of the directors to assign student projects assessing the increase of assaults and physical violence inside detention facilities, presumably to make the case that the abolition of solitary confinement has hindered their ability to "control" detained minors, and in several terms, the students' final presentations digressed into an open debate between directors and sometimes present faculty as well on the topic.

In light of this recurring conflict, one consideration for the future would be to spend some time in the classroom or through reflections clarifying for students the differences between large-scale empirical research—for example, the research that prompted the Board of Supervisors' decision to end solitary confinement—and the relatively small-scale evaluations students undertake in the course of a single semester or quarter. One idea is to have students find a peer-reviewed program evaluation similar to the project they took on and compare the population size, methods, and IRB requirements around the evaluation; their findings could be included as a part of their final presentation as acknowledged limitations of their work. Another way to connect students' experiences in the field generally to the published academic work on the justice systems, implemented in a more recent term the course was administered, is to have students read personal testimonies of incarceration and probation supervision and connect them to either their experiences while in placement or empirical research on the same topics. In this exercise, students would connect qualitative work on the experiences of detained youth and adults to quantitative assessments of effective programs and policies in the same context, urging students to recognize how different types of research can serve and complement each other. A final suggestion may be to have students perform a mock IRB application, to better understand the rather grueling process by which academic researchers become qualified to speak for the communities they work with.

Conclusion

The experiences and lessons learned from the Probation Service Learning Program reinforce the importance of fostering partnerships between academic departments and professional practice to connect students and their academic knowledge more directly to the agencies that shape the health and safety of our communities. Above all, this article demonstrates the importance of administering an assessment of service-learning courses each time they are offered.

In our assessment we determined the kinds of civic outcomes that students could demonstrate—personal commitment to make a difference, emergent awareness of diversity—and those that students could not: how improvement of professional practice within an institution can contribute to the public good in society at large. We think that greater focus on civic professionalism is a promising framework from which to support and grow students' interest in serving the public through criminal justice or any human services profession.

Students of criminal justice at Cal State LA are often drawn to the field with the goal of improving community well-being in all the ways it can be conceived. However, seldom do students have the opportunity to glimpse

what institutional and community change looks like from the perspective of those with the power to implement programs and policies that enable that change. A significant asset of the Probation Service Learning Program for Cal State LA students has been to expose them to the daily operation of a major criminal justice agency through the perspective of the director. This provided a unique opportunity for students to imagine their own future opportunities to improve the well-being of clients through effective communication, collaboration with key partners, and the implementation of best practices and evidence-based practices in criminal justice.

About the Authors

Akhila L. Ananth *is an assistant professor in the School of Criminal Justice & Criminalistics at California State University, Los Angeles. Her research examines constructions of race and gender in the design of juvenile courts and detention facilities. She received her Ph.D. in criminology, law, and society from the University of California, Irvine.*

Michael Willard *is professor and chair in the Department of Liberal Studies at California State University, Los Angeles. His research interests include youth, race, popular culture, and the arts in Los Angeles; service-learning and community engagement; transparent teaching; and faculty development and administration in higher education. He received his Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota.*

Denise C. Herz *is professor in the School of Criminal Justice & Criminalistics at California State University, Los Angeles. Her research interests include improving juvenile probation services and building integrated systems for youth who touch both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. She received her Ph.D. in criminology from the University of Maryland–College Park.*

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Transforming Campus Voting Drives Into Interdisciplinary Service-Learning Projects

Allison D. Rank, Rebecca Mushtare, Angela R. Tylock, and Christy Huynh

Abstract

During the 2016 election season, the authors—a collection of staff, faculty, and students at a rural, four-year comprehensive college—piloted a new format for a student-driven, campuswide, nonpartisan voter mobilization campaign anchored in a political science course and supported by a credit-bearing internship and advanced graphic design course. We argue that this project offers a model for how collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs can transform the nonpartisan voter mobilization campaign into a site for interdisciplinary, cross-campus service-learning projects that benefit the student participants and the campus community. This article outlines the advantages and challenges of the project and concludes with recommendations for those interested in implementing a similar program.

Keywords: voter mobilization campaign, service-learning, interdisciplinary

Presidential elections bring a flurry of activity to college campuses. Charged by the 1998 Higher Education Act to assist students in registering to vote, many campuses make civic engagement activities a feature of campus programming at least every 4 years (Kiesa, 2016). The mission statements of many colleges and universities include a commitment to engaging students as citizens. As part of this commitment, campuses across the country embrace the responsibility to introduce students to voting by offering not only registration but also civic education and get out the vote programming. Nonprofit organizations such as Rock the Vote and the New Voters Project stand ready to assist campuses in this effort by providing campaign materials and paying organizers to run large voter registration drives. Schools can hire organizations like TurboVote to email students links to voter registration forms as well as text students reminders about local registration deadlines and elections. Furthermore, interested faculty, student organizations, and student affairs staffers contribute to efforts on their campuses to run voter registration tables, include voter registration forms in the paperwork given to all incoming students, and draw on established rivalries among residence halls or athletic conferences to drive healthy competition around voter registration (Stockman, 2018). Organizations such as Civic Nation and Campus Compact support faculty, staff, and students in pulling together efforts and initiatives from around a campus into cohesive, campus-specific plans for voter registration, education, and mobilization.

During the 2016 presidential election, college campuses' efforts resulted in a 3% increase in the voter turnout rate of college students. According to *Democracy Counts: A Report on U.S. College and University Student Voting*, released by the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, college students' overall voter turnout increased from 45.1% to 48.3% while voter registration rates among college students held steady around 70% (Thomas et al., 2017). Out of the 1,023 higher education institutions included in the study, over 75% posted gains in voter turnout rates from 2012 to 2016 with close to one third posting gains of 6% or higher. Clearly, the combined labor of nonprofits, campuses, and national coordinating organizations to mobilize students paid dividends at the 2016 ballot box.

Despite the growth in college student voter turnout, there is still room to improve, particularly when it comes to incorporating election activities within the academic classroom. The barriers to incorporating election work into academic or service-learning activities appear to be twofold. First, practical publications about student voting focus on the role of students and nonprofits while ignoring faculty and administrators (Kiesa, 2016). Second, ethical concerns regarding partisanship and student labor lead even professors who regularly seek out service-learning opportunities for their students to resist crafting projects centered around presidential or midterm elections (Bennion, 2006; Redlawsk, 2018). Instructors have sought to square the ethical challenge by asking students to volunteer with the mechanics of elections by serving as poll workers (Csajko & Lindaman, 2011; Mann, Alberda, Birkhead, & Ouyang, 2018), running exit polls (Emery, Howard, & Evans, 2014), or crafting specialized projects such as coordinating a candidate debate (Boeckelman, Deitz, & Hardy, 2008), building campaign websites (Caughell, 2018), producing a nonpartisan voter guide (Bardwell, 2011), or creating a fact-checking blog (Bardwell, 2011) as part of a course on political communication or campaigns and elections.

Although the projects listed in the previous paragraph are certainly valuable, we argue that nonpartisan voter mobilization drives offer an underrecognized and underutilized opportunity for cross-divisional and cross-disciplinary service-learning. A true service-learning experience places equal value on learning and service and should be mutually beneficial to students and the community (Furco, 2003). Ideally, service-learning helps students to grow personally by developing passion, curiosity, and interpersonal skills; supports them in thinking critically about course content in context by tackling ill-structured problems that are complex and open-ended (Eyler & Giles, 1999); and challenges participants to include political engagement (policy and decision-making change) as a component of civic engagement (Walker, 2000). A voter mobilization service-learning project should help the community build capacity and satisfy the particular needs of the community. Service-learning is most effective when the project is embedded in the discipline/coursework and includes a strong and consistent reflective practice that integrates regular feedback from the community. One factor that differentiates service-learning from related practices of volunteerism, internships, and fieldwork is the faculty member's role as a mentor and coach (and, sometimes, project manager), providing emotional and intellectual support while also pushing and challenging students (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Student affairs offices, as well as off-campus partners, can create effective voter mobilization campaigns; however, faculty participation adds "valuable academic context for phenomena such as voter-engagement and voter-regulation patterns and election events" (Eaves & Husser, 2017, p. 995). Although creating ongoing collaborative relationships can be a daunting task, collaborative projects that use the specialized knowledge of faculty and student affairs professionals, including each collaborator's specific understanding of who our students are and what they need (Price, 1999), increases the chance of the project's success (Schuh & Whitt, 1999). Moreover, because campaigns rely on such a wide variety of skills—grassroots organizing, strategic planning, event planning, data analysis, graphic and web design, and communication and rhetoric, among others—professors from a variety of disciplines can use a voter mobilization campaign as an opportunity to collaborate and offer a service-learning experience for students.

