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From the Editor...

Shannon O. Brooks



The *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement (JHEOE)* is proud to publish the final issue of 2023, showcasing a robust and broad range of engaged scholarship and engagement approaches from across the globe.

The Research Article section begins with a look at institutional strategic planning and its connection to community engagement. Beckowski and Laufgraben's mixed-methods study examines responses from a variety of stakeholder perspectives of how an urban-serving research university is fulfilling its community-minded values. This study employs stakeholder theory and paradox theory to analyze the tensions and divergent perspectives of the institution's approach, success in community engagement, and how these can be leveraged in institutional strategic planning.

As we consider issues related to institutional support for community engagement, our next research article examines another dimension of interest for engaged institutions—faculty motivations. Adding to this discourse, Rios and Saco's qualitative narrative inquiry is focused on the question of what motivates faculty to practice engaged scholarship. This study provides new insight into the multifaceted reasons for and influences on faculty participation in this form of scholarship, taking a more holistic and nuanced view of intrinsic, extrinsic, and relational factors affecting the development of engaged scholars.

Rounding out the scholarship related to institutional community engagement issues with a perspective from the Global South, Wahyuni and Málovics tackle a challenge that frequently plagues university-community engagement work, namely, the effects of top-down motivation for participating in community service and engaged scholarship. Through a qualitative single-case study of university-community engagement in Indonesia, this article critically examines the relationships, motivations

for, and outcomes of university, local, and intermediary leaders (in this case village chiefs), and the accompanying challenges of a country-wide top-down approach to university-community engagement versus grassroots engagement.

Following this look at institutional and faculty issues, our next two research articles explore student outcomes. In the article "The Civic-Minded Graduate," Gregorová and Heinzová present a large-scale study analyzing civic-mindedness and civic competencies of university graduates in Slovakia. This study adds new depth to the broader question of what constitutes citizenship in different national political contexts, and provides insight into this broader question focused on the European context. Honing in on graduate students, McAlister and Lilly's multiple case study examines the perceptions of physical science doctoral students involved in an educational outreach STEM program with underserved elementary students, and seeks to understand their views of the perceived benefits, burdens and value of engagement in these types of activities. This study provides needed and important lessons for ways to productively engage graduate students in educational outreach activities more broadly.

Our research section concludes with new understanding of community partner perceptions of university-community partnerships. Herber-Valdez et al.'s mixed methods study examines the perspectives of community partners related to their relationships with an academic health center in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The case study employs the Kellogg Commission's seven-part test of engagement (NASULGC, 2001) and guiding principles that define an engaged institution. Using a two-phase process, the research team adapted Michigan State University's Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI; Michigan State University, n.d.) for an initial survey followed by community focus groups. The study's findings have implications for other higher education institutions in designing

surveys and feedback mechanisms from partners, as well as for understanding ways to improve collaboration and the sustainability of partnerships.

This issue's Projects with Promise section features early to mid-stage projects and research studies designed to demonstrate initial indications of impact. Our first article in this section was written primarily by a team of former undergraduate students at Brown University and provides an overview and lessons learned from the Brown Boosts Immunity project. Students involved in this project helped design an educational campaign and credit-bearing service-learning course to help alleviate vaccine hesitancy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Scholarship authored by students involved in service-learning and community-engaged learning opportunities is a welcome addition to *JHEOE* and we hope to publish more student voices in the future.

Next, McGuire et al. present an exploration of varsity student-athletes' experiences with a volunteer youth sports program sponsored by a Canadian university in partnership with the community. This study examines how student-athletes benefit from volunteering, and provides key takeaways and recommendations for developing successful and effective sports-focused volunteer programs.

Finally, Doberneck et al.'s article explores the need for addressing community engagement professional development in the field of wildlife conservation and management. The article describes the process of codevelopment between partner organizations in implementing an introductory and advanced community engagement certificate program, along with evaluation results of participant and partner impact. The article also explores valuable lessons learned that can be adapted by other organizations when developing community engaged learning experiences in varied contexts.

As we close out 2023, we thank our dedicated editorial team, associate editors, and reviewers for their contributions to another successful year of publishing engaged scholarship. *JHEOE* is also appreciative of the authors who have developed new avenues of inquiry in order to build the field of engaged scholarship. As always, a reminder that we invite authors and reviewers for assistance in advancing excellence in community engagement scholarship. We look forward to 2024 and promoting another robust year of publications, scholarly conversation, and inquiry.



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The Value of Community: Stakeholder Perspectives at an Urban-Serving Research University

Catherine Pressimone Beckowski and Jodi Levine Laufgraben

Abstract

Urban-serving research universities (USRUs) address issues of access, community engagement, and development within urban areas, but internal and external forces complicate their place-based missions. By embracing contradictions within stakeholder viewpoints, strategic planning can foster fruitful, institutionalized engagement. This mixed-methods study analyzed responses to a core values survey that was disseminated to stakeholders at a USRU to explore the question “What do the ratings of and comments about the *community-minded* value reveal about possible tensions and opportunities in how stakeholders describe a USRU’s fulfillment of its *community-minded* value?” Through stakeholder and paradox theory, we examined how stakeholder perspectives uncover tensions and opportunities related to the *community-minded* value. Whereas stakeholder theory emphasized the importance of valuing the interests of all stakeholders, paradox theory illustrated how coexisting-but-divergent perspectives on defining, approaching, and engaging community could help to advance community engagement goals.

Keywords: community engagement, urban-serving research university, strategic planning, stakeholder theory, paradox theory



Urban-serving research universities (USRUs) fulfill a unique, complex mission in higher education, addressing issues of educational access, community support, and urban development. Because USRUs are “composed of the city they inhabit” (Zerquera, 2016, p. 137), place consciousness is embedded within their institutional mission but is complicated by conflicting ideas about how USRUs should best engage with and support the communities in which they are anchored (Moore, 2014) while attending to other institutional priorities (Zerquera & Doran, 2017).

Institutional stakeholders have different definitions of the term “community” and varied conceptions of the relationship between the community and university (Gavazzi, 2015), which can result in contradictory approaches to fulfilling the USRU’s mission. For example, some stakeholders may perceive or define community-university engagement as unidirectional, be-

lieving that the university should provide support to the community, whereas others may advocate two-way engagement, which invites collaboration and reciprocity between campus and community stakeholders (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Janke and Medlin (2015) made a distinction between more unidirectional “public service” and more reciprocal and mutually beneficial “community engagement” (pp. 128–129).

It is important for USRUs to explore how stakeholders understand and value the commitment to the community, acknowledge the contradictions and tensions within their viewpoints, and implement creative solutions that leverage and balance different approaches (Bowers, 2017; Zerquera, 2016). A strategic planning process provides an opportunity for stakeholders to articulate their institutional values; through such a process, institutions can engage diverse perspectives and subsequently shape priorities that reflect complex interests (Dostilio & Welch, 2019; Friedman et al., 2014).

This study applied stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984/2010) in conjunction with paradox theory (Pinto, 2019; Smith & Lewis, 2011) to explore one institution's leveraging of a strategic planning process to understand stakeholders' perceptions of the value of community. Early in the process, a mid-Atlantic USRU in a large urban area disseminated a survey to internal and external stakeholders. Respondents were invited to select what they perceived to be the top five core values of the USRU, to rate how well the institution was fulfilling selected values, and to provide qualitative feedback on how the institution could better fulfill the values. The top five values identified by respondents were *diverse*, *community-minded*, *inclusive*, *hard-working*, and *affordable*. We selected *community-minded*, the second-most selected value, as the basis for this secondary analysis because the initial analysis of data for institutional purposes revealed diverse and even paradoxical perspectives on how the university should approach its community engagement and development efforts. Additionally, survey responses captured tensions that have existed between the institution and community in recent years. For this study, we analyzed how stakeholder groups who selected *community-minded* rated the value, then conducted qualitative analysis of open-ended responses to answer the research question:

What do the ratings of and comments about the *community-minded* value reveal about possible tensions and opportunities in how stakeholders describe a USRU's fulfillment of its *community-minded* value?

Literature Review

Urban-serving institutions are anchor institutions, supporting social and economic growth through job creation, community and cultural development, and industry expansion (Davis & Walker, 2019; Friedman et al., 2014; Harris & Holley, 2016; Norris & Weiss, 2019; Taylor & Luter, 2013). Their complex mission involves a commitment to access, equitable student outcomes, diversity, and reciprocal engagement with the city and community in which they are located (Davis & Walker, 2019). USRUs further expand the urban-serving mission through a commitment to community-based research and in collaboration with diverse constituents to address urban challenges

(Zerquera & Doran, 2017). Zerquera (2016) described USRUs as “model institutional citizen[s]” responsible for advancing the public good while working to solve urban problems. Importantly, USRUs reciprocally rely on their communities as their “life-blood” (Horvat & Shaw, 1999, p. 103).

Community-Related Tensions Among USRU Stakeholders

Although the fulfillment of USRUs' complex mission requires the involvement of internal and external stakeholders, the research on who these groups include and how they interact is underdeveloped (Harris & Holley, 2016). Centering stakeholders' perspectives and ideas has proven critical to the success of community-university collaborations (Cantor et al., 2013), but diverse stakeholder involvement has also resulted in tensions at USRUs. Institutional culture, norms, and practices can create obstacles to engagement and tension among stakeholders (Moore, 2014; Stachowiak et al., 2013), yet comprehensive stakeholder involvement is seen as essential to institutionalizing community engagement (Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021; van Schyndel et al., 2019).

One tension arises in defining *community* as universities engage different and more expansive notions of communities. Universities participate in both internal and external communities (Jongbloed et al., 2008), and globalization of higher education has further broadened notions of community (Harris & Holley, 2016). Tensions can also arise in how stakeholders perceive or approach engagement (Addie, 2019; Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021). Within institutions, divergent definitions can fragment or misalign community engagement efforts, which can cause frustration (Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021). Additionally, town-gown relationships have often reinforced barriers and inequitable power dynamics between universities and communities, particularly when universities have not engaged community members (Bruning et al., 2006; Sandmann & Weerts, 2008; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Some university-community engagement initiatives tend to be unidirectional, suggesting that institutional experts would reach out into the community but rarely solicit community feedback (Bruning et al., 2006; Moore, 2014). Unidirectional public service can allow institutions to support the community through key resources and programs (Janke & Medlin, 2015). However,

as Cantor et al. (2013) illustrated, unidirectional practices can have harmful effects on the community, for example, by displacing community members and perpetuating physical and perceptual barriers between the campus and community. Furthermore, such practices can cause community members to feel understandably skeptical about future collaborations with the university.

In recent decades, universities have worked to cultivate two-way approaches that emphasize reciprocal collaboration with the community (Cantor et al., 2013; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008), which can prevent the omission of community members from decision-making processes (Moore, 2014). Moore advocated a shift from outcome-focused engagement, during which the university seeks to act within the community it serves, to engagement as a process, which can help to dismantle boundaries between universities and communities.

USRUs' social and spatial contexts can also create tensions, and social issues can strain internal and external stakeholder relationships. For example, in seeking to ensure campus safety, institutional leaders may restrict community access to campus, and students' demand for off-campus housing can create conflict with local residents (Davis & Walker, 2019; Harris & Holley, 2016). Tensions also arise when institutions want to expand their boundaries. Urban anchor institutions often intend land development to serve both community needs and university goals (Harris & Holley, 2016), but such initiatives do not always consider community members' perspectives and can perpetuate skepticism and animosity toward university projects (Cantor et al., 2013).

Within the USRU, other tensions exist, such as between universities' commitments to engagement and the ways in which that engagement is perceived as valued, resourced, and rewarded (Borkoski & Prosser, 2020). At times, engagement, such as through faculty-led community-based research, is promoted in word and mission but is not recognized through reward systems like tenure and promotion (Franz et al., 2012; Moore, 2014; O'Meara, 2011; O'Meara & Saltmarsh, 2016; Purcell et al., 2020; Zerquera & Doran, 2017). Tensions also exist between traditional research and community-engaged scholarship, but as O'Meara and Saltmarsh (2016) explained, both types of research have a place in the academy, and networks and alliances between and across groups of

researchers can help to create opportunities for mutual support and benefit. Siloing within institutions can also complicate or obscure the community emphasis of the USRU mission; not all stakeholders, offices, or colleges may approach engagement the same way or have a comprehensive understanding of how the university is working to fulfill its mission (Franz et al., 2012). Institutionalization through the formal development and adoption of campuswide language, practices, and priorities of the community-engagement mission at USRUs can help to surface internal and external tensions and suggest strategic pathways for mission fulfillment that takes into account diverse stakeholder interests (Franz et al., 2012; Holland, 1997; Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021; Norris & Weiss, 2019).

The Role of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a valuable tool for advancing a USRU's approach to fulfilling its place-based mission (Dostilio & Welch, 2019). Institutionalized commitment to a community-engaged mission begins with strategic planning (Friedman et al., 2014), a mechanism that helps urban institutions reflect on the benefits and risks they pose to their communities (Davis & Walker, 2019) and articulate engagement priorities (Franz et al., 2012; Norris & Weiss, 2019). Strategic planning engages diverse stakeholders (Dostilio & Welch, 2019; Hoy & Johnson, 2013) and empowers them to drive change (Addie, 2019). By embracing contradictions within stakeholder viewpoints, strategic planning can foster fruitful engagement (Bowers, 2017) and ensure that engagement is "embedded" as an institutional priority (Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021, p. 12). For the institution in this study, an added benefit from a survey designed to identify core values was the ability to recognize and understand tensions inherent in these values, particularly around the concept of community engagement. Without this survey, the USRU might not have understood or taken into account those tensions when outlining strategic priorities.

Theoretical Frameworks: Stakeholder Theory and Paradox Theory

The theoretical frameworks of stakeholder theory and paradox theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984/2010; Smith & Lewis, 2011) inform our analysis of how USRU stakeholders perceive tensions and opportunities related to the fulfillment of

the *community-minded* value. The growing body of literature applying these frameworks to higher education contexts (Bowers, 2017; Jongbloed et al., 2008; Langrafe et al., 2020; Stachowiak et al., 2013; Strier, 2014) suggests that these frameworks provide insight into stakeholder values and strategic priorities at USRUs. The joint application of these frameworks, an emerging theoretical approach, uses stakeholder theory to understand what must be done to manage conflicting interests and paradox theory to identify innovative approaches to conflict management and resolution (Pinto, 2019).

Stakeholder theory posits that all stakeholders, both internal and external, have legitimate interests to which organizational leaders must attend (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Recent developments in stakeholder theory have focused on creating value through enhanced stakeholder relationships and broader recognition of what can have value (Freeman et al., 2020; Langrafe et al., 2020). According to Freeman et al., stakeholder theory promotes a “value network” (p. 217) in which all stakeholders contribute to and benefit from complex organizational systems; as systems create new values, stakeholder theory recognizes that stakeholders are human, not merely economic, and reinforces the significance of values beyond profit (Freeman et al., 2020; Langrafe et al., 2020). Stakeholders are not homogeneous but hold diverse viewpoints and therefore must be engaged through different approaches (Harris & Holley, 2016). As Jongbloed et al. (2008) noted in their application of stakeholder theory to understanding complex relationships between universities and their communities, organizational commitment to stakeholders should be dialogic, a tool through which universities can understand stakeholder values and seek ways to continually improve. By involving stakeholders in identifying values and setting priorities, institutions may better attend to stakeholders’ “demands and values” and determine whether stakeholder and institutional goals align (Langrafe et al., 2020). Murrah-Hanson and Sandmann (2021) also identified comprehensive stakeholder involvement as critical to the “paradigm shift” (p. 11) of institutionalized community engagement. Thus, stakeholder theory helps us equitably consider the diverse interests of USRU stakeholders as expressed through a strategic planning process and helps us to consider the significance of those perspectives in building a sustainable campuswide

commitment to community engagement.

Paradox theory acknowledges and embraces the contradictions and tensions that inevitably arise in an organization, viewing seemingly incompatible differences as opportunities for creative, flexible solutions and organizational learning (Pinto, 2019; Smith & Lewis, 2011). Smith and Lewis developed a framework including four types of paradoxes found within organizations:

- *learning paradoxes*, which capture growth and innovation efforts that build upon and dismantle the past;
- *belonging paradoxes*, which capture tensions related to identity, such as between autonomous individuals and the groups of which they are members;
- *organizing paradoxes*, which capture conflicting structures, strategies, and approaches employed to attain certain goals; and
- *performing paradoxes*, which capture the diverse and often conflicting demands and goals of internal and external stakeholder groups.

Many of these paradoxes may be present at USRUs. For example, *learning* paradoxes may arise when innovative facilities or practices threaten historical or cultural practices and traditions within or beyond the university’s boundaries. *Belonging* paradoxes may arise when an individual faculty member’s community engagement goals or values, such as a commitment to community-engaged scholarship, do not align with those of the department or institution. *Organizing* paradoxes may arise within community partnerships—as the USRU seeks collaboration and reciprocity, it may simultaneously seek to maintain control over how the partnership functions. *Performing* paradoxes may occur when different stakeholders emphasize different measures of success, such as the conflict between recruiting and enrolling local students as opposed to an increasingly global student body. Conflicts can also occur between these types of paradoxes; for example, faculty who have a personal commitment to community engagement but feel compelled to bring in high-profile grant funding in service of a USRU’s research mission may illustrate a *performing::belonging* paradox (Smith & Lewis, 2011).

In an examination of paradoxes found

within university–community partnerships, Strier (2014) advocated a culturally embedded understanding of paradox as a way to foster dialogue about tensions within partnerships. Paradox theory can also help to identify tensions and suggest ways in which divergent perspectives can inform solutions (Bowers, 2017; Strier, 2014). Thus, paradox theory helps us to understand the tensions and contradictions embedded within strategic interests of USRU stakeholders and can suggest ways in which the institution can leverage these contradictions to innovatively attend to stakeholder values. An important first step in achieving this understanding is collecting the stakeholder perspectives that determine how stakeholders define and place “community” among institutional values and priorities.

Methodology

This study analyzed a subset of responses to a survey on core values that was disseminated to a USRU’s faculty, administrators, staff, students, alumni, donors, and family members of students in January 2021. The survey was distributed by email to over 244,000 individuals; 8,753 responses were received. As the data were obtained through a survey conducted as part of the institution’s strategic planning process, IRB approval was not needed for the initial data collection. The Office of the Provost granted permission to conduct this secondary analysis of institutional data.

Site Description

North Urban University (NUU; a pseudonym) is a state-related comprehensive research university ranked as a “highest research activity” university in the Carnegie Classification. NUU’s main campus is in a major metropolitan area in the mid-Atlantic United States and serves as a major economic contributor to its anchor city and state. NUU has three additional campuses within the anchor city, two elsewhere in the state, and two international campuses. The majority of NUU’s schools and colleges are located on the main campus. Since its founding in the late 19th century, NUU has had an explicit commitment to providing educational opportunities to those whose access may be limited. The university also has a long-standing reputation as the city’s public university. However, in recent years, disagreement has arisen over proposed campus development projects and the institution’s

impact on the surrounding community, leading to tensions and distrust that have complicated the community–university relationship. As the institution has enrolled an increasingly national and global student body, NUU has experienced pressure to recruit and admit more students from neighborhoods around campus. Although NUU participates in some successful community–university partnerships, community members’ positive perceptions of institutional boundary spanners sometimes contrast with critical perceptions of the whole institution (Winfield et al., 2022).

Data Collection and Sample

Respondents were asked to select what they perceived to be NUU’s top five core values via a survey. The survey included a randomized list of 50 values as well as write-in space for up to five additional values. Respondents were then asked to rate (0–10) the extent to which NUU embodied each selected value. For the selected values, respondents were invited to answer the open-ended question “Looking to the future, what could [NUU] do to continue to fulfill or to better align with these values?”

Community-minded was selected 2,214 times (25.3% of submissions), the second-most-selected value. Of responses that selected *community-minded*, 2,091 provided a rating and 827 provided a comment. Respondents could also identify membership in one or more stakeholder groups (*administration/staff*, *alumni*, *donor*, *faculty*, *parent/family member*, and *student*) and designate a primary stakeholder affiliation; 1,820 responses provided a primary affiliation, and 582 responses identified two or more affiliations. For this study, 123 responses that selected the *community-minded* value but provided neither a rating nor a comment were excluded, resulting in an analytic sample of 2,091.

Data Analysis

This mixed-methods analysis employed a convergent design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), as both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously during the institutional survey administration. During the strategic planning analyses, the authors coded the open-ended responses to identify themes as to how the institution could fulfill the value. The research question for this study emerged through that process. To explore this research question,

the researchers then reviewed the data set and developed a new set of codes to reflect stakeholder perspectives on community. Codes were developed through a conventional content analysis of the open-ended responses, which allowed categories to emerge inductively throughout the coding process (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researchers reviewed the data, discussed emergent themes, and developed and reviewed parent and child codes to address the research question. During the initial round of coding, it became clear that findings could be interpreted through the theoretical frameworks of stakeholder and paradox theory, which informed the synthesis of codes into themes (Creswell & Creswell Báez, 2021). All responses were coded using the qualitative analysis tools in Dedoose; although the first author coded the majority of responses, both authors shared access to the Dedoose project, and the researchers conferred on a weekly basis throughout the coding process to confirm findings as they emerged.

To understand the composition of stakeholder groups, the researchers identified what percentage of overall respondents from each primary affiliation group selected *community-minded* as a top five value and reviewed how many stakeholders identified multiple affiliations. To examine the different average ratings of the *community-minded* value across stakeholder groups, an ANOVA

was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant between-group differences.

Findings

Stakeholder Participation

All six stakeholder groups included in the values survey instrument—*administration/staff*, *alumni*, *donor*, *faculty*, *parent/family member*, and *student*—were represented as primary affiliations for respondents who selected the *community-minded* value. All but *student* were selected as additional affiliations (Table 1), which may reflect a tacit understanding that students are primary institutional stakeholders. The frequent selection of *donor* and *parent/family member* as additional affiliations may suggest that these stakeholder groups are perceived to have less influence on institutional strategic direction and values (Jongbloed et al., 2008).

Value Ratings

The overall and stakeholder group ratings of how well NUU embodied the *community-minded* value suggested a tension between the perceived importance of the value and NUU's success in committing to that value. On average, *community-minded* was rated 7.72, the second lowest rating of the top 10 most selected values. Among stakeholder

Table 1. Total Selections and Average Rating of Community-Minded Value by Stakeholder Group

Stakeholder group	Primary affiliation	Additional affiliation	Average rating
Faculty	275	59	7.28
Administration/staff	340	129	7.72
Student	815	0	7.73
Alumni	242	243	7.83
Parent/family member	138	227	8.27
Donor	10	222	8.5
No affiliation provided	271		7.76
Total	2,091	880	7.72

Note. Total average does not equal calculated mean of stakeholder groups because groups' means are unweighted. Average rating calculated according to primary affiliation. More than one affiliation was provided in 582 responses; respondents could select up to six affiliations.

groups, *community-minded* mean scores ranged from 7.28 to 8.5 (Table 1). One-way ANOVA showed a statistically significant difference in ratings between stakeholder groups ($F(6, 126) = 4.98, p < .001$). A Tukey post hoc test showed significant differences between faculty and alumni ($p < .05$), students ($p < .05$), and parents/family members ($p < .001$). Lower faculty ratings may reflect faculty's close commitment to engaged scholarship, which may be at odds with institutional pressure to prioritize higher profile, better funded research (Bowers, 2017; Zerquera & Doran, 2017).

Additionally, the post hoc test showed significant differences between parents/family members and students ($p < 0.1$) and administration/staff ($p < 0.1$). These findings suggest that parents/family members perceived a higher level of fulfillment of the *community-minded* value than administration/staff, faculty, or students. As we will discuss in our analysis of open-ended findings, this result may suggest that stakeholders involved in the daily operations of the institution tended to rank the fulfillment of the *community-minded* value more critically than those more removed from the institution.

Open-Ended Responses

Qualitative analysis provided rich insights on complex stakeholder perspectives. The responses from each stakeholder group suggested that each group interpreted the *community-minded* value in distinct ways. Although overlap occurred among responses from different groups, as did considerable variety within each group's responses, the following summaries help to highlight the diverse perspectives that, according to stakeholder theory, must be considered in institutional decision-making processes (Freeman et al., 2020; Langrafe et al., 2020) in order to institutionalize engagement (Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021) in ways that reflect the heterogeneous interests of stakeholders (Harris & Holley, 2016). We have identified an overarching theme that encapsulates the predominant perspectives of each stakeholder group based on their primary affiliation; the total number of qualitative responses provided for each group is also listed. (One response included a comment but did not provide an affiliation with any stakeholder group and so is not reflected in any n for qualitative responses.)

- Faculty: critical perceptions of in-

stitutional commitment to engagement ($n = 147$)

- Administration and staff: institutionalization and targeted approaches to engagement ($n = 177$)
- Students: broad support and campus as community ($n = 292$)
- Alumni: broad support and broadened community ($n = 138$)
- Parents and family members: support for community development and engagement ($n = 65$)
- Donors: improved community relations ($n = 7$)

Below, we discuss the characteristics of each group's responses, beginning with the group that gave the lowest average rating of the *community-minded* value and progressing to the group that gave the highest average rating. Interestingly, this organization reflects a roughly inverse relationship with stakeholder groups' approximate level of current institutional engagement—faculty and administration/staff provided the lowest scores, whereas parents/family members and donors provided the highest.

Faculty: Critical Perceptions of Institutional Commitment to Engagement

Faculty responses were often distinctly critical of NUU's commitment to community engagement; fewer than 13% of responses from faculty affirmed that NUU was upholding the *community-minded* value, compared to between 23% and 43% in responses from all other stakeholder groups. This finding is consistent with their lower ratings of the *community-minded* value compared to other stakeholders and consistent with other research that has shown that faculty perceive institutions to value research over service-learning (Borkoski & Prosser, 2020), which complicates institutions' fulfillment of their public missions (Papadimitriou, 2020). Faculty described a disconnect between how NUU perceives its community work and how the community perceives that commitment. One faculty member commented that "the faculty and students by and large are MUCH more community-minded than the administration and board of trustees," viewing the institution's business operations as at odds with access, equity, and social justice. Another faculty member suggested that while the university purported to serve the

community, it actually reinforced a “gated community effect” that created a “very deliberate border vacuum” between NUU and its surrounding neighborhoods. Faculty called for broad representation of community members on school and university committees and the Board of Trustees and also advocated more community–university partnerships. Many faculty expressed interest in embedding community engagement into the curricula and missions of all schools and colleges. Some faculty felt that NUU lacked infrastructure, support, incentives, and rewards for faculty–led community engagement work. Faculty suggested ways to strengthen community engagement, such as partnerships with local schools, investment in community programs, and public health services.

Administration and Staff: Institutionalization and Targeted Approaches to Engagement

Administration/staff responses frequently emphasized the importance of considering the needs of the community. Nearly a quarter of responses from administrators and staff members called for including community members in decision-making and keeping the community engaged in NUU’s actions. As one respondent wrote, “[NUU should] engage more deeply with the [local] community. Recruit [local] students, engage residents in projects, build collaborative/ongoing relationships with neighborhood leaders, ensure all new construction is developed with local residents.” Additionally, these stakeholders acknowledged that some community engagement efforts were siloed. They called for NUU to institutionalize the commitment to the *community-minded* value and involve more institutional stakeholders through a number of specific recommendations, including establishing a “center for civic engagement” or similar office, incorporating engagement into the curriculum, and rewarding and resourcing current projects. Administrators and staff also described direct supports to the community, such as educational opportunities through courses and scholarships, partnerships with local K–12 schools, health services, community cleanup initiatives, and support for local businesses.

Students: Broad Support and Campus as Community

Students’ responses were often broad, describing a desire for more outreach opportunities in the community but offering

limited suggestions on how community engagement might best be accomplished. Some of the most specific responses related to students’ behavior in the community; some students expressed concern that loud parties, trash, and gentrified apartment buildings disrupted local residents, and that more could be done to “educate [NUU] students about how to properly respect the surrounding communities.” Although more than half of student responses mentioned the importance of community, approximately a third of those responses focused primarily on NUU as a community, rather than the relationship between NUU and the surrounding neighborhoods. As one student wrote, “I believe the close knit campus and general positive demeanor of professors and staff are the two greatest contributors to this attribute.” This comment suggested that not all students defined the *community-minded* value in ways that reflect community engagement as an institutional priority.

Alumni: Broad Support and Broadened Community

Although alumni responses echoed other stakeholder groups’ calls for continued engagement with community members and suggestions for supports within the local community, recommendations were typically broad or generic. For example, responses suggested that NUU could “engage with and uplift the surrounding community” through volunteer opportunities, unspecified opportunities for students, and more (but again unspecified) partnerships. Similarly, alumni broadly suggested that NUU should “be more mindful” of and “be true to the neighborhood and city” through school and neighborhood partnerships, employment opportunities for community residents, community centers, and community service, but these recommendations were not typically developed. However, alumni expressed more concerns about the proposed stadium than any other stakeholder group. Alumni also recommended a more expansive definition of community in virtual, state, and global contexts.

Parents and Family Members: Support for Community Development and Engagement

Parent/family member responses included more suggestions to develop the community around NUU through building projects (some respondents even expressed support for the proposed stadium), new businesses, and beautification initiatives. Sometimes

these recommendations simultaneously acknowledged the importance of preserving neighborhoods and avoiding gentrification, but other responses implied that development would equally benefit both NUU and its surrounding communities. For example, although one parent acknowledged “an invisible wall” between NUU and community residents, another suggested that NUU should “continue to purchase properties surrounding [NUU] . . . to clean up the community.” Parent/family member responses also expressed a desire for students to more fully engage with and explore the surrounding areas, as a way to both enrich students’ academic experiences and strengthen connections with the community. For example, one response suggested that NUU could “allow class scheduling flexibility to give students time to engage”; another recommended “continued integration of academic programs with the surrounding . . . community.”

Donors: Improved Community Relations

The few donors who selected *community-minded* as a value focused on the connection between NUU and its community, acknowledging the “unbelievable focus by [NUU] to the Community” while calling for continued “work to improve the [urban] area.” Most of these respondents emphasized the need for improved community relations through intentional involvement of community members in decision-making and cultivation of communication channels between NUU and community members.

Paradoxes Within the Community-Minded Value

As the above analysis of each stakeholder group’s responses suggests, different and potentially conflicting understandings of the *community-minded* value exist not only within but also between groups. A thematic analysis of the data set as a whole brought tensions and conflicting views into sharper relief. However, these tensions—as understood through paradox theory—need not be reconciled; rather, they can explicitly or implicitly suggest opportunities for innovative solutions that will address stakeholders’ values and advance community priorities (Bowers, 2017; Smith & Lewis, 2011; Strier, 2014). Three primary themes emerged in our analysis of paradoxes: *definition paradoxes*, *community relations paradoxes*, and *role/impact paradoxes*.

Definition Paradoxes

Stakeholders defined or described *community* as local, urban, regional/global, or internal and called for NUU to better fulfill the *community-minded* value by serving one or more of these communities. Respondents most often connected the fulfillment of the value to the local community, frequently acknowledging the importance of the surrounding neighborhoods to NUU. As one faculty member wrote, “engaging with the [local] community is very important for the institution, for our students, and for the community.”

Some responses acknowledged existing barriers or potential connections between the various communities that stakeholders defined. For example, a student called for NUU to “continue to build a bridge between students and the surrounding community,” suggesting a persistent and important link between the university and the neighborhood it anchors. Similarly, a parent/family member suggested that NUU should “strengthen ties with the community, both inside the [NUU] community as well as the surrounding community.” Although this example acknowledged that multiple definitions of *community* are salient to NUU, the respondent’s distinction between an internal and external community may reflect real or perceived divisions between communities that may perpetuate tensions.

Some responses more explicitly acknowledged a perceived shift in how NUU has prioritized communities and how the *community-minded* value is not consistently upheld, depending on how “community” is defined. An alumni respondent wrote, “As its reputation has improved, [NUU] is focused less on the immediate community surrounding the university. It does provide a ‘community atmosphere’ within many of its colleges.” Other respondents felt that a more expansive definition of community may align with NUU’s strategic direction. For example, a member of the administration/staff observed, “[NUU’s] sense of community is located to [its city] for the most part. [NUU] may want to consider branching across the state and country from programs, to recruitment to branch campuses.” Such perspectives may reflect the globalization of higher education that affects USRUs even as they remain rooted to their cities (Harris & Holley, 2016; Zerquera, 2016).

Often, these conflicting and overlapping

definitions of *community* exposed *belonging paradoxes* related to stakeholder perceptions of how NUU fosters community membership (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Strier, 2014). Because individual stakeholders may identify more strongly as members of particular NUU communities, NUU must strive to articulate links between the communities it encompasses and to understand the value of each community to stakeholders and to institutional strategy. Rather than prioritizing or attempting to eliminate one or more communities, embracing the complexity of definition paradoxes can help to ensure that all stakeholders can locate themselves within NUU and can seek opportunities for creativity and innovation across communities (Bowers, 2017; Pinto, 2019; Smith & Lewis, 2011).

Community Relations Paradoxes

Stakeholders made general and specific calls for NUU to engage with or in the community. Recommendations included both unidirectional and two-directional approaches to engagement (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008), suggesting that respondents did not share consistent or clear definitions of community engagement (Murray-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021). More unidirectional recommendations called for outreach into the community or prioritized institutional actions and perspectives over input from community members. For example, one student suggested that “[NUU] should align with student organizations to help advance community outreach,” and an administrator/staff member said NUU should “continue to keep the people who live in the community in mind when making decisions that will impact their lives.” Although these comments may not intentionally exclude community members’ perspectives, such responses do not necessarily give community members agency or view them as key stakeholders. In contrast, more two-directional responses emphasized partnerships and relationship building. As one parent/family member wrote,

Being situated in [the city] where [NUU] is located requires that the school not only engages with the surrounding community, but truly partners with the surrounding community when making decisions and policies that will impact the neighborhood. The only way to know if there is an impact is to have regular, on-going communication with

elected officials and neighborhood groups.

The range of stakeholder responses about how the institution should fulfill the *community-minded* value suggested important *organizing paradoxes* embedded within how NUU approaches its community relations, highlighting divergent perspectives on how community engagement should be structured and who should lead or control engagement (Smith & Lewis, 2011).

Although paradoxical approaches to community relations emerged across responses, some respondents spoke directly to the tensions between NUU and its surrounding communities. For example, an administrator/staff member observed that “[NUU] has some fantastic community-facing programs that do an excellent job of building strong relationships with the community. That being said—[NUU] still does not have a positive representation with most community members.” This perspective captures a *belonging::organizing* paradox; even as program partnerships can build positive relationships between institutional boundary spanners and community members, negative perceptions of the institution as a whole may persist within anchor communities. Such experiences reflect community members’ positive attitudes toward boundary spanners even when institutions have been viewed as disingenuous (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). A faculty member articulated a similar concern: “I think [community-mindedness] is where [NUU] least achieves its stated values—except perhaps through the hospital and clinics, which do clearly serve the community.”

Through their paradoxical perspective that NUU was both serving and failing the community, both of these responses go on to capture opportunities for innovative, more effective value fulfillment. The faculty member advocated for “a decisive reorientation of the university toward becoming a much stronger engine for supporting the [surrounding] area.” The administrator/staff member wrote, “I envision a University that is on the cutting edge of ‘town-gown’ relationships and actively working alongside [residents of the local neighborhood] to define what positive community-university partnerships look like.”

A tension related to how community members are involved in fulfilling the *community-minded* value was reflected in

responses as well as the survey distribution design. Many respondents across all stakeholder groups acknowledged community members, who were not explicitly included in the strategic planning survey administration, as key stakeholders, suggesting that external stakeholders must be equitably engaged even as engagement is formally institutionalized (Strier, 2014). One faculty respondent suggested a comprehensive approach to including community members in this institutionalization: "Recruit diverse community members into board of trustees. Establish systematic and continuous, as well as ad-hoc, collaborative university-community teams and integrate them fully into strategic planning and project operationalizations. Compensate community participants in these teams." The omission of community members as a key stakeholder group in a survey that invited respondents to reflect on the *community-minded* value may reflect a *performing paradox* (Smith & Lewis, 2011)—although many NUU stakeholders view community engagement as mission-centric, excluding external stakeholder voices prioritizes institutional approaches to community over community-voiced needs. As suggested in the preceding quote, institutionalization and community-embeddedness need not be exclusive; this paradox could foster creative, intentional engagement of community members not only through discrete partnerships, but through university-sponsored town halls, committees, and planning processes.

Role/Impact Paradoxes

Stakeholders shared conflicting views on the role of the university in the community, highlighting the ways in which NUU's urban-serving mission is complicated by campus development projects and land acquisition, student residents' behavior, and NUU's responses to current events and their community impacts. The *community-minded* value was viewed as central to NUU's legacy, but some respondents considered that mission incompatible with the university's behavior in its anchor community in ways that could be addressed only through sweeping changes, as one administrator/staff member expressed:

So much damage has been done in [NUU's] surrounding community over the past 50–60 years that distrust is high among the residents. No matter what we do, it will look patronizing and paternalistic. We

need to engage the community more, and offer centers to assist with employment, tax preparation, a food pantry (for the community), free healthcare options, also perhaps free non-credit classes for the neighborhood. Also, though we can't control the local landlords and developers, we must exert some control over students living in the area, at the very least contracting a private trash removal service to circulate through the immediate area during move-out week. We might also provide a contact point for neighbors to complain about problem student housing before it becomes an issue.

Many of the tensions related to the university's role and impacts can be understood as *learning paradoxes* (Smith & Lewis, 2011)—on the one hand, NUU is committed to changes and innovations perceived as strengthening the institution's standing in and economic support of the community; on the other hand, these changes and innovations are seen as destructive of history and culture.

Gentrification and displacement of local residents was one area of concern. As one administrator/staff member observed, "I understand that we need progress, but if you're going to take over neighborhoods we need to help employ those individuals." A student commented, "[NUU] has a reputation for being a driver of gentrification and displacement, which goes against its commitment to community."

Some concerns about community impacts were tied to more specific development projects. A number of respondents criticized NUU's proposal to build a stadium near its main campus. Although some saw this and other development projects as economically beneficial to and respectful of the local neighborhood, other respondents identified campus expansion initiatives as a violation of community residents' rights and a destructive force within surrounding neighborhoods that was driving up rent and restricting housing availability.

Respondents perceived students—many of whom reside in off-campus neighborhood housing—as a source of tension in the community. One student respondent felt that students needed "to be aware of the fact that they are living within a community, within people's homes." Although

respondents felt that structured student engagement—through service-learning, for example—could be a way to fulfill the *community-minded* value, student residence within the community could negatively impact community engagement. As another student wrote,

[NUU] likes to send students out to help the community at large, but many people living in the zip codes surrounding [NUU] constantly have to deal with college student[s] overriding their neighborhoods. For example, . . . when students have to move out of their apartments[,] couches, trash, and large furniture [are] just left on the curb for the community to deal with.

Paradoxically, student engagement in the community was seen as both critical for and antithetical to the *community-minded* value.

Because this survey was conducted in early 2021, comments on NUU's role and impact in the community sometimes reflected current tensions about issues beyond the university, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Some respondents admired NUU's use of campus facilities to aid pandemic response. Others expressed concern that NUU was putting the community at additional pandemic risk and felt that the community should have been more involved in COVID decision-making. Similarly conflicting viewpoints emerged relating to policing, particularly in the wake of George Floyd's death. Some respondents called for campus to be made safer; others viewed the NUU police as harmful to the community. Such conflicting viewpoints, particularly in times of crisis, suggest the benefit of accepting, rather than seeking to eliminate, paradox as a strategy through which universities can creatively and nimbly respond to stakeholders'—including external stakeholders'—diverse interests (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Harris & Holley, 2016; Smith & Lewis, 2011).

Discussion

This mixed-methods analysis reveals alignments of and distinctions between stakeholder perceptions of how and how well NUU fulfills the *community-minded* value. Through stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman et al., 2020), we can see that although perspectives within groups are not homogeneous, each stake-

holder group rated and characterized the *community-minded* value in distinct ways that may reflect how they engage with NUU and its communities. For example, students and alumni both expressed broad but general support for the anchor community while also signaling that they did not universally think of local neighborhoods as the sole or primary aim of the *community-minded* value. Faculty and administration/staff did primarily focus on the local community; however, faculty expressed concerns that this institution's stated commitment to the community was at odds with its goals for campus expansion as well as its undervaluing of community-engaged research and other faculty initiatives, a perspective consistent with prior research (O'Meara, 2011; O'Meara & Saltmarsh, 2016; Zerquera & Doran, 2017) and reinforced by faculty members' lower rating of the *community-minded* value. Support for faculty incentives was only infrequently mentioned in administration/staff responses, which more often emphasized institutionalization and programmatic approaches to fulfilling the *community-minded* value. This range of responses suggests that in a complex organizational system like a university, stakeholders will interact with that system in ways that shape and reflect their values (Langrafe et al., 2020). As evidenced through this analysis, institutional practices can create obstacles to engagement and tensions among stakeholders (Moore, 2014; Stachowiak et al., 2013). Nevertheless, engaging stakeholders in planning processes is critical to institutionalizing community engagement (Friedman et al., 2014; Murrain-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021) and empowering stakeholders to drive change (Addie, 2019). Additionally, strategic planning that engages diverse stakeholder perspectives can help USRUs better understand how their actions impact their anchor communities (Davis & Walker, 2019).

The tensions and contradictions regarding how NUU should define and approach community engagement that emerged within groups became especially apparent across all stakeholders' responses. Paradox theory suggests that institutions should expect and accept these conflicting ideas (Bowers, 2017; Smith & Lewis, 2011; Strier, 2014). The strategic planning survey that served as the foundation for this analysis offered both explicit and implicit insights into existing paradoxes, which can in turn clarify directions for and expose gaps in institutional

actions related to the *community-minded* value.

For example, paradox theory suggests that, given the room for multiple and potentially conflicting definitions of *community*, NUU may want to explore how these definitions can best support university and community goals. As Murrah-Hanson and Sandmann (2021) noted, language around community engagement has sometimes been appropriated by stakeholders in ways that diffuse its context. Recognizing this potential for ambiguity and engaging stakeholders in the work of defining the *community-minded* value may help to strengthen shared understanding of communities related to NUU and to clearly align them with institutional priorities (Murrah-Hanson & Sandmann, 2021).

