

From the Guest Editors...

State of Service-Learning and Community Engagement Around the World

Andrew Furco and Kateryna Kent



Across the globe, we are witnessing a rise in the integration of community engagement practices into primary, secondary, and higher education systems. At the center of this movement is the incorporation of service-learning as a primary means to advance this agenda. Much as it did in the evolution of the higher education community engagement movement in the United States, service-learning is serving as the entry point for making community engagement a more central feature of the academic culture of higher education institutions in different corners of the world.

This volume presents series of research articles, projects with promise, and reflective essays that bring to the fore the ways that service-learning is used in different countries to deepen higher education's efforts to institutionalize community engagement. The first set of articles reveals the rise in research efforts in Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America to understand more fully the impacts of service-learning within differing cultural contexts. These articles shed light on the varied set of impacts that service-learning is designed to accomplish in different parts of the globe. They also reveal how, within cultures and national borders, the construct of service-learning takes on a particular meaning that might not necessarily translate to other cultures or countries.

The second set of articles speaks to the mission of higher education and elevating higher education's third mission in the context of substantial social and cultural shifts across Africa, Asia, and Europe. These articles shed light on the growing worldwide effort to enhance the relevance, value, and societal impact of higher education through more thoughtful, mutually beneficial uni-

versity-community engagement. They also speak to the challenges and promise of advancing this engagement agenda.

This collection of articles reveals the practice and progress of service-learning throughout the world:

1. Service-learning acts as a primary means to further broader community engagement in higher education.
2. Although a set of principles and elements establish the construct of service-learning, the ways in which these principles and elements are operationalized in different cultures and countries give service-learning a particular cultural or national brand.
3. There is a still a struggle across countries to codify best practices for service-learning, comprehensively measure service-learning outputs and outcomes, and effectively assess student learning from service-learning.
4. As service-learning gains momentum as a pedagogical tool, it is also catalyzing broader efforts to reconsider the role of higher education's third mission. The third mission, which focuses on higher education's outreach and extension efforts, speaks to the growing emphasis on reenvisioning the role of higher education outreach and engagement to better serve the public good.

We hope this issue will provide insights into different ways in which service-learning and broader community engagement are expanding and deepening in different parts of the world, as well as catalyze additional conversations and discussion on how this work can be further institutionalized across higher education.



About the Guest Editors

Andrew Furco is the associate vice president for public engagement at the University of Minnesota, where he is professor of higher education in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development. His research focuses on investigating the impacts, implementation, and institutionalization of experiential learning, service-learning, and community engagement in primary, secondary, and higher education in the United States and abroad. He received his Ph.D. in educational policy and administration from UC Berkeley.

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