In 2016, the authors—an assistant professor in political science, an associate professor in graphic design, a student affairs staff member, and an undergraduate political science student—collaborated on a student-driven, campuswide, nonpartisan voter mobilization campaign: Vote Oswego. We argue that Vote Oswego offers a model for how collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs can transform the nonpartisan voter mobilization campaign into a site for interdisciplinary, cross-campus service-learning projects that benefit the student participants and the campus community. We begin by describing the campaign structure and major campaign projects. We measure the impact of the campaign on the college campus through deliverables commonly used by nonprofit organizations engaged in mobilizing youth voters, including voter registrations submitted, get out the vote contacts made, volunteer hours, and media hits. We assess the campaign's impact on students enrolled

in the involved courses through pretests and posttests as well as written reflections and interviews. We conclude that centering the voter registration and mobilization drive in a course can meet, if not exceed, the outcomes of a traditional voter mobilization campaign, as well as offering an opportunity for students in fields ranging from political science to event planning to graphic design to gain practical experience in their field. The article closes with plans for our next phase of research as well as recommendations for those interested in running a similar campaign.

Context

The State University of New York at Oswego (SUNY Oswego) is a rural college with an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 7,000 students. At the time of the study, 27% of undergraduate students were low income, and the student body was approximately 50% female and 50% male. Seventy-two percent of undergraduate students identified as White (non-Hispanic), 8.4% Black (non-Hispanic), 11.2% Hispanic, 2.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2.7% two or more races (non-Hispanic), 1.9% non-resident alien, 0.2% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.2% unknown. The college provided more than $80 million in need-based grants, loans, and work-study awards.

Despite administrative, faculty, and staff commitment to experiential learning, our students face a series of challenges in securing meaningful internships or service-learning opportunities. First, many of the positions require travel to the nearest urban center in an area with limited public transportation options. As a result, a car and financial resources are preconditions for students applying for internships. Second, although rural areas have significant need, the small nonprofits and government offices that serve the population often lack the capacity to provide oversight and mentorship to interns. Third, many students balance work with full course loads, making an unpaid internship with significant travel obligations—which would likely take away time from either needed paid work or hours spent on a degree—a difficult proposition. Ultimately, then, internships remain out of reach for many interested students. Similar concerns leave faculty hesitant to incorporate service-learning experiences into their courses.

Every 2 years, however, campuses have a chance to run political campaigns as they make a good faith effort to register students to vote. On SUNY Oswego's campus from 2010 to 2014, a graduate student supervised by the college's Office of Business and Community Relations coordinated voter mobilization programming. The campus, along with others in our university system, used posters and t-shirts provided by Rock the Vote. The graduate assistant organized debate and election results watch parties and recruited student volunteers to sit at tables in the student union with voter registration and absentee ballot request forms. Undergraduate students volunteered at the programs and tables but did not have an opportunity to design materials, take on leadership roles, or engage in guided reflections to connect their experiences with course material.

Data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) for 2012 shows that of the SUNY Oswego students eligible to vote in the 2012 presidential election, 68.3% were registered to vote, and 33.2% (or 48.7% of those registered) cast a ballot (NSLVE, 2016). Nationally, in 2012, 69% of college students ages 18–24 were registered to vote, and 45.1% (or 65.3% of those registered) cast a ballot (Thomas et al., 2017). Thus, in 2012 SUNY Oswego students approximated the national average in terms of registration (68.3% at SUNY Oswego compared to 69% nationally) but fell significantly short of the national turnout rate (33.2% at SUNY Oswego compared to 45.1% nationally). Although we cannot state a definitive cause for this discrepancy, we theorize that the low turnout rate stems from the desire of many students to remain registered at their permanent, rather than campus, address. Absentee voting in New York places additional burdens on students, including submitting an absentee ballot request postmarked at least a week prior to Election Day and mailing the completed ballot so that it is postmarked no later than the day before Election Day. We suspect that the added complications of requesting an absentee ballot and the lack of a dedicated turnout strategy for absentee voters contribute to the lower turnout rates among our students. Thus, the campus community would benefit from a more aggressive, targeted voter mobilization campaign rather than "one-size-fits-all" programs like Rock the Vote.

In fall 2015, we proposed that the campus replace Rock the Vote with Vote Oswego. Vote Oswego would be a student-run, nonpartisan voter mobilization drive that pulled together resources from student affairs as well as academic affairs. We structured the program to address the needs of (1) students interested in political work but without the means to take on an internship or otherwise commit to volunteering with a campaign away from campus or outside their coursework and (2) the campus community, which we believed would benefit from a more robust, strategic voter mobilization campaign. A three-credit course in political science anchored the campaign. The political science professor teaching this course also hired and oversaw the work of five interns who served as coordinators for teams of students from the course. Other students and faculty, most notably through a graphic design course, supported the campaign by producing relevant campaign materials. Ultimately, Vote Oswego transformed SUNY Oswego's voter mobilization drive from a project using materials produced off campus and staff-planned activities to one where students combined knowledge of their peers with research on youth voting and training on specific skills to develop and run a voter mobilization drive for their campus community.

Overview of the Project: Vote Oswego

Preparation for Vote Oswego began during the 2015–2016 academic year. During this time we built the logistical framework for the campaign through fund raising, created campaign materials, recruited interns, and, most important, built connections among various stakeholders. Our objective in creating Vote Oswego was to broaden the campus commitment to voter mobilization to a campaign that not only mobilized the campus community but did so in a way that created service-learning opportunities for students in political science, communication studies, and graphic design.

This campaign involved an interdependent set of service-learning projects. First, for students enrolled in an elective course offered by the political science department, POL 300: Vote Oswego, the campus at large served as the community site. Town and gown divisions often lead us to define the community as what exists beyond the campus boundaries. Yet Hill and Lachelier (2014) point out that because students contribute to the city economy, use city services, and are impacted by political decisions made at the city, county, and state levels, members of the campus should also be considered part of the community (p. 63). Moreover, the mission statements of many institutions of higher education—including SUNY Oswego—establish a responsibility to instill within their students a sense of civic obligation. In staffing a nonpartisan voter mobilization drive that drew attention to and created opportunities for civic engagement on campus, Vote Oswego offered a service to the campus community. Second, for students in ART 417: Web Media II, the campaign headquarters (POL 300) served as a community partner. A strong online presence is a critical component of a political campaign—particularly one directed at college students. For both classes, the voter mobilization drive provided students an opportunity to build on discipline-specific knowledge—of campaign tactics and communication design, respectively—to tackle an ill-structured problem under the supervision and mentorship of a faculty member with the intention of benefiting both the students in the course and the campus at large.

POL 300: Vote Oswego

The course description for POL 300 included the following language:

> Students will learn the nuts and bolts of building and running a political campaign including how to set and revise campaign goals, develop a coalition, work with the media, recruit and train volunteers, and develop and articulate a unified message. The students in this course will not simply be volunteers for a campaign. They will be campaign staff involved in making decisions about the direction of the campaign.

Twenty students enrolled in the course. In addition, junior- and senior-level students were invited to apply for a three-credit internship with Vote Oswego. The interns served as liaisons between the campaign manager (the instructor of record for POL 300) and the students enrolled in the course. Nine students interviewed for the position; five were hired. Both the course and the internship were open to all majors, though most students came from political science and public relations.

Course framing encouraged students to see themselves as members of a campaign staff, and this expectation was communicated through the syllabus, which stated campaign goals alongside learning objectives for their roles as staff members and their roles as students. Drawing on a background in political organizing, the instructor for POL 300 established the rules for nonpartisan campaigning, outlined the campaign's objectives, and ran trainings on grassroots strategies, including tabling, phone banking, and class announcements. The campaign had three phases: registration, education, and get out the vote. The instructor planned the first 2 weeks of the course in order to ensure that the students and interns (1) quickly entered the field to test and build their grassroots skills from Day 1, (2) saw an example of the types of opportunities they should take advantage of on campus, and (3) recruited student volunteers. Staff from student affairs played a key role in scheduling these first 2 weeks by granting Vote Oswego permission to take part in numerous programs during Welcome Week (SUNY Oswego's name for the programming that takes place starting the Friday prior to the start of the first week of school to introduce the new students to the campus and then welcome all students back for the new year).