Furthermore, the survey responses expose how despite calls for better engagement of community members in institutional decision-making, community members were omitted as a stakeholder group from this strategic planning activity (the values survey). Although this omission was, on the one hand, a limitation of the strategic planning tool, the contradiction exposed here may help NUU to consider innovative and comprehensive ways to equitably include external stakeholders moving forward. This paradoxical finding reveals ways in which NUU may be tacitly practicing unidirectional engagement that can reinforce divisions between the university and community (Cantor et al., 2013; Moore, 2014). Without awareness of this omission, NUU cannot work to equitably value the perspectives of external stakeholders.

Finally, NUU's interest in growth and development—which may be intended to serve both institutional and community needs (Harris & Holley, 2016)—is paradoxical to the cultural and social preservation of its anchor neighborhood. These contradictory perspectives—such as those relating to a proposed capital project—can create highly visible conflicts among stakeholders but may allow NUU to identify creative and well communicated solutions that are endorsed by internal and external stakeholders. For example, NUU could look for ways not only to include community voices in planning efforts, but also to strengthen how it communicates its work in the community.

As demonstrated in this study and understood through stakeholder and paradox

theories, engaging diverse stakeholder perspectives through a strategic planning process can expose contradictions in how a USRU approaches community engagement and support. However, considering all stakeholder perspectives and identifying tensions between them may offer institutions opportunities to foster innovative approaches to equitably addressing community needs and institutional interests. Engaging stakeholder perspectives in a strategic planning process may help USRUs to enhance stakeholder relationships, manage conflicting interests, and leverage divergent perspectives when shaping institutional priorities (Pinto, 2019).

Limitations

Stakeholder categories in the survey were very broad, so they do not give a complete picture of how respondents relate to the institution. For example, we could not distinguish if a faculty member is full-time or contingent or whether they are tenured or tenure-track. Additionally, we have used respondents' self-identified primary stakeholder affiliation as the basis for our analysis to clarify our data interpretation. For stakeholders who identified multiple affiliations, we do not know the ways in which those affiliations intersect. Still, seeing the complex stakeholder identities that individuals bring to their reflection on NUU's complex mission reinforces the importance of remaining receptive to diverse and conflicting stakeholder viewpoints that may collectively paint a more complete picture of perspectives on how NUU fulfills the *community-minded* value.

Critically, the values survey did not include a stakeholder affiliation option for community members—this is a significant limitation, and, as noted in the findings and discussion, reflects a key concern shared by many of the stakeholders who participated in the survey. As these stakeholders suggest, USRUs must intentionally and by design include community members as legitimate stakeholders in institutional planning processes and decisions to avoid exacerbating existing tensions in stakeholder relationships. The strategic planning committee that developed the survey did not include the Board of Trustees in the survey distribution; however, trustees who are also alumni of the university may have received the survey and responded as part of that stakeholder group. As noted in the findings, some respondents felt that the *community-minded* value could be better

upheld through more representative Board membership, and as NUU's administration reports to the Board, understanding this stakeholder group's perspective on the community could further illuminate alignments and tensions related to this institutional value.

The strategic planning survey was designed to capture stakeholder perspectives on institutional values; however, this study reflects a secondary analysis of a subset of this data. Although our research question is aligned with the intent of the original survey, our analysis is somewhat limited by the available data.

Since data analysis was conducted, we have started to gain insight into how NUU's values survey findings have informed decision-making about strategic priorities. The values are now published on NUU's website and publicly disseminated as part of the ongoing strategic planning process; the values report has been shared with decision-makers. Community engagement has been identified as a strategic priority, with ongoing efforts to strengthen community partnerships in local schools and, further, address community and campus safety concerns through a newly formed task force, stakeholder engagement in community outreach, and other efforts. NUU's progress toward priorities is tracked in a publicly available dashboard. Work on all community engagement initiatives is ongoing and outcomes are being defined.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

First, as demonstrated through this mixed-methods analysis, strategic planning processes can provide important insights into the complex values held by stakeholders, but these processes can also influence who gets to express their values. USRUs and other types of institutions that are place based or community oriented should intentionally build opportunities to engage external stakeholders from relevant communities in the strategic planning process. Furthermore, the qualitative responses suggest that higher education institutions, particularly those that function as anchors, should create more visible, long-term opportunities for local external stakeholders to participate in institutional decision-making. In addition to establishing specific positions or roles for community members, institutions should also look for ways to regularly

engage community groups in discussions about the connections and tensions between the institution and the communities in which it is located.

Second, this study suggests the importance of understanding divergent perspectives held within and across stakeholder groups at higher education institutions, particularly as related to *community-minded* values and aspirations. By capturing and analyzing stakeholder affiliations and perspectives through both quantitative and qualitative data, institutions may cultivate a richer understanding of the opportunities and tensions embedded within institutional decisions. Data collection, analysis, and dissemination through publicly available dashboards may help to institutionalize stakeholder and community engagement and may help institutions to leverage exposed paradoxes in order to create innovative solutions.

Third, this study indicates the need for USRUs to clearly define and understand their communities. As the community memberships of place-based institutions become increasingly complex, institutions must think strategically about how these communities can be simultaneously and mutually supported. For example, USRUs might consider how globalization might reflect and potentially support local initiatives.

Future research should explore the ways in which USRUs are intentionally engaging external stakeholders in institutional decision-making and self-evaluation processes, including strategic planning as well as accreditation. Case studies at USRUs that have implemented leadership roles, town halls, and other opportunities for anchor community members to share feedback may deepen our understanding of external stakeholder involvement and influence. Future research should also continue to jointly employ stakeholder and paradox frameworks to understand tensions and opportunities within higher education institutions. Finally, future research could consider stakeholder perspectives on other institutional values, such as *diversity, inclusivity, and affordability*.

Conclusion

When working to institutionalize community engagement, USRUs aim to balance institutional strategic priorities with their responsibilities to the cities and neighborhoods in which they are rooted. Achieving this balance—which may at times seem

contradictory or conflicting—often requires innovative approaches. Strategic planning tools and processes, such as the one described in this study, may offer pathways to understand and respond to the diverse values of institutional stakeholders and expose tensions and paradoxes between various perspectives. Rather than prioritizing one perspective or choosing one side of a conflict, paradox theory suggests that institutions can instead recognize tensions and leverage them as an opportunity for creative institutional goal-setting and action.



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A Qualitative Study of Multilevel Faculty Motivations for Pursuing Engaged Scholarship

Michael Rios and Larissa Saco

Abstract

Drawing on the narrative inquiry method, a qualitative study of 49 engaged scholar interviews at the University of California, Davis was conducted to understand motivations for practicing engaged scholarship. Notwithstanding the significant contributions to understanding faculty motivations in this field, we argue that previous research details the roles of individuals and institutions of higher learning while leaving room for further theorization of other important influences and their intersections. The study findings reveal that faculty report intrinsic, extrinsic, and relational motivations that interact at multiple levels of influence. These multilevel motivational influences have implications for faculty recruitment and retention, implementation of institutional support strategies, and recognition in merit and promotion.

Keywords: faculty motivation, engaged scholarship, interpersonal, community, policy



The movement for engaged scholarship has gained momentum and further institutionalization over time in higher education (Jovanovic et al., 2017), with its benefits for faculty, students, and community members gaining increasing recognition. Scholars credit engaged scholarship with fostering innovation in research and teaching methods (Bowen & Kiser, 2009; McKay & Rozee, 2004; Vuong et al., 2017), promoting principles of democracy and civic engagement on campuses (Jovanovic et al., 2017; Peters et al., 2008), fostering knowledge-building collaborations between campus and community partners (Jovanovic et al., 2017; Nicotera et al., 2011; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009), and disseminating research findings that address public issues faced locally and globally (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Osborne & Wilton, 2017; Vuong et al., 2017). However, despite engaged scholarship's benefits, higher education's current promotion and tenure system lacks encouragement, fair evaluation, and sufficient rewards for the work of engaged faculty scholars (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; O'Meara, 2010; O'Meara & Rice, 2005).

As the topic of faculty recognition in engaged scholarship continues to garner attention, grow, and evolve in higher education, questions remain about how to understand faculty motivations for pursuing engaged work, and how to create institutional supports that offer effective rewards in light of them. For example, faculty are situated within a complex set of power relations that span different levels, which affect their behaviors—from their individual experiences and interpersonal relationships to the communities, institutions, and policy settings in which they practice engaged scholarship. Understanding how motivations play out at these different levels is key for several reasons, including successful faculty recruitment and retention, identification and implementation of institutional support strategies, and the creation of a greater sense of belonging among engaged scholars. Moreover, a focus on motivations provides an alternative to a dependency on institutional norms or the availability of resources when it comes to faculty recognition and rewards with respect to promotion and tenure. In this article, we draw from Blanchard and Furco's (2021) conceptualization of engaged scholarship, which can be ideally defined as

a form of engagement “built on reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships between members within and outside of the academy” (p. 19). This definition encompasses multiple frames of engaged scholarship, including community-engaged, publicly engaged, civically engaged, public scholarship, and critically engaged scholarship. Relatedly, Beaulieu et al. (2018) identified the following principles of engaged scholarship: high quality scholarship, reciprocity, identified community needs, boundary-crossing, and democratization of knowledge. These terms encompass attainment of the highest academic standards, mutual benefit between scholars and their community partners and collaborators, practical responses to community-identified issues, an orientation toward crossing disciplinary and knowledge boundaries, and the accessibility and dissemination of knowledge beyond the academy.

In reviewing the literature of faculty motivations for pursuing engaged scholarship, scholars have described intrinsic and extrinsic reasons constituting faculty motivation. *Intrinsic motivation* refers to individual knowledge, skills, and attitudes commonly attributed to demographics, prior experiences with academia, or individuals’ professional identity (O’Meara, 2008). *Extrinsic motivation* often refers to universities’ institutional mechanisms such as promotion and tenure, as well as other factors such as community partnerships and a scholar’s academic discipline (O’Meara, 2013). Although internal goals and external conditions are factors that motivate faculty and have been discussed as long-standing concepts in the literature, scholars have also argued that a simple intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy provides insufficient theoretical basis for understanding the complexities of faculty motivation to pursue engaged scholarship (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008). In response to this critique, motivation models have become more sophisticated in recent years as scholars have more elaborately described motivational factors in personal, professional, and institutional domains (Wade & Demb, 2009). Scholars have identified a range of individual knowledge, attitudes, and skills affecting engaged scholarship motivation (Blakey et al., 2015; Hou, 2010), and some scholars have recognized more nuance in extrinsic motivation by describing separate institutional and environmental categories as well as providing analyses that consider micro and macro inequalities

present within university settings (O’Meara, 2013, 2016).

Within this promising direction in the literature, questions remain that deserve further attention and clarification. Institutional and nonindividual categories may still be too broad and thus obscure the particularities of interpersonal, community, and societal levels of influence on engaged scholars’ motivation. First, for example, an interpersonal motivation might entail a mentoring relationship, a community-level motivation may refer to an attachment to a specific neighborhood or place, and a societal motivation could indicate a focus on human rights or a state policy proposal. All of these motivations can be considered nonindividual motivations, but their specificity here at different levels of influence can provide more clarity about how motivations operate, and can also guide effective interventions at each level to support those motivations. Second, despite a general recognition of overlap among individual and nonindividual motivations, interactions among motivations are not well understood (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; O’Meara, 2013). Lastly, although increasing numbers of motivational and engagement models have appeared in the literature (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; Darby & Newman, 2014; O’Meara, 2008, 2013; Ward, 2010), the field lacks a clear or systematic way to compare and contrast elements in these models for empirical or practical purposes. An exception is O’Meara (2016), who identified both macro and micro organizational practices.

This article provides a response to the following research question: Why are faculty motivated to practice engaged scholarship? The findings reveal the existence of various intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that operate at multiple levels. Thus, we have used a multilevel frame to review the literature on motivational factors of engaged scholars with a focus on individuals, relationships, organizations, communities, and public policy. Following the literature review, we present a summary of the methods and findings from a study of 49 interviews across 10 colleges and schools at the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). The majority of the 49 interviewees possessed tenure or tenure-track appointments, and the majority of the 32 interviewees who responded to a demographic follow-up survey identified as a woman, a person of color, and/or a first-generation college student. The results

of the study are then presented using the aforementioned levels. The article concludes with a call for more relational approaches to understanding faculty motivations within institutions of higher education.

Literature Review

The literature in this field recognizes faculty motivation to practice engaged scholarship at various levels, with particular elaboration of various individual and organizational mechanisms. For example, an array of motivational variables at the individual level are documented in the literature, including personal and professional experiences, identities, and epistemological approaches. The personal and professional identities of engaged scholars are found to be important, shaped by demographic, career, institutional, political, and civic influences (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Nicotera et al., 2011; O'Meara, 2008; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Ward, 2010). Scholars are motivated by their inclusive and social approaches to epistemology and knowledge production, wherein scholars challenge traditional forms of knowledge production and embrace engaged principles and practices in their scholarship (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; O'Meara, 2008; Wade & Demb, 2009; Ward, 2010). Individuals' initial participation in engaged scholarship can be motivating in and of itself for future participation, according to more cyclical motivation models (Darby & Newman, 2014; O'Meara, 2013; Wade & Demb, 2009).

Organizational characteristics are well-documented in the engaged scholarship motivation literature as well. Documented influences include institutional type and mission (Nicotera et al., 2011; O'Meara, 2008, 2013; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Wade & Demb, 2009), institutional expectations for the value of engaged scholarship (Lewing & York, 2017; Nicotera et al., 2011; O'Meara, 2013), as well as institutional policies and structures (Wade & Demb, 2009). Recognition and reward for community-driven research, teaching, and engagement in promotion and tenure protocols, faculty work expectations, and faculty appointments are widely called for by scholars (Darby & Newman, 2014; Forbes et al., 2008; Franz et al., 2012; Nicotera et al., 2011; O'Meara, 2008, 2010, 2013). Supportive institutional practices include resources for professional growth (Forbes et al., 2008; Franz et al., 2012; O'Meara, 2010, 2013), a clear defini-

tion of engaged scholarship (Franz et al., 2012), leadership support (Hou, 2010; Wade & Demb, 2009), financial support (Forbes et al., 2008; Nicotera et al., 2011; O'Meara, 2010; Wade & Demb, 2009), and a center for student engagement and community partnerships (Franz et al., 2012; O'Meara, 2010; Welch & Saltmarsh, 2013). Conducive work conditions are important as well, including workload (O'Meara, 2010), class schedule, academic calendar (Franz et al., 2012), autonomy, and organizational fit (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015). Campuses, departments, and disciplines are all important contexts for influencing motivation (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; O'Meara, 2013; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Wade & Demb, 2009).

Scholars also argue that community partners' and students' perceptions about the engagement arrangement are motivating factors, including whether they experience partnership and collaboration, satisfaction, and trust (Bowen & Kiser, 2009; Darby & Newman, 2014; DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Franz et al., 2012; O'Meara, 2008, 2013; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). The literature has a significant focus on service-learning to improve learning outcomes and meet community needs, and so relationships and interactions in classroom and community settings between faculty and students, and between students and community partners, are also an interpersonal motivation (Bowen & Kiser, 2009; DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Hou, 2010; O'Meara, 2008; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). Interactions with family members and colleagues, both internal and external to scholars' home institutions, were documented to positively influence faculty motivations toward engaged scholarship (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Hou, 2010; Jovanovic et al., 2017; O'Meara, 2008, 2013).

In the public engagement motivation literature, a variety of communities and community settings are discussed. O'Meara (2008) and DeFelippo and Giles (2015) found that engaged scholars are motivated by specific issues, people, and places, aiming to address problems that affect geographic locations and communities of people that matter to them. For example, such scholars may collaborate with particular community organizers, neighborhoods, or nongovernmental organizations, or may work with local government to impact policy for community benefit. Community and university relations are also part of engaged scholars' motivations, where scholars desire to build

partnerships (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007), create community engagement opportunities (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Wade & Demb, 2009), push back against traditional exclusionary practices of universities (Osborne & Wilton, 2017), and colearn and coproduce knowledge with communities (Franz et al., 2012; Ward, 2010).

Scholars also discuss communities in the context of desired impacts from engagement, including beneficial or useful support to address public or community needs (Abes et al., 2002; Darby & Newman, 2014; Franz et al., 2012; Hou, 2010; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Osborne & Wilton, 2017; Ward, 2010). Colbeck and Weaver (2008) found that, out of all their identified goal types, integrative social relationships, which “serve to maintain or promote other people or social groups” (Ford, 1992, as cited in Colbeck & Weaver, 2008, p. 11), were the most common among their study interviewees. Examples of this goal type include academically supporting students, serving society, and producing tangible benefits for communities, departments, and universities (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008, p. 16). Students make up a group of people that matter to faculty, with improved learning and development resulting from engaged scholarship as desired student outcomes (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Blakey et al., 2015; Darby & Newman, 2014; DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Franz et al., 2012; O'Meara, 2008, 2010). Professional communities that offer faculty support and socialization around engaged scholarship have also been documented (Baez, 2000; Franz et al., 2012; O'Meara, 2010, 2013; Wade & Demb, 2009). Several national organizations and networks, such as American Democracy Project, Campus Compact, and Imagining America, have been vital in this area (Orphan & O'Meara, 2016). However, leadership and support from disciplinary associations is lacking, with limited guidance coming from a few notable examples such as the Modern Language Association and the American Anthropological Association (Staub & Maharramli, 2001).

Although overall less documented in the literature, public policy work has been recognized as a mode through which individuals practice engaged scholarship, as well as an example of how levels intersect vis-à-vis scholar motivations. Public policy is an area that needs further conceptual clarity, including distinguishing whether public

policy is an explicit focus, an outcome of community engagement, or a by-product of research. In this context, more study is needed regarding means and ends of engaged scholarship vis-à-vis public policy, and when this type of work can be categorized as engaged scholarship—that is, when it is focused on reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships. It is not surprising that a policy focus often intersects, intertwines, and is associated with political engagement and social issues. For example, O'Meara and Niehaus (2009) found that some service-learning faculty are committed to a specific social cause, issue, need, or situation with impact ranging from local to global, where policy-related work may involve connecting people to political engagement opportunities, including policy advisement. In addition to people and places, engaged scholars are also committed to specific social issues. A range of social issues have been reported, including but not limited to environment, public health care, public education, urban planning, poverty, homelessness, sustainability, child advocacy, prisoner education, women's health, rural community vitality, and economic and social justice (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; O'Meara, 2008; Peters et al., 2008). Commitments to social issues may be supported by a university mission and public funding source (Osborne & Wilton, 2017) and knowledge gained from an academic discipline (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015). Some researchers encourage engaged scholars to be conscious and reflective about their commitments to social issues and obligations in general, including biases, interests, roles, politics, identities, and stances (O'Meara, 2008; Osborne & Wilton, 2017; Peters et al., 2008). Studies report faculty desiring to address social problems by becoming experts to influence public policy issues, creating more socially just and democratic university classrooms and spaces, and making academic disciplines relevant in democratic transformations of higher education and community life (DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; O'Meara, 2008).

Although psychological, organizational, and cultural fields have furthered scholarly and practical understandings of faculty pursuing engaged scholarship, scholars have argued that models from these areas overestimate the roles of individuals and higher education organizations and underestimate other profound influences on engaged scholarship (O'Meara et al., 2011). In discussing the perspective of psychology and motivation,

O'Meara et al. (2011) suggest that "origins of faculty engagement" can also be shaped by "the social, economic, or cultural context" (p. 89). They argue these contexts could better explain "origins" such as "generational influences, involvement in identity politics, or power struggles for social justice" (p. 89). The present study addresses this tension in the literature by asking the research question, "Why are faculty motivated to practice engaged scholarship?" To address this question, we have paid analytic attention and description to various levels of influence on engaged scholars' motivations, including interpersonal relationships, community, and public policy.

Methods

Study Context, Sampling, and Recruitment

The present study was conducted at UC Davis, a public land-grant research university in the western United States. The aim of the study was to understand faculty motivations to practice engaged scholarship in order to inform faculty program and development opportunities as well as mechanisms that would increase recognition for this field in merit and promotion, given the focus on engagement at this research-intensive institution. Engaged scholarship—as an aspirational ideal and a set of emerging practices—remains peripheral to the actual work of most universities. The research literature explains this lack of priority by citing two powerful institutional barriers that affect both public land-grant and research-oriented universities in particular. The first is the growing privatization of public universities, with education being viewed increasingly as a private benefit rather than a public good (Boyer, 1990; Rice, 2016). As government funding decreases, the logic of the marketplace takes over, and it becomes difficult to justify research that does not promise short-term economic or commercial value (Harkavy & Hartley, 2012; Newfield, 2008). The second barrier consists of internal university practices (Gelmon et al., 2013; Jaeger et al., 2012; Stanton, 2012), particularly merit and promotion processes that skew faculty incentives away from engaged scholarship (Ellison & Eatman, 2008). These two factors are mutually reinforcing. The recent trend toward quantifying faculty research products and outlets via measures such as H scores and impact factors represents the transfer to the academy of the bottom-line metric mentality prevalent in

the private sector (Davis, 2009).

We therefore offer a threefold rationale for focusing on scholars at a public land-grant research university in California: (1) The literature on faculty motivations has a growing but small representation of institutional case studies conducted explicitly in the western United States (McKay & Rozee, 2004; Nicotera et al., 2011; Russell-Stamp, 2015), (2) none of the analyzed western U.S. institutions were explicitly described as public land-grant research universities, and (3) given the empirical and practical intentions of conducting this research, the study team sought to identify, first, motivations and related opportunities and constraints at UC Davis specifically and, second, those that may be transferable to other institutions of higher learning.

The choice of a single case study approach also has a threefold rationale: (1) Case studies are suited to addressing "why" and "how" research questions like the one pursued in this study, (2) they are used to understand and describe in-depth complex social phenomena, and (3) they attend to social phenomena rooted in lived experiences and events structured by multiple levels of influence (Yin, 2009). As stated in Robert K. Yin's (2009) book on case study research design and methods:

As a research method, the case study is used in many situations, to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena . . . the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events—such as individual life cycles, small group behavior, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries. (p. 4)

The study was reviewed, approved, and assigned exempt status from the institution's IRB, but all study procedures were implemented in alignment with IRB human subjects research principles and practices, including informed consent and confidentiality. A purposive sampling strategy was adopted that aimed for representativeness across engaged scholars' disciplines, faculty ranks, colleges, and schools. Study

team members created a list of initial interviewee recommendations based on their own knowledge of engaged scholars at the university, and they also emailed deans from each college and professional school requesting the names of five to 10 faculty members committed to engaged research and/or teaching. The study team emailed 67 recommended individuals to recruit for the study, and 54 of them participated in a one-hour interview, yielding an approximately 81% response rate. Of the 54 interviewees, 49 individuals were considered to hold an academic position; therefore, five interviewees holding a nonacademic position were removed from the sample for analysis.

The 49 interviewees are affiliated with 10 academic colleges and professional schools across the university. The schools and colleges with the most interviewees include the College of Letters and Science, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and the School of Medicine. Approximately 49% of the sample are full professors, and over half of the interviewees have been with the university for over 10 years. At UC Davis, tenure is granted at the associate professor level for all colleges and schools. Additional information on institutional characteristics is presented in Table 1.

After all the interviews were conducted and analyzed, the authors sought to contextual-

Table 1. Institutional Characteristics of Interviewees

Characteristic	<i>n</i>
College or School	
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences	7
College of Biological Sciences	3
College of Engineering	5
College of Letters and Science	10
School of Education	4
School of Law	5
School of Management	2
School of Medicine	5
School of Nursing	4
School of Veterinary Medicine	4
Title	
Professor	24
Associate professor	8
Assistant professor	10
Assistant adjunct professor	2
Lecturer SOE (Security of employment)	1
Other ^a	4
Years at Institution	
Less than 5	9
5–10	11
More than 10	29
Total	49

^a Interviewees in the “other” category held academic administrator and staff positions but not professorial or lecture positions. Affiliations in this category include directors and codirectors of institutionally affiliated centers, professional researchers and research administrators, and clinical staff in social work.

ize the interview findings with respondents' self-reported demographic characteristics. Based on manuscript reviewer comments, the authors created and distributed an electronic follow-up survey to the 49 respondents in the study's analysis sample in August 2022. This Qualtrics survey included the following three demographic questions: (1) "How do you describe your racial and/or ethnic identity?", (2) "How do you describe your gender identity?", and (3) "Are you the first in your family to receive a four-year college degree?" The first two survey questions allowed for multiple answers and included a text entry option, and the third survey question allowed for a single answer. The survey was distributed via email to respondents, followed by one email reminder. A total of 32 respondents from the analytic sample completed the survey, yielding a 65.31% response rate and meeting the general norm of 20 to 30 completed responses in nonethnographic, interview-based qualitative work (Warren, 2001). Demographic data responses were collected anonymously to promote trust, rapport, and commitment to the study (Carr et al., 2018).

Most survey respondents (75%) described themselves as a woman, a person of color, and/or a first-generation college student. Women made up a majority of the engaged scholar survey sample (59.4%). Underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities made up 15.6% of demographic survey respondents, compared to 10.2% of senate

faculty at UC Davis, and people of color represented 37.5% of survey respondents, compared to 26.1% of senate faculty at UC Davis (see Table 2). These figures are consistent with scholarship finding that women and faculty of color are more likely to conduct engaged scholarship compared with men and White faculty (Abes et al., 2002; Antonio et al., 2000; Astin et al., 2006; Baez, 2000; O'Meara, 2002). The demographic survey also reported one respondent as nonbinary (3.1%) and a little under a third of the sample (28.1%) as the first in their family to receive a four-year college degree.

Qualitative Data Collection and Development of the Interview Guide

Between November 2017 and February 2018, the interviews were conducted with individuals who practice engaged scholarship, the majority of whom held tenure-track appointments (see Table 1). Initial interviews were conducted face-to-face by the principal investigator and a trained graduate student researcher, followed by the remainder of interviews conducted by the graduate student researcher. Interview questions focused on individuals' experience navigating and practicing engaged scholarship, including the request for individuals to share a story of a project or personal experience. Interviews often became a reflection on the interviewee's research and teaching, and the joys and challenges of working in an academic institution. The specific ques-

Table 2. Race and Ethnicity Comparisons Between UC Davis Faculty and Survey Respondents

Category	UC Davis faculty ^a	Survey respondents
Underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities ^b	10.2%	15.6%
People of color ^c	26.1%	37.5%
Total (N)	1,400	32

^a UC Davis faculty data were obtained from UC Davis Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (2020), which reports data collected in October 2016 on Academic Senate faculty that hold tenure/tenure track titles of assistant, associate, or full professor.

^b UC Davis defines underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities as "African Americans, American Indian/Alaska Native, Chicana/Latinx (including Puerto Rican), and Pacific Islander (including Native Hawaiian)" and excludes the categories "Other White/Unknown/Decline to State and White" (UC Davis Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, 2020, Notes, para. 1).

^c UC Davis defines people of color as "all underrepresented minorities and Asian categories (Chinese-American/Chinese; East Indian/Pakistani; Filipino/Filipino-American; Japanese American/Japanese; Korean-American/Korean; Other Asian; SE Asian[,] not Vietnamese; and Vietnamese)" and excludes the categories "Other White/Unknown/Decline to State and White" (UC Davis Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, 2020, Notes, para. 1).

tions from the interview guide that relate to motivations, the focus of the present study, are as follows: (1) “Did you have any key mentors or people who deeply influenced who you are, what you believe in and what you’re committed to in your work and life? Tell me about them.” (2) “What led you to do publicly-engaged scholarship? Had you been doing publicly-engaged scholarship before you came here [UC Davis]? What attracted you to do this type of scholarship?” (3) “What would you say most motivates you to do publicly engaged scholarship? What are you most excited or passionate about? What are the goals you most want to accomplish in this aspect of your work? Not so much the goals that are in your job description, but the goals you hold personally?” (4) “Did you have any life-changing experiences that put you on the path that led you to be doing what you’re doing today? Tell me about them.”

Interviewing faculty exemplars is a methodological approach that has helped shape the literature on engaged scholarship motivation (O’Meara, 2008; Peters et al., 2008). The present study builds on this tradition by centering engaged scholars’ practice stories, wherein faculty describe an instance of their scholarship in depth to illuminate the practical contours of their work (Forester, 1993). The theoretical approach that informed the design of the study’s interview guide was the narrative inquiry method (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), which lends itself to practice stories by illuminating the storyteller’s meaning-making from actual lived experiences. These stories inform critical assessments of both knowledge production and practice in interdisciplinary fields, which maps well to engaged scholarship as both a concept and a form of critical praxis that can transcend disciplinary boundaries.

The narrative inquiry method is not a fixed protocol and can vary in approach by study (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2007), but the element threading approaches together is attention to a study’s particular field and interviewees’ personal, social, and historical contexts (Clandinin, 2006). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) described a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space that involves “the personal and social (the interaction); the past, present, and future (continuity); and the place (situation)” (Creswell, 2007, p. 56). These dimensions informed the interview questions’ focus on personal trajectories

and relationships with people, places, and events that may have influenced motivations for their engaged scholarship projects and aspirations.

Qualitative Data Coding and Analysis

The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and then imported into MAXQDA. Similar to prior qualitative scholarship on engaged faculty perspectives (Darby & Newman, 2014), the coding and analysis plan drew from Hennie Boeije’s (2010) widely cited coding procedure. After the data collection of interviews was complete, the graduate student researcher who was present in all of them began with an initial read-through of the transcripts and proceeded with open coding the data in MAXQDA. Regular check-ins occurred among the research team about the development of concepts and categories, drawing from the team’s collective experience conducting and reading literature on engaged scholarship.

After reaching saturation of the initial codes, the graduate student researcher and PI progressed to axial coding and continued regular check-ins. This process led to the definition and delineation of the following axial codes: Alternative ways of producing and disseminating knowledge, engaged scholarship’s scales of impact, a sense of obligation to people and places, and a personal sense of reward and fulfillment. The third phase, selective coding, then commenced between a second graduate student researcher and the PI (the authors) for processing the theoretical models and evidence from an extensive literature review on faculty motivations for pursuing engaged scholarship. After observing the literature’s more detailed elaborations of psychological and organizational factors in contrast to the data’s equal complexity of community, policy, and interpersonal factors, the authors decided to apply a social ecological lens to the data. The interview excerpts were well fitted to social ecology’s individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy levels of analysis (McLeroy et al., 1988; Sallis et al., 2008), demonstrating the empirical efficacy of this analytic lens and addressing a meaningful tension in the conclusions found within the faculty motivations literature.

Trustworthiness of Findings

The rigor of the present study is evidenced by the ways in which our methods align with

Andrew Shenton's (2004) "provisions" of trustworthiness, which are based on the methodological contributions of Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition to the detailed transparency in our research protocols provided above, and the limitations noted later in the article, below we explain the provisions of trustworthiness that we applied for this study.

We adopted appropriate, well-recognized qualitative research methods consistent with extant interview studies about engaged faculty motivations (Darby & Newman, 2014; O'Meara, 2008; Peters et al., 2008). Research team members developed an early familiarity with the culture of the participating organization through years-long occupational and educational affiliations with the university. The study designers employed the triangulation of different respondent types (representing various schools and colleges at the study institution), job titles, years at the institution, racial and/or ethnic identities, gender identities, and generational college statuses (see Tables 1 and 2). Triangulation was also supported by conducting follow-up surveys to quantitatively contextualize select social identities represented in the sample, while relying on interviews to qualitatively understand how and when social identities and experiences may shape faculty public scholar motivations.

Research team members adopted both written and verbal strategies to help encourage honesty during interviews, including scheduling in-person interviews, sharing their positionalities as engaged scholars, expressing openness about using the data to improve support of engaged scholars, and reassuring respondents of their rights to confidentiality, asking questions, raising concerns, and skipping questions or removing themselves from the study without consequence. As reflected in the interview questions, iterative questioning took place in the interview dialogues to clarify and elaborate on expressed perspectives for both the interviewer's and the interviewee's understanding.

Regarding data processing and intercoder reliability, an initial graduate student researcher led the open and axial coding process, and a second graduate student researcher led the selective coding and social ecological analysis. Although only one graduate student researcher at a time coded at each of these stages, early and on-

going debriefing sessions took place among the research team to exchange reflective commentary on data collection impressions and analytic patterns throughout the life course of the study. Data analysis also entailed negative case analysis to account for all the data excerpts, categorizing each of them into analytic themes. Quoted data excerpts are included in the following section to thickly describe themes for readers' own assessments of the findings.

Findings

We analyzed the interview data and ascertained that faculty motivations for pursuing engaged scholarship existed at multiple levels. It is worth noting that the findings draw attention to interpersonal, community, and public policy sources of motivation that we argue deserve more elaboration in the literature. The following section discusses the findings organized at the individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy levels.

Individual Level Motivations

Individual experiences shape scholars' motivations to pursue engaged scholarship in their academic career. Interviewees spoke about their personal and professional identities informing their decisions to become engaged scholars, drawing from experiences being raised in families and communities within contexts of race and ethnicity, education, immigration, income, and geography. A number of interviewees touched on the theme of personally experiencing structural inequities, such as racism, sexism, and poverty, and using education and knowledge to effect change. They explained how engaged scholarship connects to their individual passion for intellectual development and lifelong learning, motivating them to both understand and resolve complex problems. For example, a professor in Native American Studies who works with community partners on how to form mutual relationships that support Native self-determination initiatives shared: "I grew up spending a lot of time outside. I grew up [as] one of the very few minorities in the community where I grew up and dealt with racism, both overt and covert, in multiple ways growing up, so I was drawn to social justice issues that deal with the environment." Scholars may turn to engaged work for its capacity to address social inequities experienced on a personal level.

In the study, engaged scholars recognized that they never have all the answers, yet individually they have the desire to keep learning and growing. An assistant adjunct professor in the School of Management explains how their research connects to their individual passion for personal development: “And just the intellectual curiosity of all the things you have to learn and continue to learn. Right? It’s a lifelong learning process. You can’t ever be truly up to date. You can never hope to know everything you need to know. So, there’s this constant charge to continually learn.” While motivated to understand complex problems, scholars are also individually motivated to have an impact by concretely addressing those problems. A professor in the School of Education who focuses on STEM education for high school youth shared,

What I discovered was that, even the more tedious moments of it, I enjoyed them more, because I felt like I was doing something good. That was one moment, not the only one, clearly, but a moment late in my college career where I thought, I really want something that has that applied aspect to it, and that feels like it’s a tangible good that I’m doing. . . .

Such feelings of self-efficacy served as an individual motivational basis, and were also closely tied to the ways individual scholars personally connected with others.

Interpersonal Level Motivations

Interpersonal experiences also fueled scholars’ motivations to address public needs and overcome setbacks along the way. Interviewees described a sense of fulfillment from making a positive difference in people’s lives. Individuals shared stories of influential relationships on their paths to becoming engaged scholars, including with individual family members, community partners, university colleagues, and students. A professor in the College of Letters and Science, who collaborates with deportees in Mexico, offers the following example of the importance and impact of relationships in engaged work:

We have his story that’s been published. His daughters have seen it. They know it’s out there, and if they have lost him . . . and they’re somehow able to find out where the web-

site is, and were to contact us, that would be something that we could at least tell them what happened . . . clarified for me how important it is what we’re doing, even just at this interpersonal level.

Interviewees also appreciated guidance from dedicated mentors, who demonstrated the importance of cocreating knowledge and disseminating findings to create positive impacts that address social issues and produce beneficial outcomes for involved places and people, such as students and community partners. A professor in the School of Medicine shared a story about meeting their mentor who prioritized community needs:

And I remember him saying, “If I’m going to help you, I need you to make sure that you stay true to what you are saying you’re going to do. And that’s to help the community.” And I remember just thinking profoundly like, wow, he not only believes this and says it, but he lives it.

For another faculty member, an assistant professor in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, it is important that their research is relevant and understood in accessible ways: “I want something that [a family member] can clearly articulate, that my research matters and this is why, versus something that’s articulated in a tenure file as an impact factor or citation count.” The stories shared by interviewees capture a range of interpersonal relationships—from early childhood through completion of formal education to the types of relationships established with peers and individual community members.

Organizational Level Motivations

Organizationally, interviewees indicate motivations based on the university’s institutionalized principles that align with engaged scholarship. An associate professor in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences observed:

There is more and more support at the university level, again the interest or commitment of the Provost for this community engaged scholarship strategy, that speaks greatly to the value that the university is putting on the recent relocation of *Imagining America* to UC Davis

similarly I think represents a commitment of the university for engaged scholarship.

Scholars noted that the mission of a land-grant university aligns with scholars' desires to partner with and benefit communities, as well as integrating research with teaching. They recognized this alignment despite the complicated history of public land-grant universities with regard to building systems of oppression, land dispossession, and ties to government and industry, which several interviewees acknowledged. An assistant professor in the School of Education indicated the reason they chose to take a position at the university: "So I ended up at UC Davis because the opportunity to work and create and teach and do the theoretical and then apply it to actual products, apply it to learning and teaching, that's what brought me here." Interviewees also spoke about the university's institutional identity coinciding with the goal of making a difference through engaged scholarship. A professor and director of a health disparities research center shared the following perspective on the university's purpose:

I think that the mission of the university, in terms of research, education, and service is related pretty much, being a land-grant public institution, that we are to serve. And serving means not only through education, but also through service and through reaching out to communities and trying to make things better for, in my case, in underserved communities.

Community Level Motivations

Interviewees also reported developing a sense of obligation at the community level, many discussing attachments to specific populations and places. A lecturer in the School of Law powerfully stated: "Then there's those of us who come from that community and of course this is the whole reason why we're here." Similarly, a professor in Native American Studies identified their attachment to place as the impetus for their research:

I grew up without electricity for the first ten years and we got our water from a spring and the spring dried up part way through my childhood. It was related to some changes with

the management of a mill on the other side of the hill. So, after that, we had to dig a well, but I guess to say, I spent a lot of time outside so this region is really important to me.

Individuals also expressed commitments to produce knowledge that would benefit communities that face social injustices, such as poverty and racism. An assistant professor in Human Ecology explained their motivation:

The reason I do the work and tend to focus on marginalized communities is [that] I've seen what good research can do in terms of capturing people who listen or people who make decisions and what good research can do to help people listen to the challenges that are going on or draw connections.

Sometimes scholars shared their prior hesitancy to start engaged work, but then observed the positive impacts it can yield. A professor in the College of Letters and Science remembered the following transformation in their scholarly trajectory:

I was very happy in the archive . . . I think I overcame that by seeing work that other people were doing and seeing the potential for the impact that community-based work can achieve, and gradually got over my fear or reluctance or whatever that was. And now I can see very clearly the potential impact of work, of community-based work.

Other scholars discussed the imperative of people being involved in the problem-solving related to ecological issues. A professor in the School of Veterinary Medicine elaborated: "I learned how important communities and humans were in that equation. . . . Not only were we the ones that were changing environments that made them less optimal for wildlife populations, but we were also the only ones that could reverse that." A professor in the College of Biological Sciences similarly discussed their following interest: "Human activities have a really big effect on these ecosystems. . . . I could see these ecosystems decline. That's why humans have to be part of the whole ecosystem. . . . It was just obvious that humans had to be involved in the ecology."

Interviewees also reported experiencing community-level sources of motivation on their university campus. At both undergraduate and graduate levels, students comprise communities that motivate engaged teaching and collaboration for scholars. Individual scholars also benefited from groups of colleagues who share similar engaged scholarship interests and dedicate time and expertise to collaborative efforts. Through such campus community supports, faculty feel encouraged in their commitments to the public good by directing their academic skills and education toward engaged scholarship.

Policy Level Motivations

In terms of public policy, scholars expressed a personal obligation to affect policy as a way to spur social change. Interviewees experienced reward from influencing public discourse; affecting policy issues; producing applied, tangible products with the results of their scholarship; and seeing the impact of policy change. A professor in Earth and Planetary Sciences emphasized their urgent, policy-level sense of obligation: "I'm trying to motivate individual change but also I'm trying to motivate people to get their government to change . . . because I work on an issue that is extremely pressing and rapidly moving, and we have to do something about it quickly." Another faculty member, a professor in Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies, described the intellectual sense of reward from partaking in politically relevant work:

Because you become much more sensitized, especially in the fields that I work in, to the way that your body doesn't stop at its skin. It goes out from there. And thinking about the social and political implications of that is probably what has made it intellectually really interesting to do community work.

Scholars want their scholarship not only to be published in journals, but also shared widely to influence important decisions affecting communities. A professor in Evolution and Ecology, who is a strong advocate in government, media, and educational circles, shared:

You can write as many publications as you want, but mitigation lies in the hands of policy makers and government agencies, and they need

science. They need a scientist to talk to in ways that they can understand and take up and then use.

Individuals also articulated engaged scholarship's influences on law and policy and potential benefits for the public. An associate professor in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences who directs an action-oriented research center shared: "What motivates me is really the impact, the benefits that we can have on changing public policy, on supporting community empowerment, on channeling more resources towards disadvantaged communities, that kind of thing." As is apparent in this quote, this conceptualization of impact intersects at community and public policy levels. Other interviews expressed impacts that cut across two or more levels, which suggests that interventions at different levels can work together and complement each other, and that perhaps concepts such as power, inequality, and differential access may be implicated at multiple levels of influence as well. As evidenced by our study's examples, a focus on policy is more than regulatory reform; it also encompasses aspirations toward political, societal, and environmental change.

Implications

The findings provide evidence for exploring ways that institutions of higher education can support faculty at multiple levels, especially at universities that prioritize research over teaching and service, while at the same time increasing efforts to recruit and retain women and faculty of color. Interviews qualitatively explored how and when social identities and experiences have shaped faculty public scholar motivations. When asked about motivation, some engaged scholars spoke about experiences being raised in families and communities within contexts of race and ethnicity, education, immigration, income, and geography. At the individual level, a number of interviewees touched on the theme of personally experiencing inequities, such as racism, sexism, and poverty, and using education and knowledge to effect change.

The study underscores concerns about faculty recruitment and retention of engaged scholars, especially women and faculty of color, given that these populations represented a significant percentage of the engaged scholars in our survey sample. More broadly, a focus on recognition of engaged scholarship necessarily encompasses equity

in scholarship and epistemic inclusion, especially among faculty of color who practice engaged scholarship (Settles et al., 2019, 2020). Such recognition includes valuing the full array of faculty life experiences and ways of being in the world beyond socialized disciplinary identities; it includes the different types of knowledge that faculty bring to bear on their scholarship, and the diverse approaches to how knowledge is produced, with whom, and with what effects. To consider engaged scholarship as an equity issue challenges traditional knowledge communities in the academy and the ways these spaces are policed that devalue engaged scholarship. A key issue concerns how Whiteness reproduces social hierarchies and norms about engaged scholarship and how socialized behaviors support and reinforce particular faculty motivations over others, and related expectations for promotion and tenure. Often, engaged scholars are tokenized. At other times they are met with resistance, hostility, and dismissiveness by their colleagues. These types of experiences also do epistemic harm and highlight tensions of othering and belonging inherent in structural marginalization (powell, 2012).

Relatedly, the study has implications for faculty recognition and the role of the promotion and tenure system (Colbeck & Weaver, 2008; DeFelippo & Giles, 2015; Franz et al., 2012; Jovanovic et al., 2017; Nicotera et al., 2011; Wade & Demb, 2009). Responding to faculty motivations at multiple levels can more holistically meet individual and collective needs, which has implications for promotion and tenure. Such a holistic approach is also a response to scholars who call on higher education leadership “to diagnose micro and macro inequalities in how diverse forms of scholarship are recognized” (O’Meara, 2016, p. 104). Insights from interviewees’ promotion and tenure reflections articulate an array of challenges and opportunities for universities to respond to engaged scholarship motivation at multiple levels of influence. Universities would gain by taking more holistic and multilevel approaches to recognition and rewards, thereby responding directly to faculty motivations rather than framing reward systems solely on institutional norms or the availability of resources, because multiple levels of influence have the potential to support faculty motivation and subsequent productivity.

Possible forms of multilevel institutional

support include providing individual faculty clear merit and promotion and tenure guidelines, or examples of engaged scholarship evidence, both of which could reduce confusion about what counts in dossier reviews. At the interpersonal level, mentorship by senior engaged scholars and establishment of peer support networks could help scholars gain firsthand knowledge from engaged scholars who have successfully navigated the system of faculty personnel reviews on such topics as how to articulate holistic and impactful representations of community-engaged research and/or teaching. Although more common, organizational level supports are also vital. For example, explicit merit and promotion policies signal to faculty that their work is supported by their institution, while also providing guidance to department chairs, faculty personnel committees, and others who review faculty dossiers. Similarly, faculty recruitment and retention efforts that make explicit mention of faculty public scholarship are an important strategy to ensure a more diverse professoriate. Resources that support faculty involvement in engagement centers, recognition awards, and grant programs are other examples. Shifting to the communities that are the focus of much engaged scholarship work yet receive little to no institutional resources, grant assistance to support these community partnerships, as well as community coauthorship recognition, would provide significant recognition of the labor behind the coproduction of knowledge. Additional ways to recognize partners as coequals include community partner involvement in merit and promotion reviews, as well as the establishment of IRB community advisory boards. Lastly, the community of engaged scholars can be further enlarged, especially in the STEM fields, through institutional support strategies that mirror engaged scholar motivations to produce research that responds to societal challenges and/or has public policy impacts. Such a focus on broader impacts is a timely response to growing public criticism of institutions of higher education.

Faculty recognition in the merit and promotion system is not the only example to illustrate how institutions can provide multilevel supports that match faculty motivations. Similar approaches can be applied to increasing faculty involvement in community-engaged learning or multiyear anchor institution initiatives. A diversified investment strategy that spans supports at

different levels will pay dividends in terms of individual meaning, creating a sense of faculty belonging, increasing retention rates, enabling new forms of knowledge production, and demonstrating community-based and policy-relevant impact.

To further bolster motivation, and to prevent hesitation to act on those motivations, the work of engagement needs to be recognized and not punished by the institution. In reviewing our interviewees' promotion and tenure reflections, a few interviewees noted how some department leaders and colleagues privilege traditional scholarship in faculty evaluation, create conditions that compel engaged scholars to be risk averse, and discourage engaged scholarship through punitive measures. Moreover, engaged scholarship is one way to assess the accountability of institutions of higher education to the mission of the university. Engaged scholarship is especially vital for land-grant universities, which espouse adherence to the public good or societal benefit. This form of scholarship is also an avenue for unleashing faculty innovation and creativity, as well as leveraging additional sources of funding.

Conclusion

This study addresses a gap in the literature by focusing on different levels of influence on engaged scholars' motivation and offers a nuanced reading that takes into account an individual's life experience, meaning-making, and sense of belonging. Based on data from 49 interviews detailing practice stories of engaged scholarship at a public land-grant research university, this study sought to understand faculty motivations for this type of scholarly practice. Interviewees reported individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public policy influences on their motivation for engaged scholarship. The results offer an analytical structure for conceptualizing interactions between motivational themes and levels of influence, as well as a practical approach for university leadership to identify areas of change in institutional policies, programs, and processes to better support engaged scholarship, especially around promotion and tenure.

Results from this study have already directly influenced an implementation strategy at UC Davis centered on faculty recognition and rewards. The newly formed Office of Public Scholarship and Engagement initi-

ated several faculty-facing programs and resource supports between 2019 and 2021. At the individual and interpersonal support levels, this new office offered guidance and resources for faculty seeking evaluation of their public engagement activities for merit, promotion, and tenure, as well as the establishment of a Public Scholars Community to connect engaged scholars to one another. At the organizational level, several cohort-based faculty fellows programs were created and focus on advancing individual scholarship and integration of community engagement in coursework. Additionally, a research grant program supports university researchers who are working in partnership with nonuniversity groups. Although much work remains to effect change in merit and promotion policies, the office has begun consultations with the university's faculty senate to consider changes to the academic personnel manual, the policy document that describes expectations with respect to research, teaching, and service. At UC Davis, the areas still most needing attention are community and public policy level motivations. However, plans are in the works to provide community partners temporary affiliate status that would allow them to gain access to training opportunities, library services, and university events, among other benefits. Additionally, internal collaborations are being explored to build the capacity of individual scholars to communicate and disseminate their research through nonacademic channels, including public policy briefs.

The present study's findings bolster arguments for multilevel approaches where personal commitments, knowledge production and dissemination, and outcomes are motivated and experienced not only at a few levels, such as the individual and institutional, but at multiple levels that dynamically interact with each other including interpersonal, community, and public policy. These findings suggest the need for relational theories and nonbinary models to further understand and analyze faculty motivations for pursuing engaged scholarship and concordant practical interventions that support multilevel motivations. However, given that the present study focused on one institution—a public land-grant research university in the western United States—it is limited in its methods and data, presenting opportunities for future research. We encourage future researchers to apply multilevel analyses to other types of higher

education institutions to assess the suitability and fit of our findings, highlighting the unique contexts and pathways in which engaged scholarship is pursued. Future research may also explore the relationship between motivational levels and various engaged scholarship frames such as community, public, civic, or critical (Blanchard & Furco, 2021). Researchers may employ comparative study designs to analyze more than one institution vis-à-vis a multilevel framework, as well as how, if at all, motivations may vary by level(s) of influence for different demographic groups.

Additionally, the present study's purposive sampling strategy aimed for representativeness across scholars' disciplines, schools,

and ranks, yielding a limited sample size of 49. Although these study constraints limit the generalizability of findings, future research can expand study sample sizes and aim for randomized sampling methods to minimize sampling biases. Lastly, multilevel studies that examine equity and inclusion are needed. For example, the field would benefit greatly from relational and multiscalar studies that critically examine how individuals are situated in geometries of power regarding their own social identities, relationships to others, the institutional cultures in which they find themselves, the communities they engage, and the public policies that directly impact communities.



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Top-Down Motivation in University-Community Engagement

Andi Sri Wahyuni and György Málóvics

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the process of a top-down motivational approach in university-community engagement (UCE). We conducted a qualitative single case study in Indonesia using direct observations and semistructured interviews with 16 informants in three categories of actors: university, local community, and intermediary. Our main finding is that all actors are motivated by a top-down motivational approach. The university provides service to the community to fulfill its obligation to the government, and the local community is obligated to follow the village chief's directive to participate in community service. As an intermediary between the university and the community, the village chief supports community service because participation will make the chief (and community) eligible to receive grant funds from the central government. These empirical findings provide a new understanding of how UCE works in a country that employs top-down government to implement its regulation at the grassroots level.

Keywords: top-down motivation, community engagement, university-community engagement



Presently, the topic of successful university-community engagement (UCE) is widely discussed (Ahmed & Palermo, 2010; Arnold et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2017; Dempsey, 2010; De Weger et al., 2018; Farner, 2019; Macaulay et al., 1998; Purcell, 2014; Tal et al., 2015). Extensive literature exists on community engagement (CE), including numerous recipes for successful CE (Arnold et al., 2008; Cunningham & Smith, 2020; De Weger et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2005; Ramsbottom et al., 2018). Through examples of successful cases, it is hoped that the steps to implement UCE will be clearer and easier to carry out and can impact community development.

However, not all UCE practices have been implemented as successfully as the goal of the UCE itself intends. We offer two unsuccessful UCE cases in the literature. First, Thakrar (2018) reported that the actors involved in conducting UCE in South Africa failed to uphold their commitment and motivation, resulting in a lack of impact on

the local community where the university is located. Second, Chen and Vanclay (2022) observed a UCE failure in China due to the insufficient capacity of university actors to understand the cultural nuances of the local community. Other UCE cases have failed to achieve the involvement of all parties equally in each process, the goals of both parties, and the sustainability of the partnership in the long term (Clark et al., 2017; Duke, 2008; Sanga et al., 2021). It is imperative to thoroughly examine and analyze all instances, whether they resulted in success or failure, as they serve as crucial components for discussion and reflection to derive valuable insights for implementing future UCE initiatives. Evidence also suggests that “we learn from our mistakes” (Johnson, 2004), and there is an opportunity to reflect and formulate new recommendations from both successful and unsuccessful UCE cases (Clark et al., 2017).

A case of UCE conducted by a public university in Indonesia, in ASM Village, is an example of UCE that failed to involve all

parties equally, achieve all parties' goals, and establish a long-term engagement. This case occurred in a country that implements activities with a top-down approach in government. To date, very few studies have addressed top-down motivation in community development, and no single study has addressed top-down motivation in the context of unsuccessful UCE.

Nikkhah and Redzuan (2009) discussed a top-down approach to community development in a general case; Sanga et al. (2021) explored a top-down CE case between a nongovernmental organization (NGO) and India's urban poor community; Mendes (2018) drew attention to the top-down approach in CE between the Australian government and participants of the paternalistic income management program. No specific university-community case has been analyzed in all of this previous literature. However, universities have a different culture than other organizations or institutions in conducting CE (Hart & Northmore, 2011). This study was conducted to critically examine the process of a top-down motivational approach in UCE.

We conducted a qualitative single-case study of UCE in ASM Village, Indonesia. We utilized direct observations and semi-structured interviews with 16 informants, composed of three categories of actors: university, local community, and intermediary. This article addresses the literature review and background context of the case, followed by the methodology used. The results and discussion are described thereafter.

Critical Success Factors of University-Community Engagement

Benneworth et al. (2018) defined UCE as "a process whereby universities engage with community stakeholders to undertake joint activities that can be mutually beneficial even if each side benefits differently" (p. 17). Some researchers in UCE studies consider UCE successful when all participants are satisfied with the process and outcomes (Ahmed & Palermo, 2010; Macaulay et al., 1998). Some others agree with this definition but also emphasize measuring the continuity of the process, applicability to vital social community problems, "meaningful participation" in the entire process, and having the entire community feel responsible for the solution and actively engaged in the process (Davis et al., 2017; Dempsey, 2010; De Weger et al., 2018; Farnar, 2019;

Purcell, 2014; Tal et al., 2015). The term "process" refers to decision-making, planning, designing, managing, and/or delivering services and/or policies (De Weger et al., 2018). Meanwhile, Arnold et al. (2008) and Dempsey (2010) defined the term from the subject's perspective. A successful UCE is achieved when all stakeholders increase their capacity to address and solve the problems they face while improving university goals, all ideas are accepted and shared, and all actors are satisfied that they have included their voices equally.

Hazelkorn (2016a) distinguished the concept of UCE in three aspects: (1) social justice, (2) economic development, and (3) the public good. The social justice model emphasizes reciprocity to improve the capacity of universities and local communities, economic development emphasizes the importance of universities as engines of social and economic growth, and the public good model emphasizes a process in which universities serve the public good, especially if the state funds them. In the context of these three models, the definition of successful UCE in this study is based on the first model. Then, from the parade of definitions above and based on the social justice model, successful UCE can be related to the participation of all parties equally in each process, the achievement of the goals of all parties, and the sustainability of the partnership in the long term. With this definition, UCE is measured across the entire process by considering the collaborative and equal participation of all parties.

To achieve successful UCE, as defined above, several previous studies have discussed the keys and critical factors (Arnold et al., 2008; Cunningham & Smith, 2020; De Weger et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2005; Ramsbottom et al., 2018). Arnold et al. formulated a recipe for successful CE by showing a sample from youth CE, stressing the actors' activeness and the clarity of strategies in performing CE.

Meanwhile, other researchers have defined successful UCE in more detail. Building on some UCE cases and relevant literature, Martin et al. (2005) identified funding, communication, synergy, measurable outcomes, visibility and dissemination of results, organizational compatibility, and simplicity as seven critical factors for successful UCE. Funding is central to successful UCE, and communication is important once funding is received. Communication

in the initial meetings between university and community partners is encouraged to identify and discuss the issues, challenges, and expectations. After communication and establishing professional relationships, successful UCE acknowledges synergy, meaning university academics must see and treat the local community as full partners. Alternatives for relationship models include partnership, coalition, tentative, aligned, and committed engagement (Clayton et al., 2010; Dorado & Giles, 2004; Himmelman, 2001). All of these alternatives adapt to the characteristics of the university and local community and underline “working together as partners,” meaning that some actors are not considered better than others.

According to Martin et al. (2005), the next critical factor for successful UCE is a certain level of results that can be disseminated through visible research and knowledge. Successful UCE also shares power and decision-making in a fairly similar manner, and the partnership’s goal is feasible for all parties.

More recent research was conducted by Cunningham and Smith (2020) on what factors should be considered in UCE. Although two previous studies (Arnold et al., 2008; Martin et al., 2005) did not include elements of culture, Cunningham and Smith completed the requirements for successful UCE by including culture, in addition to other determining factors in the form of mission statements and support administration. According to Cunningham and Smith, UCE must be contained in a mission statement to state the commitment of both parties. UCE must also have the support of the administration, which includes infrastructure and financial support, to be a sign that UCE is taken seriously. However, the most important factor is that UCE must be in harmony with the culture of the community and the university. In this regard, Cunningham and Smith referred to “culture” as a part of the definition from the *Oxford Learner’s Dictionary*, “the way of life” (Oxford University Press, n.d.).

In addition, Ramsbottom et al. (2018) and De Weger et al. (2018) have compiled a systematic review of successful UCE. It is expected that the systematic review method can provide accurate and reliable conclusions from the large body of literature on successful UCE (Gopalakrishnan & Ganeshkumar, 2013). Ramsbottom et al. emphasized the importance of depending on the context

of communities. Meanwhile, De Weger et al. formulated eight guiding principles for CE. The first guideline is that UCE should ensure the staff provides supportive and facilitative leadership to the local community. Supportive and facilitative leadership refers to organizational leadership that supports the community in its activities and responsibilities without being overly authoritarian and restrictive. The second guideline is to foster a safe and trusting environment that allows the local community to contribute. The meeting should be comfortable enough to bring ideas and critiques for both parties. The third guideline is early citizen involvement, which means that the local community should be involved in the process and participate as early as possible. The fourth guideline is shared decision-making and governance control with citizens. The activity should encourage the local community to perform governance and decision-making processes so that their ideas and aspirations can be valued. The fifth guideline acknowledges and addresses citizens’ experiences of power imbalances between citizens and professionals. Actors from the university are generally viewed as professionals and experts, so they are seen as a smarter group than the local community. Successful UCE cannot be achieved if these assumptions still exist. The two parties should regard each other as legitimate and equal partners (Mileski et al., 2014). The sixth guideline is to invest in the local community on behalf of community members who feel they lack the skills and confidence to get involved. The university should provide learning opportunities for community members who lack the necessary skills and confidence to participate in UCE. The seventh guideline is to create quick and tangible wins to build and sustain momentum with the local community. The early successes in the stages of the intervention give impetus to the local community to come together to achieve other common and achievable goals. The last guideline by De Weger et al. is taking the motivation of both parties into account. Rather than channeling their participation into other projects, the university should allow the local community to participate in events and projects that interest and motivate them.

These five studies (Arnold et al., 2008; Cunningham & Smith, 2020; De Weger et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2005; Ramsbottom et al., 2017) overlap and complement each other at the technical level of UCE imple-

Table 1. Key Factors of Successful University–Community Engagement

Five Studies of University–Community Engagement	Context		Infrastructure			Strategy				
	Culture	Relationship	Active actor	Funding	Administration	Preparation	Communication	Synergy	Clear outcome	Dissemination
Ramsbottom et al. (2018)	X	X	X	X			X			X
Arnold et al. (2008)			X			X	X	X		X
Martin et al. (2005)	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Cunningham & Smith (2020)		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
De Weger et al. (2018)		X	X			X		X	X	X

mentation (see Table 1). From the combined research, it can be concluded that three categories of factors generally determine the success of UCE.

Category 1 is the context in which UCE is conducted, consisting of the culture and the relationship between the institution and the community. This category is primarily applicable during the planning and anticipation phase of community service. The success of UCE is determined by the background information about local community life and how well community members cooperate with university groups.

Category 2 is the infrastructure of UCE activities. Infrastructure components are active actors, sufficient and flexible funding, and administrative integrity that support the implementation of UCE. This category is the most crucial factor in determining how community participation is conducted.

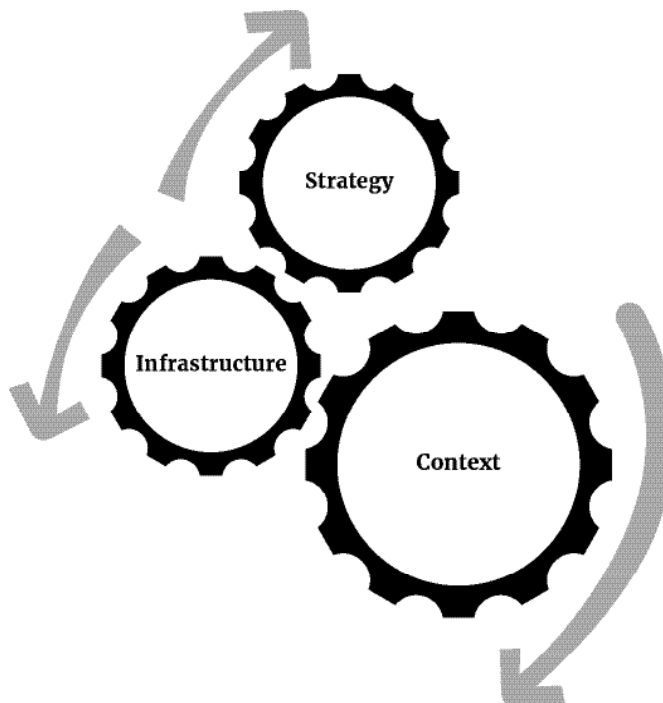
Category 3 is the strategy carried out in its implementation in the form of thorough preparation, clear communication, synergy, clarity of activity results, and dissemination of UCE results. This strategy is focused on achieving the UCE target or goal.

Previous studies indicate that these three key factors are prerequisites for achieving successful UCE. The three factors should not substitute but complement each other to achieve successful UCE. Their interrelatedness can be visually represented by interlocking machine gears. All three gears must rotate simultaneously for the machine to function (see Figure 1).

Top-Down Approach to UCE and the Context of the Case Study

There are three basic approaches to development: top-down, bottom-up, and partnership (Nikkhah & Redzuan, 2009). In a top-down approach to community development, the main activity of development is initiated by the government (typically central government; Sabatier, 1986) or agency. Everything is managed by the government, and the citizens are just spectators. With the top-down approach, the focus is on central planning. In contrast, a bottom-up approach is directed and controlled by the community for the community. Governments and service providers serve only as intermediaries and advisors. In other words, the community plays or initiates an active role in the development pro-

Figure 1. Illustration of Three Key Factors in University–Community Engagement



cess. A partnership approach occurs when government and community work together or participate in development efforts. In developing countries like Indonesia, community development work practices introduced by nonprofit organizations are dominated by a top-down approach (Dyck & Silvestre, 2019).

In the Indonesian context, the top-down approach applies to all levels of government (Ha & Kumar, 2021; Pramono & Prakoso, 2021), including the education sector (Poedjiastutie et al., 2018; Setiawan, 2020). Community service is institutionalized by the central government and becomes an obligation for all university lecturers under the Directorate-General for Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture (Fahmi, 2007; Mastuti et al., 2014). This obligation is contained in one of the “Tri Dharma” of higher education.

Learning, research, and community service are three pillars of national higher education that make up the Tri Dharma of higher education. The Tri Dharma is the main legal foundation for all universities in Indonesia, compiled and inaugurated in 1961 (Fahmi, 2007). The regulation was enacted 12 years after the establishment of the first official university in Indonesia and is contained in Law No. 22 of 1961 on Higher Education. Thus, since 1961, when Indonesia had been independent for 16 years and two universities were founded in Indonesia, community service has become compulsory for all lecturers.

To discipline the implementation of the three pillars of the Tri Dharma, the government requires that any increase in the functional level of the lecturer must fulfill these three pillars. A junior lecturer who wants to advance to the next career level up to a professorship must submit complete documentation that fulfills these three elements. Therefore, in the course of an educator’s career in higher education in Indonesia, it is certain that they must carry out community service as one of the three main requirements.

The relationship between community service activities and lecturer careers is reciprocal. On the one hand, the more community service activities a lecturer carries out, the greater the chance of advancing to the next career level. For every proposal for a lecturer’s academic promotion in Indonesia, a lecturer must have at least 0.5 credit

points from community service. Based on the Operational Guidelines for Assessing Credit Numbers for Academic Position/Lecturer Rank 2019 Updated Number 4, 2021 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Indonesia, 2021), one community service activity completed by a lecturer earns a minimum of 0.5 points. The value varies depending on the type of activity performed.

On the other hand, the higher the functional position of a lecturer, the greater the control that individual can exercise over the performance of community service. For example, to submit a funding proposal for community service activities, the group leader must have at least the rank of lector (senior lecturer). Junior lecturers with the position of assistant lecturers can work only as group members.

Apart from lecturer career levels, the indicators of the three pillars of the Tri Dharma are also used for the annual performance appraisal of lecturers (Bungai & Perdana, 2018). Each lecturer must achieve a minimum score for their performance to be considered good each year. At least once a year, a lecturer must complete one community service to fill out their SISTER (Integrated Resource Information System) performance report. SISTER is an online application created by the Directorate of Resources, Directorate of General for Higher Education, Research and Technology, used by all lecturers and staff to report their yearly performance.

In addition to career-level promotions and performance appraisal purposes, community service is also a requirement for additional salary. Since 2008, a new remuneration mechanism for educators’ employment (teachers and lecturers) has been introduced. They must participate in the certification process. For lecturers, one of the documents required to pass the certification test is the achievement of Tri Dharma activities, including community service. Those who pass the certification process receive additional rewards (Elfindri et al., 2015).

Certification allows a lecturer to double their salary. Certified lecturers receive an additional salary each month equal to the basic monthly salary they receive from the government. To maintain these conditions, they must continue to perform community service as a pillar of the Tri Dharma.

Through these requirements, it has become a “must” for all lecturers in Indonesia to perform community service. Since the top-down approach works, the focus is on central planning and reporting. Therefore, every lecturer in Indonesia must perform community service to report their performance to the central government.

Methodology

Research Design

This study collected data through a case study with a qualitative approach to gain a better understanding of UCE in the context of the top-down government approach in Indonesia. We used a qualitative approach to capture the opinions and perceptions of the local community, the university, and the government as an intermediary in ASM Village, Indonesia.

Data Sources and Participant Selection

This study mainly used data obtained from direct observation and semistructured interviews. Direct observations were made four times: once in the place of community service presentation, once in the local government service office, and twice in the local farmhouses (see Table 2).

Each day, local farmers take their cows out of their cowsheds in the morning and feed them in the afternoon. The observations’ results help the researchers to present the data in a more relevant manner in accordance with the context of the local community. Meanwhile, the semistructured interview method was chosen to allow for reciprocity between the researchers and the informants, to improvise follow-up questions based on the participants’ responses, and to leave room for the participants’ verbal expressions (Kallio et al., 2016), all of which are important for analyzing the informants’ culture.

The interview process was conducted in stages with 16 informants to achieve rigorous data collection and trustworthiness (see Table 2). In this study, participants were three groups of informants with different roles in UCE:

1. University side, consisting of two groups of community service actors, each of which performed community service in the same community and with the same implementation of service activities. They were composed of six lecturers, with three people in each group. Generally, each group has a chairperson and two members: a senior lecturer and a junior lecturer.

Table 2. Data Collection Activities

No.	Method	Time	Media
1	Direct observation	July 2021–January 2022 a. Community service presentation (8 hrs) b. Local government service office (2 hrs) c. Twice in the local farmhouses (4 hrs)	Recorder, photo, and reflective diary
2	Interview local community	August 2021–April 2022	
	a. First interview	August 2021	Notes and recorder (face-to-face)
	b. Second interview (probing and prompting)	January 2022	Notes and recorder (face-to-face)
	c. Reconfirm doubtful data	April 2022	WhatsApp
3	Interview lecturers from the university	August 2021–April 2022	Notes (face-to-face) and WhatsApp

2. Local community side consisted of six farmers. Four farmers own a small number of cows obtained from government grants (Farmers B, C, D, and E). The other group members are a farmer whose cows were bought with his own funds (Farmer A) and an eminent farmer (cow broker) who trades cows with small farmers in the village and sells beef to the city (Farmer F).
3. Intermediary, or the local government in ASM Village. This group has four members: a village chief, a secretary, and two employees who are assistants to the village chief. The local government is the party that connects the local community with the university and organizes the farmers to participate in community service activities.

The questions were outlined prior to conducting the interview but evolved throughout the process and remained focused.

The first occasion when the researcher came as a community service group member was still the first meeting. Then the researcher went back to the village to conduct semistructured interviews. The local government and farmers recognized the researcher as a member of the community service group who came to a different mission.

To interview the local community, the researcher used the rapport technique as a prelude to make the interview process more flexible and open. As noted by Gorden (1969), good rapport often determines the simplicity and clarity of relevant data. Rapport encourages informants to talk about their culture and everyday life (Spradley, 1979). Recognizing context in this way is important in the analysis process of this research, as culture is one of the important analyzed components that determines successful UCE. However, interviews with the lecturers who are members of the community service group did not require establishing rapport because one of the researchers in this study is part of the group and knows all members of the community service group. In accord with standards regarding data security for reporting in qualitative studies (O'Brien et al., 2014), no specific individual or institution has been explicitly named in this study.

Data Analysis

The results of the observations were stored

in the form of video recordings, photos, and reflection diaries of the researcher who participated as a member of the community service group. The reflection diary was written each time after the researchers conducted observations and interviews in ASM Village. Meanwhile, interview results were stored using a media recorder, written notes, and social media text messages according to the informants' needs and conditions.

All direct interview results were transcribed in the original language (Indonesian-Makassar language). Upon compiling the transcript, the data were analyzed with a thematic approach (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). The results from the thematic analysis were reported by finding the patterns in three themes: the context of UCE, the process of implementing UCE, and the motives of UCE actors.

Data that did not agree with each other were found several times during the analysis. Thus, a reconfirmation of the validity of the data was performed on the participants concerned. After the data was clear and valid, it was processed and analyzed thematically with other data.

Result

Observation From Implementing University-Community Service

In early 2021, two community service groups from a public university in Makassar visited the village of ASM, where the cow farming community lived. The village is 41 kilometers from the main campus, where the academics work and study.

This village was chosen because it is one of the partner villages where the university is involved. At the same time, the community of farmers was chosen as a target of community service because, according to one of the group community service leaders, "these local farmers receive a grant." Not many villages receive cow grants in Indonesia, and not all cow farmers in ASM Village receive cow grants. Therefore, the service goals of these two groups are "unique" and an added value to be able to pass lecturer's grant proposals at the university level. So, these community service activities are intended to improve the skills of ascertaining production costs, selling products, and gaining knowledge of how to increase sales of local farmers.

Lecturer A, a member of Community Service Group 1, was sitting around talking to a middle-aged man (Farmer A) who works as a civil servant and raises livestock part-time. Unlike the group of farmers who stayed in the classroom and listened to explanations from the other members of the community service group, Farmer A chose to sit outside. Unlike most farmers who stay in the classroom, he started his business independently, not on government funding. He had no “obligation” to stay and sit in the room as he was not among the cow grant recipients.

In contrast, the farmers in the classroom received a cow grant from the central government. They were selected based on a decision by the village chief. Therefore, the village chief required the other farmers to stay in the classroom, hear, and see the presentation. After the lecturer explained calculating the biological production cost, three other farmers (Farmers B, C, and D) left the room. They approached Lecturer A and Farmer A, who were already outside, and sat down beside them.

Suddenly, Farmer B said:

Her explanation was for a big firm. We are not traders; we are farmers. We don't do that kind of thing to get profit. We sell our cows because we need money for urgent conditions. We have done this kind of job for two years, and you can imagine how much the cost we need to do it. Well, if we calculate it using that academic method, we will definitely lose.

When Farmer B said this, the other farmers smiled and nodded.

From Farmer B's comments and the responses of three other farmers, it can be concluded that what was being done as part of the community service activities did not meet their needs.

The three training topics taught then were income tax procedure, sales price, and product marketing management with digital media. The three materials were just passing, and none were used to be practiced by the farmers. Ironically, this fact was actually recognized by all of the lecturers who conducted the training. This was conveyed by Lecturer B, who taught tax material, and said, “Yes, they [the farmers] don't actually

pay taxes. They don't even understand what a tax is.”

When it came time for Lecturer A to present the material, he was not sure whether the material was useful to the farmers or not, but Lecturer B said: “Just say what can be taught so that this activity can be completed quickly.”

Reconfirming Goal Difference in Deep Interview

In an ideal state of UCE, the university should provide the local community with opportunities to participate in activities and projects that interest and motivate them (De Weger et al., 2018). If the local community is actively involved, their hopes can be conveyed properly. Unfortunately, in top-down UCE the opportunity to actively participate is minimal, as the ideals of community participation are sacrificed by various actors in favor of procedural expediency and bureaucratic convenience (Sanga et al., 2021). Based on these references, the active participation in UCE between the university and the local community did not meet expectations.

The local community's needs did not match what academics were “giving” them, so they could not actively participate and convey their aspirations in community service. According to Farmer E, they need information about alternative fodder for their cows. In ASM Village, wild grass, the cows' main fodder, runs out in the dry season. Then the farmers must find other fodder sources by traveling to the nearest town. Therefore, the farmers hope to be taught how to produce alternative food instead of charging the selling price of cows.

They have also self-learned how to determine the selling price of a cow without calculating the cost, as lecturers at the university teach. They estimate the price by looking at the size of the cow. The price of a cow is determined by its weight and height, not by the complex calculation. This was also confirmed by Farmer F, who shared this in an interview:

Only in a city like Makassar everything is bought, everything is paid for, so the bill is right. If you are here, you will find your own food for free, and the same is true for the land. Because it's your own land, so you do not have to pay rent.

In the village of ASM, there is still free

land and open spaces where cows can roam freely. Grass can also grow on open land, so the cow can easily find food. In contrast, in large cities like Makassar, where the university is located, the land is leased and the food must also be purchased, so everything must be accounted for, and the calculation of these costs ultimately determines the cost of goods sold for the cow. These academics teach such methods of calculating cost of goods sold. This different context is not noticed by the two groups of community service. Indeed, Ramsbottom et al. (2018) have reminded us of the importance of understanding the context (place and conditions) in which community service takes place.

What, then, did the community members get from the community service activities at that time? Both Farmer E and Farmer F shook their heads. During the interview, all participants admitted that the community service activities were useless. The one exception was the village chief, who welcomed these academics with great enthusiasm. Notwithstanding the discrepancy between the needs of the local community and the instruction by academics who came to the village, the village chief, representing the local government, simply commented, “Yes, at least there is a piece of knowledge.” The village chief welcomes the community service group and its UCE for a practical reason: the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Through this MoU, the grant from the Indonesian government can flow smoothly to ASM Village. As the assistant village chief said, “The signing of the MoU with the university is a prerequisite for receiving grants.”

Not only this university but also several other universities from Makassar have performed community service in ASM Village. However, those universities have different focuses, such as the health sector. The types of community service activities were adjusted according to the disciplinary background of the participating institution. For the village chief, all are welcome because more UCE means more MoUs, and the more MoUs, the easier the path to win the grants. It is not a problem for him if the material presented in the training for farmers in the village is not relevant to the local community.

Another Lecturer Perspective on University–Community Engagement

The motives of the lecturers for performing community service differ depending on the position. Certified senior lecturers must continue this annual ritual to maintain a monthly payment. Community services are also a prerequisite for noncertified junior lecturers to advance to the next career level. Without this requirement and condition, a junior lecturer (Lecturer C), who has been employed as a lecturer for only a year, may not do any community service work. Her motivation is clear from the following statement:

Actually, if it were possible for a lecturer not to do community service, I would prefer [not to do it], but due to the requirements of the Tri Dharma, it must be followed. What is important is that there is something that can be filled in the SISTER Application. . . .

Lecturer C’s main motive for community service is the central government’s Tri Dharma rules and the duty to fill out the SISTER application. If the service section of the SISTER application is not completed, her performance that year will be considered a failure. Undeniably, she performed community service, driven not by internal motivation but by her external motivation to fulfill the central government’s obligation. Lecturer C participates only if a senior lecturer signs up for the service group. It does not matter to her whether the activity is relevant for her as long as she can participate in community service activities. “In fact, I am grateful they put my name as a member of the group,” said Lecturer C.

A different motivation applies for a senior lecturer who leads the service group. The motive is not only because of the rules but also because of maintaining monthly payments. Without services, monthly payments are affected. Ironically, this double payment does not motivate faculty to perform more community service. As De Ree et al. (2018) suggested early on, in Indonesian education, dual payment has no impact on student learning outcomes and educator performance.

Discussion

In addition to the areas of conflict and tension in the previous descriptive part, some aspects of the project lacked some key factors of UCE. The following subsections

discuss how top-down motivation works in UCE.

UCE and the Lack of Key Factors

If we refer to the definition of successful UCE as an activity where all collaborators are satisfied with the research process and the results, community service in ASM Village is still far from being a success (Ahmed & Palermo, 2010; Macaulay et al., 1998). The university side was absolutely satisfied with the activity. They could prepare a report and write an article to disseminate in the university seminar, and then they could fulfill their requirements and obligations as lecturers. After that, the community service activities in ASM Village were discontinued. There was no continuity, which Ahmed and Palermo emphasized is a definition of successful UCE. The village chief was also satisfied because he received the MoU. The only actors who were not satisfied with this activity were the farmers. Ironically, this actor group represented the main actor, that is, the main subject wanting to be empowered and facilitated. They were “the reason” this activity was conducted.

The local farmers were not involved in the decision-making, planning, and designing of the activity since the lecturers who planned this activity focused solely on the university and government requirements to get funding and complete the activity. The activity did not give these lecturers a deep purpose to collaborate and focus on the problem farmers wanted to solve. The village chief faced the same situation; his focus was on obtaining the MoU to get the next government grant.

The farmers, however, admitted that they got no benefits from the community service activity. They came to listen to the training only because of the orders from the village chief. Of course, as recipients of the grant, they must obey the orders of the village chief to get another grant.

Successful UCE should ensure the equal involvement of all parties in every process, the achievement of the goals of all parties, and the long-term sustainability of the partnership. In the ASM Village case, none of these points were met in the community service activities. This failure can be understood by combing through the key factors described in Table 1, one at a time. In general, most of the categories have not been properly implemented. Especially regarding cultural

context factors, the community service group is still weak in understanding the culture and conditions of the local community.

Context

The presentation about cost of production conveyed by the faculty comes from the urban context where they live and work. That is not the community culture. In the village, people still live communally; therefore, many things can be consumed and used together, free of charge. This difference alone explains the lack of initial relationships between the two parties before the activities were undertaken. The group leaders and the village chief were the only parties actively involved in planning the type and topic of community service activities. They met during the process of signing contracts and funding proposals.

In the Indonesian context, cultural patriarchy still exists, visible or invisible, in the formal or informal sphere (Sudarso et al., 2019; Wahyuni & Chariri, 2020; Wayan & Nyoman, 2020). This patriarchal culture is shaped by the social and historical conditions of Indonesia, which include colonization by several countries (especially Japan and the Netherlands), as well as the dogma of Islam that teaches people to respect elders (Azhar et al., 2022). In education, patriarchal culture feeds into the relationship between the academic members of the university. Lecturers see students as empty glasses and senior lecturers have more authority and control than junior lecturers. Finally, in any activity, including UCE, senior lecturers are the ones who have more control over planning and discussing the activities with the village chief. Junior lecturers only act as implementers and must agree upon the plan made by the senior lecturer and the village chief.

Aside from the patriarchal culture, another reason the context was missed is that the farmers who had direct experience raising cows were never asked about their needs and knowledge of calculating the cow’s price. It is as if these academics nullified the knowledge the farmers gained from their daily experiences in raising livestock. Also, because lecturers from the university generally were seen as professionals and experts, they were assumed to be smarter than the local community. The local community has its local knowledge that they feel is best suited to their needs in traditional cow trading transactions. This local reliance on

local knowledge was expressed by a village office employee who agreed with Farmer E that they only used “estimated prices.” It makes a lot more sense for these villagers to have only two or three cows. After all, in accounting standards, accounting information and data must be based on the decision usefulness for stakeholders (Williams & Ravenscroft, 2015).

Infrastructure

In the second factor, all sections (active actors, funding, administration) are quite good, except for the active actors related to the activity of the community service group in exploring the problems and needs of cow farmers. The actors’ activity is problematic, especially from the university side. Lecturers do not actively build relationships and communication with the farmer community. This way of operating is also influenced by classical university culture, which assumes that people from the university always know better and have excellent education (Jongbloed et al., 2008). Consequently, they come to teach the community without asking the needs of the community. They tend to have more power than other societal groups, which allows them to advance the agenda in the community (Dempsey, 2010; Desta & Belay, 2018; Hazelkorn, 2016b; Strier, 2011; Tal et al., 2015). Research, however, indicates the importance of a strong emphasis on the activity and involvement of local communities as key group actors in solving their problems (Desta & Belay, 2018; Hawes et al., 2021). The goal of community engagement is achieved only through the involvement of all parties from the community and institutional sides (Abbott, 1996; Bartel et al., 2019).

Strategy

Meanwhile, the communication part was not fulfilled properly in the strategic factor. Communication relates to the two previous factors: relationship (context) and active actor (infrastructure). The lack of good communication between the community service group and the farmers from the start resulted in ignorance of the needs of the local community. The focus of these lecturers’ community service was only on their own needs in order to fulfill Tri Dharma obligations. This one-sided focus also indicates a weak preparation and synergy between the two parties. Meanwhile, clear results and dissemination can be checked

properly since this is the reporting obligation of the community service group to the funding institution. Of these factors, the cause of community engagement failure occurs when the interaction of the two parties overlaps. Problems always arise when two parties are involved, and these can be perpetuated by lack of understanding of the context, the relationship between the two parties, the active actors, preparation, communication, and strategy. All of these indicators are related to people involved in UCE. To achieve successful UCE, both parties must understand each other, and, on the university side, lecturers must understand that community members are not an empty glass, but each of them is a subject with knowledge (De Weger et al., 2018). In this case, academics know from textbooks, and farmers also know from everyday experience. Both gain knowledge in different ways. Unfortunately, only lecturers’ knowledge from formal education is recognized.

Table 3 concisely depicts the three categories of key factors essential to UCE in their roles for the three categories of actors in ASM Village: the local community, the university, and the intermediary (the government, i.e., the village chief). The components of the categories are described in terms of reasons for success or failure in this study.

Top-Down Motivation in All Parties

Motivation originating from the top, which we refer to as top-down motivation, is present in all participants in UCE activities in ASM Village. On the university side, senior and junior lecturers perform community service driven by obedience to the Tri Dharma rules. The Tri Dharma rules are evaluated in the forms of annual performance reporting, promotions in academic careers, and the continuity certification status of lecturers. Because the emphasis is on the motivation to meet the requirements set by the top government, lecturers are denied the opportunity to “see” the needs of the local community.