By week 3, the interns and POL 300 students were responsible for planning campaign events, making budget decisions, recruiting and scheduling volunteers, and more. Perhaps most important for distinguishing this experience of a voter mobilization campaign from previous efforts on SUNY Oswego's campus and on many other campuses, students used their expertise about the campus and their peers, with guidance from the instructor, to create the campaign materials and campaign strategy rather than relying on materials produced generically by a third party or a strategy created by a campaign organizer or a staff member in student affairs. For example, within the first 2 weeks of the semester, the POL 300 students pointed out that many students came to tables looking not to register but to learn how to request an absentee ballot so they could vote in their home districts. The instructor pushed the students to consider how the discovery of this unexpected population should be considered in light of the campaign's goals as well as their growing knowledge of best practices for political campaigns. The students ultimately chose to count "forms" (meaning voter registration and absentee ballot requests) rather than just voter registrations toward their totals. More impressively, they crafted a get out the vote (GOTV) strategy that combined their knowledge of the campus's structural barriers to absentee voting and contemporary research on voter turnout strategies.

ART 417: Web Media II

While a professor in the political science department worked with students on the campaign calendar, budget, strategy, and tactics, a professor in the graphic design program used Vote Oswego as a service-learning opportunity for ART 417: Web Media II, as well as a project for other graphic design students. Similar to the campaign staff approach in POL 300, nine students in ART 417 worked as staff of a simulated design agency, where the instructor acted as the creative director. In this arrangement, the students in POL 300 served as the community partner the design students were working with. The design students worked together over a 4-week period to research, plan, and launch a website that the Vote Oswego campaign could use as a resource during the GOTV phase. Design students worked within the brand identity already established (by a previous design student in spring 2016) and collaborated with students in POL 300 on the content of the site.

During the research phase, design students studied who the audience of the site would be—this included campaign staff but also members of the campus community with varying knowledge of the election process. This provided design students an opportunity to design a project about a topic they were not experts on, a frequent scenario for professional designers. The goal of the website was to answer commonly asked questions and to refer students to additional resources they might be looking for as Election Day neared. The design team succeeded at organizing content to meet the needs of the audience because they themselves had so many questions about the election process. Ultimately, student designers launched a site that worked across all devices but was optimized for mobile use and social media sharing. Interactive components, subtle animation, and original illustrations made for a site completely unique to the campaign and its target audience.

To complement the work of the web design

team, additional design students in the SUNY Oswego design club on campus created residence hall posters and buttons the campaign used to encourage students to get out and vote.

Community Services Office

Housing components of the project in academic disciplines links the organizing, event planning, and graphic design to academic learning while providing an interdisciplinary component to the project. At the same time, the project also bridged academic and student affairs. At SUNY Oswego, civic engagement programming rests with the Community Services Office (CSO), whose mission is to engage students in community and civic engagement programs in order to inspire a lifelong commitment to active citizenship that contributes to the common good. During the 2016 election season, the CSO planned debate watch parties as well as the election night party. Students from Vote Oswego contributed ideas for programming and volunteered during these events. Moreover, the Community Services staff supported new programming—such as the absentee ballot strategy—proposed by Vote Oswego. The CSO staff provided their expertise on hosting an event, and the students from Vote Oswego contributed ideas born of their experiences campaigning on campus as well as classroom discussions of research on youth political participation. This model allowed CSO, as the community partner, to act as a coeducator, which placed value on experts "in the real world" outside academic affairs. Ultimately, Vote Oswego revealed the potential for the campus community itself to function as a service-learning site as well as the potential for a nonpartisan voter mobilization campaign to function as an interdisciplinary, collaborative project that brings together faculty, staff, and students from across campus.

Measuring the Impact of Vote Oswego

We assessed the impact of Vote Oswego on the campus community by comparing our results to the results of previous campus voter mobilization programs as well as to objectives set out for the campaign in terms of voter registrations and absentee ballots collected, media hits, and coalition partners. We assessed the impact of participating in Vote Oswego on students enrolled in POL 300 and ART 417 through pretests and posttests of their political activism, civic skills, and political efficacy. We also collected data through reflection activities and student interviews. All instruments received approval from the Institutional Review Board at SUNY Oswego. We review each in turn.

Impact on the Campus Community

Our goal for the community as a service-learning site was to improve voter mobilization—including registration, education, and get out the vote efforts—both through hard numbers and by creating a sense of excitement and urgency around the election. We evaluated Vote Oswego on the types of deliverables typically used to evaluate a nonprofit youth vote mobilization campaign: voter registrations collected, GOTV contacts (direct interactions designed to motivate registered voters to submit an absentee ballot or go to the polls) made during the first week of November, coalition partners developed, and media hits secured. Although information on the coalition partners, media hits, and get out the vote contacts from the previous elections remain elusive, we know that the campus collected approximately 700 voter registration and absentee ballot forms in 2010 and approximately 1,300 of the same forms in 2012. Thus, Vote Oswego set its goal at 2,000 forms (approximately 25% of the student body). Stated campaign goals also included developing 10 campus coalition partners, securing eight media hits, and making three times the number of GOTV contacts as voter registration forms collected.

Ultimately, the campaign exceeded three of the four goals. The students collected 1,054 voter registration and 1,583 absentee ballot requests for a total count of just over 2,600 forms. Over 30 clubs and organizations, 25 faculty members, and Greek Life and Student Athletics became members of the coalition and contributed class time or volunteer hours to the campaign. More than 250 volunteers (students who were not enrolled in POL 300, the related internship, or ART 417) contributed a total of 450 hours to Vote Oswego. The campaign also created a buzz around its efforts on and off campus by securing nine media hits. Despite these successes, Vote Oswego had only 1,103 direct interactions with voters during the final week of November, falling far short of the stated GOTV goal of making three times as many contacts as voter registration forms collected.

Data provided by NSLVE revealed an in-

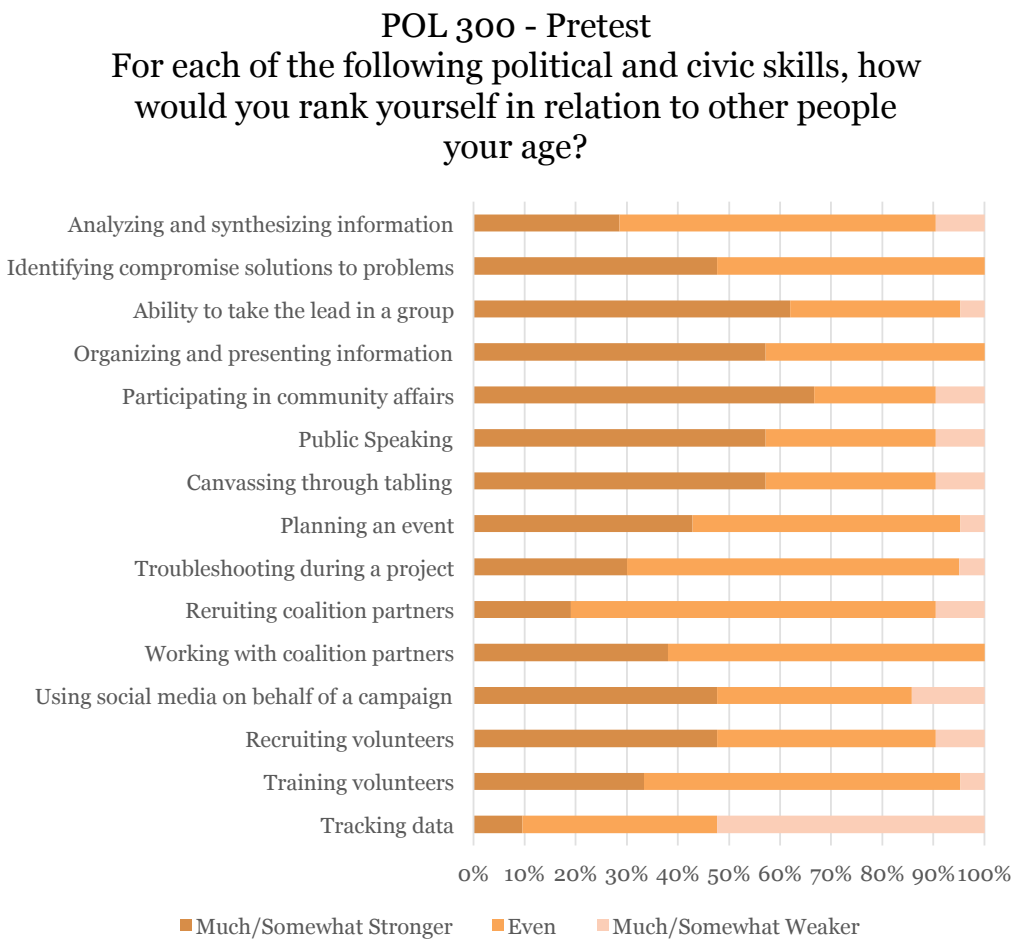

Figure 1. POL 300 Political and Civic Skills Pretest

crease in both the voter registration and voter turnout rates in 2016 compared to 2012. The voter registration rate increased from 68.3% in 2012 to 76.6% in 2016, and the voting rate increased from 33.2% to 41.8% (NSLVE, 2016). Although SUNY Oswego remains below the all-institutions voting rate of 48.3% reported by NSLVE, these numbers mark a clear improvement over the registration and turnout rates reported by NSLVE in 2012. Our research design does not allow Vote Oswego to take the credit for these results. However, we feel confident concluding that transforming the voter mobilization drive into a collaborative service-learning project had the desired effect of engaging SUNY Oswego students in the 2016 presidential election.

We now turn to a discussion of the impact of participation with Vote Oswego on students enrolled in POL 300 and ART 417. Pretests were administered at the beginning of the campaign, with posttests administered after Election Day. A number of students dropped each course between the pre- and posttests. As a result, more individuals have taken the pretests than the posttests, which leads us to be cautious in drawing conclusions from our results. We do, however, believe that they offer preliminary data that support the effectiveness of the program. We also supplement the quantitative data with reflections (POL 300) and interviews (ART 417).

Impact on Student Participants—POL 300

We expected POL 300 to help students with a stated interest in political careers to better understand the realities and challenges of political campaigning by serving as staffers for Vote Oswego. Pretests conducted during the first week of class on students' political and civic skills (see Figure 1) revealed that many of the students rated themselves highly in comparison to their peers regarding their abilities to perform campaign

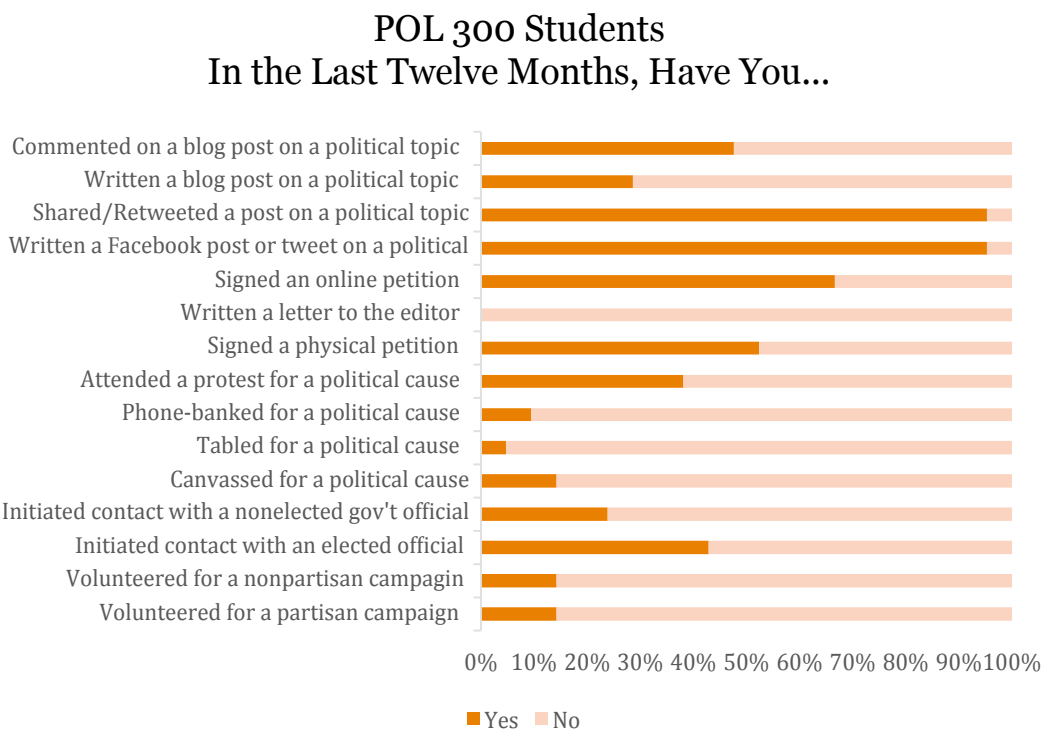

Figure 2. Political Participation of POL 300 Students

tasks. For example, close to and in a few cases over 50% of the students rated themselves as much or somewhat stronger than their peers in their ability to participate in community affairs, canvass through tabling, use social media on behalf of a campaign, and recruit volunteers. In addition, just over 30% of students rated themselves much or somewhat stronger than their peers at training volunteers and troubleshooting during a project.

As Figure 2 shows, however, the students' positive assessments of their skills mask a relatively low level of political involvement. Although 90% of the students had engaged in political activity on social media, and more than 50% had signed a physical or online petition, fewer than 30% had initiated contact with an elected official, and fewer than 20% had volunteered for a partisan or nonpartisan campaign, canvassed, tabled, or phone banked for a political cause.

In other words, the students had confidence in their skills and willingness to engage politically in an online forum, but few had been exposed to the realities of a political campaign. Frankly, these results matched our expectations about students who would enroll in the class—we expected to see a group of politically interested and motivated young people seeking an opportunity to be exposed to the realities of a political campaign. The results of a post-test conducted during the final week of the course (displayed in Figure 3) also indicate that the experience led students to increase their self-assessment of their skills compared to their peers. Participants assessed themselves as improving in their ability to perform a variety of specific campaign tactics (tabling, recruiting and working with coalition partners, training volunteers, and tracking data) as well as skills ranging from analyzing and synthesizing information to identifying compromise solutions to problems, taking the lead in a group, and troubleshooting during a project.

This growth in a broad set of skills—particularly regarding analysis and critical thinking—reinforces for us the promise of having students engage not just as volunteers with a campaign but as coordinators of a campaign. Each student spent an average of 7 hours per week in the field—registering voters, training volunteers, phone banking, and more. As a whole, the class contributed over 550 hours to the project. Throughout the entire campaign, the instructor pushed students to adjust and readjust campaign

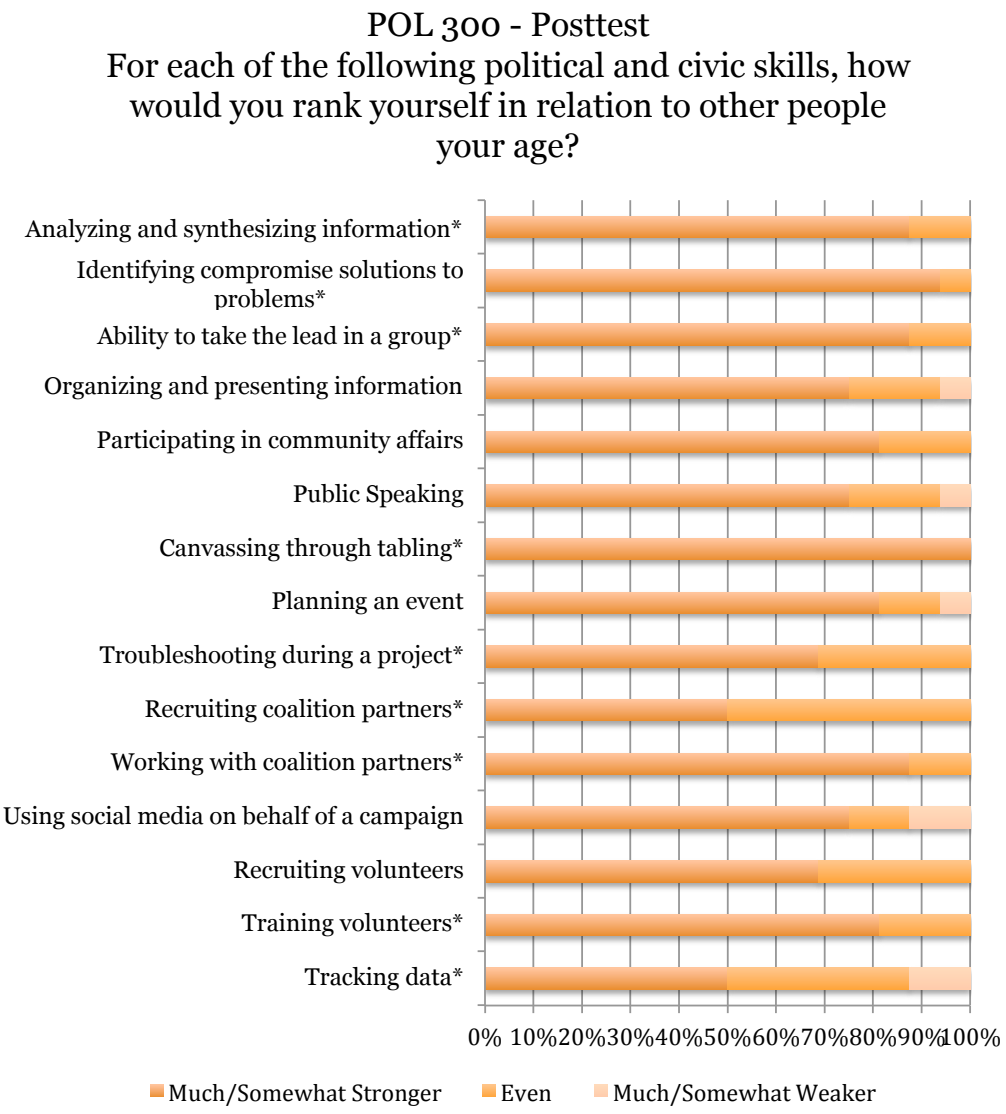

Figure 3. POL 300 Political and Civic Skills Posttest.
**Indicates the change between pretest and posttest is signifcant with a p-value of .95*

plans considering the prior week's outcomes and their growing knowledge about campaign strategy. In other words, the course allowed students ample opportunities to practice the grassroots tactics key to local campaigns with the added layer of reflection and mentorship required to transform the experience from volunteering to service-learning.