On the local community side, the farmers who received the grant came to listen to the training materials from the lecturers because of top-down motivation. They obey the instructions of the village chief, who is authorized to select and evaluate the grantees among the farmers. Instead of criticizing the material presented by the lecturers, the farmers accepted it, although they were also aware that the material was completely

Table 3. The Lack of Key Factors in Successful University –Community Engagement

Categories	University side	Local community side	Intermediary side
Context	<p>In the social class, academics are considered smart and knowledgeable, so when teaching the community, they want to convey material they feel is right and worthy to teach without confirming with the audience whether the material is needed.</p>	<p>The teaching materials did not meet the local community's needs because the lecturers were unaware of the communal living culture of the people of ASM Village, which differs from their individualistic lifestyle in the city.</p>	<p>As a mediator, the village chief and his colleagues did not seek to promote the two distinct cultures between the academics and the local community they lead.</p>
	<p>The community service is planned by the group leader and automatically accepted by the village chief. The village chief does not have the power to choose which group should come and what kind of activities should be carried out with the local communities he leads. They meet during the process of signing contracts and funding proposals.</p>	<p>No relationship is established between the local community and the university before community service begins.</p>	<p>The village chief is the representative of the local community who signs the proposal submitted by the university.</p>
Infrastructure	<p>Senior lecturer as a group leader plays a role as an active actor in the UCE, starting with setting community goals, choosing activities to be carried out, submitting proposals, implementing activities, and reporting on annual seminar activities. Meanwhile, other lecturers who are members of the community service group are just the performers of activities.</p>	<p>The local community acts as a passive actor. They did not have the opportunity to convey their needs at the beginning of the agreement, and their views were not heard during implementation either.</p>	<p>The village chief is responsible for signing the proposal submitted by the university. When community service is held, he instructs all farmers in the village to engage in community service activities. The village chief's function as an intermediary is crucial, as he is both a representative of the local community and a person whose instructions are obeyed by the local community.</p>
	<p>Funding Administration</p>	<p>Community service activities are funded through routine funds from the Indonesian government given to the university to be managed and for administration.</p>	

Table continued on next page

Table 3. Continued

Categories	University side	Local community side	Intermediary side
Preparation	Lecturers, especially group leaders, focus on drafting funding applications to implement UCE.	The local community was not involved at all in the preparation phase.	After the funding application is written by the university, the village chief is asked to sign the application document for approval to implement UCE.
Communication	The academics do not try to establish two-way communication with the local community. As a result, the educational material imparted during community service does not meet the needs of the local community	When the teaching process took place, the farmers realized that the material could not be used. However, they did not communicate this to the village chief or the lecturers who taught them. They came only to sit and listen to the materials as instructed by the village chief.	Although the village chief is aware of the incompatibility of the services provided by the university side with the local community he leads, this is not seen as a problem since his motivation is not the usefulness of the material taught in the community service.
Synergy	Synergies are not built with the local community nor with all team members on the university side itself. UCE implementation focuses on raising funds, completing activities, and reporting to universities by disseminating in annual seminars and government by SISTER application.	As the object of the university-initiated implementation of the UCE, the local community plays a role only in accepting what is offered by the university and agreed upon by the village chief.	The village chief only focuses on signing the MoU and collects local community members to participate in community service activities.
Clear outcome	The leader of the community service group formulated the expected outcomes in the proposal regardless of the needs of the local community.	They knew nothing about the purpose of the UCE activity.	The village chief assumed that UCE was beneficial for the sustainability of the next grants from the government.
Dissemination	Conduct an annual dissemination to report the results of the service activities without inviting the local community to listen to the presentation.	They were never informed about the results of the community service activities.	Even the village chief was never invited to hear the results or sent the report of community service activities.

useless in their daily life. This awareness is comparable to Lecturer B’s awareness when teaching tax material. Lecturer B was aware that the material was useless for the farmers, and the farmers were aware that what they were listening to was useless. However, the farmers still had to sit and listen to the material. They received a cow grant by the decision of the village chief; therefore, they bore the “burden” of following the instruction of the village chief, especially when it came to the continuity of grants in the following years.

The village chief was the same; he was passionate about the UCE due to the need for MoUs with the university. He can use the MoU file to apply for the next grant. Getting the next grant, of course, is also related to the village chief’s performance. Getting a grant from the central government is a feat.

This top-down motivational cycle occurs without any correction. Each party completes what motivates them (Table 4). The lecturers fulfilled the Tri Dharma obligations, the cow farmers carried out the village chief’s orders, and the village chief obtained the MoU of the UCE file. Each goal was achieved according to their respective motivation. However, the original goal of UCE itself was not achieved.

UCE becomes a mere ritual without the awareness and activeness of the people involved. There is no postcritical reflection, although reflection has a critical point in UCE (Saltmarsh & Johnson, 2020). After completing the community service, lecturers

will return to the city and have an academic dissemination ritual at the university to report what they have done. As usual, the dissemination would be held without inviting the local community. Community engagement as a part of community development has been seen as a work “to-do-list” because of the regulation from the central government.

There are no sustainable synergies and no local community empowerment because the UCE is determined from above without awareness of the root parties who carry out UCE. This is precisely what Nikkhah and Redzuan (2009) have reported; since regulation is made by the central government, the staff who are far away from the central government may experience a lack of motivation, passive involvement, and misunderstanding about the goal of the policy made.

Limitation

This research was conducted on a single case, meaning the result cannot be generalized. The single case comes from a public university where the implementation of UCE was only 24 years old when the UCE was carried out in ASM Village. Although 24 years is not a short time, this period is not as long as the implementation of UCE in Indonesia, which has reached 60 years. Therefore, the most important limitation is that the failure of UCE, in this case, cannot be generalized to the case of a large campus in Indonesia that already has an international reputation and has long had a more stable university

Table 4. Top-Down Motivation in All Actors

No.	Actor	Top-down motivation of CE
1	University side	Component of the Tri Dharma obligations required in the following matters: 1. Promotion in lecturer’s academic career 2. Annual performance report 3. Lecturer certification
2	Local community side	Carry out orders from the village chief, who has the power to determine who is the recipient of the grant among farmers.
3	Intermediary side	Requires an MoU of the CE file with the university.

structure. In addition, this case was taken in a city far from the Indonesian capital on the island of Java. The majority of large and well-known universities are located in Java. Therefore, this research case comes from a campus outside the dominant area of Indonesia in terms of government and education. Future research can raise broader issues by looking at cases in big campuses in Indonesia to acquire better comprehensive knowledge.

This study reveals a significant dearth of university actors who comprehend societal challenges and needs adequately. To address this issue, a viable solution involves inviting a third party, such as a local NGO, that possesses an in-depth understanding of the community's needs and concerns. This approach is supported by some previous exemplary practices, as demonstrated by higher education institutions' collaboration with local community service organizations to perform UCE (Boodram & Thomas, 2022; Jackson & Marques, 2019; Málovics et al., 2022).

Also, the university can provide professional development programs to enhance critical thinking and reflective practices among lecturers. Additionally, other strategies could be implemented to enhance positive outcomes at the community level, such as conducting mandatory questionnaires to assess the needs and satisfaction of community actors. For instance, Kindred and Petrescu (2015) conducted a study to assess and measure the satisfaction of community actors through mandatory questionnaires before and after UCE activities. The positive outcomes of these assessments could influence future grant funding for both the university and the village. Nevertheless, these preliminary recommendations require further research to generate more applicable and practical technical guidance in a top-down UCE context.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the process of a top-down motivational approach in the UCE process. By analyzing the result of interviews and direct observation, this study has found that the evaluation system in the top-down approach functions only to see whether the service activity is complete. It is not to critically evaluate the components of successful implementation of UCE. Finally, the lecturers do not feel responsible for the success of UCE as formulated in the ideal

definition of UCE but focus only on whether the activity is completed. Therefore, the responsibility for the success of the UCE comes only from the personal moral consciousness of the lecturer, not from the collective consciousness driven by the government as the policymaker for the implementation of the UCE.

One crucial point to highlight is that the system enabled individuals to attain their respective goals at the group level while failing to achieve the overarching objective of the UCE. It is essential to underscore that this outcome does not stem from deliberate misconduct or neglect by the actors involved but rather from structural constraints that assign responsibility solely to the individual level. As a result, each actor pursued their self-interest, unhindered by any obligation to prioritize the collective good or community-level benefits.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that not only does the university provide service to the community to fulfill its obligation to the government, but also the local community, which is not officially part of government staff, is driven by top-down motivation. Community members were obliged to follow the village chief's orders to participate in community service. As an intermediary between the university and the community, the village chief is also driven by a top-down motivation because he needs an MoU to receive another grant from the central government. The empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding of how UCE fails in a country that applies top-down government to implement its regulation at the grassroots level.



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The Civic-Minded Graduate Construct in the Context of the Engaged University—A Case Study of a University From Slovakia

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Abstract

Our exploratory study analyzes the civic-mindedness of university graduates in an engaged university with emphasis on Central and Eastern Europe, particularly Slovakia. The research sample consisted of 452 graduates of the second level of university studies. To map and analyze civic-mindedness, we used the Civic-Minded Graduate Questionnaire (CMG; Steinberg et al., 2011). At the selected university, graduates scored the highest in skills and dispositions and the lowest in behavioral intentions. Furthermore, we found that those graduates who volunteered during their university studies had statistically significant greater development in the areas knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behavioral intentions, as well as in CMG scale overall, than those who did not participate in volunteering. Our study showed that the CMG concept is usable in countries with different contexts of the development of the university environment and the idea of citizenship and can help map the level of civic-mindedness among university graduates.

Keywords: engaged university, civic-mindedness, civic-minded graduate, Slovakia



University–community engagement has emerged as a priority in the European Commission’s (2017) renewed agenda for higher education. Although actions that link a university with the broader society are not a novelty, community engagement in higher education is a new way of articulating and structuring how higher education interacts with the broader world. The Commission’s renewed agenda emphasizes that higher education must play its part in facing up to Europe’s social and democratic challenges and should engage by integrating local, regional, and societal issues into curricula, involving the local community in teaching and research projects, providing adult learning, and communicating and building links with local communities. As stated in the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee (2015) in *Engaged Universities Shaping Europe*, the development of universities into knowledge hubs in society fuels discussions on the

essential characteristics of higher education on which day-to-day practices must be based. A common trend of these discussions seems to be the opening-up of higher education to public and private stakeholders, the students’ opinions and interests, and cross-fertilization between research and education and greater cooperation and internationalization. One of the manifestations of these changes in the university environment is the emphasis on developing the civic competencies of university graduates or the formation of civic-minded graduates. One structure that connects with this focus is the civic-mindedness construct. Civic-mindedness is distinct from orientations that emphasize oneself, family, or a corporate or profit motive (Steinberg et al., 2011). The civic-minded graduate (CMG) construct provides a set of common learning objectives that can guide the design, implementation, and assessment of curricular and cocurricular civic engagement programs (Bringle, Hahn, & Hatcher, 2019).

Our exploratory study aims to analyze the civic-mindedness of university graduates in an engaged university with an emphasis on Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), particularly Slovakia.

University Social Responsibility and the Engaged University

The changes in today's society related to globalization and the growth of the knowledgeable society are reflected in the transformation of organizations and institutions, not excluding universities. As stated in the document *Magna Charta Universitatum 2020* (Observatory Magna Charta Universitatum, 2020), the potential for higher education to be a positive agent of change and social transformation endures. Current changes require the global academic community to identify responsibilities and commitments vital to universities worldwide in the 21st century. Universities acknowledge that they are responsible for engaging with and responding to the aspirations and challenges of the world and the communities they serve to benefit humanity and contribute to sustainability.

These considerations of new roles and tasks of universities are reflected in concepts such as the third mission, social responsibility, public engagement, civic engagement, community engagement, social role/dimension, innovation, outreach, transfer, and translation. There is no unambiguous agreement in defining individual concepts; it can be stated that they are significantly contextually defined. As Vasilescu et al. (2010) stated, social responsibility has become an increasingly important concept within the European Union. According to the green paper *Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility* (European Commission, 2001), being socially responsible means not only fulfilling legal expectations but also going beyond compliance and investing more into human capital, the environment, and relations with stakeholders. As stated by Wallace and Resch (2017), university social responsibility (USR) itself is still at an early stage of development. The critical importance of social responsibility in the case of universities stems from the fact that universities represent the centers of intelligence, knowledge, and creative activity and play a key role in society's scientific, cultural, social, and economic development. Chen et al. (2015) saw USR as the philosophy of a university to use an ethical approach

to develop and engage with the local and global community to sustain social, ecological, environmental, technical, and economic development. USR sees universities taking responsibility for the impacts of their decisions and activities on society and the environment through transparent and ethical strategies. They understand such practices should be promoted and encouraged among students and staff in a way that celebrates and promotes the values of justice, equity, participative democracy, social responsibility, and sustainability (Amorim et al., 2015).

Although USR is a broader concept, activities connected with civic engagement are essential to a USR approach (Wallace & Resch, 2017). Holland (2001) defined the engaged university as an institution committed to direct interaction with external constituencies and communities through the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, expertise, resources, and information. Bridger and Alter (2007) stated that the engaged university works in partnership with local people to facilitate a broad range of community interaction that fosters individual and social well-being. The perspective of an engaged university emphasizes that the university responds not only to changes in the higher education environment but also through mutual engagement with different organizations at different geographical scales (Goddard & Vallance, 2013). As a common denominator of an engaged university, several authors (for example, Bridger & Alter, 2007; Holland, 2001; Jongbloed et al., 2008; Nicotera et al., 2011) have emphasized the need for reciprocity, respect, and responsibility between the university and the community. In this context, Bridger and Alter (2007) distinguished between development of the community and development in the community. According to Holland (2001), the work of the engaged campus is responsive to (and respectful of) community-identified needs, opportunities, and goals in ways appropriate to the campus's mission and academic strengths. This engagement is not one-way but based on mutually beneficial relationships and considering community needs (Nicotera et al., 2011). A civic university goes beyond teaching, academic research, and knowledge. It engages actively with the public and the surrounding society at all levels. As stated by Jongbloed et al. (2008), this approach makes community engagement challenging to separate from traditional teaching and research activ-

ity—they cannot be put in a separate box. Engaged universities are primarily expected to directly tackle community issues such as poverty, inequality, or health problems and thus are more directly linked to the concepts of civic engagement and social responsibility (Watson et al., 2011).

Civic-Mindedness

Despite the strong emphasis on economic value and employability in public policy in many countries, Kreber (2016) stated there is a parallel discourse that highlights not the economic but the social and, more importantly, the public purposes of higher education. The argument underlying this discourse is that higher education plays a crucial role in forming citizens (often conceptualized as global citizens) and, by extension, is a vehicle for creating a more democratic and fair society. In connection with this discourse, we are asking what we should consider a “good” or “ideal” university graduate and, by extension, “ideal professional practice” in society. The concept of civic-mindedness or the civic-minded graduate offers the answer.

Civic-mindedness is a multifaceted and multidimensional concept comprising cognitive, affective, and conative elements. According to Bringle et al. (2011), a civic-minded graduate is comprised of a set of knowledge outcomes (cognitive), dispositions (affective), skills, behavioral intentions, and behaviors. Weber and Weber (2010) presented three dimensions of civic-mindedness. The first is self-efficacy to contribute time and service to the public good. The second dimension is civic participation, which can be defined as the desire to support the less fortunate by volunteering time and money to those in need. The third dimension in developing civic-mindedness is the role universities should play in this process. Kober (2003) named three criteria that characterize a civic-minded individual: a sense of belonging to a community (the emotional dimension of civic-mindedness), orientation to the common good (the normative aspect of civic-mindedness; as a normative idea, the common good is tied to values like justice and human dignity), and a willingness to work for the community (the practical dimension of civic-mindedness requires that individuals know how they can get involved and also that they are allowed to participate). A willingness to get involved is inherent in civic-mindedness. However, if

the community is to benefit from this willingness, the individual must have specific abilities for dealing with others: that is, civic skills.

Research studies from the North American context (Billig & Good, 2013; Bringle, Hahn, & Hatcher, 2019; Bringle & Steinberg, 2010; Crandall et al., 2013; Palombaro et al., 2017; Pike et al., 2014; Steinberg et al., 2011) connected with the concept of a civic-minded graduate are mostly focused on the impact of service-learning on students and graduates.

In the European context, we can find a similar concept to civic-mindedness prepared by the Council of Europe (2016) called “competences for democratic culture.” This concept provided a model for civic competencies for learners if they are to participate effectively in a culture of democracy and live in culturally diverse democratic societies. The framework consists of 20 competencies for learners focused on values, attitudes, skills, knowledge, and critical understanding and can also be used in designing programs in engaged universities.

Contexts of Engaged University and Civic-Mindedness in Central and Eastern Europe and Slovakia

Although the development of the concepts mentioned above can be considered highly relevant for higher education, the application of these concepts into practice and, subsequently, the development of a civic-minded graduate is strongly determined by historical, economic, social, cultural, and political contexts (Aramburuzabala et al., 2019). It seems almost impossible to name common characteristics for European models in this area; we find differences between countries not only of Eastern and Western Europe but also between countries that, at first glance, share a common historical experience of communism and socialism. As several studies have shown (Coffé & Lippe, 2009; Vandor et al., 2017), the ideas of communism and socialism found different forms of application in these countries and took various political and economic structures and social paths of development after the fall of communism.

The term “third mission” or “third task” of universities does not appear in any strategic document in Slovakia before 2014 (Matulayová, 2013). Strategic documents also do not mention the “new mis-

sion” or civic engagement of universities. Universities tend to focus on industry and the private sector. Knowledge is considered a commodity, education, and research service. The Slovak Republic has adopted an approach that pushes the economic dimension of higher education to the forefront. Academic capitalism is striking in all aspects of government policy affecting higher education, science, and research—from organization and funding to quality and evaluation of outcomes for future school development. A current conceptual document dealing with the development of higher education, which has been in force since 2018, is the National Programme for the Development of Education. This document supporting quality and accessible education for Slovakia (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, 2018) mentions, among other things, the implementation of tools to support the implementation of the third mission of universities (p.51). However, this measure is not specified in any detail.

The absence of conceptual and legislative support for implementing the above concepts does not mean universities do not carry out any activities in this area. However, it is primarily a bottom-up process, implemented and led by active teachers, without systematic institutional support or strategic and long-term plans to build partnerships with the community. It is not easy for “traditional” higher education institutions to take on the role of a committed university and to promote student participation in civic engagement and social responsibility. Many of them are still not open to cooperation with public and nongovernmental organizations in the region where they operate and do not have sufficiently developed capacities to solve local, regional, or national challenges and problems.

Coffé and Lippe (2009) stated that the experience with communism makes definitions of citizenship in CEE particularly interesting. In communism, citizens were not faced with choices; they were part of a mass mobilization demanded by a totalitarian regime that controlled most spheres of life and repressed all forms of autonomous nonstate activity. The tradition of civic activism was forcibly interrupted in individual totalitarian regimes, and the activities of all forms of independent organizations were purposefully and systematically reduced or subject to strict control. Communist rulers

tended to dissolve civil society through a diversity of means: state control over any type of association, including, for example, labor unions, women’s associations, and even chess clubs; complete control over media; short and unattractive opening hours for restaurants, pubs, and any other place where people could meet and talk; state control over citizens’ time through mandatory, unpaid supplementary work (sometimes called voluntary or patriotic) and through the obligation to participate in ritual party meetings. Public space was perceived as the room of lies, of the official fake reality, with subsequent deep consequences including a postcommunist lack of trust in any public activity (Voicu & Voicu, 2009). However, beyond the state’s policy on values, a wide variety of unprescribed, practical solidarity grew among the population. These informal types of civic-mindedness served mainly to cope with the problems induced by the nation’s economy of scarcity, and they vanished relatively quickly after the revolution. Many people experienced the disappearance of this solidarity as a loss. That these particular forms of civic-mindedness did not survive indicates that whatever solidarity a state-imposed collective orientation was able to engender was mainly a matter of joining forces against the state rather than drawing together with one’s fellow citizens. It originated more from small communities opposing the state than from forming bonds with other groups (Kober, 2003). The lack of participative values, mistrust in democracy and governments, less developed entrepreneurial values, self-responsibility, autonomy, and individual planning were identified as the main discontinuities between Western capitalism and the Eastern European cultures (Voicu & Voicu, 2009).

After the 1990s, national education policy frameworks that support students’ civic engagement and civic-mindedness as part of their (higher) education have unfortunately not been a priority. Learning about democracy, human rights, political participation, civic engagement, volunteering, social responsibility, and activism has been predominantly left to the not-for-profit organizations’ efforts, leaving public educational institutions on the side (Culum Ilic et al., 2021). It is therefore no surprise that many EU reports as well as national studies show that political literacy and civic participation in many CEE countries is much lower than in other European countries with substantial democratic history (see, for ex-

ample, European Union Open Data Portal, 2017, 2020).

In addition to participation, civic engagement development is determined by an understanding of citizenship and the citizen's active role in a society with its own specificities in Slovakia. Despite the limitations that the communist regime engendered in all areas of society, and in the field of education and civil society, most people in Slovakia today think that socialism led people to a more moral way of behavior and that people helped each other more; they showed more solidarity with each other and were closer (FOCUS Marketing and Social Research, 2018). According to Strečanský (2020), this favorable view is the result not only of nostalgic optimism and persistent stereotypes passed down from generation to generation, but also a lack of explanation in families, the media, and education about the objective reality of the communist regime. Distortion in people's thinking is also reflected in the perception of the role of the welfare state and solidarity, which also influence the perceived position of higher education in society. A significant part of the public in Slovakia still believes in the ability of the state to provide the achieved level of social security and thinks that the state should play an essential role concerning their living conditions. At the same time, many are skeptical of voluntary solidarity and the ability of private providers in the social system (Šimek & Gonda, 2020). In a representative survey of the FOCUS agency (2018), up to 69% of respondents stated that people are unwilling to help themselves in an emergency voluntarily, so the state must take care of them. The prevailing view is that volunteers would not be needed if the state fulfilled its responsibilities. In 1998, this opinion was held by 55% of respondents (Woleková, 2002), and in 2003, 74% (Bútorová, 2004). There is no shift in opinion in the young generation either. In a 2017 survey (Brozmanová Gregorová et al., 2018) conducted among young people aged 15 to 30, up to 54% of respondents agreed with this statement.

This context provides a framework for understanding how the CMG concept can be grasped in the university environment in Slovakia. As stated by Steinberg et al. (2011), the domains of the CMG are all rooted in an American understanding of civic learning. The degree to which the generalizability of the CMG model is appropriate or warrants

modification when considering educational systems in other countries will need to be conceptually and empirically evaluated. To contribute to the academic discussion and develop a better understanding of the specific aspects of CMG in Slovak conditions, we explore various issues in our empirical study to answer the following research questions:

- What is the level of CMG and its subscales for graduates of a selected Slovak university?
- Are there differences between graduates who have volunteered during their university studies and those who have not volunteered?

We conducted our research at a selected university as part of the process of institutionalizing a service-learning strategy.

Methods

The research sample consisted of 452 graduates of master's studies in the 2018 academic year. A total of 6,951 students studied at the selected university that year. The research sample selection was random; the questionnaire was distributed to all graduates on the first dates of the final exams ($N = 773$). Its completion was anonymous and voluntary; by completing it, respondents agreed to participate in the research. The research sample was dominated by women (78.5%), and one respondent did not state their gender. Compared to the primary sample, 72.1% of women completed their studies at the university that year. Graduates of all colleges of the university were represented in the research; the percentage of individual colleges was as follows: education ($n = 123$; 27.2%), humanities ($n = 64$; 14.2%), political science and international relations ($n = 62$; 13.7%), natural sciences ($n = 52$; 11.5%), economics ($n = 115$; 25.4%), law ($n = 36$; 8.0%). More than 50% of graduates from each college participated in the research, and their distribution within individual colleges copies the basic sample.

We used the Civic-Minded Graduate Questionnaire (Steinberg et al., 2011; Slovak translation Brozmanová & Heinzová, 2018) to map and analyze civic-mindedness. The construct of CMG consists of 10 domains clustered by knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behavioral intentions:

- *Knowledge* covers understanding ways to contribute to society; understanding how knowledge and

skills in at least one discipline are relevant to society's issues; and understanding of current events and the complexity of modern society's problems locally, nationally, or globally.

- *Skills* include the ability to communicate (written and oral) with others, listen to divergent points of view, understand the importance of, and work with, others from diverse backgrounds; also, appreciation of and sensitivity to diversity in a pluralistic society, ability to work with others, including those with diverse opinions, and work across differences to come to an agreement or solve a problem.
- *Dispositions* are about understanding the importance of serving others and being actively involved in communities to address social issues; having a desire to take personal action, with a realistic view that the action will produce the desired results; and feeling a sense of responsibility and commitment to using the knowledge gained in higher education to serve others.
- *Behavioral intentions* are described as a stated intention to be personally involved in community service in the future. (Steinberg et al., 2011)

The original questionnaire consists of 30 items, and the Slovak version of the questionnaire contained 28 items (two items were excluded from the Slovak version, as they were semantically the same in the Slovak context), which are assessed on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*). The items are formulated so that the graduate always comments on whether studying at a particular university has helped him/her with the given knowledge, skills, or disposition. CMG administration takes approximately 7 to 10 minutes. Cronbach's alpha of the CMG scale was .96, indicating good internal consistency across items.

Our study has shown that the CMG concept is also usable in countries with different contexts for developing the university environment and the idea of citizenship. Of course, we are aware of the limitations of our research related to using a hitherto non-standardized CMG tool. Therefore, we veri-

fied the presence of the so-called common method bias using this measurement tool, and we found that the data of our research sample do not skew the results in connection with the use of a nonstandardized questionnaire because the total deviation extracted using Harman's one-factor test is 42.7% and is lower than the recommended limit of 50% (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

To measure the involvement in volunteering, we asked, "During your studies, did you participate in volunteering (unpaid activities for the benefit of other people or nonprofit organizations outside your household that were not part of your studies or practice)?" It could include different types of volunteering involvement—one-time and long-term—but they were not part of their study duties. In the Slovak context this was an important explanation, because many people do not distinguish between volunteering and internship or practice education.

Based on descriptive indicators (coefficients of skewness and sharpness), we did not notice a significant deviation from the normal in the monitored variables of the CMG questionnaire, so we used parametric procedures in the statistical analysis.

Results

We approximate the variables of the CMG questionnaire using descriptive characteristics in Table 1.

The total CMG score for graduates reached an average of 3.73. The skills subscale was rated the highest (3.90; $SD = 1.02$), and the behavioral intentions were the lowest (3.50; $SD = 1.01$).

According to the results in Table 2, we can observe that in all subscales of the CMG, as well as in the CMG scale overall, the highest score was achieved in the College of Political Science and International Relations, whereas the lowest score in most CMG indicators was achieved in the College of Law. The last place in the dispositions and behavioral intentions subscales is shared with the College of Humanities. We verified the differences between the colleges in the indicators of the CMG questionnaire by means of ANOVA, which confirmed the statistical significance of the differences between the colleges only in the skills subscales. We verified the differences between the colleges through the least significant difference procedure, which showed that the statistical significance of

Table 1. Descriptive Indicators of the CMG Questionnaire and Its Subscales for Graduates (*N* = 452)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis	Minimum	Maximum
Knowledge	3.69	.91	3.78	-.11	-.31	1.3	6
Skills	3.90	1.02	4.06	-.40	-.47	1.2	6
Dispositions	3.84	1.00	3.89	-.30	-.51	1.1	6
Behavioral intentions	3.50	1.01	3.67	.02	-.42	1.0	6
CMG scale overall	3.73	.89	3.78	-.21	-.36	1.5	6

Table 2. Basic Descriptive Indicators of CMG by College

College	CMG scale overall	Knowledges	Skills	Dispositions	Behavioral intentions
	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>
Education (<i>n</i> = 123)	3.82 .99	3.77 .96	3.97 1.12	3.96 1.08	3.57 1.13
Humanities (<i>n</i> = 64)	3.64 1.00	3.65 1.02	3.84 1.08	3.64 1.12	3.43 1.08
Political science (<i>n</i> = 62)	3.92 .86	3.84 .97	4.14 1.06	3.97 .94	3.75 1.03
Natural sciences (<i>n</i> = 52)	3.62 .89	3.51 .91	3.76 1.05	3.77 .98	3.45 1.00
Economics (<i>n</i> = 115)	3.71 .75	3.72 .77	3.92 .84	3.84 .92	3.38 .84
Law (<i>n</i> = 36)	3.51 .77	3.43 .80	3.47 .87	3.73 .90	3.43 .85

differences in the score achieved in the skills subscale is between graduates of the College of Law and the College of Education, College of Political Science and International Relations, and College of Economics to the detriment of graduates of the College of Law. Specifically, it is a subscale of B.2. Skills: Diversity, which maps the understanding of the importance of diversity, as well as the ability of graduates to work with it and be sensitive to diversity. Results of statistical testing with the least significant difference procedure are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

The second hypothesis that we verified with our research was whether the volunteer experience of graduates is related to their civic-mindedness. We divided the research sample into two groups—those who had volunteer experience during their studies (*n*

= 60) and those who did not have such experience (*n* = 312). The remaining 80 graduates answered the question “I don't know.” In Table 5, we present the percentage of graduates' involvement in volunteering according to their affiliation with the colleges. Table 6 shows the results of the statistical comparison using a *t*-test between the group that was involved in volunteering and the group that was not.

According to the results of the statistical verification of differences between graduates who were involved in volunteering activities during their university studies and those who were not, there is a statistically significant difference in all subscales as well as in the CMG scale overall, with a moderate to strong material significance. All the differences were in favor of those who were involved in volunteering.

Table 3. Differences in the Skills Subscale Between Different Graduates

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>LSD</i>
Law (n = 36)	3.47	.87	Education (n = 123)	3.97	1.12	-.50*
			Political Science (n = 62)	4.14	1.06	-.67*
			Economics (n = 115)	3.92	.84	-.45*

p* < .05.Table 4. Differences in the Subscale B.2. Skills: Diversity Between Different Graduates**

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>LSD</i>
Law (n = 36)	3.24	.92	Education (n = 123)	3.88	1.14	-.64*
			Political Science (n = 62)	3.96	1.13	-.72*
			Economics (n = 115)	3.81	.91	-.57*

p* < .05.Table 5. Involvement of Graduates in Volunteering During Their Studies by College**

College	<i>n</i>	%	Total graduates
Education	24	19.5	123
Humanities	7	10.9	64
Political Science and International Relations	5	8.0	62
Natural Sciences	3	5.8	52
Economics	18	15.6	115
Law	3	8.3	36
Whole university	60	13.3	452

Table 6. Difference in CMG According to Graduates' Involvement in Volunteering

	Volunteering	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	d-index
Knowledge	Yes	4.29	1.03	5.196	.83*
	No	3.55	.87		
Skills	Yes	4.36	1.04	3.803	.54*
	No	3.79	1.03		
Dispositions	Yes	4.30	1.07	3.873	.58*
	No	3.73	.98		
Behavioral intentions	Yes	4.06	1.07	4.681	.71*
	No	3.36	.99		
CMG scale overall	Yes	4.25	1.00	4.660	.73*
	No	3.61	.87		

**p* < .001.

Discussion

CMG mapping at the selected university showed that graduates achieved a CMG scale overall (3.73; $SD = .89$) for the entire university. We can compare these data with studies carried out in the American context. In the first study by Bringle, Hahn, and Hatcher (2019) the overall CMG score for students ($N = 180$) averaged 4.32 ($SD = 1.03$), whereas, in the second study ($N = 250$), the average score was 4.15 ($SD = 0.92$). The measured values in the overall scale are a few points higher than in our case. Graduates scored the highest at the mapped Slovak university in skills (3.90; $SD = 1.02$) and dispositions (3.84; $SD = 1.0$) and the lowest in behavioral intentions (3.50; $SD = 1.01$). We can therefore state that during their studies, they further developed the dimensions of civic-mindedness related to communication and listening, diversity, consensus-building, valuing community engagement, self-efficacy, and social trustee of knowledge.

Within the colleges, the college focused on political science and international relations scored the highest on the CMG overall scale; the highest score achieved at this college was in the subscale skills (4.14; $SD = 1.06$). It can be stated that the result reflects the specifics of preparation in study programs at this college, which prepares students to work in an international environment full of diversity, where communication skills are essential, as is the ability to work with different people in different settings.

The lowest score on the CMG scale overall was achieved by the College of Law; at the same time, the graduates of the College of Law have a statistically significant lower development of understanding of the importance of and the ability to work with others from diverse backgrounds and appreciation of and sensitivity to diversity in a pluralistic society, in contrast to graduates from the Colleges of Education, Political Science and International Relations, and Economics.

In verifying the relationship between the involvement of graduates in volunteering during their university studies and the results in the CMG, we found that those graduates who participated in volunteering during their university studies have statistically significant greater development in knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behavioral intentions, as well as in CMG scale overall, than those who did not volunteer. Our findings are comparable to the findings

of other authors, especially those that do not focus only on verifying the development of the concept of civic-mindedness using the service-learning strategy. Fenzel and Peyrot's (2005) alumni study showed that participation in cocurricular service was positively related with alumni attitudes toward social and personal responsibility as well as alumni involvement in postcollege community service. Bowman et al. (2015) found that participation in ethnic group organizations on campus, which often involves service, was positively associated with civic engagement 6 years later. Vogelgesang and Astin (2000) using data from more than 22,000 students, found that students participating in service only (not connected to a course but assuming some informal reflection was involved) showed learning gains in civic outcomes similar to those who had course-based service-learning when compared with students who did not participate in service at all. However, those who volunteer during college are more likely to continue to do so after graduation than those who do not. Richard et al. (2016) showed the development of professional orientations that integrate civic identity, and work was associated with current civic action. Concerning the nature of the service activities, Bowman's (2011) meta-analysis found that face-to-face interactions with diverse groups resulted in favorable and significant effects on civic attitudes, behavioral intentions, and behaviors compared to classroom-based educational experiences. Similarly, Levine's (2003, in Bringle, Brown, et al., 2019) research found that simply involving students in community-service activities was insufficient for developing civic learning and skills.

As stated by Bringle et al. (2011), the developmental model for the CMG is grounded in the expectation that civic-mindedness can be represented as the integration of (1) the self with both (2) civic activities and (3) student activities. The degree of overlapping of this dimension is indicative of the degree of integration. From the perspective of this model, the task of college and staff is to design and refine interventions that will lead to increasing the intersection of the three dimensions—in other words, to result in greater integration.

Conclusion

On the one hand, we can see that the development of the concept of a committed university and the emphasis on the formation

of civic-mindedness or civic competencies is obvious in the European context. On the other hand, the actual application practice in different countries can be very different. The relationship between higher education and society can be seriously challenged when a country, like Slovakia, at the national level does not support this relationship intentionally and when citizens have no consensual understanding of what constitutes civic and active citizenship in the democratic context. We agree with Thomson et al. (2010) that different political systems call for other citizenship skills. The design of pedagogies to develop these skills will also need to be tailored to the particular political and social context. Nevertheless, some fundamental values (e.g., reciprocity, mutual benefit, democratic processes, and community voice) may transcend geographical, historical, political, and economic boundaries.

Although the CMG was developed within the context of community service-learning programs, its implications apply to programs at other institutions of higher education that intend to contribute to civic growth (Bringle et al., 2011). CMG is a broader conceptualization because it includes how educational activities inform and contribute to personal and civic growth and how education can provide individuals with a focused sense of civic direction and purpose. CMG can be considered as a preferable superordinate construct for civic-engagement outcomes encompassing specific knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behavioral intentions in the civic domain (Bringle, Hahn, & Hatcher,

2019). Bringle and Wall (2020) presented different possibilities for using CMG, which also apply in the Slovak context.

How to encourage civic growth in students, including those for whom the civic domain is underdeveloped or has little or no integration into their identity, presents an essential educational challenge (Bringle & Wall, 2020). However, the fact that civic-mindedness needs to be intentionally developed is not yet sufficiently discussed in the Slovak university environment. Although most universities state in their strategic intentions, among other things, the formation of a community of responsible graduates, many institutions seem to assume that this intention will bear fruit in the university environment somehow automatically, without intentional action. Involvement in volunteering, as evidenced by our results, may be one way, but as Bringle et al. (2015) reported, no amount of learning and thinking about democracy and no amount of activity (e.g., community service) in communities will result in the development of democratic civic skills and civic identity without democratic partnerships. Boyle-Baise (2002) also pointed out that a charitable task will probably not generate insights for social change. Partnerships between students and community members that contain democratic qualities are critical and necessary for the full development of civic lessons about democratic processes and for cognitive learning to be clarified (Bringle et al., 2015).



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How Physical Science Doctoral Students View and Value their Involvement in Educational Outreach in Graduate School

Anne McAlister and Sarah Lilly

Abstract

Educational outreach can benefit both the broader community and scientists themselves while fulfilling the service mission of many universities and funding programs. Involvement in educational outreach can benefit doctoral students, via improved teaching and classroom management skills, increased experimental design skills, strengthened sense of identity and belonging in science, and refined science communication skills. However, doctoral students are frequently encouraged to prioritize research over teaching or educational outreach. Understanding the complexities of their perceptions of educational outreach is important for supporting all doctoral students to receive the benefits of participating in this activity. In this study, we interviewed eight physical science doctoral students who participated in an educational outreach program at a medium-sized public research university. Cross-case analysis revealed that participants viewed both benefits and burdens to participating in educational outreach and reported feeling that outreach was less valued by their institution, their community, and, in turn, themselves.

Keywords: outreach, identity, higher education, doctoral education

Increasing and strengthening the communication of scientific research in accessible ways through educational outreach can benefit the broader community and scientists themselves (Brownell et al., 2013; Bubela et al., 2009; Komoroske et al., 2015) through increased science literacy and potential implications for public research funding (Clark et al., 2016). In this study, we operationalize educational outreach as an activity that provides a learning experience to a population that traditionally does not have access to that form of learning. National calls have been made to increase scientist participation in educational outreach and related professional development opportunities in science education and communication (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2011; AAMC-HHMI, 2009; Anderson et al., 2011), as scientists must engage with their community in order to improve science literacy and the quality of science education (e.g., Alberts, 1991; Colwell & Kelly, 1999). Further, service, such as educational out-

reach, is central to the mission of many universities and funding agencies, such as the National Science Foundation, which values broader impacts (e.g., NSF, 2003; NASA, 2008). Despite calls for increased focus on educational outreach, efforts toward outreach and teaching are frequently devalued compared to research responsibilities in academia (Bartel et al., 2003; Moskal & Skokan, 2011), exemplified by the faculty reward structure that emphasizes research excellence (Laursen et al., 2012; O'Meara & Jaeger, 2006).

Doctoral students in particular need opportunities to develop science communication skills as well as scholarly interests aligned with issues in their communities or larger societal needs (e.g., Gaff et al., 2000; Walker, 2004; Weisbuch, 2004). Involvement in educational outreach helps doctoral students achieve these aims through promoting professional growth, application of knowledge, and connections with the community (O'Meara & Jaeger, 2006). Doctoral

students interested in pursuing careers in academia may need opportunities to engage in teaching and outreach in addition to the research work that is commonly emphasized (Laursen et al., 2012; O'Meara & Jaeger, 2006). However, academic structures that prioritize research send conflicting messages regarding the importance of service at the institution, and graduate students may feel that they too must devalue educational outreach in order to succeed in academia (Laursen et al., 2012).

In this study, we examined physical science doctoral students' perceptions of serving as educators as they volunteered in an educational outreach program called University Science Camp (USC; pseudonym). The graduate students volunteered time each week to design and facilitate fun and engaging hands-on science activities for traditionally underserved elementary students in their local community to increase engagement and interest in science. To inform understandings of doctoral students' valuation of educational outreach and identification with an educator role, we used a case study methodology in which we qualitatively analyzed semistructured interviews with the doctoral student participants in an effort to preserve the participants' voices and present thick descriptions.

Background

Graduate student participation in educational outreach has been examined previously (e.g., Clark et al., 2016; Houck et al., 2014; Laursen et al., 2012; Moskal & Skokan, 2011; deKoven & Trumbull, 2002; Wellnitz et al., 2002). Here we review the benefits and challenges revealed in these prior studies and the ways in which graduate students are shown to balance both when engaging in educational outreach.

Benefits to Graduate Students

Many studies have demonstrated how outreach programs led by university students can lead to improved attitudes toward science and increased interest for the K-12 students being served (e.g., Clark et al., 2016; Heinze et al., 1995; Houck et al., 2014; Koehler et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2007). Importantly, educational outreach programs can also benefit the graduate students who serve as educators through improved experimental design skills (Feldon et al., 2011), strengthened sense of identity and sense of belonging in their field of science (Rethman

et al., 2020), and refined science communication skills (Clark et al., 2016; deKoven & Trumbull, 2002; Koehler et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2007). For example, Clark et al. investigated an outreach program in which doctoral students presented their research (in simplified form) to middle school students. Participation in the program improved the doctoral students' science communication skills and gave them new perspectives on their research.

Participation in educational outreach may improve graduate students' teaching and classroom management skills (Laursen et al., 2012). Specifically, prior teaching experiences and/or training, such as those gained through educational outreach, were shown to increase teacher self-efficacy and effective teaching practices of STEM graduate students (Boman, 2013; DeChenne, 2012; Fowler & Cherrstrom, 2017; Prieto & Altmaier, 1994). Competence of STEM graduate teaching assistants is similarly supported by their relationships with the students they teach, their relationships with their peers, and prior experiences and training that provide foundational pedagogical knowledge (Kajfez & Matusovich, 2017).

Challenges to Graduate Student Participation

The belief that a department most values research is common among academic scientists, including graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members, which can be a barrier to participation in teaching and outreach (Ecklund et al., 2012). Systemic practices such as tenure review weigh research more heavily than outreach, teaching, or sharing knowledge outside rigorous academic journals. Additionally, STEM graduate students are frequently encouraged by their academic setting to prioritize research over teaching or outreach (Anderson et al., 2011; Bianchini et al., 2002; Feldon et al., 2011).

Graduate students may perceive negative responses from peers and faculty to their participation in outreach, along with messages that teaching is of a lower status than research (Laursen et al., 2012). Faculty may believe that efforts toward improving as a researcher will lead to improved teaching skills through an increased understanding of the subjects being taught; in contrast, faculty often do not hold the complementary belief—that efforts toward teaching will lead to improved research skills (Brawner et al.,

2002; Robertson & Bond, 2001). However, teaching experiences can lead to improvement on associated research skills and do add value to a graduate experience, even when research skills are thought of as the most important outcome (Bartel et al., 2003; Feldon et al., 2011; Moskal & Skokan, 2011).

Balancing Benefits and Burdens

Many graduate students who volunteer for educational outreach view their experiences positively, despite time constraints and departments' devaluing of such experiences (Andrews et al., 2005; deKoven & Trumbull, 2002). However, graduate students may believe that spending their time volunteering for educational outreach hinders them from obtaining highly regarded academic positions (Laursen et al., 2012). Institutions, communities, academia, and advisors must help graduate students to balance these mixed messages and see the benefits of participation, not only to the "image" of the university but also to the intellectual well-being of the graduate students themselves and the community they serve.

The limited prior research that has focused on challenges to graduate student participation in educational outreach largely examined perceptions of education in academia and institutional barriers to participation, rather than the challenges perceived by graduate students. In order to fill this gap, we investigated the burdens of educational outreach from the perspective of physical science doctoral student volunteers. Recognition of such burdens may have implications for ways to better support doctoral students to gain the benefits of participation in educational outreach and to fulfill the service mission of their institution. We theorize that the balance of these benefits and burdens in a doctoral student's experience might relate to their valuation of their educational outreach experiences and their identification with the role of an educator.

Identity Framework

Our examination of physical science graduate students' balance of benefits and burdens to educational outreach is informed by role identity theory (e.g., Stryker, 1980). A role is a position that one fills, such as a student, a scientist, or an instructor, whereas a role identity is how one relates to the characteristics of a role and the expectations of filling that role (Ashforth, 2001; Carter & Fuller, 2016; Stryker, 1980). In this

study, we used this lens of role identity to explore doctoral students' perceptions of being an educator through participating in educational outreach. Specifically, through exploring perceptions of educational outreach, we gained insights into how physical science doctoral students view, value, and identify with the role of an educator, which they take on through their involvement in the educational outreach program.

Understanding the complexities of doctoral students' perceptions of participating in educational outreach is important for institutions to better support doctoral students as science communicators and researchers, preparing them to perform professional roles in academia and fulfill the service mission of universities. Additionally, deeper understanding of doctoral student perceptions of educational outreach may improve perceptions of outreach in academia and expand the population of doctoral students who benefit from participation in educational outreach. In this study, we used a case study methodology to address the research questions:

1. What benefits and burdens do physical science doctoral students associate with involvement in educational outreach?
2. How do physical science doctoral students value their involvement in educational outreach?

Methods

We chose to use a multiple case study methodology and inductive qualitative analysis methods in order to describe and learn from the experiences of individual graduate students in the bounded context of a particular educational outreach program (Miles et al., 2020; Yin, 2018). Each doctoral student participant is a case through which we examine the perceived benefits, burdens, and value of participation in an educational outreach program (Thomas, 2011). Thick description, often associated with case study (Yin, 2018), in combination with inductive analysis methods (Miles et al., 2020), allowed us to value and more accurately represent the voices of our doctoral student participants, which is essential to answering our research questions that concerned the perspectives of these students. We used cross-case analysis to reveal themes across participants related to each research question (Miles et al., 2020).

Context: Educational Outreach Program

Central to the university's mission statement is the tenet of disseminating knowledge and serving the state and the nation. The educational outreach program, University Science Camp (USC; pseudonym), fulfills the service mission of the university through its mission to foster science interest and curiosity through hands-on inquiry activities, particularly targeting racially minoritized and low-income elementary students for whom science outreach has been historically overlooked. USC has grown over its 10-year history; at the time of the study, each year doctoral students would run a weekly 2-hour after-school club for 9 weeks at two local elementary schools (one school each semester) and two week-long summer camps that campers attended for 6 hours each day. Camps and clubs consisted of a combination of content learning, science-themed outdoor games, and hands-on science inquiry activities. Additionally, doctoral student volunteers met weekly to plan for each day of club or camp, develop new content for the camps, coordinate access to schools, and facilitate these events. With support from the university to fund these endeavors, USC was fully and independently run by doctoral students.

Participants

Participants in this study included eight physical science doctoral students who volunteered for USC through their physical science department at a medium-sized mid-Atlantic public research university (Table 1). We chose to study doctoral students in this physical science department due to the large proportion of doctoral students in the department who were involved in educational outreach. More than 20% of the doctoral students in the department were

included in this study, and a larger proportion participated in USC. It is a norm within the department for the doctoral students to participate in USC.

We acknowledge that our participants are not racially diverse, and we cannot capture the perspectives of racially minoritized doctoral students. Although this lack of racial diversity is reflective of the department from which participants were solicited, where more than half of the doctoral students are White and over 10% are Asian, it is a limitation to the findings of our study.

A multiple case study approach was used to compare the perspectives of the multiple doctoral students (Miles et al., 2020, p. 95). Each of the doctoral student participants gave informed consent to participate in this study, which was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board for human subjects research.

Data Collection

Participants were each interviewed one time for 1 hour. Each interview was audio recorded and then transcribed. The interview questions (Table 2) asked students to talk about their experiences in graduate school and USC specifically.

Note that Question 5 directly asks about educator role identity. We asked additional probing questions, such as "Can you tell me more about . . . ?", "How did that make you feel?", and "Why did you decide to . . . ?" based on participants' responses.

Analysis

First, we analyzed the data from each participant individually. For each participant, we started with carefully reading each interview transcript to get to know the participant as

Table 1. Self-Reported Individual Participant Summary

Pseudonym	Year in School	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Alex	2	F	White, Asian
Austin	5	M	White
Avery	5	F	White
Blake	5	M	White
Charlie	2	M	White
James	2	M	White
Kelly	3	F	White
Quinn	3	M	White

an individual and to familiarize ourselves with the content of the interview. Next, we each read the interview again and individually created a list of main themes that the participant addressed in the interview, careful to note evidence for the presence of each theme. We then met to discuss and merge our individual analyses of the participant. Through our discussion, we created a final list of themes for the participant, based on evidence from our individual analyses and agreed upon through discussion. The first author then wrote a descriptive memo for the participant, which included a detailed summary of the ideas expressed by the participant in their interview and also helped to winnow the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The second author reviewed each memo to make sure that it accurately reflected their understanding of the participant and to further strengthen the trustworthiness of the results. This entire process, repeated for each individual participant, is summarized in Figure 1.

Following the analysis of each individual participant, we engaged in cross-case analysis of the data to derive themes re-

lated to perceptions of educational outreach, perceived benefits and burdens to serving in educational outreach, and valuing of their role in outreach (Miles et al., 2020, p. 95). Together, through multiple discussions, we noted patterns across participant memos, grouped participants based on these patterns and other similarities in their themes, and contrasted and compared findings from each participant to generate meaning from the cross-case analysis (Miles et al., 2020). This analysis resulted in the findings presented in this article.

Researcher Positionality Statement

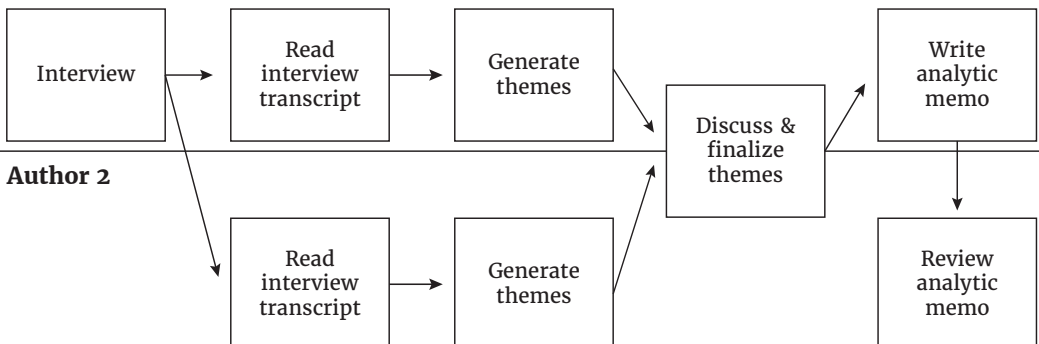
Because this study centers the voices and experiences of doctoral students, we feel that it is important to recognize that we, the authors, were doctoral students who studied STEM education at the time that data was collected and analyzed. As researchers studying education, we may be inclined to more highly value education experience and take a positive view of doctoral students serving in that role. In order to minimize our bias and center the perspectives of our participants, we were careful to listen to stu-

Table 2. Interview Questions

1. Can you please tell me the story of your experience in graduate school?
2. Why did you initially volunteer for USC?
3. Why do you continue to volunteer your time for USC?
4. What do you think you get out of volunteering for USC?
5. Do you feel like an educator in USC?
6. Do you value educational outreach for your future career?
7. Do you have any final comments about your involvement in USC?

Figure 1. The Flow of Inductive Analysis Used for Each Participant

Author 1



dents' voices as they also discussed burdens to involvement in educational research. As doctoral students ourselves, we could relate to feeling both benefits and burdens in the same experience. Additionally, participants may have been more comfortable sharing both the benefits and the burdens with us in interviews due to our roles as doctoral student peers, which we hope provides a more full picture of doctoral student perspectives.

Findings

In this section, we present several themes in participants' understanding of educational outreach. First, participants identified as an educator in a variety of different ways, including taking on a titled, institutional role as an educator or through more casual experiences engaging in the practice of teaching. Participants reported feeling that an educator role and role identity was less valued by their institution, their community, and, in turn, themselves. Finally, they viewed both benefits and burdens to participating in educational outreach.

Perceptions of an Educator Identity: Engaging Formally Versus Informally

We explored participants' perceptions of the connections between the educator role and role identity in order to more fully understand the ways in which participants felt like educators in the context of participation in educational outreach. About half of our participants defined an educator identity through engaging in the educator role in a formal way. For example, James identified himself as an educator when he was in a formal educator role, standing in front of a classroom and lecturing, most likely in line with the way he was taught. Relatedly, he spoke about how he did not like to be in an educator role in this formal way because he did not like "educating the large groups of people who stare silently up at me." James expressed that he preferred discussion and working with a smaller group of students, "rather than me being like, 'Hello, class. I have prepared a lecture. Let me speak it to you.' I don't like that idea." Thus, although James identified as an educator only when he was in a formal educator role, he also expressed how he did not particularly like that definition.

In contrast, the other half of our participants discussed identifying as an educator when engaging in an educator role more informally. For example, Alex felt like an

educator when she was effectively helping someone. Even when people, namely family or friends, asked about something not directly related to Alex's research, she would draw on her knowledge of the science from her classes and try to connect. She said, "They just want to talk about it. So then I'll say, 'Oh, yeah, I know about this. I learned about that in this one class.'"

These examples demonstrate the variety of ways that participants identified themselves as educators, varying from engaging in formal, institutionalized roles to informal conversations outside academic settings. These varied perceptions of what it means to be an educator are important to consider as we examine participants' views of being an educator through educational outreach. In the remainder of the findings, we highlight the ways that participants viewed and valued their experiences as educators in educational outreach.

Perceptions of the Value of Educational Outreach

All of the participants perceived educational outreach to be less valued than their other responsibilities as doctoral students, particularly their research responsibilities. This lesser valuing was demonstrated through discussion of the idea that by receiving certain funding, a doctoral student did not, as Austin said, "have to" teach, but if they did not have funding then they "had to" spend the summer teaching instead of "getting to" do research. We next discuss several examples of participants describing educational outreach, and by extension the educator role and role identity, being less valued by society and themselves.

Participants viewed serving in an educator role to be less prestigious, even when they found it fulfilling, due to the academic or societal attitudes around being an educator. For example, Blake said that he would like to work as an educator after graduating; however, he was conflicted because with all the work he had put toward his doctoral degree, he felt overqualified to be an educator.

I'll have a PhD, and I have a lot of student loans. I want to make enough money for my worth. Unfortunately, a lot of the jobs where you'd be a camp counselor, things like that, you barely even need a bachelor's degree for some of them. And I think the time that

I spent towards my education, I'm personally worth more than that. I wish and I think those educators are worth more than what they're getting paid, for sure.

Blake experienced tension between his beliefs about his personal worth of having a doctoral degree and his passion for outreach and elementary education, demonstrating his larger perception of being an educator as less prestigious.

Kelly's perception of her own future worth reflected similar ideas about the worth of educators in society:

I worry about a lot of the types of jobs that I see myself leaving to do, like outreach sorts of things, aren't necessarily high paying sorts of things, which would be a little like "Oh I got a PhD and then went and continued making grad student money the rest of my life," which just seems like a shame. I'm not like trying to be rich but like, you know, I'd like to make more money than I'm making now.

Thus, although both Kelly and Blake reported that they might be happier leaning into their identities as educators, they felt that they would be less valued in society in that role than they would be if they leaned into their identities as researchers or scientists. Specifically, both participants saw the value of the educator and scientist role identities reflected in their associated earning potential.

The perceived devaluation of educational outreach experiences and associated identities is a potential burden that doctoral students must balance when considering participation in educational outreach. This finding reflects not only the participants' own perceptions of the value of educational outreach experiences and an educator identity, but also their perceptions of how others value educational outreach and educators. These societal perceptions then, in a cyclical feedback loop, impact the participants' values and, for Blake and Kelly, their career decisions.

Participation in Educational Outreach May Be a Burden

Most participants described how participation in outreach could, at times, become a

burden as they tried to balance their role as an educator with their other roles and responsibilities as a doctoral student. For example, Alex perceived a conflict between USC and research that she felt made participating in USC more challenging.

It does take away time from me researching and things but it's priceless when you interact with the kids and they get so excited about stuff that is so mundane to you. . . . And it gives me a renewed sense of why I'm doing this [doctoral program].

Alex was clear that she did value the benefits from participating in USC, despite the time conflicts. Unfortunately, many participants reported that they had to make involvement with USC a lower priority than research, despite the perceived benefits, due to time constraints.

In contrast, Blake felt that USC was the space where he was able to make an impact on other people, and so he chose to prioritize his role as an educator in USC over his other roles as a doctoral student. Blake stated that many of his peers felt "guilted" into volunteering, and he was frustrated that they were not making USC a priority. He said, "I just wish there were more people that didn't feel they were guilted into going to [USC], and more people that just wanted to." This parallels Austin's earlier statement about "having to teach" versus "getting to do research," and further illustrates the impact of the burden of "having to" rather than "getting to" teach.

Three participants described their perspective on feeling obligated to engage in educational outreach. For example, Quinn reflected about feeling obligated to engage in USC because it was aligned with his ideas of what it meant to identify as a graduate student at this university. However, he reported that he would not seek out this type of educational outreach if it was not readily available. He said:

It's like "Oh, I'm a grad student. What should I do? What does a grad student do? Oh, outreach is one of the things grad students do here. As a grad student, outreach is one of the things I should do, we have this cool program. I should join it."

Charlie reported feeling pressured to participate in USC for the social connections

and did not especially enjoy working with the elementary students. He said:

I felt unconfident in saying “no” to doing things with people. Sort of a fear of missing out. I didn’t have a lot of friends in the department, and so I wanted to do this to spend more time with other people to become better friends with them. So I am not talking about how I love helping kids and things. I feel a little ashamed of that. But I think that’s the truth.

Charlie felt that the benefits that he got from USC were related to his connections with the other doctoral student volunteers, instead of the elementary students. More specifically, he perceived the educator role to be defined by engaging in “kid wrangling and managing behavior,” which he did not find fulfilling. Regarding participants’ perceptions of managing behavior, Kelly discussed that the obligation to engage in classroom management aspects of educational outreach did not make her identify with either the educator or scientist roles. For example, she said:

We’ve had a few instances with really bad behavior. And so I feel like a decent chunk of [Outreach] is yelling at kids, trying to get them to do what you want. And it’s hard to really feel like I’m a scientist yelling at these children to just stop throwing rocks at each other. . . . Which, I don’t mind, but definitely not like “Oh I feel like a scientist today.”

Kelly’s quote, in particular, demonstrates that even when doctoral students do not view engaging in educational outreach overall as an obligation, certain requirements of such participation can feel like a burden.

Finally, Blake, Kelly, and Austin, who were formal leaders of USC, perceived that the department occasionally took advantage of doctoral student labor via the time they volunteered for USC, which was an additional burden to the doctoral students. Blake praised the program, saying, “I think everyone around the community thinks of us as this awesome group without realizing that we’re just like 15 grad students doing stuff. Which is awesome.” However, Blake also acknowledged the nature of volunteering his time. “I wouldn’t be surprised if some of the people that I’ve interacted with

think that it’s my job to do outreach, and don’t realize that it’s just volunteers. And so I think the community’s really appreciative of it.” The doctoral students were not being compensated, financially or through progress toward their degree, for the significant amount of time they spent toward USC, despite the large impact it was having and the way it strengthened the relationship between the university and the surrounding community.

These quotes demonstrate that participants had to balance the benefits against certain burdens when deciding to participate in USC. Specifically, they experienced time constraints and occasionally felt pressured into volunteering when they did not want to. In the next section, we explore the perceived benefits.

Perceived Benefits to Participation in Educational Outreach

All of the participants described some amount of benefit to participation in USC, including relief from other pressures of graduate school, increased social or “soft” skills, professional benefits, and connections to their community. We discuss each in more detail.

Personal Benefits

Participants described the ways in which they benefited personally from their involvement in USC. For example, Austin said that involvement in USC was a “release from doing research-y things and classes,” and he chose to make time for outreach despite the other pressures of graduate school. He said:

I felt that it was even more important to do that [USC] then so that I would have a break from doing other things. . . . So instead of just sitting at my desk, trying to type out words and think really hard, just go do something tactile which doesn’t require that much brainpower. So it’s a nice sort of relaxer in a weird way.

About half of the participants also discussed USC as a break from their other responsibilities.

Additionally, most participants valued the soft skills that they gained. For example, Austin described gaining management and event planning skills, specifically “being a

good team player, working with the team, managing time, managing people, trying to see the bigger picture of what we're doing, try to connect with people, connect with, well, in this case, the kids." Kelly said that she gained similar soft skills from volunteering for USC, such as "public speaking, and confidence, organization." Kelly was a formal leader in USC, and perceived that she developed "really useful skill" from that leadership experience, specifically. She said,

I think that taking ideas from a range of people and responding openly to them is something that I need to work on, because sometimes I get caught up in my own ideas and my own plans, and so having to lead this group of people with different ideas and different plans has kind of been an important exercise for me.

The soft skills gained through educational outreach were perceived to have benefits in participants' future STEM careers, in other educational outreach settings, and also in the many other roles they may take on in the future.

Together, these quotes demonstrate that relief from other pressures of graduate school and increased soft skills were both personally beneficial to participants in the moment as they participated in USC and could also benefit participants in the future.

Professional Benefits

Involvement in educational outreach inspired Kelly and Blake to want to take on educator roles in the future through shaping their educator identities. Kelly reflected that volunteering for USC caused her to more highly value interacting with and educating people in her future career, a change from her initial goal of pursuing a research career. This change was strongly related to the "personal enjoyment" she felt from participating in USC. She said that it made her "feel good to work with kids." Blake, too, described how his career goals were changed through USC, saying, "I effectively want to just be a science communicator in the future. It is what I think I'm good at. And I enjoy doing it." These quotes demonstrate how participation in educational outreach can help refine doctoral students' goals.

The professional benefits many former doctoral students received through USC inspired some participants to get involved in USC or

to continue to volunteer their time. For example, Kelly explained:

I know for a fact that it has significantly impacted several people's careers, helped them get jobs to be able to say they have this outreach experience, they have this outreach connection. Even from people staying in [science], there's several grants that want to see that you're doing this sort of outreach and to say that you're so involved in such an intensive, impactful sort of program where you even have statistics to prove how impactful you've been.

Participants discussed two different benefits. First, the evidence that involvement in USC had been useful to former doctoral students in getting a job was beneficial to the current doctoral students in the department, as it helped them feel that their volunteer work for USC would be recognized as valuable. Then also, doctoral students who volunteer their time for USC may benefit in their job search.

Overall, participation in educational outreach could benefit participants through refinement of their career goals, as they gain the knowledge that they either do or do not want to be in educator roles in their future. It also can make doctoral students competitive for the careers they might pursue.

Community Benefits

Participants also reflected on the benefits received by the local community from USC. Specifically, Kelly discussed educational outreach as a "great tool for bringing science to the public in a palatable, exciting way" and benefiting her community. She said:

People want to hear more about it. And I think that's a great way of also teaching them why you should trust all science and a way of making people have a sense of the robustness of science and what it means to be a scientist, and that sort of thing.

Similarly, Blake and Alex felt that educational outreach was a way to connect with other people through an interest in science. Blake said, "It's probably my favorite part about [science] is how much people want to listen to people talk about [science]." Alex

said about talking to community members about her research,

Seeing them excited, it gets me excited too. It's a wonderful thing to tell something to someone that they've never heard before. And talk to them about it. And that reinforces the fact that I'm in this program, and I am learning, and I know what I'm talking about. And I can communicate it.

Together, these quotes demonstrate both the benefits to the community and the ways that doctoral students are fulfilled by connecting with the community. Further, the personal and professional benefits of communicating about science topics and identifying as a scientist are deeply tied to the connections participants are making with their community.

These examples of personal, professional, and community benefits summatively demonstrate participants' positive perceptions of participation in educational outreach and their understanding of the benefits that they felt they gained through volunteering. Notably, participants predicted that the benefits would last beyond their graduate school experience and into their future.

Discussion and Implications

The participants in this study recognized many of the same benefits to being in an educator role through educational outreach that have been identified in prior studies, such as improved teaching and classroom management skills (Laursen et al. 2012) and refined science communication skills (Clark et al., 2016; deKoven & Trumbull, 2002; Koehler et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2007). By examining doctoral student participation in educational outreach through a role identity framework, we expand on prior literature to demonstrate additional benefits to participating in educational outreach perceived by doctoral students. These benefits include increased confidence and social skills, relief from other pressures of graduate school, and educational outreach as a tool for promoting science literacy and benefiting the local community, in line with the service mission of many universities and funding agencies. Connections to people in the local community through science educational outreach strengthens science literacy in the community and demonstrates for doctoral

students their potential to use science to make changes in people's lives.

Although doctoral students in this study reported benefits to participation in educational outreach, they felt they were not receiving support or compensation for the important work they were doing, fulfilling a part of the university mission and representing the university to the community. The lack of perceived support and compensation reflects an issue with the way that educator professions are valued in society and financially compensated more broadly. For example, our society pays STEM professionals more than teachers, directly representing prestige that makes it a difficult decision for STEM students to choose to educate others. This devaluing of the role of educators was further perpetuated by the doctoral students, as demonstrated by participants' perceptions that they were overqualified to pursue careers in outreach and would not be satisfactorily compensated, despite their reported passions for and fulfillment from participation in educational outreach. Doctoral students who may identify as educators and who feel they can have a large impact on their community via working as an educator may perceive that their work will be less valued and, as an extension, that they will be less respected in their community if they choose to focus on education. By understanding the significant influence that institutional values, demonstrated through support for and prioritization of educational outreach, may have on doctoral students' perceptions of their identity and potential careers, institutions of higher education might be able to counter the systemic devaluing of educators through increased support and compensation for doctoral students' engaging in educational outreach efforts.

Our results demonstrate ways in which an institution can shape perceptions of the value of educational outreach and, in turn, the value of an educator identity by recognizing and supporting, or not recognizing and supporting, time spent in that role. For example, participants in this study reflected that their institution did not financially compensate them for the time they spent promoting the university through USC and that their time spent toward science education and outreach was not recognized in considering their progress toward their degree. Thus, the university directly shaped the ways that the participants viewed and

valued educational outreach and the educator identity. Institutions might demonstrate that they value the educator role by rewarding and promoting participation in educational outreach through financial compensation, credit hours or other forms of recognition toward a student's record of progress or a professor's tenure and promotion, professional development opportunities to support individuals to become better educators, highlighting opportunities for doctoral students to make their participation in educational outreach part of their research work, and changing and clarifying expectations regarding the allocation of time so that individuals are able to spend time in educational outreach. Overall, institutions might recognize educational outreach as a form of academic service that is as valuable to the scholarly community as reviewing journal articles or serving on committees.

Although participation in USC was voluntary, results suggest that some participants felt fulfilled by participating, and others felt that their participation was a burden. This dichotomy reflects Gee's (2000) concept of an institutional identity, which is a role identity that is recognized by an institutional authority and can be either a "calling or an imposition" (p. 103). This study adds to the body of literature around educational outreach by highlighting the voices of those participants who may view educational outreach as a burden but still recognize its benefits; although some participants expressed that their participation at times felt like a burden rather than a calling, all participants perceived some amount of benefit from participating in outreach. To increase the number of doctoral students who are able to receive the benefits of participation in educational outreach, advisors of doctoral students might promote the benefits and work to reduce the burdens. For example, advisors can engage in outreach and teaching to model for doctoral students how to balance their time between research and outreach or teaching.

Limitations and Future Research

All study participants were solicited from participants in a single educational outreach program. Drawing from this population allowed us to examine their particular context in greater detail, but may limit the transferability of these findings. Future research might examine doctoral students' perspectives on educational outreach across

multiple contexts, such as research universities, teaching universities, and different sized institutions.

Some students choose to study at this particular institution due to the opportunity to serve with USC. Such widespread participation in educational outreach in a physical science department is not common and may have influenced the perceptions of educational outreach of participants included in this study. Future studies might compare the perspectives of doctoral students who participate in departmentally sponsored educational outreach to the perspective of doctoral students who seek out their own opportunities to participate in educational outreach.

Finally, the lack of racial diversity is a limitation to this study, as we could not capture the perspectives of students from racially minoritized backgrounds in STEM. Lack of racial diversity is also a limitation to the educational outreach program itself, as the demographics of the doctoral student volunteers may not reflect the populations that they aim to serve and may leave an impression of science as White. Future research might further explore the benefits of science educational outreach on the identities of doctoral student participants from historically minoritized backgrounds in STEM, as research suggests that social outcomes may be more important to the career goals of these students (Garibay, 2015). Future research might also investigate how the K-12 students being served might be impacted by the racial identities of the doctoral student educators.

Conclusions

This study focused on participation in educational outreach from the perspective of doctoral student volunteers in order to provide insights into the burdens and benefits. Participants in this study did perceive many benefits to participating in educational outreach; however, they also discussed burdens, including the feeling that outreach was less valued by their institution, their community, and, in turn, themselves. Identifying perceived burdens may help faculty and institutions work to reduce those burdens and better support doctoral students to gain the benefits of participation in educational outreach and fulfill the service mission of their institution.

This study highlights how doctoral stu-

dents must be supported to participate in educational outreach and how educational outreach experiences must be valued in academia. Although an institution's mission statement may nominally value education and outreach, students at the institution may be receiving a contrasting message of outreach that is not supported or is at odds with other institutionalized goals (i.e., research). Thus, institutions might better support students and their service mission through endorsing opportunities for students to work as educators and valuing these experiences in hiring and tenure decisions.



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Community Partner Perceptions in a Health Care Shortage Area

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Abstract

This study illuminates community partner perspectives regarding their relationship with a public academic health center (AHC) in a health care shortage area (HCSA). Community-based and statewide leadership invested deeply in the AHC's programs and initiatives to prepare health care providers for practice in the region, to decrease the provider shortage and improve local health care outcomes. The mixed-methods study sought to identify current community engagement partnerships and examine relationships from the perspective of community partners. Phase 1 of the study utilized an adaptation of the Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI) as a survey to gather data from employees at the institution. Phase 2 of the study gathered data from the community partners through communities of interest focus groups. Data was analyzed using the Kellogg Commission's seven-part test of engagement. Findings from the survey identified community partner perspectives that informed AHC and partner collaborations during a period of multiple crises.

Keywords: community engagement, partnerships, health care shortage areas (HCSAs), Kellogg Commission seven-part test of engagement



Institutions of higher education (IHE) have historically been key agents in civic engagement and in building collaborations with communities (Ehrlich, 2000). Boyer (1996) challenged IHEs to become more effective partners in the nation's work to address social, civic, economic, and moral conditions. Concurrently, U.S. health care has seen a shift away from the treatment of disease model to a population health paradigm (Gourevitch, 2014), along with funding agencies' emphasis on the inclusion of community engagement in research activities (Bartlett et al., 2014). These forces provide context for the community engagement partnerships of academic health centers (AHCs; Vitale et al., 2017). Specific to health care contexts, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define community engagement as "the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situ-

ations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people" (1997, p. 90).

Even as IHEs have addressed the challenge to make significant contributions to the health of communities through local partnerships, sharp critiques of these relationships have also emerged. According to Danley and Christiansen (2019), an increasing number of scholars have warned of such partnerships as perpetuating existing power structures and taking advantage of communities (Bortolin, 2011; Cruz & Giles, 2000). Lynton (1994), for example, argued against the linear flow of knowledge from the universities to practitioners. Cruz and Giles (2000) argued that community voices and priorities are often missing from partnerships. According to Schön and Rein's (1995) theory of reflective practice, the most important issues cannot be solved with technical rationality—or substantive knowledge—from the ivory tower "but are found outside where methods are arguably less scientific and the potential learning

is more relevant” (Danley & Christiansen, 2019, p. 9).

Academic research projects have received “well-deserved criticism for engaging in helicopter research that focuses primarily on the research goals without developing a plan for building capacity and creating a sustainable system that will live on well after the research funding has ended” (Mosavel et al., 2019, p. 54). As a result, communities have become increasingly skeptical of researchers who are primarily focused on their research goals and fail to develop plans for sustainability. Situations where researchers engage with the community until research needs have been met, then leave the community with minimal if any benefits, have been described all too often—particularly in research involving underserved populations and minoritized communities (Dancy et al., 2004). Implicit in the principle of sustainability is a commitment to partnerships, relationships, knowledge gained, and capacity building to extend beyond the research project or funding period (Hacker et al., 2012; Israel et al., 2006). The literature provides examples of effective sustainability in academic–community partnerships through building trusting relationships, recognizing the value of all partners’ perspectives, gaining a commitment to collaborative principles, and providing a structured approach to the partnership (Hacker et al., 2012; Israel et al., 2006).

Similarly, Hartman (2013) criticized universities for being too intent on remaining apolitical, arguing that universities have ethical responsibilities as organizations that promote democracy. Ehrlich (2000) defined civic engagement as

working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (p. vi)

According to Forester (1988), civic engagement draws heavily on theories of participatory planning, communicative action, and advocacy. Within this context, the planner is an active listener who works alongside community members to design activities through inclusionary dialogue and the practice of making sense together. This conver-

sation is thus a collaborative act that works to develop new networks while fostering citizen empowerment (Innes & Booher, 2004).

Encapsulating the idea of research and communities existing as an intertwined duo rather than two separately acting units, community-based participatory research (CBPR) emerged as an integrated research design. Following the tenets of CBPR, projects should be built in partnership with the community to ensure sustainability and to “send a strong signal to community members that the researchers are there to support them and the community’s identified needs, and not just there to benefit from conducting research on the community” (Mosavel et al., 2019, p.55). According to Mosavel et al., a commitment to sustainability further reestablishes the credibility of researchers and their institutions and helps to rebuild trust between academia and underrepresented and minority communities and populations. Importantly, such a commitment also means that relationships are maintained through continued collaboration among partners, even if the original project initiated through the academic–community partnership is not continued (Israel et al., 2006, 2008).

Lastly, communities are increasing their calls for transparency for AHCs’ community engagement efforts and demonstrations of effectiveness (Vitale et al., 2017). In response, AHCs must develop effective evaluation methods for community engagement (CDC, 1997; Rubio et al., 2015). According to Vitale et al. (2017), “demonstrating the impact of community engagement on population health outcomes is problematic, and leadership-level knowledge of an AHC’s community-engaged activities within their own institutions may be limited” (p. 81).

Within this context, this case study focuses on the initiatives of community leadership and the response by an AHC to address long-term and structural deficits in a designated health care shortage area (HCSA) that is in a binational and multicultural environment. Specifically, this study focuses on a community-led initiative at the U.S.–Mexico border to address this deficit. The initiative required significant community political and financial investment. The result of the partnership between community leaders, donors, a university system, and state and academic leadership was the creation of the AHC. Fully accredited as a separate institu-

tion in 2018, the institution became one of the first AHCs to be recognized as a Title V Hispanic–Serving Institution in 2019.

Community–based leaders invested deeply in this initiative to provide higher education programs to train health care providers, who are encouraged to remain in the region to decrease the shortage of providers, and ultimately improve health care outcomes in the region. To prepare health care professionals for work in the U.S.–Mexico border region, curricular innovations include cultural and Spanish–language immersion and a community health and engagement focus across curricula (Boyer, 1996; Ramaley, 2000; TTUHSC, n.d.). Research initiatives are geographically and culturally located to address major health issues and disparities in the primarily Hispanic U.S.–Mexico border population.

Further important facts related to the context of the study cannot be omitted. It was initiated in 2019 and continued through 2021, a period that was marked by a historic influx of immigrants along the U.S.–Mexico border. In addition, the community suffered the trauma of a mass shooting incident in August 2019, which impacted the AHC as well as all community partners. In spring 2020, just months after the mass shooting, COVID–19 cases were identified on both sides of the border, directly altering the work of the AHC and community partners. This context of multiple crises permeated the experiences of the parties involved in the research study.

Purpose of the Study

Given the institution’s community–centered mission, the community context, and the critique of partnerships discussed in the literature review, this case study was developed to examine the engagement activities in the U.S.–Mexico border region as well as the relationship between a specific AHC and community partners considering the vision for broader impacts, and to ensure multidirectional relationships focused on sustainability.

As an organizing framework and structure for analysis of the qualitative data, the study utilized the Kellogg Commission seven–part test of engagement (the seven–part test; NASULGC, 2001), which includes “seven guiding characteristics that define an engaged institution”:

1. Responsive to community concerns.

2. Respect for partners—involving community partners in cocreative approaches to problem solving.
3. Academic neutrality.
4. Accessibility of the institution, personnel, and resources.
5. Integration of engagement across institutional missions.
6. Coordination of institutional activities.
7. Resource partnerships.

Research Questions

This study is qualitative and constructivist in nature, a methodology that Creswell (2014) described as follows:

The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participant’s views of the situation being studied. The questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons. (p. 8)

Thus, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the scope and nature of the AHC’s engagement activities, and who are our partners?
2. How do community partners describe their current activities and needs in working with the AHC?
3. What recommendations for improvement do community partners suggest?

IRB approval for the study was granted by the AHC’s institutional review board for the protection of human subjects.

Method

Study Design

To assess current engagement activities and examine them from the perspective of community partners, the study utilized a mixed–methods research design, including both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Within this mixed–methods approach, a sequential explanatory design guided the collection of data in two phases. Phase 1 consisted of collection of quantitative survey data; Phase 2 consisted of col-

lection of qualitative data with focus groups, conducted with local community partners.

The quantitative methodology utilized in Phase 1 of the study to address Research Question 1 further followed a survey design approach with descriptive analysis through an institutional survey conducted with university personnel ($n = 372$), which identified community partners and hence seeks to describe the status of a variable or phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Phase 2, the qualitative component of the study, was designed to address Research Questions 2 and 3 and utilized a single embedded case study approach (Yin, 2009) consisting of “an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a ‘case’) set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 18). The qualitative data was collected through focus group sessions with community partners ($n = 14$).

The Phase 1 survey participants were employed by the study institution and included both faculty and staff. Data from Phase 1 informed the selection of the Phase 2 focus group participants; therefore, the focus group sample was purposefully selected. The 14 focus group participants were regional employees or volunteers representing four communities of practice: (a) health, food, shelter, immigration; (b) specific disease focus (diabetes, cancer, lupus, etc.) and patient support; (c) regional preK-12 education; and (d) regional community colleges and universities (other than the study institution).

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument utilized was adapted from the Michigan State University (MSU) Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI; Michigan State University, n.d.). The survey was first adopted and revised by Texas Tech University with permission from MSU. The revised instrument was then adapted to the AHC context. However, the major categories in the OEMI were retained. The adapted Outreach and Engagement Survey was utilized in Phase 1 of the study to generate institutional data to identify and benchmark outreach and engagement activities, provide institution-level support, and track activities for accreditation and other institutional self-study purposes. Furthermore, survey questions were designed to measure

involvement with community groups, as well as participation in community-based research projects and educational partnerships. Survey administration opened in the late spring term of 2019 and closed 6 weeks later. Initial invites and follow-up reminders were sent to the entire AHC employee population to encourage participation.

Upon completion of Phase 1 survey administration and data analysis, the partners named by survey respondents were reviewed by the AHC outreach and engagement leadership and institutional researchers. Specifically, community partners were defined as those individuals who lead and represent organizations identified by survey respondents, and with whom they are currently engaged. Four emergent communities of practice were identified from the survey responses. These were nonprofit organizations whose work is with communities located along the U.S.–Mexico border region, contiguous counties, and states (Texas and New Mexico). At the beginning of the following academic year, Phase 2 of the study was conducted by inviting community organization leadership to focus groups convened on the AHC campus. In total, 14 community partners participated in four communities of practice focus groups.

Data Collection and Analysis

Phase 1: Survey

In Phase 1 of the study, the Outreach and Engagement Survey was sent to all university employees in 2019. Study institution faculty, staff, and medical residents with active university email accounts were invited to participate. The survey was administered electronically via an anonymous Qualtrics survey link, and participation was voluntary. Data collected with the survey cannot be linked to survey participants, and all survey-generated data utilized for analyses were deidentified.

Phase 2: Communities of Interest Focus Groups

An invitation letter describing the study was emailed to the purposely selected community partners. The 14 community partners self-selected to participate in the focus groups. Participants were organized into four communities of practice. Facilitators of each group were researchers, who were employees of the institution and had completed IRB human subjects research training.

Kitzinger (1995, p. 299) described the focus group method as a process that can help people explore and clarify their views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one-to-one interview. Group discussion is particularly appropriate when the interviewer has a series of open-ended questions and wishes to encourage research participants to explore the issues of importance to them, in their own vocabulary, generating their own questions and pursuing their own priorities.

The following questions guided focus group discussions:

1. How does the partnership with the institution benefit your organization?
2. What are the most important community issues to you?
3. How are these issues addressed through the partnership with the institution?
4. If you were given an opportunity to shape your partnership, what changes would you make?
5. How could the partnership with the institution be improved?

Focus group discussions were recorded and transcribed by the researchers. All recordings were destroyed upon transcription. Transcribed data was deidentified. Focus group conveners took field notes and reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and member-checking.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative component of this study (Phase 1) utilized a descriptive design, which aimed to examine forms of engagement, domains impacted, and sources of funding or revenue. Survey questions were developed based on Michigan State University's Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI) as previously revised for use at Texas Tech University. The survey was delivered via anonymous email link to currently employed faculty, staff, and residents ($N = 1,971$). The response rate to the survey was 19% ($n = 372$). However 12% of the respondents ($n = 46$) did not identify their role at the institution. Respondents who identified their institutional role included 24% faculty ($n = 77$), 72% staff ($n = 234$), and 5% residents ($n = 15$).

For the Outreach and Engagement Survey, descriptive analyses were performed to de-

termine (a) the forms of engagement from the provided list: clinical service, credit courses and programs, economic engagement, experiential or service and learning, noncredit classes and programs, public programs, events, resources, research and creative activity, service on boards and committees, technical or expert assistance, and other; (b) the domains that were impacted by project/activity from the provided list: economy, health and human life, human capital, human relations/behavior/well-being, infrastructure, innovation, intellectual property, internationalization, natural resources, environment/water/quality of life, research, rural life, social empowerment, teaching and learning, technology transfer, university-community ties, urban environment, and other; and (c) sources of funding or revenue from the provided list: event/activities fees, federal grant, foundations, international agencies, private business/industry, other nonprofit organizations, state grant, and other. The seven-part test (NASULGC, 2001) was utilized to organize survey data (Table 1).

Qualitative Data Analysis

In Phase 2 of the study, after member-checking by focus group conveners, transcribed data was uploaded into ATLAS.ti software. Qualitative analysis involved the identification of emergent major themes from the community partners' narratives and perceptions. Thematic text analysis was utilized to identify major themes and to describe the experiences and perspectives of focus group participants.

During thematic analysis, codes were written with reference to Braun and Clarke (2006) and identified by (a) familiarizing with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) writing the report. This process was iterative and involved a constant moving back and forward among the six phases through reading and familiarizing with the data, peer debriefing, and consensus (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017).

Next, the seven-part test of engagement (NASULGC, 2001) was utilized to organize the initial codes. Data was examined to determine the following partnership characteristics: responsive to community concerns; involving community partners in cocreative approaches to problem solving;

Table 1. Survey Items, Descriptive Data, and Alignment with Kellogg Commission Seven-Part Test of Engagement

Survey item	Descriptive data	Alignment with the seven-part test
Forms of engagement	Clinical service: 16% (<i>n</i> = 13)	Respect for partners Accessibility
	Public programs, events, and resources: 22% (<i>n</i> = 18)	Accessibility
	Research and creative activity: 13% (<i>n</i> = 11)	Academic neutrality
Domains impacted by project/activity	Health and human life: 29% (<i>n</i> = 33)	Accessibility
	University–community ties: 11% (<i>n</i> = 12)	Coordination
	Research: 8% (<i>n</i> = 9)	Academic neutrality
Sourcing of funding/revenue	Federal grants: 7% (<i>n</i> = 3)	Resource partnerships
	Foundations: 10% (<i>n</i> = 4)	Resource partnerships
	Other nonprofit organizations: 19% (<i>n</i> = 8)	Resource partnerships
	State grants: 7% (<i>n</i> = 3)	Resource partnerships

maintaining neutrality; making expertise accessible; integrating engagement with the institution's teaching, research, and service missions; aligning engagement throughout the university; and working with community partner for community projects funding.

Results

For the Outreach and Engagement Survey administered in 2019, the most identified forms of engagement and alignment with the seven-part test concepts are included in Table 1.

Focus group data was also utilized to identify alignment and areas that need improvement, guide future engagement efforts, and ultimately articulate the community's vision for broader impacts resulting from these partnerships. Table 2 indicates the identified major themes and their alignment with the seven-part test. Themes, descriptions of themes, and the alignment with the seven-part test are shown below.

Discussion

Survey Findings

The quantitative component addressing Research Question 1 (What is the scope and

nature of the AHC's engagement activities, and who are its partners?) yielded findings in the following areas: nature of the existing partnerships across the institution (clinical, public events and activities, research, and creative activity); domains impacted by partnerships (health and human life, university ties, research); funding/revenue sources (federal grants, foundations, nonprofit organizations, and state).

In addition, the survey yielded data that had not been previously collected on the length of the partnerships, resources available through the partnership, inclusion of students, geographical distribution of the partnership, specific populations and health concerns addressed, and the specific names of partner organizations and representatives. Using the latter data generated from the survey, the institution was able to identify community partners, identify communities of interest, and purposefully select community partners for participation in Phase 2 of the study.

Communities of Interest Focus Group Findings

Phase 2 of the study addressed Research Questions 2 and 3 (How do community partners describe their current activities

Table 2. Major Theme Descriptions and Alignment With Kellogg Commission Seven-Part Test of Engagement

Theme	Description	Alignment with seven-part test
Region is a “medical desert”	Need for medical information and assistance.	Resource partnerships
	General lack of awareness; not just among patients.	
	Need (for everyone) to know local resources are available.	
	Help remove stigma of chronic diseases.	
Moving through a fog	Long-standing partnerships, but as AHC has grown there is lack of understanding of the organization.	Respect for partners
	Need for better/deeper understanding of the AHC and its structure.	
	“All I know is to say, ‘go to [AHC]’; I would love to be a little bit more definitive.”	
	AHC needs to get to know the community.	
Fragile connections	Need more connectivity between organizations.	Responsiveness
	Organizations work in silos.	
Need for leadership	Desire for the AHC to take on community leadership role.	Responsiveness
	AHC to serve as convener/facilitator.	
	“Bring stakeholders together, so that we can identify what we have and what we need.”	
Partners make us stronger	Auxiliary services are common to all (i.e., chronic disease patients share need for same education/information/services).	Integration
	What can we [all organizations] contribute to the conversations?	
	Partnerships seen as social capital.	
Local is everything	Nothing matters unless it is done locally.	Integration
	Health policies, information, research—nothing matters unless it is used and practiced locally, and people know about it.	

and needs in working with the AHC? What recommendations for improvement do community partners suggest?) and was met with enthusiastic support from community partners. Facilitators of the focus groups noted that community partners expressed that they highly valued the opportunity to share their opinions, as evidenced by lively conversations, identification of common concerns and perspectives, and positive comments related to the focus group sessions.