The students' end-of-semester reflections expressed an appreciation for this structure. Indeed, nearly half of the students communicated that they had learned more than they expected over the course of the campaign, particularly with regard to the complexity and moving parts required for a campaign to succeed. The following lines from student reflections are indicative of how students viewed the experience:

> I have learned that campaign work has extensively more depth than what I thought. The intricacies of building a coalition, working with that coalition, gaining a visibility, and a variety of other issues are things that campaigns consistently face in order to achieve the goals the campaign establishes.

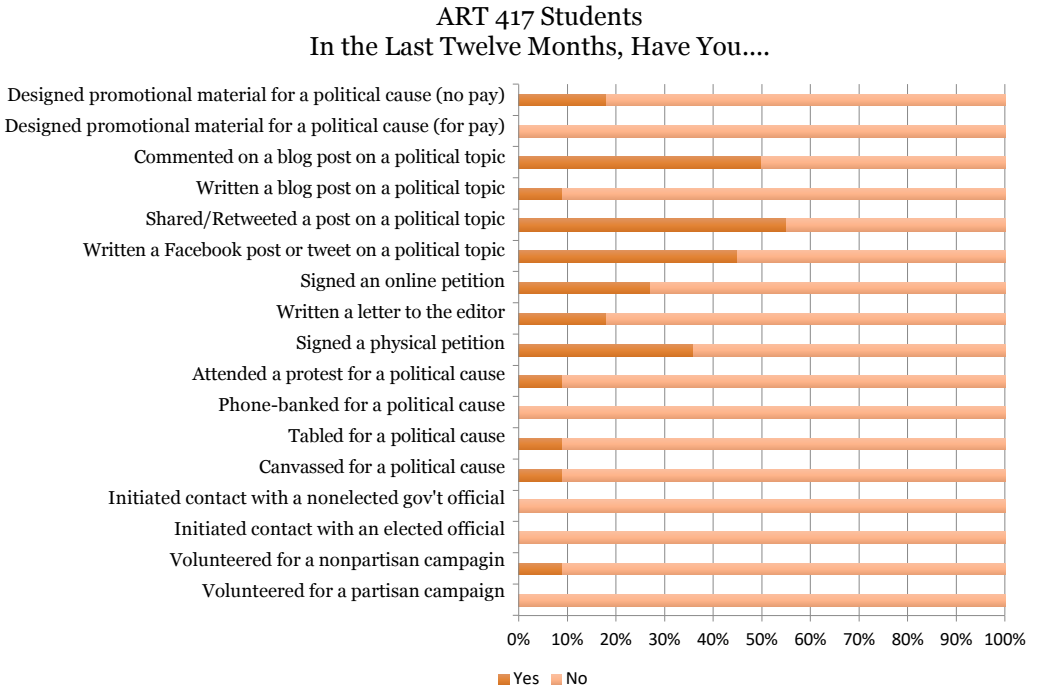

Figure 4. Political Participation of ART 417 Students

> I had hoped to gain campaign knowledge and experience. I did not exactly know what that knowledge would be but at the end I definitely got some valuable experience and I acquired new skills and knowledge about the inner workings of a campaign.
>
> It is very time consuming and detailed. It is also complex and requires a lot of different skills and groups. You have to plan everything in advance.
>
> I learned that campaign work is not as glamourous [sic] as it seems. It's a lot of hard work.

We take assurance from these comments that this course fulfilled our intention of introducing politically motivated but undertrained students to the skills and knowledge fundamental to campaigning.

Impact on Student Participants—ART 417

Although the majority of students enrolled in POL 300 for the express purpose of gaining political experience through an elective campaign practicum, the students enrolled in ART 417 had no such intent. Similar to POL 300 students, to the extent that ART 417 students engaged in politics, they were most likely to do so through social media, commenting on blog posts, or signing a petition (online or offline). Notably, however, they were approximately half as likely to engage in these activities as the POL 300 students, and no one enrolled in ART 417 reported having initiated contact with an elected or nonelected government official (see Figure 4). Two of the students had previously designed for a political campaign. Throughout the design process (and after the election), most of these students indicated that this was their first election as eligible voters and commented on how much they learned about the election process and the candidates by gathering and organizing information for the website.

As we established earlier, POL 300 students explicitly enrolled in an elective with the knowledge they would become campaign staffers, but ART 417 is a regularly offered course focused on advanced web design skills. Vote Oswego offered an opportunity to work with a "client" on a real-world project while being mentored by a faculty member. Consequently, there were large learning gains on the process of design, research methods, and so on. Student designers working on this project had limited experience working on projects where they

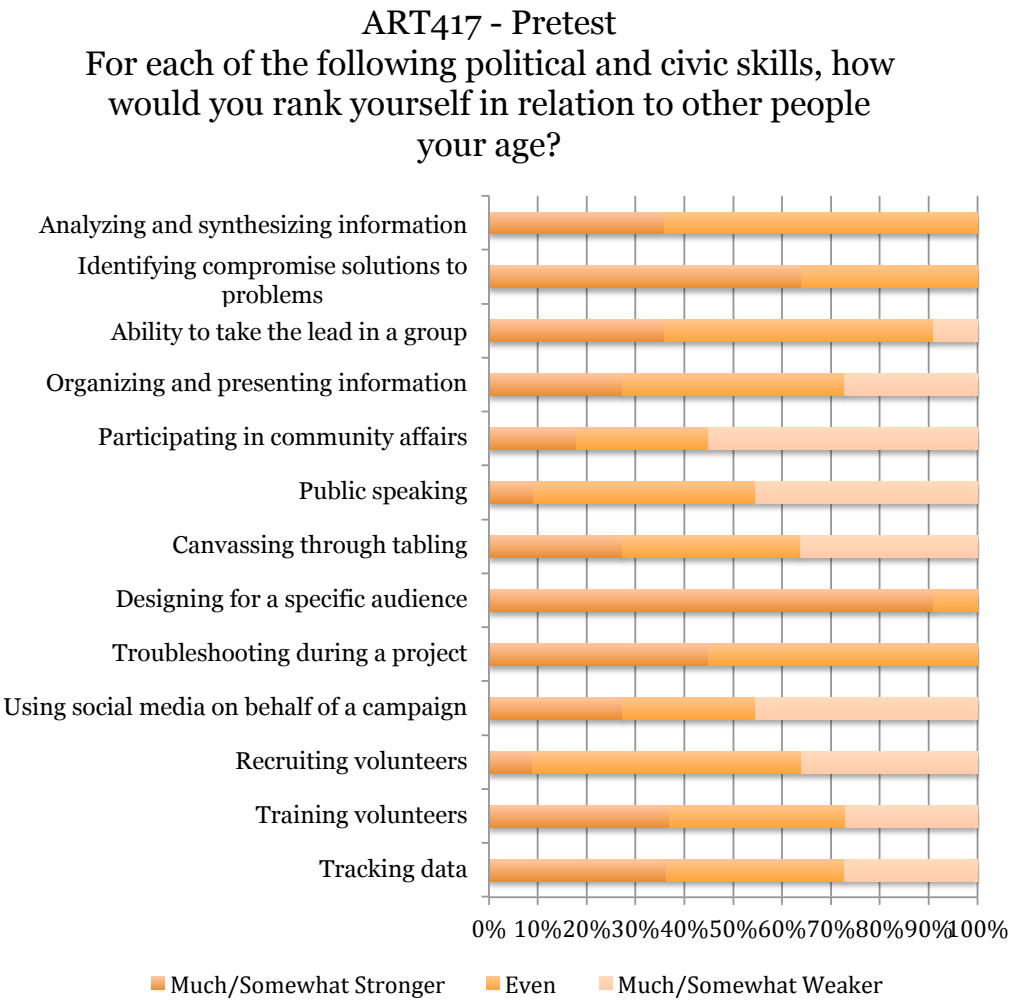

Figure 5. ART 417 Political and Civic Skills Pretest

did not have control over the goal or intent; such experiences are crucial to preparing students to enter the field as professionals. Students logged over 300 hours on the project and quickly learned that research, design, and revision phases take much longer than they expected. They had the opportunity to perform audience research, including empathy maps and personas, which the students had only completed in hypotheticals previously. This particular project also challenged them to focus deeply on the mobile experience of the website, given the audience and the intended uses of the site to supplement interactions with campaign staffers. Community-based projects also have the added complexity of collaborating with another team of people who need to provide feedback and content. Negotiating the time needed for these exchanges was something new for many of the student designers.

We administered the same pre- and post-test to ART 417 as was given to the POL 300 students to see if designing for a political campaign would have an influence on their assessments of their political and civic skills (see Figures 5 and 6). Notably, although the POL 300 students reported increased self-assessments of their abilities from the pretest to the posttest, the ART 417 students did not have any statistically significant increases in their self-assessment. In fact, the only statistically significant results for ART 417 students was a decline in those students' confidence about their leadership skills. This finding is supported by in-class reflections where students reported challenges collaborating as a group and dividing design tasks because of their limited experience with these scenarios. Students found themselves in leadership roles they had not experienced before and had difficulty supporting other team members. Time man-

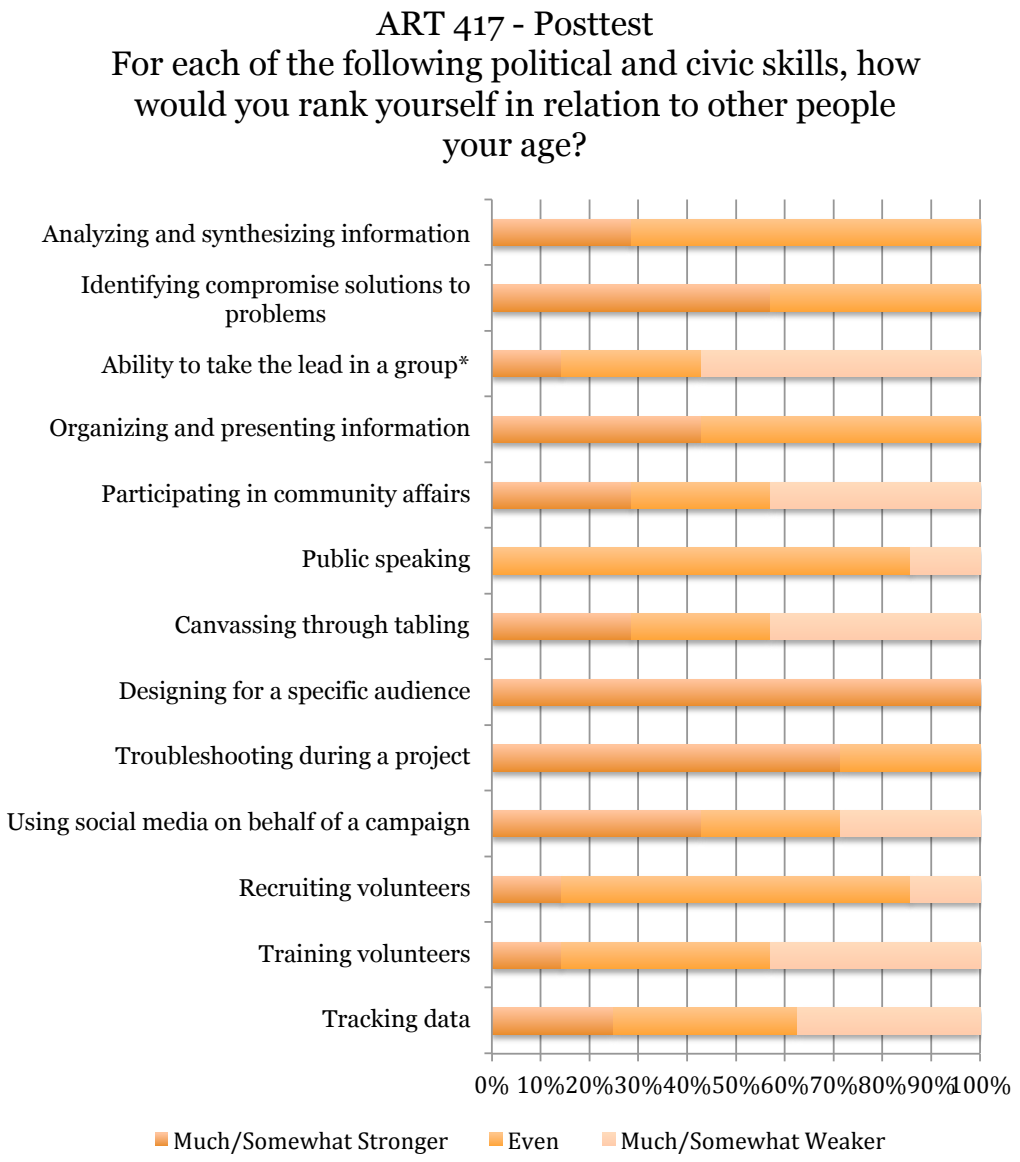

Figure 6. ART 417 Political and Civic Skills Posttest.
**Indicates the change between pretest and posttest is significant with a p-value of .95.*

agement, scheduling, and completing tasks by stated deadlines were additional challenges students identified in these reflections that were not captured in the survey.

This result is not surprising, given that this learning opportunity allowed the students to check their perceptions of their skill sets, and many recognized and openly discussed their need to develop better leadership, teamwork, and collaboration skills. Moreover, although the POL 300 students had the satisfaction of meeting the majority of their goals, the ART 417 students had a different experience. The website analytics indicated that the site made a minimal impact (143 unique visitors in October and 192 unique visitors in November, with about 20% of visitors staying for longer than 30 seconds). Spikes in site usage (October 25–28, November 2, and November 6–7) coincided with promotion of the site on social media and scheduled phone banks (some of the intended uses of the site). In this respect, the design students saw the potential for impact but realized that their work, ultimately, had minimal impact. In the next section, we outline our proposal

for better incorporating design students into the broader project.

The design students struggled during the research and planning phase of the site to gain empathy for students who might have a different relationship to the election than they had (i.e., connecting or understanding students who were very politically engaged, those who had voted previously, etc.) and designing for those segments of the student body. However, two of the nine students involved in the project developed additional politically motivated work in their portfolios in the spring semester.

In an interview, one of those students was asked about her new interest in political work. The student indicated that the 2016 presidential election was the first major election she could vote in, which also meant it was the first time she had a reason to pay attention. During the project she gained awareness about the candidates and the process, and she regularly used the site herself to learn what she needed to do to vote. It wasn't until gathering content for this project that she even knew that there were midterm elections. She indicated that had she not been involved with the project, she likely would not have voted. The project motivated her to better understand the issues at stake and caused her to seek out additional information so that she could be an informed voter. She now sees her own ability to combine her journalism and design training to inform and make an impact. Following Vote Oswego, she started a personal passion project about the Bill of Rights that targeted high school students. She took on the project after realizing what could be gained from projects outside traditional class assignments. Although the survey did not indicate advances in political facility, reflections and interactions with the design students indicated that they gained foundational knowledge of the political system that they would not otherwise have had. Through reflection after the project, they also indicated their clearer understanding of the ways they could increase the impact of their work and the responsibility they have as designers to do so.

Implications and Next Steps

The results of our assessment have convinced us of the value of a student-driven, nonpartisan voter mobilization drive as a service-learning project, given the positive impacts on both the campus community and participating students. That said, our experiences during the 2016 election also indicate opportunities to improve both in the performance of the campaign as a voter mobilization drive and the capacity of the campaign as an opportunity for service-learning. In the following section, we offer suggestions for improving future campaigns on our campus as well as changes that should be made to improve our ability to assess the impact of this service-learning project on students. We capitalized the opportunities presented by the 2018 election cycle to test a number of the suggestions included below and will continue to refine our process and methods in preparation for 2020.

Improving Vote Oswego

First and foremost, this project will benefit from regular communication among the faculty and staff. Essentially, the instructor of POL 300 needed to consult with the community services coordinator as though she was the site supervisor for a service-learning project. In addition, the instructor of ART 417 needed to consult with the instructor of POL 300 as though she was the site supervisor for a service-learning project. Although the individuals in these three positions would send periodic e-mails with questions or updates, no regular communication was established. Students experienced a corresponding lack of communication. Certainly, the POL 300 and ART 417 students would likely have gained more from the experience if they had communicated more directly with one another. To address this issue in the future, we plan to schedule these two classes to meet at the same days and times so that both groups of students can be seen as campaign staff working together for one community partner, the campus's community services office. This will facilitate the groups' ability to have joint campaign meetings and consultations. This will also provide a time when members of the broader campus community—for example, the Community Services Office—will know campaign members are available. Additionally, it would be helpful to all involved for participating faculty and staff to have specific leadership roles defined, like campaign manager (POL 300 instructor) and media/design advisor (ART 417 faculty), so that students are able to understand their roles and the roles of the faculty/staff in the project. It is important that faculty and staff fill some of these

top organizational positions so that there is continuity between semesters and campaigns as well as appropriate mentorship and supervision in place for students to be amply supported while they learn.