The analysis of the qualitative data identified major themes that starkly depicted the perspectives of the community partners: the region is a “medical desert”; partners are “moving through the fog” looking for support and collaborations with the AHC; “connections are fragile”; need for the AHC to assume a leadership or convenor role; “partners make us stronger”; and “local is everything.” Each of these themes and related descriptor phrases was then assigned to the related component of the seven-part test, which was the study’s organizing framework. Respect for partners, resources, responsiveness, and integration were themes that emerged from this analysis of the data gathered from community partner perceptions.

Overall Findings and Implications

The results of this study provide important insights into current partnerships between the study institution and community organizations from the perspective of community partners. Specifically, community partners articulated their perceptions of the HCSA in which they work (“medical desert”); confusion about resources that were available to them through the AHC partnership; fragile and siloed connections and relationships; and yet, a desire for stronger and more effective partnerships to meet the needs of the community. The mutual learning and relationship building that emerged from the focus group sessions indicated the need to

strengthen opportunities for partnerships that are (a) aligned with the community’s vision for broad impact in a HCSA in the U.S.–Mexico border region, (b) multidirectional and responsive to community partner needs, (c) resourced, and (d) designed to be sustainable.

Conclusion

The findings in this study were utilized to organize a second workshop and communities of interest focus groups conducted via Zoom in August 2020 during the pandemic. The perceptions of the community partners gathered in the August 2019 focus groups were shared with community partners during the 2020 symposium, which was expanded to include six communities of interest focus groups. The 2019 study findings were utilized by the AHC to improve existing partnerships, inform strategic planning specific to engagement scholarship, and guide community engagement initiatives during a critical period when partnerships were pivotal to supporting the health care needs of the greater community and border region. The 2019 study findings and collaboration supported the AHC and community partners to build new, improved, and more effective relationships.

This outcome is an indication of how collaboration can lay a foundation to prepare for extraordinary times, such as the health and community-related crises experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the findings identified knowledge from the community partners that was not possessed by the AHC prior to the study. Such tacit knowledge gained from community partner voices is essential in shaping responsive and effective partnerships. Given the context of the study, wherein the AHC and community partners responded to needs in a HCSA during an extraordinary period of crisis, the study addressed critical needs for mutual and beneficial collaboration.



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Brown Boosts Immunity: A Community-Centric Approach to Project-Based Service-Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract

Service-learning models serve as noteworthy curriculum paradigms that can help students engage with their communities while continuously learning. This article recounts the implementation of a service-learning model within a student initiative aimed to help combat vaccine hesitancy and promote the uptake of vaccinations within the Rhode Island community. Through a collaborative effort between students, faculty, and the university, the student initiative was able to construct a credit-bearing course to help assess and alleviate vaccine hesitancy within Rhode Island. This article highlights the journey the organization took to develop a service-learning model within the course, the project details, and the impact of their project on the community. A detailed analysis of the service-learning model's impact on students as well as key takeaways of the project are also highlighted below.

Keywords: service-learning, community outreach, vaccine hesitancy, Brown University collaborations, public health



The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has led experts in the medical and public health spheres to address health and vaccine concerns within communities. Students at Brown University have had access to accurate medical and scientific knowledge supplied by trusted individuals. Brown also continuously encourages its students to engage with the community in impactful ways. In fact, one of Brown's liberal learning goals is to "engage with your communities" (Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d., para. 15). Brown's mission is to ensure that a student's general education will be enriched by the many kinds of work that the student participates in outside the classroom. The support of the university in keeping us safe and educated during a pandemic, alongside its commitment to community engagement, put us students of Brown in a position to aid

the community. Within this context, students at Brown decided to start an initiative to combat vaccine hesitancy.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted an urgent need for community-based outreach that provides high-quality resources to promote vaccine confidence. Uptake of the COVID-19 vaccines in particular presents unique challenges. Causes for these unique challenges include the accelerated timeline for emergency approval for COVID-19 vaccines, as well as uncertainty regarding their potential side effects (Dohr, 2021). These circumstances have led to individuals' hesitancy to get vaccinated.

Before beginning our work, we realized that we would need to learn the needs of our community and adapt our outreach based on those needs. This cycle of constant learning and engagement led us to adopt a service-learning model. A service-learning model

can be carried out in many ways, such as discipline-based service-learning and capstone courses. Our curriculum integrated a project-based service-learning model. Project-based service-learning “is a form of active learning where students work on projects that benefit a real community or client while obtaining a rich learning experience.” (Cooper & Kotys-Schwartz, 2013, p.1)

Early on, we acknowledged that our work was going to be informed by service activity. Research has shown that service-learning models can help meet the real needs of community and build sustainable partnerships between faculty, students, university, and the community (Basinger & Hunter, 2014; Fletcher et al., 2012). Furthermore, service-learning models, such as project-based service-learning, have been shown to create a lasting positive impact on students’ educational experience (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). Lastly, a service-learning paradigm runs parallel to the mission of our university to enrich one’s general education by coupling education and community engagement. For these reasons, a project-based service-learning model was adopted in our efforts to meet the needs of our community, while simultaneously enriching students’ educational experiences.

With the adoption of this model for our work, we formed the student initiative Brown Boosts Immunity (BBI), whose objective is to increase vaccine uptake in Rhode Island by promoting vaccine confidence in the community. In addressing this need, we also aimed to connect university students to meaningful community engagement experiences in the form of service-learning. In this article, we will highlight how a project-based service-learning model was incorporated into BBI, as well as how the early stage impact of BBI on both the community and student level was assessed. Early stage impact was assessed quantitatively through social media and physical outreach statistics. Early stage impact was also assessed qualitatively, via feedback solicited from BBI’s student members and community partners.

Methodology

The work of Brown Boosts Immunity began once it was formalized as a Group Independent Study Project (GISP): “co-operative inquiries in which participating students bear major responsibility for both

the planning and conduct of the work. GISPs carry regular course credit and provide an opportunity for academic pursuits which might not be available in regular courses” (Brown University, n.d. para. 6). From among numerous possible routes for continuing the work of BBI from its initial fall semester into the subsequent spring semester (e.g., student organization), we opted for a GISP for several reasons. One major benefit was that students would be under the guidance of a faculty member. Due to her knowledge and expertise, Professor Toni-Marie Achilli proved to be an invaluable advisor for all students in Brown Boosts Immunity. Second, the GISP’s credit-bearing nature added an element of accountability to our project’s work, which many student organizations lack. Third, GISPs are required to have an academic component integrated into their curriculum. Given the needs-sensitive nature of our project’s work, incorporating academic learning in the forms of primary literature readings and reflections allowed students to continuously adapt to the evolving nature of our work. The GISP, through its integration of an academic component, established the learning component of our project-based service-learning approach to our work. Furthermore, unlike a traditional course, the GISP emphasized a direct community engagement component that allowed students to more deeply engage with academic material, while also connecting them to meaningful real-world experiences.

As a first step in this community engagement component of the GISP, we set out to assess the community’s needs by meeting with local community leaders. One particular collaboration that was integral to assessing the community’s needs was with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). Medical director Dr. James McDonald gave us insight into the perception of vaccines in Rhode Island, and connected the team to the head of communications of Immunization at the RIDOH. Collaborations with numerous other community leaders were also critical in aligning our work; however, the team realized that the most accurate assessment of community needs would come from the community members themselves.

We created an anonymous questionnaire to gather information on the community’s vaccine perceptions, both on traditional vaccines and the novel COVID-19 vac-

In turn, we decided to emphasize three major components in our work: (1) creation of educational materials, (2) social media, and (3) community outreach. In parallel to these components, the GISP was divided into three task forces: Educational Materials, Social Media, and Community Outreach. Educational Materials was responsible for the creation of educational content, to be distributed on a variety of platforms. Social Media was responsible for creating a social media campaign and a website. Community Outreach was responsible for engaging directly with community members, leaders, and partners. Students in the GISP were assigned to a task force based on personal interest and project needs. Each task force consisted of five students who met weekly to collaborate on projects specific to their task force. In addition, all students completed weekly readings and reflections. The work of the individual task forces is described in more detail below.

Educational Materials

One community need that our survey identified was the need for educational content on vaccines that was accurate, accessible, and relevant. The survey revealed that some Rhode Islanders felt they lacked reliable access to trustworthy information on vaccines. This lack of access to vaccine information may represent one contributing factor to vaccine hesitancy and the consequent decline in vaccine uptake. To combat this contributor to vaccine hesitancy, the Educational Materials task force aimed to create educational content that delivered accurate and relevant vaccine information in an engaging way. By doing so, this task force hoped to empower community members to make informed decisions regarding vaccinations of themselves or their family members.

To maximize impact, all of the educational content developed by the Educational Materials task force was designed to target at least one distinct determinant of vaccine hesitancy. Literature on the determinants of vaccine hesitancy frequently points to two major contributors: reduced dread of vaccine-preventable diseases and lack of trust in the pharmaceutical-industrial complex (Salmon et al., 2015). Furthermore, COVID-19 vaccines in particular face unique challenges because of the continually shifting landscape in the current stages of early vaccine rollout. Thus, the three guiding principles that the Educational Materials

task force adopted to guide content creation were (1) to appropriately communicate the true risks of vaccine-preventable disease; (2) to maintain a high degree of accuracy and transparency in all of our claims, while avoiding politicization of our message; and (3) to deliver timely updates on COVID-19 vaccine information.

Prior public health campaigns have shown that the use of “small media,” such as infographics, brochures, and stickers, can serve as a salient supplement to mobilize communities with public health interventions (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004). Over the duration of the GISP, students in the Educational Materials task force designed eight complete infographics, which were distributed both in print and digitally by Brown Boosts Immunity. Of these eight infographics, one infographic was designed specifically to communicate the true risks of vaccine-preventable disease (Guiding Principle 1), three infographics to deliver accurate and transparent information about the vaccine development pipeline (Guiding Principle 2), and four infographics to provide timely information on important and relevant developments in COVID-19 vaccine rollout (Guiding Principle 3). Figure 2 contains an example of an infographic designed by the Educational Materials task force, titled “What to Expect When You Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine.” In line with Guiding Principle 3, this infographic in particular aimed to address some of vaccine recipients’ most frequent questions, such as those regarding appointment logistics and side effects.

In addition to “small media,” Brown Boosts Immunity used a website to spread its message. One purpose of creating a website was to have a central resource that community members could access for trustworthy and relevant information on vaccines. To this end, students in the Educational Materials task force designed four complete webpages on the Brown Boosts Immunity website. These pages were designed in line with the same guiding principles discussed earlier. The most central of these pages was the “Learn page,” which was designed to be easily accessed from the home page. This Learn page, in line with Guiding Principle 1, served as a trove of general information about vaccines, such as how they work, what they contain, and what their impact has been. Incorporated into the Learn page was a list of carefully curated, hyperlinked

resources that could be used to verify the information presented on our website, which served to confer transparency to the information we present, in line with Guiding Principle 2.


The other webpage designed by the Educational Materials task force was the “COVID-19” page, which presents a comparison of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States, as well as

Figure 2. Sample Infographic: “What to Expect When You Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine”

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU GET YOUR COVID-19 VACCINE


BEFORE VACCINATION

- Check your eligibility
- Avoid getting other vaccines for 14 days before your COVID-19 vaccine
- See if you have any risk factors that might indicate that you shouldn't get the vaccine




AT THE VACCINATION SITE


- Keep your mask on at all times
- Maintain social distancing
- You will get a vaccination card that states which vaccine you received, the lot number of the vaccine, the date, and the vaccination site
- If you are getting your second dose, make sure to bring your vaccination card with you
- You will be monitored for about 15 minutes after your vaccination to make sure that you have no allergic reactions



AFTER VACCINATION

- You may have side effects such as pain at the injection site, headache, and fatigue
- Avoid getting other vaccinations for 14 days after your COVID-19 vaccine
- Schedule your second dose on time if you received a two-dose vaccine
- Continue social distancing and wearing your mask whenever you interact with people outside of your pod who are not fully vaccinated
- Most COVID-19 vaccines will not protect you immediately. For the two dose vaccines, most people's immune systems will fully respond within two weeks after receiving the second dose





Note. “What to Expect When You Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine,” one of the infographics designed for the Brown Boosts Immunity campaign by the Educational Materials task force, presents answers to questions that are highly relevant to COVID-19 vaccine recipients.

important developments that are discussed in the news. In line with Guiding Principle 3, this addition to the website provided community members with timely and relevant updates on COVID-19 vaccination in particular.

Social Media

The Social Media task force had three main responsibilities: (1) working on graphic design to enhance the appearance of our website and social media pages, and to assist the Educational Materials and Community Outreach task forces; (2) contributing to the creation and design of our website, which served as a hub for vaccination information and background information about Brown Boosts Immunity; and (3) creating an Instagram account and regular content to facilitate the growth of that account.

Graphic design was a continuous focus for the Social Media task force from its beginning, since the work of the task force was heavily visually based. The graphic design work was guided by responses to our questionnaire, which indicated the community's desire for easy-to-read graphics. In order to facilitate content creation, we developed a style guide that compiled a set of design criteria, including HEX color codes, BBI logo use restrictions, and general organizational tips to be implemented in all posts. All of our designed content adhered to these style guidelines in order to uphold our campaign's formality and professionalism. The social media team's graphic design work also involved the creation of eye-catching, uniformly designed Instagram posts, and the creation of stickers that could be distributed to local vaccination clinics and doctors' offices. Graphic design work laid the framework for the rest of the social media team's projects, and played a major role in facilitating continuity, structure, and aesthetically appealing content in Brown Boosts Immunity's social media presence.

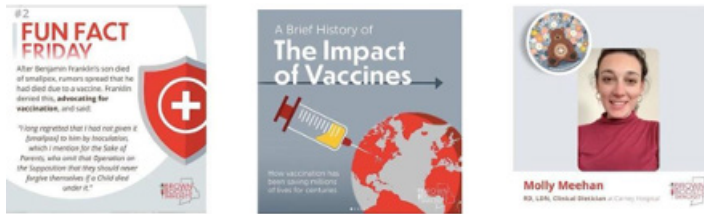
Whereas the Educational Materials task force was mainly involved in creating the informational vaccine content for the Brown Boosts Immunity website, the Social Media team's responsibility was to create and design the website itself. The Social Media team was focused on establishing an online presence for Brown Boosts Immunity, and utilizing the website helped to establish the Brown Boosts Immunity brand. The website included a page highlighting members of BBI alongside their reasons for vaccinating,

and also displayed two of BBI's campaign hashtags—#Immunity4RICommunity and #VaccinateTheOceanState—to garner social media traction. These hashtags were adopted by Rhode Island governor Daniel McKee: In both social media posts and press conferences, the governor used the phrase “vaccinate the Ocean State,” an expression originating from the Brown Boosts Immunity campaign.

The Social Media team was also tasked with creating and managing the Brown Boosts Immunity Instagram page. Despite frequently publishing educational content to our Instagram page, the aim of Brown Boosts Immunity wasn't to supersede the CDC, the WHO, or other large-scale public health entities with a broader reach than ours. Rather, the Instagram page provided equivalently informative content in a more digestible format, as well as original content designed specifically for a Rhode Island audience. The informational content created by the Social Media task force included Fun Fact Fridays that dealt with interesting vaccine facts, and vaccine-related infographics that were generally more research-based and complex. Testimonials were frequently featured as part of Testimonial Tuesday and showcased community members discussing their choice to vaccinate or their experience receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Representative samples are shown in Figure 3.

These testimonials spotlighted positive experiences with vaccines in order to dispel vaccine fears, and to encourage our audience to view vaccination as an essential step to take to protect their community. We featured Brown students, Rhode Island healthcare workers, and members of the general Rhode Island community. Our community-focused content also included Weekly Debriefs, which followed a two-slide format, with the first slide showcasing important headlines from that week (see Figure 4) and the second slide featuring a 60-second clip in which a member of BBI explained what the headlines meant in simpler terms and their relevance to our audience. Weekly Debriefs let us make our social media content more personal and more unique in terms of what we could offer as Brown students. Their creation, and the content creation by the Social Media task force in general, was informed by literature regarding the importance of adding personal touches to content involving public

Figure 3. Examples of Fun Fact Friday, Infographic, and Testimonial Tuesday Posts



Note. Left: Example of a Fun Fact Friday post highlighting provaccine sentiments from Benjamin Franklin. Center: Example of an informational graphic on the history of vaccination. Right: A representative example of a Testimonial Tuesday post, in which individuals discussed their experience getting vaccinated.

Figure 4. Weekly Debrief Example



Note. First slide of a Weekly Debrief Instagram post. The first slide features the main headlines that will be explained thoroughly in the short video on the second slide.

health communication (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2016).

Community Outreach

The need for community outreach stemmed from the group's desire to disseminate the tangible work of the Educational Materials and Social Media task forces. One of the initial goals of our team was to get "RI VACCINATED" stickers into COVID-19 and flu vaccination clinics, as well as primary care offices (Figure 5). The motivation behind these stickers came from the theory of crowd psychology that inspired the "I Voted" stickers, which have helped promote incredible voter turnout in recent presidential elections (Thompson, 2012). Our team envisioned that, with their COVID-19 vaccine, people would be given the "RI VACCINATED" stickers to wear, which would enable unvaccinated members of their community to see these stickers. Seeing that members of their community trust the vaccine increases overall vaccine

confidence because it helps establish vaccination as a norm, leading other community members to want to conform with the community's norm of receiving a vaccine (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969). BBI reached out to the Wellness Company, a Rhode Island medical services company, in order to streamline our distribution efforts and get easy access to a large number of vaccination clinics. We then expanded to primary care offices because we knew from our literature review that "communication with a caring, trusted, and concerned provider is the most important factor in eventual parent vaccine acceptance" (Dunn et al., 2018, p. 4).

In addition to targeting primary care providers and pediatricians, we knew that if our campaign was to be effective in the long term, we needed to target young adults and other college students. A study by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health analyzed various health behavior intervention campaigns aimed at adolescents and intended to influence peer crowds, and

Figure 5. Stickers Designed and Distributed by Our Team

Note. Pictured are two examples of the stickers distributed to vaccination sites and clinics throughout the state. Both of these stickers are Rhode Island specific. The blue sticker on the left has the anchor, which is an iconic Rhode Island symbol, with the Providence skyline in the background. The red sticker on the right is a view of Beavertail State Park.

found that when campaigns targeted a younger demographic they diminished risky behavior in the future (Moran et al., 2017). Dr. Meghan Moran, an associate professor from Johns Hopkins, stated, “We know that young people identify strongly with groups along subcultures and these groups vary on their health behavior, too. . . . [Developing] campaigns that incorporate the style of the group . . . can increase their effectiveness” (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2015, para. 3). In order to target these younger age groups, we reached out to university sports teams and asked their members to post about why they support widespread vaccination. The women’s hockey team was very receptive, reposting our social media posts and allowing us to collect additional testimonials. By spreading our message to these diverse groups, we were able to connect with new subgroups and further grow our campaign.

Furthermore, with COVID-19 vaccination clinics starting to ramp up, we were also given the unique opportunity to engage with the community and spread our message in real time. Members of our team attended multiple dates for vaccination clinics at a Johnston vaccination site (Figure 6), a Pawtucket vaccination site, and Clinica Esperanza’s vaccination site. At those locations, we helped spread our educational materials promoting vaccine confidence, passed out our stickers, collected video and written testimonials, and performed whatever tasks the clinic needed help with in order to make their clinics run smoothly. We were also able to communicate and form connections with city officials such as the

mayor of Johnston, a state senator for the Pawtucket district, and even the governor of Rhode Island. As a result of these connections, we were able to create a short compilation video of the testimonials we gathered and distribute it to school superintendents throughout the state. This further spread our message and also boosted our social media presence.

Impact on Community

The GISP’s three task forces utilized university resources and worked in tandem to grow the campaign and accomplish our goal of providing digestible information about vaccines for the community. While planning for the future of the campaign, we concurrently looked back to analyze the work of our campaign to determine whether our project showed signs of having a meaningful impact within the community. First we analyzed the quantitative data of our distribution network for our stickers and flyers, as well as the statistics from our social media account. We further analyzed our early stage impacts qualitatively by collecting feedback from Brown Boosts Immunity’s student members and community partners.

Quantitative

Our strategic partnership with the Wellness Company allowed us to distribute over 22,500 “RI VACCINATED” stickers, as well as additional educational flyers, to 100 flu clinics and 60 COVID-19 vaccination clinics across the state. In addition to measuring distribution of physical materials, it was

Figure 6. Experience in the Johnston Vaccine Clinic



Note. Pictured are members of the Brown Boosts Immunity team talking about the importance of civic engagement with Governor McKee (D-RI) and Mayor Polisenia (D-Johnston, RI). Mayor Polisenia has been a key community leader ally to us.

important to measure our digital impact. Our community engagement with the Brown Boosts Immunity social media and website has grown tremendously since the creation of the Instagram page on November 15, 2020. With a total of 39 posts, Brown Boosts Immunity has garnered 587 followers and counting, 34.9% of which currently reside in Providence; another 14.9% reside in cities across Rhode Island (Warwick, Cranston, and Pawtucket). Although the BBI campaign is based in Rhode Island, approximately half of our total followers come from other states. The Brown Boosts Immunity Instagram has a strong reach primarily to young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 (35.8%) and adults between the ages of 25 and 34 (21.2%).

As of the week of April 18, 2021, our Instagram has reached 683 accounts with a 50.9% increase to 1,070 impressions compared to the previous week. The growth of our posts as discussed in the social media project details parallels the increased engagement in terms of likes, comments, reach (number of unique profiles that viewed the post) and impressions (times post was displayed in someone's feed regardless of engagement/views). Table 1 highlights the category of posts and their average engagement.

Our social media growth increased the number of people exposed to our educational materials, which included compiled facts, statistics, pandemic updates, testimonials, and more. Comments left on the page indicate that vaccine hesitant people were engaging with our posts and were taking the time to read our vaccine information and personal testimonials. The Instagram statistics, viewer comments, and thousands of stickers distributed reflect the widespread distribution and reach of our materials. Thus, it is clear that our project helped increase vaccine confidence through the Rhode Island community and showed early signs of having a meaningful impact on the community.

Qualitative Analysis

In addition to the quantitative analysis, we assessed early stage impacts on the community by feedback from community partners. Personal communications and interviews with community partners were performed in order to better understand the impact of our campaign, and to see if others perceived our campaign as making a meaningful impact on the community.

Given the amount of time we spent at the clinics, we looked to community leaders working at those clinics for feedback. The

Table 1. Instagram Account Interactions

Post category	Average likes	Average impressions	Average reach
General educational materials ^a	34.5	385.1	311.5
Weekly Debriefs	36	477.3	369.9
Testimonials (video & image)	33.3	447.8	335.8
Clinic outreach highlights	48.5	577	441

Note. Statistics were gathered using the Instagram Insights feature on the @BrownBoostsImmunity profile. *Reach* refers to the number of unique profiles that viewed the post, and *impressions* are the times the post was displayed in someone's feed regardless of engagement/views.

^a Includes Pfizer/Moderna comparison, impact of vaccines, and similar information.

staff greatly appreciated our help, with the Johnston chief of police, Chief Joseph Razza, stating that “having [the students] there was a true show of support. Having [the younger] generation interact with the elderly population, [had] a calming effect. We appreciate the support!” (J. Razza, personal communication, April 20, 2021). Our team also collected testimonials to include in a promotional video, which the mayor of Johnston distributed to schools throughout the state. The mayor, Joseph Polisena, later stated in an interview that “I thought it was great. It [showed] the adults and the younger people about how important the vaccination clinics are to keep . . . their loved ones safe. I thought it was fantastic” (J. Polisena, personal communication, April 20, 2021).

In addition to the video, our “RI VACCINATED” stickers were very well-received at the COVID-19 and flu clinics. The immunization program manager at one of our major partners, the Wellness Company, even stated:

They are a big hit . . . clients love having a choice—picking their favorite—and asking their co-workers which one they got! Many choose not to put the sticker on, as they are SAVING theirs as a memento. You would get a kick out of how excited they are—just like little kids again. Thank you so much for your efforts, it’s paid off. (L. Volpe, personal communication, January 12, 2021)

To further evaluate our impact on the community, team members conducted interviews with infectious disease experts who witnessed our work firsthand, Dr. Dioscaris Garcia and Dr. Karen Tashima. In the interview, Dr. Garcia pointed to the Weekly Debriefs as particularly impactful, stating that people converse with him about vaccine-related topics using the information from our posts (D. Garcia, personal communication, April 21, 2021). Dr. Tashima called our materials “really well done, very informative, and well researched” (K. Tashima, personal communication, April 21, 2021). She commented on the campaign’s student-run, multidisciplinary approach, and emphasized that hearing about vaccine hesitancy from young people could make a difference.

In sum, through the interactions our team members and partners saw in the community, it was clear that we were enacting a paradigm shift in our community. This was the goal of our campaign, and our qualitative analysis indicates that our work to spread accurate information about vaccines and spark conversations had the intended effect. Our community partners agreed with our assessment of early stage impact, which concluded that our campaign was making meaningful impacts on the community.

Impact on Students

In addition to the outward-facing impact that Brown Boosts Immunity had on the Rhode Island community, the community engagement aspect of the GISP was very influential on all of the students who par-

anticipated. To measure the impact of the community engagement component of the GISP on the students in the course, a short reflection form was sent to all GISP members at the end of the semester. This reflection asked members to look back on their experience taking a more nontraditional, project-based learning course at Brown, and to compare their initial expectations for the course with their actual experience.

Responses were overwhelmingly positive, and revealed that students felt that seeing their efforts in the classroom translate into real effects in their community was deeply important and inspiring to their own educational goals. Even with the diverse areas of study represented by the students of the GISP—including majors such as public health, health and human biology, visual arts, and neuroscience, among many others—all students felt as though they benefited from the experiences that they gained through the GISP. Many students had unique motivations for joining the GISP, often aligned with their area of study and their career goals, and the responses to the survey revealed that students felt they gained experiences that were in line with their personal educational goals. For example, those studying public health gained experience in developing a public health campaign; those studying the life sciences deepened their understanding of and ability to communicate information regarding vaccines; those studying visual arts built on their skill set by working on the graphic design of small media, such as infographics and stickers, as well as a website.

One major motivation that students, regardless of their area of study, reported for taking this course was the appeal of its service-learning model. One student said, “I wanted to be an agent of change in the community of Providence . . . I wanted to learn the essential soft and hard skills of what is [sic] like to promote public health advice and reports to the general public” (R. Paredes, personal communication, April 12, 2021). At the conclusion of the semester, many students appreciated the benefits of this GISP’s approach to community engagement, with another participant stating, “I absolutely benefited from this interdisciplinary approach because having the chance to see my learning manifest into tangible community outreach efforts made me even more passionate about the topics I was studying” (D. Melia, personal communi-

cation, April 8, 2021). The GISP’s service-learning model aimed to enable students to utilize the knowledge they gained in a traditional classroom and apply those lessons in community engagement. The opportunity to harness those lessons “to benefit the community [and] ignite real change” in the Rhode Island community was consistently referred to in the students’ reflections as a key benefit of this GISP (E. Epstein, personal communication, April 8, 2021).

One example of the ways students were able to meaningfully engage with their community was volunteering at COVID-19 vaccination clinics. The two main responsibilities that students were given were (1) to distribute our small media materials (i.e., stickers and infographics) and (2) to schedule second-dose appointments for first-time vaccine recipients. The students who participated in this volunteering opportunity described the experience as particularly significant. One student who worked on designing the stickers said, “Seeing people’s faces light up as they received the stickers I was starting to work on just last semester was a super rewarding moment for me” (E. Epstein, personal communication, April 14, 2021). Many other students echoed this sentiment and pointed out that transforming this project “from just an idea we had, to a tangible output that we were able to give to the community” was a particularly memorable aspect (M. Polavarapu, personal communication, April 14, 2021). Another student said, “Seeing the results of our hard work translated into actual impact was a great motivator to work harder” (P. Faherty, personal communication, April 15, 2021).

Ultimately, in our review of student experiences, we found that constructing a GISP that dedicated much of its class time to real-world projects and volunteering opportunities allowed the GISP participants to engage meaningfully with the Rhode Island community and with the course material. The nontraditional course structure of the GISP provided a means for students to enhance their engagement with the academic material, and in turn strengthened their motivation to learn about vaccines and vaccine-related issues in a way that was complementary to their educational goals.

Future Directions

Brown Boosts Immunity has great potential to continue its endeavors in vaccine advocacy in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic

and general vaccine hesitancy. COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy is still a significant issue and will need to continue to be addressed. As the supply of vaccines becomes larger than the demand, Brown Boosts Immunity intends to play a major role in promoting vaccine confidence. Now that younger age groups have become eligible, we hold the long-term goal of expanding the audience of our social media and educational materials to students at elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as different colleges throughout the state of Rhode Island. Building these connections now will also allow us to use that partnership in the future to encourage vaccine confidence in all vaccines, not just the COVID-19 vaccine.

Vaccine hesitancy and the urgency of COVID-19 vaccinations have taken up a lot of the time and effort of Brown Boosts Immunity; however, vaccine hesitancy is not limited to COVID-19. It is important to continue the fight against vaccine hesitancy even outside the context of the pandemic. There are many lives to be saved if more people gain confidence in flu, HPV, measles, and other vaccines. For that reason, sticker and educational material distribution will not halt when COVID-19 herd immunity is reached. We will continue to use partnerships made during this pandemic to extend our outreach to clinics and get our materials into primary care offices. In the coming months, it is our hope to reach out to our current partners to learn what materials could be most beneficial.

One of the most important partnerships to continue will be the Wellness Company. The Wellness Company has already used our stickers in over 100 flu clinics in addition to the 60 COVID-19 vaccine clinics. The Wellness Company has the infrastructure to help us reach the most people possible. This is why the Community Outreach team maintains an open line of communication with the Wellness Company and will continue to do so even after the pandemic.

In addition to community outreach long-term goals, we plan to grow and develop our social media presence. We hope that improvement of overall quality of posts and design will help us achieve this goal. Throughout the existence of our social media, we have created our own graphic designs, and we continue to improve our skills. Additionally, it is important for us to adapt to the needs and wants of our audience and shift our strategies to get

maximum engagement with our posts. By measuring indicators of engagement such as likes, comments, and views, we can take stock of which posts and designs perform well. Our posts have had an upward trend of engagement, and we hope to continue that growth pattern. Finally, we aim to increase our following on Twitter and Facebook because we realize that different age groups and demographics may use different social media platforms.

Long-Term Analysis

For long-term analysis, we plan to reach out to our various community partners in order to assess the campaign's continuous impact in vaccination clinics across Rhode Island. We anticipate that by sending surveys to our partners, we can get their overall impressions to guide our future directions. Through these surveys we hope to assess the impact we had and how to improve our strategies to influence future directions. We also intend to measure future impact through the ongoing work of student volunteers on site at the vaccination clinics. Although available literature on vaccine hesitancy has nicely guided our efforts, it is not a substitute for being on the front lines and assessing the community's needs there.

Recommendations

For others looking to pursue similar service-learning community-based projects in their own university or community, we have several recommendations for organizing and carrying out the tasks that the GISP took on. Our goals within the Rhode Island community were to increase overall rates of vaccination, improve vaccine literacy and knowledge regarding the safety and efficacy of vaccines, and change sentiments regarding vaccination from hesitance to pride and confidence. We noted that employing a service-learning approach proved useful in accomplishing these goals, and we have detailed possible ways to implement a similar approach elsewhere.

First, we would recommend that individuals at other universities find a way to engage directly with the community of interest, preferably in an arrangement that allows for regular, routine interaction. Brown Boosts Immunity's volunteering within local vaccine clinics was integral to our project goals, both in terms of physically assisting with vaccine administration and with the distribution of flyers, educational materi-

als, stickers, and promotional materials. Our presence within local vaccine clinics allowed us both to facilitate the actual distribution of vaccines by assisting patients and clinic staff and to promote feelings of vaccine pride with our stickers and “Why I Vaccinate” posters by individual patients (Figure 7). Similar projects at other universities should consider establishing partnerships with specific sites within their community, like the vaccine clinics that Brown Boosts Immunity assisted, as one of the most effective ways of performing community outreach, and of spreading word of their program within their community.

Moreover, we recommend that other projects produce tangible material goods, like stickers or flyers, to be spread within their community. Our materials allowed us to remain connected with the community even when we weren’t physically working with and aiding its members. We further recommend carefully considering the locations within a community where these physical goods are distributed. Although the reach of both our stickers and our infographics was extensive, we eventually concluded that we were lacking representation in some key demographic areas, like those with a greater proportion of Spanish-speaking residents. In light of this realization, the team expanded to Clinica Esperanza and other Spanish-speaking clinics, and targeting this demographic will be a continued focus

for Brown Boosts Immunity in the future. Other projects should ensure their distribution network does not mistakenly exclude a key group within their community.

We also suggest that others looking to enact a similar service-learning project establish a virtual or online presence to complement in-person outreach. In meeting the needs of our community, it was important to consider how we could serve the community in both hands-on work and the virtual realm, which allowed us to reach significantly more individuals. Other projects should note that they will reach a far broader network of people within their community through a combination of in-person and online outreach work. In addition, we would recommend customizing this virtual presence to the needs of the community of interest. For example, our social media team polled our Instagram followers regarding the content they wanted to see most, and subsequently designed our content based on their responses. Thus, our original social media content was uniquely curated to our community’s interests. In establishing a more personal social media presence, we increased our campaigns’ relevance to Rhode Island citizens and differentiated ourselves from larger public health organizations. Any successful community-based campaign should endeavor to demonstrate what their campaign offers to their local community that a larger organization cannot provide.

Figure 7. “Why I Vaccinate” Posters



Note. Two examples of educators holding their custom “Why I Vaccinate” posters. Brown Boosts Immunity members who volunteered at vaccine clinics approached teachers after they’d received their vaccine and encouraged them to write down their reason for getting vaccinated. Teachers were then photographed posing with their custom signs, and were later featured on our social media pages.

Our final recommendation is to ensure that any project with similar aims be designed with sustainability and longevity in mind. Projects should be built to continue beyond single semesters, even if formatted as a semester-long course in a manner similar to Brown Boosts Immunity. Demonstrating the continued commitment to the project even after the initial GISP ended, members of BBI designed and ran a similar but adapted GISP during the spring 2022 semester. As an additional example of BBI's efforts to maintain continuity after the first semester-long GISP had ended, GISP members applied, and were accepted, to present at an event hosted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) called Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL). Here, the students presented the concept of centering a class around service-learning and gave a concrete example of how professors who attended the event could structure their class in a similar way to the GISP. We would strongly recommend that other projects consider how they could continue to provide valuable education and support to their community on the time scale of years rather than months.

Conclusion

Taking a step back and analyzing the Brown Boosts Immunity campaign from the outside reveals a number of lessons that can serve as valuable resources in implementing future student-led community engagement efforts. One of the primary lessons is how impactful students can be in recognizing and addressing significant sociopolitical issues such as vaccine hesitancy. Developing and participating in a Group Independent Study Project has revealed that interdisciplinary cooperation among students is an incredibly valuable strategy in responding to said issues. A particular emphasis on having a team with diverse academic backgrounds equips a community engagement initiative with a versatile and adaptable frame of reference. The promising signs of early stage impact that Brown Boosts Immunity was able to deliver to both the Rhode Island community and the student community indicate that there is great value in leveraging a project-based service-learning model, both as a means of serving the larger community and as a means of enriching students' educational experiences at the university level.



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The Student–Athlete Volunteer Experience: An Investigation of a University Athletics–Community Sports Partnership

Cailie S. McGuire, Jennifer T. Coletti, and Luc J. Martin

Abstract

Within the Canadian university sports context, athletics departments are increasingly partnering with community sports organizations to promote youth sports participation, while simultaneously providing student–athletes with volunteer opportunities aimed at developing civically engaged young adults. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of varsity student–athlete volunteers ($n = 10$) within a university athletics–community sports partnership program. Volunteers discussed their motivations to volunteer in the partnership program and highlighted various benefits for themselves (e.g., transferable skill development), the youth athletes (e.g., having relatable role models), and the institution and community more broadly (e.g., enhanced community outreach, credibility of programming). Key takeaways and practical recommendations are provided with the aim of fostering quality volunteer experiences within these partnership programs.

Keywords: community involvement, sport, student–athlete, volunteerism, quality participation



During adolescence, individuals become more aware of, and invested in, societal issues as they begin to foster their personal identities (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). As a result, adolescents seek to make contributions to issues that not only reinforce their identities and values, but that also improve conditions for others and their communities (e.g., Lerner et al., 2014). This concept, referred to as “civic engagement” (Adler & Goggin, 2005), is a key component in promoting a healthy and positive transition from adolescence into adulthood (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). Volunteering is a form of civic engagement that involves volitional activities that benefit another person, group, or cause (Wilson, 2000). From a positive youth development perspective, volunteer programs can promote the acquisition of various developmental assets (e.g., self–confidence, interpersonal skills; MacNeela & Gannon, 2014) that, long–term, can support the development of thriving youth (e.g., Lerner et al., 2014).

Within the context of sports, volunteering has been associated with the development of personal and life skills, enhanced social capital (Kay & Bradbury, 2009), and the fulfillment of basic psychological needs (Deal & Camiré, 2016). Moreover, volunteers are often described as one of the most valuable resources within sporting organizations and, consequently, serve as the backbone of successful sporting events and programs (Kerwin et al., 2015). Thus, ensuring that adolescents experience quality volunteer opportunities is not only integral to the success of sporting organizations, but also to the development and well–being of the volunteers.

University Athletics–Community Sports Partnerships

It is becoming increasingly common within the higher education sports context for athletics departments to partner with community sports organizations, with clear benefits for both sides of the partnership (e.g., Kerwin et al., 2015; Svensson et al., 2014).

For instance, the National Collegiate Athletic Association Challenging Athletes' Minds for Personal Success/Life Skills Program (NCAA CHAMPS) was launched to promote the holistic development of varsity student-athletes (e.g., academics, personal life, athletics) through partnerships with community service organizations. Indeed, such partnerships provide youth with sports opportunities for continued participation while simultaneously providing student-athletes with volunteer opportunities that are aimed at developing well-rounded and civically engaged young adults (e.g., Hemphill & Martinek, 2017). Notably, the benefits of these partnerships reach both institutional (e.g., enhanced networking/marketing opportunities) and community (e.g., enhanced program delivery, achievement of intended program objectives; Svensson et al., 2014) levels.

Despite the integral role that volunteers play in the success of these partnership programs, to date, existing partnership research has emphasized the benefits acquired by the community sports organization (e.g., access to athletic facilities and institutional resources) and youth participants (e.g., coached by experienced varsity athletes; Svensson et al., 2014), with less attention being placed on the experiences of the varsity student-athlete volunteers themselves (e.g., Deal & Camiré, 2016). Given that these partnership programs rely heavily on volunteers for program execution, directly exploring their experiences within, and perceptions of, these partnership programs is worthwhile (e.g., What does a meaningful volunteer experience in a partnership program look like? What are the acquired benefits for the volunteers?). In doing so, university athletics-community sports partnership representatives can ensure that these programs are structured in a way that best promotes volunteer engagement and retention and, as a result, the attainment of beneficial outcomes for all invested partners involved (e.g., volunteers, participants, institution, and community).

In 2020, the lead researchers were contacted by a university athletics department who had recently implemented a community sports partnership program. Within this program, varsity student-athletes engage in coaching opportunities with youth programs across the city, with the goal of creating a sense of community within the sport and to potentially inspire a future generation of

athletes to attend the university. Moreover, this volunteer program aims to serve as a mentorship opportunity for the varsity student-athletes. Given that this program was implemented in 2018, and that the student-athlete volunteers play a central role in program delivery, the athletics department was interested in understanding the student-athlete volunteers' experiences within the program. Notably, with increased calls to conduct research in collaboration with end users (e.g., Leggat et al., 2021), partnering with the university athletics department represented a unique opportunity for the research team to better understand their program needs, with the goal of conducting research that is more relevant and impactful for the target knowledge users.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore varsity student-athletes' experiences with, and perceptions of, the respective university athletics-community sports partnership program. More specifically, and in line with the athletics department's needs, we were interested in uncovering (a) the potential benefits acquired from volunteering in the program and (b) the strengths and/or limitations of the program in relation to fostering an ideal volunteer position. In doing so, the research team ultimately sought to create evidence-informed recommendations for the athletics department pertaining to how they could cultivate opportunities within the partnership program that would best promote quality volunteer experiences. Altogether, our findings could serve as key considerations when developing partnership programs in the future not only to benefit the participants and community/institution at large, but, importantly, the volunteers themselves.

Method

This study employed a pragmatic approach to explore volunteers' perceptions of, and experiences within, a partnership program with the goal of generating practical recommendations to promote quality volunteer experiences (Giacobbi et al., 2005). In line with this orientation, we sought to better understand (a) the associated outcomes of volunteering in the partnership program and (b) the program's strengths and/or limitations, which ultimately would inform the development of evidence-informed recommendations for the athletics department.