Second, we realize that involving faculty and students from multiple disciplines in strategic preplanning in the spring semester prior to the implementation of the campaign would help make all media components of the project more effective. For example, in these early stages, campaign staffers and designers could collaboratively complete preliminary audience research and develop a brand guide (beyond that of just a logo) that the campaign could start using at the beginning of the fall semester. Such a method would also reflect the way political campaigns work. Even staff turnover from semester to semester would mimic the natural ebb and flow of staff working on campaigns.

Extending the preplanning process would assist us in making a third improvement: expanding the role of the design team in the overall process. In getting the project up and running, the political science professor initiating the campaign failed to recognize the potential contributions that design students could make to the project beyond their web design skill set, including their skills in design thinking, social media, and so on. This undervaluation may have contributed to the ART 417 students' finding the project less satisfying. Such a shift would allow the ART 417 students to play a strategic role in the campaign, which would mirror the control, experience, and timeline the POL 300 students had in the pilot project.

During the 2018 election, we addressed these challenges by scheduling the political science and design courses at overlapping times. As a result, the two teams, including faculty, could meet with each other regularly during the semester. This scheduling provides multiple benefits such as facilitating communication among the campaign teams, allowing the grassroots and design teams to better understand each other's roles in the campaign, and increasing the interdisciplinarity of the experience by exposing the teams to the assumptions and tools of both fields.

Next Steps

Following the preliminary success of the Vote Oswego pilot in 2016, we modified our practice for the 2018 elections and hope to expand the scope of this research to involve multiple campuses for the 2020 election. If multiple instructors capitalize on their campuswide voter mobilization projects for service-learning and put similar questionnaires into the field, we will be better situated to understand the impact of participation on the political and civic skills of students.

In addition to the improvements outlined in the previous section, during the 2018 iteration we began the process of adjusting our methods and instruments to establish a clear set of criteria for other campuses to meet to participate in the 2020 study. A number of key changes will be implemented by 2020: exercising tighter controls on data, aggregating data from multiple election years to increase the sample size, collecting longitudinal data on student campaign staff, and collecting data related to campaign volunteers.

First, notwithstanding our confidence in the validity of our surveys, reflections, and interviews, the pretests and posttests in courses affiliated with the project will be more tightly controlled so we can run paired t-tests. Additionally, reflection assignments across courses involved in the project will also be more closely aligned. For example, during the 2018 iteration, faculty agreed upon the wording of reflection assignments and deployed them at similar times during the campaign.

Second, a larger sample would increase our ability to understand the impact of these service-learning experiences on students. In order to increase our sample of SUNY Oswego students, we will take a two-pronged approach: (1) involve additional courses in the project and (2) aggregate data collected over multiple election cycles by using similar curricula and consistent reflection and survey instruments.

Next, we will add a longitudinal study of students enrolled in the affiliated courses. After each subsequent midterm and presidential election, we will follow up with alumni of the program to assess their perception of how participating in Vote Oswego influenced their careers and participation in philanthropic, civic, and political affairs. Comparison of the later numbers to those collected on college graduates by national organizations as well as by SUNY Oswego's alumni office will make it possible

to develop hypotheses about the long-term implications of structuring voter mobilization drives as recurring service-learning experiences.

Finally, as previously noted, over 200 students volunteered with Vote Oswego in 2016. This was a significantly larger number than the number of students who served as staffers on the campaign—and a population we did not previously collect data from. Volunteers receive a brief training at the start of a shift that now includes an embedded brief survey with questions about recruitment tactics (e.g., Where did you first hear about this volunteer opportunity? Did you receive a confirmation call before this shift?) and the choice to volunteer with Vote Oswego (e.g., Have you previously volunteered with a political campaign? Why did you choose to join Vote Oswego as a volunteer?). The results of this survey will support a rigorous assessment of volunteer recruitment tactics as well as providing data on how the broader campus views the campaign.

Conclusion

As individuals committed to creating service-learning experiences for students at a rural college, we have come to the conclusion that nonpartisan voter mobilization drives offer significant, underutilized opportunities for learning. First, having the campus itself serve as the site for service-learning and internships eliminates the transportation and oversight barriers that hinder students and faculty from taking part in experiential learning. Second, campaigns require expertise from fields such as technical writing, graphic design, public relations, and political science. Thus, although it is important that an instructor with experience in grassroots organizing serve in a central role, the project provides an opportunity for and becomes more realistic through interdisciplinary collaboration. Third, because a voter mobilization campaign has natural stages—voter registration and get out the vote—it offers a built-in timeline for students to learn skills, test them in the field, and reflect on the results with faculty support multiple times over. Although this project requires considerable planning and coordination among staff, faculty, and students, we believe the project outlined in this article provides a framework that other campuses—particularly rural campuses—can adopt to benefit their campus community.

About the Authors

Allison D. Rank *is an assistant professor of political science at SUNY Oswego. Her research interests include American political development, civic engagement, political science pedagogy, and pop culture and politics. She received her Ph.D in political science from the University of Washington.*

Rebecca Mushtare *is an associate professor in graphic design and the associate director for the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at SUNY Oswego. Her research interests include accessibility, teaching empathy, design for social change, and community-based learning. She received her MFA in computer art from Syracuse University.*

Angela R. Tylock *is a student at Quinnipiac University School of Law. Her research interests are in international law and civil justice. She received her B.A. in political science and global & international studies from the State University of New York at Oswego.*

Christy Huynh *is an associate director of Career Services at SUNY Oswego. Her research interests include career development and community engagement. She earned her M.S. in counseling services from SUNY Oswego.*

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Institutionalizing Community Engagement in Higher Education: A Case Study of Processes Toward Engagement

Kristi Farner

Abstract

This qualitative single-case study examined the institutionalization of community engagement at a selected land-grant university by melding individual and organizational perspectives and examining the process as an adaptive challenge. Specifically, the study applied Holland's (1997) assessment matrix for institutionalizing community engagement and Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) boundary-spanning framework. Thematic analysis and constant comparison were used to examine data from transcripts from open-ended survey questions, focus groups, and semistructured interviews. Findings showed that institutionalizing community engagement represented an adaptive challenge that required a critical mass of boundary spanners enacting a variety of roles inside the university. Three conclusions resulted: (1) The case institution created conditions for personnel to safely experiment with community engagement; (2) the university engaged in strategic thinking and planning around the sustainability of community engagement; and (3) in its institutionalization efforts, the case institution fostered an "adaptive braid" model encompassing organizational and individual actions and motivations.

Keywords: Community engagement, higher education leadership, boundary spanning, institutionalization, change agents, adaptive challenges

Since colonial times, American higher education has been based largely on a three-part mission of teaching, research, and service (Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). Integrating the community into this historic mission emphasizes the public value of colleges and universities. Today, many higher education institutions (HEIs) collaborate with communities to address societal needs, thereby fulfilling the civic component of their mission. Indeed, a growing body of literature (e.g., Boyer, 1996; Kellogg Commission, 1999; Sandmann, 2008) has documented that community engagement—the "collaboration between [HEIs] and their larger communities . . . for the . . . exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Swearer Center, 2018)—can generate mutual benefits for both entities. However, many HEIs struggle to *institutionalize* community engagement.

Societal needs are complex, requiring new knowledge that involves partnerships within and outside the academy. Instilling a collective mind-set that values community engagement is not an easy or straightforward process in the context of organizational priorities, structure, resources, and culture, and it requires changing routines and ways of thinking (Holland, 2005). Moreover, implementing community engagement as an integrated strategy rather than as a renaming of service or as an extra volunteer activity is challenging (Furco &

Miller, 2009; Sandmann & Weerts, 2008) because individuals often resist new practices (Holland, 2009). Specifically, it is an adaptive challenge—one that is systemic and whose solution involves multiple stakeholders (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001).

The loosely coupled nature of higher education, combined with challenges related to the diffusion of innovation, add strands of complexity unique to HEIs. Weick (1969) described loosely coupled HEIs as those that can constantly evolve based on symbolic interactions among individuals as they create and interpret meaning from shared experiences. This concept helps explain the high level of autonomy of individual faculty and departments, why some rules within HEIs are followed more closely than others, and why information does not flow predictably along a chain of command.