Setting and Data Collection

This study was situated within a Canadian university that implemented a university athletics–community sports partnership program in 2018. The purpose of this partnership program is to inspire youth athletes to pursue varsity and academic careers at the university while simultaneously providing varsity student–athletes with mentor opportunities. In collaboration with athletics department representatives, and following institutional ethics board approval, current volunteers of the program were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. A recruitment poster and letter of information were circulated to the varsity athletics teams via the athletics department representatives, who were then asked to contact the first author directly. A total of 10 volunteers ($M_{\text{age}} = 20.8$; $SD = 1.69$; 50% self-identifying women) were recruited. Participants belonged to men’s and women’s soccer, men’s football, and women’s rugby and softball. Interviews took place in person ($n = 3$), over the phone ($n = 1$), or on Zoom ($n = 6$) and lasted on average 48:00 minutes ($SD = 8:31$). Each interview followed a semi-structured guide that was developed in collaboration with the athletics department representatives (see Appendix 1). Interviews were audio/video recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis

A reflexive thematic analysis (TA) approach was adopted to inductively identify patterns and themes across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2020). Given the relatively sparse information about volunteers’ experiences within this type of partnership program, reflexive TA provided an opportunity to openly code (i.e., data-driven coding) with the goal of developing higher order themes (i.e., patterns of shared meaning; Braun & Clarke, 2020). The first author read and reread the transcripts, generated initial codes using the Quirkos Analysis Software (Version 2.3), and further developed themes of broader significance. Through discussion with the coauthors, themes were reviewed for coherency, defined, named, and are described in the Results section below. Given the pragmatic orientation of the project, our analysis was guided by the notion of practical utility—that is, ensuring that findings have use in the real world (e.g., Wiltshire, 2018). To protect the anonymity of participants, the partnership program’s name

has been removed; it is herein referred to as “program,” and participant names have been replaced with pseudonyms.

Results

Pertaining to the student–athlete volunteer experience within the partnership program, the volunteers discussed a variety of reasons for volunteering within the program that ranged from intrinsic to extrinsic in nature. Stemming from these motivations to engage, important program implications were also discussed spanning themselves, the youth participants, and the institution and community more broadly (see Figure 1). In addition, based on the volunteers’ experiences, key takeaways and practical recommendations are provided for invested partners who are involved in, or seeking to develop, similar partnership programs (e.g., coaches, athletics staff) to promote quality volunteer opportunities.

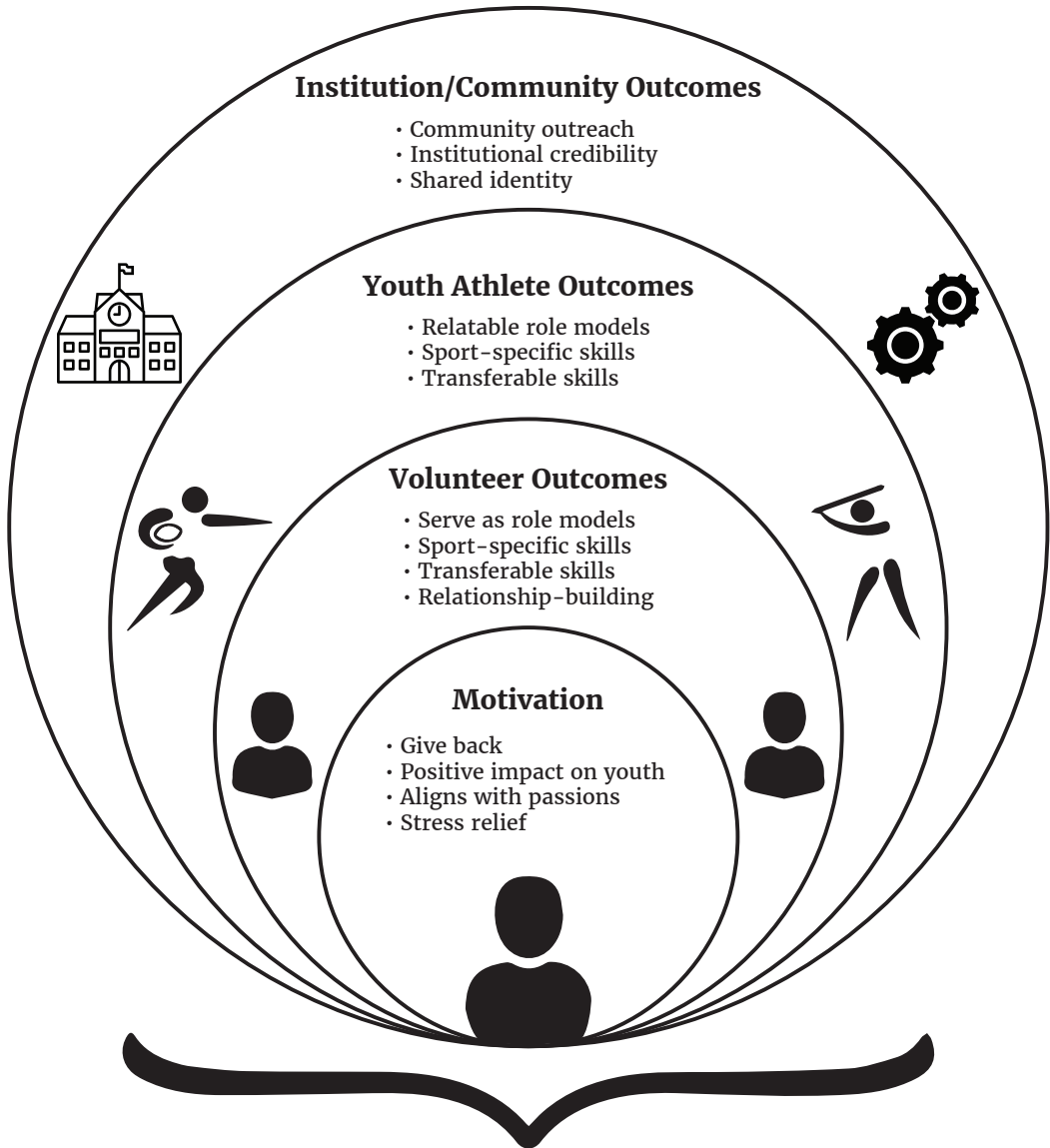
Motivation to Volunteer

Athletes discussed various motivations for volunteering in the program that ranged from being intrinsic (e.g., giving back) to extrinsic (e.g., building resume) in nature. Most often, volunteers described the program as an ideal, solidified opportunity to “give back” to the youth sporting community that they had previously benefited from by promoting positive sports experiences to the next generation of young athletes. Lionel stated:

I’ve had so many people help me in my [sports] career . . . I’ve had a ton of different coaches and people that believed in me and helped me develop into a better person. I’ve realized that coaching is a great way to give back and do the same thing for the next generation of kids . . . it feels good to try to give them the same kinds of opportunities.

The opportunity to give back also enabled volunteers to have an impact on youth athletes’ psychosocial and sport-specific development, which also motivated them to engage in the program. Kevin stated, “When [the youth athletes] do one simple thing right or just them having a smile on their face makes any effort worth it.” Thus, having a positive impact on the youth athletes was a driving force that motivated them to volunteer in the program.

Figure 1. The Student–Athlete Volunteer Experience in a University Athletics–Community Sports Partnership



Program Recommendations

- Clear and shared volunteer expectations
- Ensure meaningful volunteer opportunities
- Carefully consider logistics

Participating in the “youthful” sports environment and engaging in an activity that they loved also motivated the student-athletes to volunteer. Along these lines, volunteers emphasized that having fun and enjoying themselves were important motivators to volunteer:

When you get into the depths of your training . . . you sometimes forget to enjoy the game . . . without joy there is no game, so going back to volunteer with these kids . . . it brings you so much joy. It [reminds you why] you play—just to enjoy the game. (Kevin)

Moreover, throughout the interviews a common point of discussion was how busy the volunteers’ schedules were and the stressors associated with having to balance various life responsibilities as varsity student-athletes (e.g., academics, athletics, extracurriculars). Despite being an additional time commitment, volunteers saw this program as an excellent outlet to relieve stress: “It’s pretty much the best part of my day . . . to step away from school . . . to step away from everything for a little bit” (Devan). Altogether, the volunteers were motivated to engage within the program for a variety of reasons that ranged from giving back to sporting communities to acquiring personal benefits.

Key takeaway: Volunteer partnership programs should not serve as additional stressors for student-athletes but rather as an opportunity to foster social relationships, learn new skills, and have a positive impact on youth.

Partnership Program Implications

Although the purpose of this study was to explore volunteers’ experiences and the associated volunteer outcomes, participants emphasized a variety of benefits for not only themselves, but also for the youth athletes, institution, and community as a whole.

The Volunteer

Volunteers discussed a variety of benefits of engaging with the program, noting that serving as volunteers provided them with the opportunity to develop trusting and supportive reciprocal relationships with the youth participants. The volunteers often described a point of realization that younger

versions of themselves were looking up to them, and that they had the potential to dramatically impact their sports experiences by serving as relatable role models:

There is a sign in our changeroom that says . . . “See that little girl in the stands, she wants to be just like you, make sure you put your heart out” . . . and now it has meaning behind it. There are girls out there watching our game, trying to learn the game, to be an older female player, so that’s really cool. (Aaliyah)

Serving as relatable role models for the youth athletes and assisting them throughout their sporting careers was very rewarding for the volunteers.

Volunteers also described acquiring various sport-specific and transferable skills through engaging with the program. Whereas they prioritized the youth participants’ development, given the lessened age gap between some participants and volunteers, there was also an opportunity to further refine their own sport-specific skills: “We get to go practice with the U16s once a week, which is more reps for us to make us better, keep us in shape” (Camila). Moreover, the volunteers developed various transferable skills such as patience, problem-solving, and self-governance by interacting with the youth. Most notably, volunteers described this program as an ideal opportunity for the varsity student-athletes to develop their leadership skills that, in turn, could better their own varsity teams: “The players who have been really involved in the coaching, I’ve noticed a lot of them step up—take more vocal leadership roles on the [varsity] team . . . when you’re a coach, you have no choice but to be a vocal leader” (Theo).

In addition to fostering supportive and reciprocal relationships with the youth athletes through role modeling, volunteers also highlighted that engaging in the program served as an opportunity to build new connections with their varsity teammates. Devan stated, “Coaching with teammates gives you an opportunity to build more of a relationship with different teammates . . . teammates who you haven’t interacted with as much—people who you wouldn’t talk to as much off the field . . . or even on the field.” Thus, volunteers not only recognized

individual benefits, but also discussed the broader implications for their varsity teams.

Key takeaway: Partnership programs provide varsity student-athletes with unique mentoring opportunities that have implications for the individual volunteers (e.g., skill refinement) and their respective varsity teams (e.g., developing athlete leaders).

The Youth Athletes

Just as the volunteers were able to serve as role models for the youth, volunteers emphasized that they believed the youth also benefited from the reciprocal, supportive relationships they built together: “[The youth athletes] are so excited that they get to interact with actual varsity athletes and to them, we’re their role models . . . they want to hear everything I have to say” (Aaliyah). Given the close proximity in age between the volunteers and athletes in comparison to parents and full-time coaches, the volunteers saw this as a unique opportunity to serve as relatable role models for the youth participants to assist in positively shaping their sport experiences: “In two years they’re going to be choosing universities . . . maybe they’ll be more likely to stay because they’ve grown up cheering for [University] . . . so having us involved . . . it’s just something more you can relate to” (Kevin). Volunteers described how important it was for the youth athletes to have relatable role models with whom they could envision themselves being in the future. Volunteers emphasized how this experience could have important implications for long-term participation in sports and decisions pertaining to advancing one’s varsity athletics career.

Another prominent outcome that volunteers described for the youth participants was the development of sport-specific (e.g., technique) and transferable (e.g., teamwork, communication) skills. Zane highlighted that being so well-versed in the sport provided a unique and fresh perspective when coaching the youth athletes, which, in turn, had positive developmental implications for the participants. In addition to skill development, volunteers also discussed their important role in trying to prevent sport dropout by increasing the quantity and quality of available sporting opportunities for the youth:

When I was in youth soccer, they

didn’t have any specific goalkeeper coaches, it was like “Oh yeah, hold your hands up, don’t let it hit your face.” So I think the parents are grateful they have . . . more relatable, younger coaches, and the fact we are coaching them and we’re varsity athletes, the kids think just that’s the coolest thing because they hope to one day to play for [University]. (Aaliyah)

Key takeaway: Highly skilled and more relatable volunteers served as exemplar role models for the youth and promoted sport-specific development/skill acquisition among the athletes.

The Institution and Community

Volunteers reflected on how their involvement within the program also benefited the institution and community through enhanced outreach, credibility of the university and community sports programs, and the development of a shared identity. Volunteers discussed the importance of building positive relationships with community members to enhance their program’s reach and image outside the University district. Devan recalled:

It’s beneficial for us [varsity athletes] . . . it’s beneficial for [University]. It looks good on the program because we’re obviously getting out, helping the community, it looks good on our team . . . it gives opportunities to build relationships with people who are eventually going to become fans of our team . . . come to our games—come cheer us on.

Thus, creating positive relationships and enhancing the university’s connection with the community had important implications for garnering support for one’s respective varsity team.

Volunteering for the program was also described as an avenue to increase the perceived credibility of both the youth sport and varsity athletics programs. Theo stated,

I think the program just [being associated] with [University] . . . is a really great partnership. [University] has a lot of resources and facilities that may not be open

to smaller community–based programs, so sharing those resources . . . is definitely great for the development of the athletes.

Thus, volunteers perceived the youth programming to be more established and of higher quality when associated with the university. In relation to the credibility of the varsity program, volunteers emphasized that partnering with community teams provided them with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities through coaching and, as a result, the team experienced increased community support during competitions, which strengthened their team’s reputation.

In addition, volunteers described that, through their involvement in the program, a greater sense of connection and shared identity were established between the university and community sports programs. For instance, Jasmine stated, “You hear from other universities that they don’t get as involved as joining literally with a club. [Program] is joining directly [with the University] so, that’s pretty cool . . . just seeing the kids walk around with their [program] hoodies and their sweaters.” Volunteers often discussed how they would see youth participants sporting the university’s colors and clothing within the community, reflecting their enhanced connection and shared identity with one another.

Key takeaway: Building supportive relationships between the institution and community sports organizations can serve as a solidified pathway through which youth can pursue varsity athletic careers while promoting and enhancing the reputation of said university.

Enhancing the Quality of Volunteer Opportunities Within the Partnership Program

Despite the many beneficial outcomes associated with the program, it became apparent through the discussions with the volunteers that some aspects of the program hindered quality volunteer participation. More generally, these barriers included a lack of communication between community sports program representatives (e.g., coaches) and volunteers, not being given meaningful roles, and logistical concerns (e.g., location, scheduling). Therefore, to maximize

the benefits associated with volunteering in this program, we propose the following recommendations for invested partners within these organizations (e.g., full–time coaches, athletics department staff).

Establish Clear and Shared Expectations for Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Whereas volunteers acknowledged that they were primarily there to assist the full–time coaches, a lack of clearly outlined expectations often resulted in volunteers acting in a more reserved way out of fear of overstepping. Zane recalled, “I always find myself having to ask, ‘Okay, what’s the plan for practice? What do you want me to do?’ [The coach] never makes that public at the start . . . I think [that discussion] is really important.” Thus, volunteers highlighted the benefit of having transparent conversations instigated by the head coaches prior to the start of their training sessions. These discussions, in turn, could enhance the volunteers’ abilities to fulfill their expected level of engagement.

Ensure Meaningful Opportunities Through Quality Interactions

Volunteers described their roles as meaningful when they were given autonomy or could embody a leadership role (e.g., provide input on drills to implement, give technical feedback). When their involvement and responsibilities were described as meaningful, participants discussed feeling valued and appreciated, which in turn, promoted volunteer retention:

As soon as we come to the practice the [coaches] shake our hands and will be like, “Hi, we’re super happy to have you and the girls are super excited to have you guys here!” . . . they’ll integrate us into every drill . . . [I] always feel welcomed. (Jasmine)

As highlighted previously, the volunteers described having extremely busy schedules as varsity student–athletes, and thus it was imperative to feel as though their time was valued and that they were having an impact on the youth participants through meaningful roles and responsibilities.

In addition, all of the volunteers discussed the importance of building quality interpersonal relationships with the youth participants. Notably, the volunteers highlighted that building those quality relationships

took time and thus emphasized the importance of having continuity and longevity when volunteering with specific teams:

I've been able to work continuously with one team. So, I got to know the team and really have an impact on them personally rather than just jumping in on random training sessions. . . . I feel like being able to get to know the girls and actually work with them one on one has been really impactful. (Jasmine)

Thus, many volunteers recommended a more consistent training schedule in which volunteers could work with the same athletes over the course of a season as an avenue to develop quality connections and reinforce a sense of relatedness with the youth.

Carefully Consider Logistics to Facilitate Volunteer Involvement

Many volunteers discussed the difficulties of attending scheduled practices that were extremely far away from campus and required public transportation. Aaliyah noted that given their time-constrained schedules, spending an additional hour commuting to their already hour-long sessions was often not feasible:

Most university students don't have vehicles or modes of transportation, so when they're training out at [location], that's kind of tricky because you're only spending an hour with the team but actually you're spending 40 minutes to get there in a cab and 40 minutes after—it's your whole evening.

Given the time commitment required when traveling to training locations, volunteers discussed frustrations that arose when there was a lack of organization and communication with the partnered organization upon arrival (e.g., being given the wrong practice time, facilities being locked). Scheduling was also a concern for the volunteers when balancing their own training schedules with the program's training sessions. For instance, many volunteers highlighted that after a weekend away at a varsity competition, volunteering on Sunday evenings was often not feasible or ideal. Thus, it is crucial for athletics departments and sports organizations to be transparent and open with one another in regard to scheduling program

practices to minimize scheduling conflicts. Improved communication and planning would provide more opportunities for student-athletes to attend volunteer sessions and, as a result, enhance the quality of the youth sports programming.

Discussion

Through the varsity student-athlete interviews, numerous motivations to volunteer (e.g., ranging from intrinsic to extrinsic) and associated program benefits were highlighted, spanning the volunteers themselves (e.g., serve as role models), the youth participants (e.g., sport-specific skill development), and benefits at community/institution levels (e.g., enhanced community outreach, credibility of programming). Whereas similar implications have been discussed in university sports partnership literature pertaining to the benefits acquired by the youth (e.g., skill development; Hemphill & Martinek, 2017) and the institution/community (e.g., increased organizational capacity; Svensson et al., 2014), this study extends this body of literature to encompass benefits acquired by the volunteers themselves.

Accordingly, targeted recommendations have been provided on how to generate quality volunteer experiences to promote retention in these partnership programs (i.e., the development of clear and shared volunteer expectations, providing meaningful opportunities through quality relationships, and carefully considering logistical concerns). These findings are further supported by existing literature pertaining to volunteer motivations and future intentions within the sports context. For instance, individuals are more likely to continue to volunteer when they feel a sense of belonging with their respective community (e.g., Kerwin et al., 2015; MacLean & Hamm, 2007; Wicker, 2017). This finding aligns closely with the current recommendation to promote consistent volunteer interactions with the same team over time to enable the development of high-quality relationships. In doing so, volunteers may feel a greater sense of belonging through more meaningful interactions with the youth.

More broadly, these recommendations are further supported by research examining university student-athlete volunteer experiences grounded in self-determination theory (e.g., Deal & Camiré, 2016). In relation to the satisfaction of basic psychologi-

cal needs (i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness; Ryan & Deci, 2017), student–athletes are more motivated to volunteer when these needs are satisfied (e.g., Deal & Camiré, 2016). In relation to the proposed recommendations, establishing clear and shared expectations may provide volunteers with the opportunity to adequately display their existing competencies (e.g., leading specific drills). Moreover, carefully considering logistical concerns (e.g., scheduling of varsity athlete practices, location) may provide more opportunities for athletes to engage meaningfully in their volunteer positions and, subsequently, further develop their own sport-specific and transferable competencies. Similarly, although having the opportunity to build quality relationships with youth over time could enhance feelings of relatedness, being given meaningful roles and responsibilities may satisfy volunteers' needs for autonomy. Thus, in alignment with existing literature on varsity student–athlete volunteers (e.g., Deal & Camiré, 2016) and volunteer literature more broadly (e.g., Bidee et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2016), fostering volunteer positions that fulfill the aforementioned basic psychological needs may be an important consideration for these partnership programs.

Next Steps

To develop a more well-rounded understanding of these implications, it is integral to engage with multiple invested partners of the program (e.g., Goodman & Sanders Thompson, 2017). Thus, to further explore the outcomes associated with the respective program, the researchers will seek to engage with other social agents such as the youth participants, community coaches, and the athletics department staff to obtain a better understanding of their perspectives of, and experiences within, the program. Moreover, within the field of sports psychology, behavioral observation methods have been employed to examine coach–athlete interactions (e.g., Turnnidge et al., 2014). Implementing an observational technique may serve as a fruitful avenue to obtain information about the interactions (e.g.,

feedback, instruction) that occur between the volunteers and key partners of the program. These interactions may subsequently influence the aforementioned outcomes and thus can be used to inform future program recommendations.

Given the benefits associated with program evaluations (e.g., program enhancement), adopting evidence-informed evaluation tools is critical for better understanding how a program can be improved to benefit the intended end user (e.g., Lawrason et al., 2021). One particularly relevant evaluation tool that has been used across a range of research fields is the RE-AIM framework (Gaglio et al., 2013). The RE-AIM framework encompasses five dimensions: (a) reach (the number and characteristics of individuals who engage in the program), (b) effectiveness (the positive and negative outcomes of the program), (c) adoption (the proportion and representativeness of the setting), (d) implementation (the cost and extent to which the program is delivered as intended), and (e) maintenance (assessing individual- and organization-level outcomes beyond 6 months; Glasgow et al., 1999). Thus, implementing the RE-AIM framework may serve as a salient avenue to inform recommendations with the goal of enhancing the program for all of those involved.

Conclusion

This study reinforces, from the volunteer perspective, the many motivations to volunteer for, and the benefits of engaging with, a university athletics–community sports partnership program. Institutions and community sports organizations are encouraged to cultivate partnerships that not only promote long-term sports participation, but also assist in fostering quality volunteer opportunities. Based on the volunteer experiences, key considerations and program recommendations are provided. Altogether, it is the hope that institutions and community sports programs adopt similar partnerships to maximize sports as a salient avenue to develop well-rounded and civically engaged varsity student–athletes.



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Declaration of Interest

No potential competing interest was reported by the authors.

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Appendix 1

Interview Guide

Before we begin, I would like to confirm your consent to participate.

I would like to remind you that you are able to stop participating in the interview at any point, and do not have to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable with. You do not have to provide any reason for declining to answer a question.

To analyze the interview, we will audio/video-record it so it can be transcribed verbatim afterwards and we will be using quotes during the write up of the analysis. Your name will be removed, do you consent to the interview being audio/video-recorded and the use of quotes?

Part I: Contextualizing Participant Volunteering Experience and Establishing Rapport

Contextualizing Description—We will begin with a definition of volunteer-based experiences. In our interview, volunteer-based experiences will refer to any activity in which your time is given freely to benefit another person, group, or cause (e.g., an after school reading program, providing assistance at a hospital information booth).

The first topic I would like to ask you about is the different volunteer experiences that you have taken part in throughout your life. Can you begin with your first volunteer experience, and then walk me through any others that you've done?

- *Probes:*
 - Tell me more about that.
 - When was this?
 - What did you do after that?
 - How old were you during these experiences?
 - Why did you begin volunteering at this time?

For each volunteer experience, the interviewer will also try to obtain the following information:

- How often did you take part in this activity?
- How many hours a week did you dedicate to this activity?

Considering all of your volunteer-based positions we have discussed:

- Which experience has meant the most to you?
 - What aspects of the experience made it more meaningful?
 - Tell me more about these aspects.
 - Who played a key part in this?
 - Can you tell me a story of a time when an activity felt meaningful?
 - Why was that a meaningful moment?
- Which experience meant the least to you?
 - What aspects of the experience made it less meaningful?
 - Tell me more about these aspects.
 - Who played a part in making it less meaningful?
 - Can you recall an example of when an activity did not feel meaningful?
 - Why was this activity not meaningful?

Part II: Student–Athlete Experience Generally and With Volunteering Specifically

Before we discuss your most current volunteering here at [University], I would like to know a bit more about your day to day life as a varsity student–athlete.

- Can you start by telling me about the academic program that you are in?
- What about the sport that you are involved with?
- Can you walk me through a typical weekday from start to finish?
- What about the weekend?

On top of the schedule that you’ve described, you’ve become involved with the [Program name]. I would like to spend the remainder of our time discussing this experience.

- What is important for you to experience in an ideal volunteer position?
 - *Probes:*
 - Why?
 - What do you mean by that?
 - How would this make you feel?
- Very generally, what would you say you’re “getting” out of your involvement in volunteering with [local sport organization]:
 - *Probe for skills, opportunities, networking, etc.*
- If we met at the end of the school year, what do you hope you would be telling me about your volunteering experience?
 - *Probe for variety of elements ranging from psychological, physical, social*
- How have you been received from the organization/youth/parents that you’re working with?
 - Can you provide an example of why you think that?
- How (if at all) do you think the organization generally, and youth specifically, are benefiting from this program?
 - What would you say you individually are contributing to this?
- If a close friend asked you about a quick snapshot of your experience in the [Program], what would you say to them?
 - Why would you choose to share these particular items?
- Thinking back on your involvement, can you tell me a story about something meaningful that happened within the [Program]?
 - Why was this important to you?

I would like to finish by speaking with you about this program at more of a team level.

- For starters, whose decision was it to become involved, and how were you and your teammates notified?
- What has the “buy in” from your fellow teammates been like?
- Can you provide any examples of how it has affected the environment around the team?

I have covered everything I would like to ask you about today . . . is there anything else you would think would be important to share with me?

Thank you for your time, again if you have any questions feel free to contact me.

The Codevelopment of Community Engagement Certificate Programs for State Wildlife Agency Professionals: Impact of a University–State Agency Partnership

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Abstract

State wildlife agency professionals are realizing they need new mindsets and practices for collaboration with diverse stakeholders and community partners to achieve policy, management, science, and education goals. This realization led to a partnership between a state agency, a land-grant university's outreach and engagement office, and University Extension to codesign professional development certificate programs about community engagement. The authors describe the codevelopment process of both basic and advanced community engagement certificate programs, including goals, descriptions, curricula, and evaluation outcomes. Three years of programming resulted in lessons learned about moving community engagement concepts from theory to practice, the value of participant-generated case studies, and the importance of opportunities for adult learners to practice new ideas in their own professional contexts. In addition to participant impacts, the authors share how this codevelopment process and partnership has improved practices and influenced culture change in the state agency, university, and Extension.

Keywords: professional development, community engagement competencies, community-engaged practitioners, adult learning theory, university-state agency partnerships



Wildlife conservation and management increasingly face profound threats, such as climate change, invasive species, and zoonotic diseases. Addressing these challenges successfully hinges on changes in human understanding and behavior (Corner et al., 2014; Selinske et al., 2020). As a result, wildlife managers must engage with the public to work toward solving such complex, and often global, challenges. In the United States, wildlife are managed as a public trust resource, meaning these resources are held in trust by the government for the benefit of current and future generations (Blumm & Paulsen, 2013; Horner, 2000; Sax, 1970). As managers of this public trust, state wildlife agency (SWA) professionals must understand public needs, interests,

and concerns regarding wildlife to ensure management strategies satisfy as broad an array of people as possible (Decker et al., 2016, 2019; Forstchen & Smith, 2014; Hare et al., 2017; Pomeranz et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2011). One way for SWAs to understand public desires is through public engagement in setting wildlife management goals and objectives (Forstchen & Smith, 2014; Pomeranz et al., 2021). Effective public engagement has many benefits, including improved decision-making; increased legitimacy, procedural fairness, and credibility; shared ownership of issues; improved trust in the state agency; and increased support and compliance with regulations (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies & the Wildlife Management Institute, 2019; Besley, 2010; Chase et al., 2004; Hunt & Haider, 2001; Lauber & Knuth, 1999; Riley

et al., 2018; Smith & McDonough, 2001). Maintaining SWA relevancy is a particularly important concern because the focus of management has traditionally been on hunting, trapping, and fishing (i.e., consumption of wildlife resources). With participation declines in those activities, SWAs need to find ways to broaden connections to members of the public who hold more diverse and often nonconsumptive values toward wildlife (AFWA, 2019; Jacobson et al., 2010; Manfredo et al., 2018, 2020). Because SWAs have less familiarity and history with the nonconsumptive segments of the public, relationship-building and effective engagement with new stakeholders and partners are critical in maintaining and strengthening the solicited; however, such public input is not always considered or acted upon SWAs' future (AFWA, 2019).

Historically, SWAs have engaged regularly with some stakeholders for regulation setting and for addressing landowner and agricultural interests over the past 30 years (Chase et al., 2000; Decker & Chase, 1997; Fleegle et al., 2013; Leong et al., 2009; Pelstring et al., 1999). These efforts, however, are largely focused on traditional stakeholders (e.g., deer or waterfowl hunters). SWAs have performed less public engagement with unfamiliar, nonconsumptive stakeholders or partners, such as wildlife photographers or birdwatchers. In addition, wildlife managers typically receive little education and training in facilitation, community engagement, or public conflict management. As a result, collaboration with broader stakeholders and partners tends to be focused on information gathering (e.g., stakeholder surveys) or public comment efforts (e.g., open meetings, comments collected online), because these approaches are often easier to implement, especially for those with little knowledge or experience in engaging the public more deeply. In addition, because some wildlife management decisions have the potential to be contentious (e.g., wolf hunting regulations), wildlife managers have to exercise caution with public engagement to avoid the process being co-opted by national and international special interest groups that complicate or even prevent locally informed management decisions (Nie, 2004). Without education and training in public outreach and engagement and in facilitating engagement in contentious and conflictual situations, SWAs and their wildlife managers are limited in effective implementation of public

engagement.

Currently, the education and training of wildlife professionals is shifting to include options for learning about human-wildlife interactions as an acknowledgment of the need for a more active role for the public in wildlife management recommendations and a recognition that addressing complex problems will require changes in human understanding and behavior. The important role the public can play in wildlife management decisions is known as *human dimensions* (Bennett et al., 2017; Decker et al., 2012). At universities, 97% of fisheries and wildlife undergraduate programs now offer at least some human dimensions content in their required courses; 66% offer standalone human dimensions courses, in contrast with 40% of programs 20 years ago (Dayer & Mengak, 2020; Robertson & Butler, 2001). Yet undergraduate programs still often lack human dimensions concentrations, majors, or minors (Dayer & Mengak, 2020; Morales et al., 2021; Robertson & Butler, 2001). Of the human dimensions-type courses, only 5% focus on environmental communication and education, where one might expect to see some engagement skill-building addressed (Dayer & Mengak, 2020). Finally, only 20 state agencies have full-time conservation social sciences or human dimensions positions in-house, and all but four of those positions are single positions, which might focus on engagement or might be entirely research-focused, depending on the nature of the role (Morales et al., 2021). Needless to say, engagement capacity is limited for most SWAs. Even if calls to reform wildlife education to better prepare students to tackle complex, global wildlife problems (Kroll, 2007) yield results, any such educational reforms would impact only future professionals. Current wildlife professionals' preparation makes meeting their emerging job expectations to engage with the public challenging.

Despite the emerging importance of public outreach and engagement, wildlife professionals have limited opportunities for community-engagement professional development within their professional organizations. Professional development programs that meet some needs related to human dimensions are either disciplinarily relevant but do not cover engagement comprehensively, or they focus on community engagement in general but are not specific to the wildlife management context. For example,

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offers some human dimensions training on one specific approach to public decision-making, the structured decision-making process. The Wildlife Society offers training on another aspect of community engagement: conflict management. Other wildlife professional organizations offer one-off trainings and workshops. These short-term, piecemeal trainings require the wildlife professional to connect various engagement concepts to the bigger picture and then to integrate the new knowledge into their professional practice on their own.

Alternatively, other organizations focus on engagement across all contexts, with no content specific to wildlife management. For example, the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) offers a foundations course and special topics courses, including one on managing public outrage. University Extension offers a variety of leadership development courses for state agency employees that address facilitation, leadership, conflict management, and diversity. However, these broad community engagement and leadership trainings are not tailored to the wildlife management context, leaving SWA participants to figure out how to apply the ideas and make them relevant to their own work. As a result, this gap between available trainings and the educational need of wildlife professionals creates an opportunity to develop tailored community engagement curricula for wildlife management professionals working in SWAs.

In this article, the authors, who include members from all three partner organizations, describe our university-state agency partnership initiated to address this professional development gap. Our codelvelopment process meant all three organizational partners collaborated equally on program planning, implementation, and evaluation. First, we detail the history of this partnership and the process of codelveloping the curricula and logistics for both a basic and advanced community engagement certificate. Next, we present evaluation data of the certificate programs' impact on participants and describe the partnership impacts on both the state agency and university collaborators. Finally, we conclude with lessons learned from our collaboration and from the process of codelveloping and implementing community engagement certificates.

History of the University-State Agency Partnership

In 2016, a waterfowl and wetland specialist at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division (MDNR-WLD), who was also a PhD student at Michigan State University (MSU), attended a one-week summer intensive on community-engaged scholarship organized by MSU's University Outreach and Engagement (UOE) office. After the summer intensive, she recognized the need for MDNR-WLD professionals to learn such techniques for more deliberate, thoughtful, and effective stakeholder and community engagement. She shared the resource materials with MDNR-WLD leaders, who responded positively and supported the development of a similar, but modified, workshop specifically designed for the MDNR-WLD. A conversation about collaboration between MDNR-WLD, UOE, and MSU Extension (MSUE) ensued, with a commitment by all to codelvelop and cohost a week-long community engagement workshop for the state agency professionals the following summer in 2017. Support from MDNR-WLD, UOE, and MSUE's leaders was essential for the collaboration to move forward.

With support for the idea secured, a planning committee was formed, with members including the doctoral student from MDNR-WLD, others from MDNR-WLD including field staff, UOE's professional development person, a representative from Extension, and others. The planning committee decided on a program certificate to recognize and institutionalize this level of professional development. The basic community engagement certificate would be a course offered through MDNR-WLD's training program, and UOE would issue an official certificate of completion to participants. MSUE would provide input on the curriculum development and offer specific workshops. Costs associated with the certificate program (e.g., venue, food and beverages, participant and guest speaker travel, materials) would be paid by MDNR-WLD through professional development budget allocations. UOE would contribute staff time, travel, and materials as in-kind support.

At the conclusion of the 2017 basic certificate program, participants and planning committee members identified the need to develop an advanced certificate program, with a more in-depth focus on practical

applications. With similar arrangements for financial and staff contributions, the advanced certificate was developed as a 2-day course through MDNR-WLD's training program and offered for the first time in 2018.

Planning Committee: Codeveloping the Certificates

The planning committee's role was pivotal in codeveloping logistics and curricula for both basic and advanced certificates. With an eight-person planning committee, the responsibilities and tasks were shared across multiple people, thereby reducing the workload for each individual. In the first year, the planning committee was consultative, ad hoc, and composed of MSUE staff, UOE staff, MDNR-WLD professionals, and one member of the statewide Natural Resources Commission. In the 2nd year, participants who had completed the basic engagement certificate were invited onto the new, more formally organized planning committee, whose membership was intentionally composed with geographic distribution across the state and gender, job position, and career stage diversity in mind. One UOE and one MSUE staff member continued with the planning committee, with occasional consultations with university staff on specific workshop formats and content. This variety of perspectives was essential to identify successful examples of community engagement already taking place in the agency and examples where community engagement activities were challenging for MDNR-WLD professionals. That grounded perspective informed the committee as it made final decisions about tailoring the curricula for both certificates.

Community Engagement Competencies

The planning committee liaised with the MDNR-WLD's events planner on logistics; solicited and reviewed applications; considered previous evaluation data; identified and refined the curricula's points of emphasis; and led various sessions in both basic and advanced certificates. Meeting every 2 to 3 weeks in person and by phone to accommodate field staff located throughout the state, the planning committee identified learning priorities through iterative conversations about what participants wanted to learn (from their applications), what could be improved upon (from evaluations and reflection), and what is known about community engagement competencies (from published scholarship). The basic and advanced cer-

tificates followed established community engagement curricula (Blanchard et al., 2009; DeLugan et al., 2014; Doberneck et al., 2017; Jordan et al., 2012; Katz Jameson et al., 2012; Salsberg et al., 2012) and included professional and practitioner-focused community engagement competencies as well (Atiles, 2019; Berkey et al., 2018; Dostilio, 2017; Dostilio & Welch, 2019; Harding & Loving, 2015; Suvedi & Kaplowitz, 2016). The planning committee also consulted the limited literature on professional development about outreach and engagement for professionals in wildlife conservation (Latimore et al., 2014; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2014).

One major planning committee role was to consider the established competencies and to modify the more general community engagement curricula to match the specific needs of MDNR-WLD professionals. Table 1 summarizes those decisions.

After careful consideration, the planning committee decided to drop some topics, combine some topics, add new topics, expand existing topics for more depth, and customize all content for the MDNR-WLD audience (Warwick et al., 2021). For example, initiating and sustaining partnerships were combined and expanded to include a focus on underrepresented and nontraditional stakeholders, including tribal communities, urban communities, youth, and others. Added topics included developing a community and stakeholder engagement plan and managing conflict among stakeholders. Expanded topics included techniques for community collaboration and engaging with diverse communities. The history of engagement topic was customized to emphasize the public trust doctrine, the legacy of federal requirements for public input, and the implications of both for stakeholder engagement. The community-engaged service and practice topic was refocused on engaged policy and management in wildlife, reflecting the specific ways service and practice are enacted by wildlife professionals. Evaluating community partnerships was customized to focus on evaluating the effectiveness of the public engagement processes. More academically focused topics (e.g., academic variations, institutional review boards for research, peer-reviewed publishing) were dropped because they were not viewed as having practical applications for MDNR-WLD professionals. These customizations

Table 1. Codeveloped, Modified Curricula for Both Basic and Advanced Certificates

Community engagement topic identified in the literature and refined by the planning committee	Planning team codelvelopment decision	Number of sessions in 4-day Basic Certificate	Number of sessions in 2-day Advanced Certificate
Foundations			
History of community-engaged scholarship	Customized	2	
Variations of community-engaged scholarship	Dropped		
Community partnership building			
Initiating partnerships	Combined & expanded	2	1
Sustaining partnerships	Combined		
Developing stakeholder & community engagement plans	Added		2
Techniques for community collaboration	Expanded	4	4
Managing conflict among stakeholders	Added	2	2
Criticality in community engagement			
Engaging with diverse communities	Expanded	3	4
Critical reflection & critical thinking	Dropped		
Ethics in community-engaged scholarship & practice, including institutional review boards	Dropped		
Community-engaged scholarship and practice			
Community-engaged research & creative activities	Dropped		
Community-engaged teaching & learning	Dropped		
Community-engaged service & practice	Customized	throughout	
Approaches and perspectives			
Asset-based community engagement	Kept as example		
Capacity building for sustained change	Dropped		
Systems approaches to community change	Dropped		
Evaluation and assessment			
Evaluating community partnerships	Customized	2	
Peer review of community-engaged scholarship	Dropped		

Table continued on next page

Table 1. Continued

Community engagement topic identified in the literature and refined by the planning committee	Planning team codevelopment decision	Number of sessions in 4-day Basic Certificate	Number of sessions in 2-day Advanced Certificate
Communications and scholarly skills			
Communicating with public audiences, including general public, practitioners, and policymakers	Kept	2	
Communicating with academic audience	Dropped		
Grant writing for community engagement	Dropped		
Successful community engagement careers			
Documenting & communicating accomplishments	Dropped		
Community engagement across the career span	Dropped		

and refinements occurred through an ongoing series of planning committee meetings with dialogue, reflection, and respect for the perspectives all partners brought to the codevelopment process. Both the basic and advanced curricula were adjusted between Year 1 and Year 2, based on evaluation findings, as well.

Adult Learning Theory

In addition to the abovementioned community engagement competencies, the planning committee used adult learning strategies to organize the logistics and curricula for both basic and advanced certificates (Cross, 1981; Knowles, 1980, 1984; Mezirow, 2000). Professionals working in MDNR-WLD embody the attributes of adult learners: They have significant experience from the field, interest in making connections between new topics and their own practice, and a responsiveness to active learning strategies. The planning committee, composed of past and potential participants, made important decisions about what would and would not resonate with learners in both basic and advanced certificates. Table 2 explains how adult learning theory concepts were put into practice in planning the logistics and implementing the curricula.

Consistent Definitions

Because there is a lack of clarity about what engagement means, the planning committee

discussed the importance of using clear and consistent vocabulary in both basic and advanced certificates. The planning committee developed a vocabulary sheet for participants as a reference. The term *outreach* refers to activities where the majority of the decisions are made by MDNR-WLD, with information flowing from the state agency to members of the public; decisions are made by MDNR-WLD. In contrast, the term *engagement* describes activities with more collaboration between MDNR-WLD and members of the public and where information flows back and forth between both partners; decisions are made with significantly more public input (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). We also introduced the concept of a *continuum of engagement*, with outreach on one end and engagement on the other. Where an activity is placed on the continuum is related to the degree of collaboration, locus of decision-making authority, reciprocity, and mutual benefit (Decker & Chase, 1997; IAP2, 2018). Additionally, the planning committee clarified the difference between stakeholders and community partners. The term *stakeholders* refers to anyone with an interest in a topic and includes people who

- live, work, play, or worship in or near the ecosystem
- are interested in the resources, their users, their use, or their nonusers
- are interested in the process used to make decisions

Table 2. Adult Learning Theory Concepts in Practice in Both Basic and Advanced Logistics and Curricula

Adult learning theory concept	Application in basic and advanced logistics and curricula
Adult learners are motivated by internal, not external, factors.	All participants volunteered to attend the basic or advanced certificates. No participants were required to attend, though state agency supervisors approved the individual's participation.
Adult learners are more successful when learning objectives are based on their specific needs and interests.	Participants completed applications, where they noted their learning needs and interests related to community engagement in their job roles. The planning committee used that information to customize learning activities and identify case studies relevant to the participants in each certificate program.
Adult learners learn better when new material is connected to their existing knowledge and experience.	Planning committee asked participants precertificate reflection questions to prompt thinking about their prior and anticipated experiences with community engagement. During introductions, participants shared these prereflections with the group.
Adult learners prefer problem-focused learning, with opportunities to apply ideas immediately.	Key topics in the curriculum were immediately followed by practice sessions with active learning activities.
Adult learners learn better when new material is tied directly to their roles.	The planning committee organized lectures, learning activities, and case studies with specific examples and scenarios familiar to MDNR-WLD professionals. The final session for both basic and advanced certificates included time for participants to write specific plans for incorporating new ideas into their own work.
Adult learners are more successful when the curriculum's activities are scaffolded, building on each session in increasingly complex ways over time.	The curriculum was organized with basic concepts earlier in the multiday workshop and more complex examples and synthesis on later days.
Adult learners learn more when they are engaged in identifying learning materials and resources.	Some current and past participants were invited to share case studies of their own community engagement practices. The case study templates deemphasized basic information (who, what, where) to focus more on lessons learned (e.g., what happened, why, to what effect, what improvements could be made).
Organizers of adult education should both evaluate the quality of the learning and assess future learning needs.	Planning committee used multiple evaluation strategies: formative evaluation cards throughout the certificate programs, end-of-program evaluations, 6-month postevaluations, and evaluative questions on the advanced application form.

- provide funding
- represent citizens or are legally responsible for public resources (Meffe et al., 2002, pp. 222–223).

The phrase *community partners* refers to nongovernmental organizations, government agencies, health-care systems, K–12 education, business and industry, and other entities in collaborative, medium- or

long-term relationships with MDNR-WLD. Community partners have common or overlapping goals with MDNR-WLD, share resources, and coordinate efforts. All community partners are stakeholders, but not all stakeholders are community partners. Participants receive a glossary of these key concepts as well as foundational readings in engagement and facilitation in a resource binder for both the basic and advanced certificates (see Appendix).

Basic Certificate Goals, Description, and Curriculum

The basic certificate program ran from Monday noon through Thursday noon in July during 2017 and 2018, with half days on the first and last day to accommodate participants' travel from various regions in the state. The goals were to

1. explain the importance of stakeholder and community engagement in meeting public trust responsibilities
2. underscore the importance of partnership building
3. understand a spectrum of participation, including distinctions between outreach and engagement
4. become familiar with facilitation techniques to meet a range of engagement purposes
5. consider how diversity, equity, and inclusion intersect with engagement and the public trust doctrine
6. develop practices for managing disruptive behaviors in public meetings
7. evaluate stakeholder engagement
8. learn when and how to engage during crisis communication

Individual certificate sessions varied in length from 45 to 90 minutes and included lectures, case studies, and practice sessions. Presenters represented the MDNR-WLD, UOE, MSUE, MSU's Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, and a few community partners. Sessions held immediately following lunch included highly interactive activities to keep participants engaged through the typical postlunch slump. When possible, the afternoon workshops included small group activities held outside since the MDNR-WLD professionals preferred outdoor settings for their work. Participants received workshop binders with the schedule, materials for each session, and daily reflection prompts to encourage participants to connect workshop materials to their own stakeholder and community engagement practice. Formative evaluation cards were collected throughout, and summative, in-person, anonymous paper evaluations were collected during the final session of both certificates. To give participants time to regroup and relax, optional group dinners were held off-site, with no evening workshops or homework.

In keeping with adult learning theory, this unscheduled time allowed MDNR-WLD professionals to catch up on email, exercise, address family concerns, and reflect on the day's main points.

The basic certificate curriculum focused on introducing participants to key topics about stakeholder and community partner engagement. The planning committee identified potential case studies, aligned them with key topics, and invited case study speakers to use a template to prepare their presentations, ensuring that the case study details focused specifically on the key topic. Case study speakers were MDNR-WLD professionals and, when possible, the community partners associated with the case study. At least one case study was focused on an engagement example that did not work well and included reflection on what should have happened differently in the preplanning stages and how that case study's engagement activities could be improved in the future. Practice sessions used a variety of active learning strategies (e.g., think-pair-share, scenarios, roleplaying) coupled with specific MDNR-WLD scenarios that enabled participants to put the key topics into practice in small groups. Small groups then shared their practice examples with the larger group, addressing focused reflection questions on when this practice would or would not be applicable to their professional work.

Use of Triplets

In 2017, a planning committee member suggested the use of triplets as a way of more intentionally aligning the basic certificate's overall goals with individual workshop sessions. For each key engagement topic, a lecture session on the topic would be followed by a case study and a practice session. These three pieces of the curriculum (or triplets)—key topic lecture, case study, and practice session—mutually reinforced the learning goals and embodied adult learning theory principles.

As an example of a triplet, a member of UOE presented a session on techniques for community collaboration, which gave an overview of a wide range of possible techniques and emphasized the importance of matching each technique to the purpose of the participation (Doberneck & Dann, 2019; IAP2, 2018; NOAA, 2015; State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2014). In this key topic session, four dif-

ferent people gave examples of specific techniques in lightning rounds, including gathering the givens, neighborhood gatherings, ground rules, and asset mapping. In the case study session, a MDNR-WLD professional and her community partner talked about multiple engagement techniques used at various stages of a partnership focused on managing swimmer's itch related to waterfowl on northern Michigan inland lakes. The MDNR-WLD and community partners together discussed their rationale for choosing specific techniques at different stages of the partnership. In the practice session, participants were divided into small groups, given a shared scenario, and assigned different techniques to use for that scenario. Performed in two rounds of activities, this practice session familiarized the participants with both divergent techniques (i.e., mind mapping, brainwriting, rotating flip-charts, affinity diagrams) and convergent techniques (i.e., paired comparison, levels of agreement, on the fence prioritizing, and rank voting/multivoting; Bens, 2005, 2012; Kaner, 2014; State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2014; Vandenberg et al., 2015; Wates, 2015). The strength of the triplets as a curricular design approach is the tightly coupled blending of key topics lecture (including active learning strategies), relevant case studies presented by peers, and opportunities to practice a key topic immediately following the lecture and case study. See Table 3 for program planning and evaluation details for the basic certificate.

Basic Certificate Participant Demographics

For the 2017 and 2018 basic certificates, participants self-identified as 17 women and 26 men. They held a variety of positions within the MDNR-WLD, including 21 field staff, 13 supervisors and field operations managers, six specialists and resource analysts, and three from public outreach and education. Participants were from various parts of the state, including five from the Southwest region, 18 from the central office, seven from Southeast region, seven from Northern Lower Peninsula, five from the Upper Peninsula, and one from a partner organization.

Basic Certificate Evaluation Data

MSU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that evaluation of the certificate programs did not meet the definition of re-

search and therefore did not require formal review or IRB approval. The planning committee developed an end-of-event written evaluation form that included both quantitative and qualitative questions to understand the participants' views on the certificate's organization and content. In 2017, 19 of the 27 participants (70% response rate) completed the survey. In 2018, all 16 participants completed the survey. Both years participants were asked how they rated the overall workshop on a 5-point scale. The average rating increased from 4.22 in 2017 to 4.69 in 2018. For the basic certificate, the curriculum's key community engagement topics were subdivided into community engagement competencies that constituted the majority of the quantitative data collection. Participants were asked to rate their competency level on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) using the retrospective pretest and postevaluation strategy commonly used for participants to self-report changes from educational programs. Implementing a retrospective pretest can prevent participants from overreporting ratings during the pretest portion and therefore deliver more accurate measurements of program impact (Nimon et al., 2011). Table 4 reports evaluation data from 2017 and 2018, the two years the basic certificate was offered. It shows how the community engagement key topics were subdivided into competencies, the combined retrospective pretest ratings, posttest ratings, and change in mean ratings for each competency. The number of responses varies because some questions were asked in both 2017 and 2018, and other questions were asked in only one year. Some respondents skipped some questions as well. All 20 competency areas showed positive changes.

The community engagement topics that showed the most change, on average, from retrospective pre-to-posttest were in the techniques for community collaboration category. The competencies with the most change were *differentiate between divergent and convergent stages in group decision-making* (increased by 2.2), *know where to turn to for additional ideas about collaboration and engagement techniques* (increased by 1.92), and *employ different community engagement techniques to achieve different goals* (increased by 1.69). *Understand how to organize and prepare for meetings* (increase of 1.48) and *consider a spectrum of public participation to achieve different purposes and goals* (increase of 1.21) also showed positive changes.

Table 3. Basic Certificate’s Engagement Topic, Lead Presenter, Session, Description, and Evaluation Strategy

Engagement topic	Lead presenter	Session	Description	Evaluation strategy
Why and how to engage stakeholders and community partners	MDNR-WLD MSU	Welcome and introductions	Opening comments, learning objectives, and program overview	
	MDNR-WLD	Lecture	Public trust responsibilities and stakeholder engagement	Retrospective pre & post
	UOE	Lecture	Understanding the spectrum of participation	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD	Case study	Activity: Common Merganser policy process abacus	
Partnership building	UOE	Lecture	Principles of partnerships Activity: benefits and challenges or partnerships brainstorm	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD	Case study	Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative (building a collaborative governance model for island management strategies with diverse groups)	Post only
Techniques for community collaboration	MDNR-WLD MSUE	Lecture	Facilitating public meetings	Retrospective pre & post
	UOE	Lecture	Techniques for community collaboration	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD Community Partner UOE		Activity: lightning talks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gathering the givens • neighborhood gatherings • establishing ground rules • asset mapping 	
	MDNR-WLD Community partner	Case study	Merganser stakeholder process (multiple techniques used in different stages in codevelopment of waterfowl control policy to minimize swimmer’s itch)	Post only
	UOE	Practice	Overview of collaboration techniques activity Activity 1: diverging techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mindmapping • brainwriting • rotating flipcharts • affinity diagrams Activity 2: converging techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paired comparisons • levels of agreement • on the fence prioritizing • rank voting/multivoting 	Retrospective pre & post

Table continued on next page

Table 3. Continued

Engagement topic	Lead presenter	Session	Description	Evaluation strategy
Engaging diverse stakeholders	Community partner	Lecture Practice	Engaging diverse stakeholders Activity: identity pillar, identity toss	Retrospective pre & post
	UOE Community partner	Practice	Broadening participation beyond the usual suspects Activity: rainbow diagram, easy-to-hard to engagement continuum, stakeholder by category tool	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD	Case study	Engaging nontraditional stakeholders: MI Birds (developing a statewide network of new partners)	Post only
Determining and evaluating engagement success	MDNR-WLD	Lecture Practice	Evaluating stakeholder engagement Activity: evaluation in your engagement context	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD	Case study	Competing definitions of engagement success: Deer Management Assistance Program Pilot Study (involving stakeholders early in planning process and downside of not including key groups)	Post only
Managing conflict among stakeholders	UOE MSUE	Lecture Practice	Managing disruptive behaviors in public meetings Activity: Roleplay	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD	Case study	Managing conflict: Allegan State Game Area equestrian trail (developing mindsets and strategies for addressing conflicts among use groups)	Post only
Communicating with stakeholders	MDNR-WLD	Case study	Strategic communications: chronic wasting disease (CWD; fictional scenario about providing public information about a disease outbreak)	Post only
	MDNR-WLD	Lecture	Crisis communications within the engagement process and beyond	Retrospective pre & post
		Practice	Activity: Two fictional scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harsens Island Recreational Plan Hunter harvested deer positive for CWD in Upper Peninsula 	
	MDNR-WLD UOE	Wrap up	Time to work on individual engagement action plans; group reflection; individual evaluations	

Table 4. Basic Community Engagement Certificate's Participant Self-Rating Data From 2017 and 2018

Community engagement topic	Competency	Pretest		Posttest		Avg. change*
		N	Avg.	N	Avg.	
Why and how to engage stakeholders and community partners	Recognize special considerations for wildlife planning, policy, research, and management	33	3.15	32	4.11	0.96
	Know how public trust responsibilities related to stakeholder engagement	35	3.37	35	4.21	0.84
	Recognize how community partner perspectives differ from agency perspectives on shared projects	18	3.72	18	4.28	0.56
	Understand variations and choices in how much and to what extent to engage stakeholders and partners	18	3.00	18	4.27	1.27
	Understand how a facilitative, participatory mindset differs from an expertise mindset	13	2.85	11	3.73	0.88
Partnership building	Employ specific strategies to strengthen stakeholder engagement and community partnerships in my MDNR-WLD work	32	2.67	30	4.13	1.46
	Recognize partnerships require different attention during initial and sustaining phases	33	3.24	33	4.33	1.09
	Value the importance of pre-engagement steps with stakeholders and community partners	15	3.13	15	4.33	1.21
Techniques for community collaboration	Know where to turn to for additional ideas about collaboration and engagement techniques	32	2.50	31	4.42	1.92
	Employ different community engagement techniques to achieve different goals	33	2.55	33	4.23	1.69
	Differentiate between divergent and convergent stages in group decision-making	15	2.00	15	4.20	2.20
	Understand how to organize and prepare for public meetings	15	2.47	15	3.95	1.48
	Consider a spectrum of public participation to achieve different purposes and goals	14	3.14	14	4.36	1.21

Table continued on next page

Table 4. Continued

Community engagement topic	Competency	Pretest		Posttest		Avg. change*
		N	Avg.	N	Avg.	
Engaging diverse stakeholders	Recognize how cross-cultural differences may influence stakeholder engagement and community partnerships	33	2.91	33	3.88	0.97
	Identify diverse stakeholders who are traditionally underrepresented in my MDNR-WLD work	33	2.94	33	3.79	0.85
Determining and evaluating engagement success	Evaluate the process aspects of partnerships related to my MDNR-WLD work	18	2.44	18	4.00	1.56
	Evaluate the outcomes related to my MDNR-WLD work	18	2.56	18	3.78	1.22
	Evaluate the effectiveness of my engagement with stakeholders and community partners	15	2.53	15	3.73	1.20
Managing conflict among stakeholders	Manage the emotional aspects of challenging stakeholder engagement situations	33	2.94	32	4.02	1.08
Communicating with stakeholders	Develop communications messages and strategies that reach audiences effectively during high stakes or crisis situations	32	2.34	30	3.82	1.47

Note. Basic community engagement certificate evaluation ratings for 2017 and 2018 were on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Average change was calculated as the difference between posttest average and retrospective pretest average. Statistical significance of change was not calculated due to small participant number.

*Average change figures may not reflect difference of average figures shown due to rounding.

The community engagement topic that showed the second-greatest change, on average, was partnership building. The competencies with the most change were *employ specific strategies to strengthen stakeholder engagement and community partnerships in my MDNR-WLD work* (1.46), *value the importance of pre-engagement steps with stakeholders and community partners* (1.21), and *recognize partnerships require different attention during initial and sustaining phases* (1.09).

Three other competencies showed gains as well: *develop communications messages and strategies that reach audiences effectively during high stakes or crisis situations* (increased by 1.47), *evaluate the process aspects of partnerships related to my MDNR-WLD work* (increased by 1.56), *understand variations and choices in how much and to what extent to engage stakeholders and partners* (increased by 1.27), and *evaluate the outcomes related to my MDNR-WLD work* (increased by 1.22).

The lowest average change was for *recognize how community partner perspectives differ from agency perspectives on shared projects* (0.56), which was the competency with the highest pretest score (3.72) and therefore had the least potential for change. The six lowest rated competencies that showed a change pretest to posttest (all under 1.0) were all within two community engagement topics: *why and how to engage stakeholders and community partners* and *engaging diverse stakeholders*. In addition, for 90% of the competencies at least one participant self-rated as 5 on the pretest, thus no gains could be made for their pre to post. The competency most often rated 5 on the pretest (five participants) was *know how public trust responsibilities related to stakeholder engagement*. No one rated themselves 5 on the pretest for *value the importance of pre-engagement steps with stakeholders and community partners* and *understand how to organize and prepare for public meetings*.

Follow-up Feedback From Basic Certificate Participants

In lieu of a 6-month follow-up survey of basic certificate participants, we used the 2019 advanced certificate application to gather information about what basic certificate techniques or skills the participants had implemented since the training and what challenges they had encountered. From the 15 advanced applications, we learned that 11 basic certificate participants implemented specific techniques (e.g., brainwriting, sticky dots, rank voting, affinity diagrams, parking lot, speed dating). The second most commonly cited new practice was related to preparing to engage (e.g., clarifying goals and objectives in advance, identifying a facilitator, defining roles among facilitation team members). Third, basic certificate participants noted they thought about their work in new ways (e.g., bringing the right people to the table; considering the spectrum of participation; incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion). The challenges they identified included engaging with participants who prefer top-down, less collaborative approaches, countering negative attitudes toward the state agency, communicating the places on the engagement spectrum in clearly understood ways, and phrasing engagement activity instructions in sufficient detail.

Advanced Certificate Goals, Description, and Curriculum

The advanced certificate program was a 2-day program held in July 2018 and July 2019, with the following goals:

1. develop community engagement plans and strategies
2. identify key stakeholders and community partnership
3. understand how to evaluate public engagement
4. choose appropriate collaboration tools for different kinds of community engagement situations
5. practice developing a community engagement plan
6. practice using different collaboration and engagement techniques

The program began midmorning and ended midafternoon the following day, to accommodate participants' travel from various re-

gions in the state. Sessions varied in length between 45 and 75 minutes, and included lectures with activities, practice sessions, and reflection time to plan how to apply the workshop ideas to their own work. Presenters were from the MDNR-WLD, MSUE, UOE, and some community partners. Participants received program binders, name tents with rules for dialogue printed on the back, and a summative, in-person, anonymous paper evaluation. Like the basic certificate schedule, postlunch sessions included highly interactive activities with other afternoon sessions held in small groups outside when possible. Participants were given time off in the evening, and could choose to participate in a group dinner or to spend time on their own.

The advanced certificate curriculum focused on putting community engagement concepts into practice in each participant's specific work context. Advanced program participants were assigned these preevent reflection questions:

In your work at MDNR Wildlife, what project are you currently working on or anticipate working on in the next year that will require stakeholder or community partner engagement? What is the purpose of that public engagement? What challenges do you anticipate, so that we might work through them during this program?

During program introductions, participants shared their responses so that the entire group was aware of collective learning interests.

The program started with three overview sessions: developing stakeholder engagement plans, identifying stakeholders and community partners (Chevalier & Buckles, 2008; Meffe et al., 2002; Reed, 2006; Reed et al., 2009), and choosing the right engagement approach for the situation (IAP2, 2018; NOAA, 2015; Snowden & Boone, 2007). These overview sessions established the groundwork for the rest of the program's practice sessions. Choosing the right engagement approach was followed up with three practice sessions: techniques for open/scoping meetings; techniques for a regular group of stakeholders; and techniques for a complex mix of stakeholders. In 2018, the session on managing disruptive behaviors was immediately followed by a practice ses-

sion that included roleplay opportunities to manage disruptive behaviors in public, open meetings.

In 2019, a team challenge was developed to help anchor the curriculum’s learning goals and to push participants to think through all stages from preengagement, purpose of engagement, stakeholder identification, choice of engagement techniques, and evaluation. The participants were divided into two groups, with the same scenario to work through. One group pitched their engagement plan to the other group, who provided constructive criticism. Then the groups reversed roles. The team challenge ended with overall reflection on what was learned by working as a group to think through the entire engagement process. The final session focused on synthesizing ideas from all program sessions to develop a stakeholder engagement plan relevant to each participant’s context. Participants then reported out on their plans in a way that paralleled their reporting out of the introductory question. For the advanced certificate, the organizers used duets—overview lectures coupled with practice sessions—to reinforce connections between concepts and implementation. See Table 5 for the program planning and evaluation details for the advanced certificate.

Advanced Certificate Participant Demographics

For the 2018 and 2019 advanced certificates, participants self-identified as 15 women and 13 men. They held a variety of positions within the MDNR-WLD, including 13 field staff, five supervisors and field operations managers, four specialists and resource analysts, two from public outreach and education, and four with missing data for position. Participants came from different regions throughout the state, including two from the Southwest region, 15 from the central office, two from the Southeast region, three from the Northern Lower Peninsula, three from the Upper Peninsula, and three with missing data for location.

Advanced Certificate Evaluation Data

Similar to the basic evaluation, the planning committee developed an end-of-event written evaluation form that included both quantitative and qualitative questions to understand the participants’ views on the certificate’s organization and content. In 2018, 12 of the 13 participants completed the surveys (92% response rate), with all 15 participants and 6 facilitators completing the survey in 2019. Both years, advanced participants were asked how they rated the workshop overall on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). The average overall rating was 4.83 in 2018 and increased to 4.89 in 2019. The five advanced community engagement topics were subdivided into 32 different competencies across both advanced certificate program cohorts (Table 6). Participants

Table 5. Advanced Certificate’s Engagement Topic, Lead Presenter, Session, Description, and Evaluation Strategy

Engagement topic	Lead presenter	Session	Description	Evaluation strategy
	MDNR-WLD UOE MSUE	Welcome and introductions	Opening comments, individual learning goals for workshop; workshop learning objectives and schedule overview	
Why and how to engage stakeholders and community partners	MDNR-WLD	Lecture	Issues, framing, and impacts—big picture of stakeholder engagement	Retrospective pre & post
Partnership building	MDNR-WLD	Lecture	Identifying community partners and stakeholders	Retrospective pre & post
Determining and evaluating engagement success	MDNR-WLD UOE MSUE	Lecture	Evaluating your public engagement	Retrospective pre & post

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Table 5. Continued

Engagement topic	Lead presenter	Session	Description	Evaluation strategy
Techniques for community collaboration	UOE	Lecture	Choosing the right engagement approach for the situation	Retrospective pre & post
	UOE	Practice	Techniques for open/scoping meetings	Retrospective pre & post
	UOE	Practice	Techniques for regular group for stakeholders	Retrospective pre & post
	UOE	Practice	Techniques for complex mix of stakeholders	Retrospective pre & post
Developing stakeholder engagement plans	MDNR-WLD	Lecture	Developing stakeholder engagement plans	Retrospective pre & post
		Practice as a group	Team challenge: With your team, develop a stakeholder engagement plan that addresses the given scenario. Be sure to specify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Stakeholders & community partners • Strategies for underrepresented and nontraditional partners • Technique(s) for community collaboration • Evaluation plan Pitch it to the other team for comments.	Post only
	UOE	Practice individually	Developing your own engagement action plan	Retrospective pre & post
	MDNR-WLD UOE	Wrap up	Group reflection; individual evaluations	

again rated their competency level on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) using a retrospective pretest and posttest. All 32 advanced competency areas showed positive changes.

The community engagement topic that showed the most change, on average, from retrospective pre- to posttest was *managing conflict among stakeholders*. All four competencies showed increases, including *strategies for structuring meetings to minimize disruptive behavior* (increased by 1.42), *knowledge of strategies to manage disruptive behaviors during public engagement* (increased by 1.38), *ways to prepare yourself for contentious public meetings* (increased by 1.25), and *confidence in addressing disruptive behaviors during public meetings* (increased by 1.21).

The community engagement topic that showed the second most change, on aver-

age, was *developing stakeholder engagement plans*. Six of the seven competencies had average increases of more than 1.0. The three competencies that showed the greatest increases in participant self-ratings were *match engagement approaches to situations* (increased by 1.72), *apply public engagement planning tools to my own projects* (increased by 1.59), and *integrate public facilitation approaches into my own work at MDNR-WLD* (increased by 1.46).

The *techniques for community collaboration* community engagement topic included 18 competencies. Although all 18 competencies had positive self-rated changes in average scores, five competencies had retrospective pre to post changes greater than 1.5 on a scale of 5. Those highly impactful topics included *know where to turn for additional ideas about collaboration and engagement techniques* (increased by 1.66), *familiarity with facilita-*

tion techniques for a complex situation (increased by 1.59), frame a purpose statement for a complex mix of stakeholders in a longer-term engagement (increased by 1.57), confidence in working with a facilitator for complex situations (increased by 1.54), and differentiate between divergent and convergent stages in group decision-making (increased by 1.52).

The highest average pre competency score was for *determine which stakeholders to engage with* (3.42) and highest average post competency was *know where to turn for additional ideas about collaboration and engagement techniques* (4.52). Lowest average score was *confidence in facilitating complex engagement techniques* for pre (1.94) and post (3.38). The four highest in average change were *match engagement approaches to situations* (increased by 1.72), *know where to turn for additional ideas about collaboration and engagement techniques* (1.66), *familiarity with facilitation techniques for a complex situation* (1.59), and *apply public engagement planning tools to my own projects* (1.59). The lowest average change was for *make use of feedback from evaluation to shape future engagement efforts* (0.82). About 60% of the competencies

had at least one participant (at most three) who responded with a 5 (highest score) on the retrospective pretest, thereby precluding any measured positive changes in those community engagement competencies.

Follow-up of Advanced Participants’ Survey

Six months after the 2019 advanced certificate, we surveyed participants to gauge program impact. Thirteen participants completed the open-ended questions (87% of the original program participants). When asked “What concepts, skills or ideas have you used since the training?”, the most common responses were *facilitator’s agenda/annotated notes* (n = 3), *determining diverging versus converging methods* (n = 3), *identifying stakeholders and community partners* (n = 2), and *choosing the right engagement approach for the situation* (n = 2). When asked “Were there any techniques or skills that you would like to implement but do not feel confident implementing?”, 62% responded “yes” and named *complex engagement techniques, selecting an engagement technique, structuring decision-making,*

Table 6. Advanced Community Engagement Certificate’s Participant Self-Rating Data From 2018 and 2019

Community engagement topic	Competency	Pretest		Posttest		Avg. change*
		N	Avg.	N	Avg.	
Why and how to engage stakeholders and community partners	Identify different purposes for public engagement	12	2.83	12	4.08	1.25
	Determine clear engagement goals and objectives	30	2.98	30	4.12	1.13
	Determine which stakeholders to engage with	12	3.42	12	4.33	0.90
Developing stakeholder engagement plans	Match engagement approaches to situations	29	2.31	29	4.03	1.72
	Integrate public facilitation approaches into my own work at MDNR-WLD	12	2.88	12	4.33	1.46
	Apply public engagement planning tools to my own projects	29	2.74	29	4.33	1.59
	Identify an appropriate range of stakeholders to engage	18	2.83	18	3.89	1.06
	Prepare myself to be more facilitative (rather than directive)	18	2.94	18	3.94	1.00

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Table 6. Continued

Community engagement topic	Competency	Pretest		Posttest		Avg. change*
		N	Avg.	N	Avg.	
Techniques for community collaboration	Know where to turn for additional ideas about collaboration and engagement techniques	29	2.86	29	4.52	1.66
	Differentiate between divergent and convergent stages in group decision-making	29	2.76	29	4.28	1.52
	Frame a purpose statement for an open/scoping meeting	12	2.75	12	4.13	1.38
	Familiarity with facilitation techniques for open/scoping meetings	12	2.92	12	4.08	1.17
	Confidence in facilitating an open/scoping meeting	12	2.92	12	3.96	1.04
	Frame a purpose statement for a regular group of stakeholders	12	2.79	12	4.08	1.29
	Familiarity with facilitation techniques for small group decision making	12	2.75	12	4.21	1.46
	Confidence in facilitating decisions with a regular group of stakeholders	12	2.75	12	4.04	1.29
	Frame a purpose statement for a complex mix of stakeholders in a longer-term engagement	29	2.22	29	3.79	1.57
	Familiarity with facilitation techniques for a complex situation	29	2.14	29	3.72	1.59
	Confidence in working with a facilitator for complex situations	12	2.42	12	3.96	1.54
	Confidence in facilitating complex engagement techniques	17	1.94	16	3.38	1.43
	Frame a purpose statement for a divergent stakeholder activity	17	2.82	17	3.88	1.06
	Familiarity with facilitation techniques for divergent engagement situations	17	2.76	17	4.06	1.29
	Confidence in facilitating divergent engagement techniques	17	2.59	17	3.76	1.18
	Frame a purpose statement for a convergent stakeholder activity	17	2.71	17	4.00	1.29
	Familiarity with facilitation techniques for convergent engagement situations	17	2.65	17	4.06	1.41
	Confidence in facilitating convergent engagement techniques	17	2.65	17	3.82	1.18

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Table 6. Continued

Community engagement topic	Competency	Pretest		Posttest		Avg. change*
		N	Avg.	N	Avg.	
Determining and evaluating engagement success	Evaluate the effectiveness of engagement with my stakeholders or community partners	30	2.60	30	3.76	1.16
	Make use of feedback from evaluation to shape future engagement efforts	17	2.82	17	3.65	0.82
Managing conflict among stakeholders	Knowledge of strategies to manage disruptive behaviors during public engagement	12	2.50	12	3.88	1.38
	Strategies for structuring meetings to minimize disruptive behavior	12	2.58	12	4.00	1.42
	Ways to prepare yourself for contentious public meetings	12	2.75	12	4.00	1.25
	Confidence in addressing disruptive behaviors during public meetings	12	2.63	12	3.83	1.21

Note. Advanced community engagement certificate evaluation ratings for 2018 and 2019 were on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). Average change was calculated as the difference between posttest average and retrospective pretest average. Statistical significance of change was not calculated due to small participant number.

* Average change figures may not reflect difference of average figures shown due to rounding.

and *evaluation* as topics they wished they had more confidence applying. When asked “What additional information, materials, or expertise would be helpful?”, the participants mentioned *opportunities to practice, having a mentor to choose the technique, advice on deciding when to inform versus consult, knowing who within the organization is willing to help, and a standard method or framework for tracking and measuring success.* Community-engaged certificate planners will take this feedback into consideration as they plan the next advanced certificate program.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Half-Day Program Goals, Description, and Curriculum

In 2019, an additional half-day program focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), public engagement, and conservation was offered to 2018 and 2019 participants. This program was offered on a separate day from the advanced certificate so that participants from 2018 could attend the DEI program without having to attend the entire advanced certificate a second time. Two 2018 participants and the MDNR DEI officer attended the DEI workshop only.

DEI workshop goals were to

1. understand the connections between inclusivity and conservation goals
2. share successful examples of how non-traditional and underrepresented groups have been included in DNR Wildlife work
3. become familiar with strategies for becoming more inclusive of diverse stakeholders

The program started with a presentation about why diversity, equity, and inclusion are important to meet conservation goals and meet state agencies’ public trust responsibilities (Bonta et al., 2015; Jurin et al., 2010; Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 2017). Facilitators then asked participants six questions about their views on DEI through an online polling system that allowed their reactions to be shared in a safe, anonymous way. These data revealed the group’s range of thoughts and feelings about DEI and demonstrated an anonymous group participation technique.

Following the poll, facilitators introduced the principles of dialogue (Holman et al., 2007) and led an activity to practice “yes and” ways of dialoguing with one another (Pace, 2016). Sideboards (parameters about

what was acceptable and not acceptable to discuss during the workshop) were posted on the wall at the front of the room and later in the small group dialogue breakout rooms. The planning team developed sideboards to focus participants' attention on specific aspects of DEI that were related to community engagement (e.g., broadening participation) and to direct conversation away from important DEI issues that were to be taken up by the state agency's broader task force on DEI (e.g., hiring and retention; equity in pay).

Facilitators preassigned participants to small dialogue groups that included a mixture of participants by gender, job position, and geographic regions. Each small group had a convener who led the dialogue and recorded responses to these three questions: (1) What opportunities does engaging diverse stakeholders and communities bring? (2) What are the challenges/barriers in engaging diverse stakeholders and communities? and (3) What are specific strategies for overcoming those identified barriers/challenges? Small groups reported out to the larger group. An overall observer dropped in and out of the small dialogue groups to note themes from across the small group discussions. Together, as the full group, we discussed both the content of the dialogues and dialogue as an approach to engagement

MDNR-WLD professionals then presented two case studies specifically chosen to highlight underrepresented groups (i.e., individuals from groups who participate less given their proportion in the population overall: women, minoritized groups, veterans, disabled persons, etc.) and non-traditional stakeholders (e.g., outdoor recreationists who do not hunt, fish, or trap), respectively. The final session focused on making a DEI plan of action for personal growth and professional practice. See Table 7 for a summary of the DEI program's curriculum and evaluation strategy.

DEI Workshop Evaluation Data

Twenty out of 21 participants completed the DEI evaluation, which consisted of five Likert-type scale questions where participants rated how much they disagreed or agreed with statements on a 5-point scale (1 was lowest rating, 5 was highest rating; See Table 8).

Open-ended evaluation comments included remarks such as "Excellent job creating and

maintaining an atmosphere where participants can share, make mistakes, and learn. Good flow through topics and activities over three days" and

This was a great opportunity, and I would love to have further follow-up to expand and continue this. Did this group leave and use the tools? Do they use the booklet? I would be so interested in more DEI training as well.

For basic, advanced, and DEI programs, participants learned about community engagement topics, listened to theory to practice case studies from their state agency peers, and practiced applying the ideas in scenarios written specifically for each year's cohort of participants. Organized by triplets (basic certificate) or duets (advanced certificate), the curricula emphasized connecting prior knowledge to the new materials, employed active learning strategies, and prompted preevent, daily, and overall reflection to connect the new ideas and practices to each participant's work context. Evaluation data revealed important impacts on participants' learning. In addition to participant changes, members of the planning committee observed impacts in their own organizations.

University–State Agency Partnership Impacts

From the state agency perspective, this partnership has sparked new community engagement activities, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and resource identification of supports for community engagement culture change. For example, certificate alumni pursued complex stakeholder engagement strategies to address specific management issues in their regions (i.e., bovine tuberculosis, chronic wasting disease education). These certificate alumni received approval, funding, and support to partner with National Consensus Building Institute and National Charrette Institute for deeper community engagement with regionally focused stakeholders on specific wildlife management issues.

In 2019, the planning committee transitioned into a formal MDNR-WLD Stakeholder Engagement Workgroup, which meets regularly to address community engagement needs within the state agency. This workgroup has initiated multiple peer-to-peer learning opportunities based

Table 7. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Program’s Engagement Topic, Lead Presenter, Session, Description, and Evaluation Strategy

Engagement topic	Lead presenter	Session	Description	Evaluation strategy
Diversity, equity, inclusion	MDNR-WLD MSUE	Lecture	DEI, conservation, and the public trust doctrine Activity: Anonymous polling of participant DEI attitudes	Post only
Dialogue	MDNR-WLD MSUE	Lecture	Dialogue as a way of engaging Activity: “Yes and” dialogue practice	Post only
	MDNR-WLD	Practice	Small group dialogue focused on DEI opportunities, challenges, strategies	
Underrepresented groups	MDNR-WLD	Case study on engaging underrepresented groups	Tribal involvement in the Elk Management Plan (history of collaboration with tribal resource managers)	Post only
Nontraditional groups	MDNR-WLD	Case study on engaging nontraditional groups	SEMI-WILD: Creating an effective network of stakeholders to meet natural resources needs of Metro Detroit	Post only
	MDNR-WLD UOE	Wrap up	Group reflection; individual DEI plans	Post only

on brainstormed suggestions during the certificate programs. To strengthen peer-to-peer learning, the work team developed an internal engagement request form for agency colleagues to request assistance from them on the planning or implementation of community engagement projects. This request form allows MDNR-WLD professionals, especially those who have not yet participated in the certificates, to connect with certificate alumni for assistance in thinking through community engagement details or facilitating engagement activities on projects.

The work team initiated an engagement shadowing program, where those interested in seeing the implementation of a particular community engagement process can attend an event to observe and then debrief with the leader of that event on how the engagement process worked. A community engagement tracking database was also developed to document agency-wide efforts for involving community partners and stakeholders. Lists of partners, engagement processes used, and artifacts, including agendas and facilitator’s guides, are documented in this database to support peer-to-peer learning. The engagement work team also hosted

virtual workshops during summer 2020 and a four-part virtual lunchtime series in fall 2021 so that MDNR-WLD professionals could learn the basics of engagement, especially if they had not yet had an opportunity to attend the certificate programs due to pandemic restrictions on in-person meetings.

Finally, the engagement workgroup has developed multiple internal resources to support community engagement agency-wide. Together, they authored an engagement guidebook, which details how to plan stakeholder and community engagement in the context of their own agency work. Lists of internal and external facilitators with specific training in community engagement techniques (e.g., facilitative leadership, charrettes) and a statewide inventory of facilities available for engagement activities inform the agency professionals of people and places they can tap into for their community work. The case study list developed for the certificate programs has been made available to anyone within the agency to use in idea generation and internal networking. Combined, these capacity-building efforts, peer-to-peer learning, and resource identification and development are

Table 8. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program's Participant Self-Rating Data From 2019

The DEI session on Day Three . . .	Average postevent rating
Created an opportunity for me to listen and/or contribute to a dialogue about diversity, equity, and inclusion and our stewardship goals	4.70
Addressed diversity, equity, and inclusivity related to stakeholder engagement and community engagement	4.35
Provided me with ideas for engaging with nontraditional stakeholders	3.85
Provided me with ideas for engaging with stakeholders from traditionally underrepresented groups	3.75
Gave me the opportunity to reflect on what diversity, equity, and inclusion means in my own work at the DNR	4.50

the result of the continuing leadership of the engagement workgroup, as they work to shift agency culture to be more supportive of community engagement as standard agency practice.

From the MSUE perspective, this partnership has furthered their long-standing relationship with the MDNR. MDNR-WLD professionals regularly participate in professional development programs offered by MSUE on topics like managing conflict in natural resource settings, leadership, and facilitation. None of those professional development programs, however, connected the public trust doctrine to stakeholder and community partner engagement specifically. Nor do they include case studies, activities, and examples wildlife professionals encounter in their everyday work lives. Therefore, this partnership was a unique opportunity to codevelop a program with MDNR-WLD and UOE staff and could be used as an example for future collaborative program development in Extension.

From the UOE perspective, this partnership deepened understanding of community engagement in conservation contexts and generated innovations in professional development for community engagement. Unlike other topical areas of community engagement practice (e.g., early childhood literacy, health disparities), for conservation, professionals are federally mandated to solicit public input during certain stages of some policymaking. This mandate is often fulfilled through a publicly advertised meeting where open comments (or online

comments) are solicited; however, such public input is not always considered or acted upon by the agency. The open meeting checks the box for the federal mandate, yet public participation does not necessarily shape policy, management, or education decisions. Conservation professionals and community stakeholders have sometimes become frustrated by this type of public engagement because of its limited impact on the policymaking process.

A decades-long legacy of this inauthentic engagement has shaped expectations for both professionals and stakeholders about the potential and promise of community engagement. Professional development organizers, as a result, need to confront that historical legacy and reframe the potential of medium and high levels of authentic engagement to improve conservation outcomes for both professionals and stakeholders.

Another insight from this partnership is the role of conflict among community and stakeholder groups. In many other topical areas of community engagement there are low levels of conflict among stakeholders. For example, there are no well-funded nonprofit organizations lobbying against early childhood literacy or health disparities reduction—in contrast to the many well-funded national and international organizations that influence hunting regulations one way or the other (e.g., sportsmen groups, animal welfare advocacy organizations). In the conservation context, long-standing disagreements between stakeholders and

the state agency and among stakeholder groups themselves mean that wildlife professionals need additional training on managing disruptive behaviors during engagement activities, on bringing together rival stakeholder groups in engagement sessions specifically designed to minimize conflict, and on using self-management techniques to keep from being drawn into conflict during public meetings with stakeholders (Manfredo et al., 2017; Nie, 2004). These community engagement practices, rarely listed in the general community engagement competencies, are essential for conservation professionals, especially those working at state agencies.

The partnership also improved professional development for community engagement offered by UOE. As a direct result, professional development offerings for other audiences now include duets or triplets as a way of organizing key topics in the curricula. Professional development also includes peer-led case studies, with participants invited to contribute their experiences for discussion. In the past, UOE's professional development curricula focused on topics in education, social sciences, and health. Because of this partnership, new examples of community engagement in conservation settings regularly appear in workshops, making the content relevant to a wider range of learners.

Lessons Learned

In our experience codeveloping community engagement certificates, we learned the following lessons that may be helpful to others considering the codevelopment of community engagement certificates for working professionals in state agencies. Our lessons focused on the same areas Welch and Plaxton-Moore noted in *The Craft of Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning* (2019), namely that excellent community-engaged learning blueprints include partnerships, objectives, engagement, reflection, and assessment.

- *Convene a diverse planning committee for your partnership.* First, get the support of leadership, but then involve midlevel leaders, potential participants (and, later, program alumni), and others with significant experience with professional development in the specific context in the planning. Make the planning team large enough that sharing the

work is easy for everyone.

- *Refine existing learning objectives.* Customize existing professional development frameworks for community engagement to the specific audience. Through information gathered on applications, strategic conversations, planning committee input, and eventually through evaluations, work to define and then refine the learning objectives and the curriculum.
- *Draw upon adult learning theory in how you organize the logistics and the curriculum.* Keep specific preferences of the participants in mind as you finalize logistical decisions (e.g., sessions outside, easily drivable location from all parts of the state, evenings off). Provide examples that are specific to the participants' professional practice.
- *Invite participant case studies, and then support their development, so that peer-to-peer learning remains focused and relevant.* Celebrate current community engagement successes and provide space to discuss case studies where improvements could be made to achieve better outcomes.
- *Use practical and relevant teaching strategies to ensure key topics are understood both in theory and in practice.* In the basic certificate, we implemented triplets (content-case study-practice) and, in the advanced certificate, duets (content-practice) to great effect.
- *Draw in community partners in the planning process as copresenters of case studies, and/or panelists.* Community partner voices are important in any type of community engagement professional development, as other measures often fall short of conveying the lived experience and perspectives of the partners.
- *Plan to reflect, evaluate, and assess your program from the start.* Make sure you are embedding formative and both short-term and medium-term summative evaluations. These practices improve the programming, identify new areas of learning, and model excellent evaluation practices for the participants.

- *Be open to new and evolving learning interests and needs.* When we started, we did not envision an advanced certificate, virtual workshops, or a brown bag series. We also did not envision a diversity, equity, and inclusion workshop as a separate, special focus. These have all become important components of MDNR-WLD professional development programming, especially with sustained organizational culture change in the state agency as a priority.

Conclusions

University–state agency partnerships may play an important role in strengthening outreach and engagement practices on a broader, statewide scale. Listening to an in-

tionally diverse and representative planning committee to tailor the curriculum for state agency professionals ensured translation of general community engagement ideas into the professionals' specific context. Using adult learning theory to guide logistical and curricular choices ensured more effective learning programs for working professionals. Participant–authored case studies contributed relevant examples and fostered peer–to–peer learning and networking. Cycles of reflection and evaluation identified important improvements to make each time the curriculum was offered. Cocreating community engagement certificates with state agencies has the potential to impact program participants, the state agency, Extension, the university's outreach and engagement office, and, ultimately, the lives of residents of the state through improved community engagement practice.



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Appendix. Selected Readings for Basic and Advanced Community Engagement Certificate Programs

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