Diffusion of innovation describes how change takes root when it is channeled through individuals' actions and interactions. An innovation can be a concept, action, or object that is new to the adopter. Diffusion is the movement of an innovation from its source to the adopter through communication and influence (Strang & Soule, 1998). When it comes to the adaptive challenge of diffusing community engagement practices in loosely coupled HEIs, *boundary spanners* can play a vital role. These are individuals who expand their formal institutional roles by operating beyond an organization's parameters (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Miller, 2008).

The qualitative single-case study discussed in this overview explored community engagement as an innovation diffused throughout a selected university. The purpose of the research was to understand how leaders at the university institutionalized community engagement therein. Three research questions (RQs) guided the study: (1) What are key characteristics of the institutionalization of community engagement? (2) In what ways do university leaders address the institutionalization of community engagement as an adaptive challenge? (3) According to university leaders, what qualities do community engagement boundary spanners possess?

Literature Review

Previous studies have examined individual- and organizational-level work around the institutionalization of community engagement. This study sought to enhance the understanding of how that process occurs by melding individual and organizational perspectives and examining the institutionalization of community engagement as an adaptive challenge. As Heifetz and Laurie (2001) explained, "adaptive work is required when our deeply held beliefs are challenged, when the values that made us successful become less relevant, and when legitimate yet competing perspectives emerge" (p. 6). Expertise alone cannot resolve adaptive challenges, because they involve changes in behaviors and technical strategies (Corazzini & Anderson, 2014; Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). In addition, Levine (1980) found that the acceptance of institutionalization in higher education requires boundary expansion. Accordingly, this study's conceptual framework incorporated Holland's (2006) assessment matrix of institutional commitment to community engagement at the organizational level and Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) boundary-spanning framework at the individual level.

Change agents—individuals who negotiate power, information, and relationships—are needed to facilitate institutionalization (Torres et al., 2013). Boundary spanners are a type of change agent uniquely positioned to address adaptive challenges because they "negotiate the wants and needs of parties involved in the process of creating and disseminating knowledge" (Hutchinson & Huberman, 1993, p. 79). Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) framework identifies four roles of individual boundary spanners: engagement champions, community-based problem solvers, technical experts, and internal engagement advocates. The gap between HEIs and communities can be narrowed by individuals assuming boundary-spanning roles that enhance community engagement strategies.

Identifying the activities of boundary spanners at the individual level is important for operationalizing the institutionalization process; at the organizational level, understanding how separate institutional factors come together to affect this process is critical. Holland's (2006) matrix was among the first "to describe and interpret the dimensions, approaches, and levels of institutional commitment to community service and service-learning and thereby to facilitate institutional planning decision-making and evaluation" (p. 33). Specifically, the matrix

identifies seven institutional components (mission; promotion, tenure, hiring; organizational structure; student involvement; faculty involvement; community involvement; campus publications) and relates them to four levels of integration (low relevance, medium relevance, high relevance, and full integration) to help leaders determine the actual state of engagement in their unit or within the larger institution relative to their goals for the institutionalization of community engagement.

Methods and Data Source

In this study, community engagement was viewed as a bidirectional, constructivist paradigm of systematic change through social learning comprising an active network of experiences and interactions (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). The selected university met two criteria. First, it allocated funding and time for campus leaders to attend the Engagement Academy for University Leaders (EAUL)—a program dedicated to developing institutional capacity for community engagement in higher education—every year it was offered (i.e., 2008–2014). Second, it earned the Carnegie Foundation's elective Community Engagement Classification, another indicator of institutional commitment to community engagement.

The researcher utilized purposeful sampling to yield the most in-depth understanding of the subject matter (Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Patton, 2002). Study participants included 21 people from the case study site. Participants were identified as university leaders because of their formal titles (e.g., vice provost, department head, director of programs, and associate dean) or if they held informal roles as internal conveners of community engagement. Data sources included responses to EAUL prework questionnaires; transcripts from focus groups and semistructured interviews; and documents describing the university's history, structure, and current activities. The case was bounded temporally, taking place between the time of participants' preparing for the first EAUL in 2008 and the study interviews in 2015.

The interviews and focus groups addressed all three of the research questions (RQ). Participants shared examples of each level of institutionalization they had experienced or observed (RQ1) using a handout of Holland's (2006) assessment matrix as a visual aid. They were asked to describe the adaptive challenge of community engagement integration at institutional and individual levels, and to consider how beliefs and values had been tested in the process (RQ2). Participants also mapped out where they fit within Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) boundary-spanning framework, identified their boundary-spanning roles outside the framework, and noted specific boundary-spanning roles and activities they observed in others (RQ3).

Raw data were analyzed to address the study's research questions (Yin, 1994). Thematic data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and constant comparison were used to examine data and continued throughout the data collection process (Ruona, 2005). Memos and methodological notes were taken to demonstrate transparency of the researcher's thought processes. Coding and theme revision continued until saturation of themes was reached (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Basic themes were combined into organizational themes and then synthesized into global themes, all of which illuminated participants' perceptions of elements necessary for institutionalizing community engagement.

Results and Conclusions

The study findings showed that participants perceived the institutionalization of community engagement as an adaptive challenge requiring a critical mass of boundary spanners enacting a variety of roles within the university. The data analysis offered insights into how the institutionalization process was operationalized at the case study site. At the institutional level, the university created an "incubator" for community engagement innovation, a space in which faculty and staff not only felt safe to explore engagement but were supported in doing so. To generate this space, the university actively adapted several institutional components (Holland, 2006): infusing engagement language into its mission; increasing access to leadership; restructuring organizational networks and funding mechanisms; expanding opportunities for student involvement; and officially recognizing service-learning in the curriculum. Campus leaders also built a "coalition of the willing," a critical mass of internal supporters with a shared philosophy who utilized strategic integration of new employees into the organization, the intentional placement

of community engagement conveners, and community member testimonials to effect change.

Individual roles and activities identified by participants aligned with Weerts and Sandmann's (2010) boundary-spanning framework. Boundary spanners at the case study site advanced community engagement efforts through action (rather than rhetoric). They were community-based problem solvers, engagement champions, and internal engagement advocates who exercised deep listening; solution-focused, big-picture thinking; and a willingness to make the hierarchical boundaries of the institution more permeable, encouraging a leadership culture of openness, accessibility, and approachability. As contributors to a coalition of the willing, internal engagement advocates served as conveners with expertise to motivate, and technical experts were embedded in communities as public service faculty (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010).

Many aspects of the organizational and individual levels of institutionalizing community engagement were found to be intertwined in this study, as evidenced by the theme agreement between RQ1 and RQ3. Data highlighted the interplay among individual and organizational perspectives, activities, and roles. Much of the data analysis around RQ1 and RQ3 focused on how activities fit into specific categories or roles within the guiding frameworks, but the findings suggested that, intrinsically, institutionalizing community engagement does not fit neatly into individual or organizational frames. With respect to RQ2, this study also found that university leaders addressed institutionalization of community engagement as an adaptive challenge by (1) empowering others, (2) helping themselves and others question routines, (3) shaping institutional norms, (4) honoring work in progress, and (5) acknowledging all roles as important, complex, and interdependent.

Significance of the Study

Ultimately, this study added to the literature by illuminating that the adaptive challenges of community engagement institutionalization can be addressed using a complex "braid" of organizational and individual actions and motivations. This adaptive braid of several intertwining elements was responsive to the loose coupling and diffusion of innovation patterns within the change environment of the case study site (Levine, 1980; Weick, 1969). Individual strands of the braid (e.g., mission, organizational structure, university council on community engagement, leadership/individual decision makers) moved toward or away from other strands, creating a weave of varying "tightness." The braid reflects the complexity of adaptive work and supports the conclusion that there is no single technical solution for achieving full integration of community engagement (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001). Such complexity cannot be understood by examining individual and organizational perspectives separately.

The adaptive braid model is transferable since an institution can customize the strands to reflect its unique context in an effort to become stronger as more strands are woven together. The findings have implications for organization-level change, including curriculum development; recruitment and hiring; and other policy changes, such as mission language and organizational structure, captured by Holland's (2006) matrix. The findings of this study could also be built upon in future studies by broadening the sample (to capture additional types of boundary spanners) and the scale of the research (see Weerts & Sandmann, 2010). The institutionalization process is complex and messy, but if stakeholders acknowledge that this messiness is the norm, they may find utility in adaptive strategies that enhance—and make more imperative—the critical connections between institutional mission and the public value of higher education.

About the Author

Kristi Farner *is a program and staff development specialist for Extension at the University of Georgia (UGA). Her research areas include organizational development, institutionalization, community engagement, and facilitating adult learning. She received her Ph.D in adult education at UGA.*

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