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Review by Eric Hartman

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From the Editor...

Shannon O. Brooks

Regular readers will note that issue 28(2) of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* features a particularly robust **Research Articles** section. It is, in fact, a virtual buffet of topics exploring the breadth and depth of community engagement and service-learning scholarship. Studies in this issue focus on questions related to faculty motivations and development in service-learning and community-engaged learning; course-based experiences designed to promote civic engagement and integrative learning outcomes; community partner perspectives; and varied facets of institutional community engagement—from narratives institutions use to describe their engagement efforts, to points of tension in town-gown relationships. This issue also features emerging research, new voices in engaged scholarship, and a recent publication to add to your reading list.

First up in our **Research Article** section is Lewis et al.'s study of faculty perceptions of a cohort-based faculty development program. Through listening sessions with current and past faculty who participated in a service-learning faculty scholars program at Wichita State University, this study examined the effectiveness of the cohort design to provide support and build skills and competencies of participants. Findings could be useful for institutions looking for effective ways to create programs that provide faculty resources and peer-to-peer support for adopting service-learning in the classroom. The discussion on faculty continues in our next article with a look at faculty motivations for adopting community-engaged learning. Sguoutas-Emch et al. applied the Community Engagement Institutional Assessment (CEIA) rubric (Sgoutas-Emch et al., 2021) to the perceived gap between faculty motivations for integrating community engagement into their courses and the way that institutions articulate support for community-engaged work, particularly within the context of a faith-based institution. The authors use the CEIA rubric as a framework for faculty participants to reflect on their current experience and aspirations for adopting community engagement. Building on previous studies of how faculty rank, status, demographics, and personal faith motivate participation in community engagement, this study also examines whether expressed institutional support for community engagement also affected motivation. In addition, the CEIA rubric is a useful instrument that scholars and practitioners can add to their toolbox for establishing metrics for high quality community engagement approaches.

The next three articles in this section tackle different topics related to course-based strategies and student learning outcomes using various engaged approaches to teaching and research methodologies. Bailey and Camp's experimental design case study examines the impact of civic engagement courses on student perceptions of integrative learning outcomes. In this study, a survey tool was developed incorporating National Survey of Student Engagement questions on reflective and integrative learning and McGuinness's (2015) instrument for assessing integrative learning outcomes with ePortfolios. This tool was administered to students in civic engagement courses and non-civic engagement courses who were paired for comparison. Findings indicated that students, in general and across disciplines and pedagogical approaches, reported improvement in integrative learning outcomes from participation in civic engagement courses.

Higher education continues to grapple with lesson learned during the pandemic, and we are just beginning to understand the long-term impact of COVID-19 policies on service-learning and other instructional approaches. Urias et al. present a case study at VU Amsterdam (Netherlands) about the switch to an online environment and its effect on perceptions of reciprocity by students and community partners, an important element of service-learning pedagogy. The authors draw on Dostilio et al.'s (2012) three categories of reciprocity to understand

and analyze the impact of pandemic pivoting on four courses. In another study of long-term impact, VanLeeuwen et al. conducted a study of place-based, community-based learning (CBL) in professional programs at the University of Prince Edward Island. For professional programs in particular, longitudinal studies of CBL programs are vital to understanding intermediate and long-term impacts of these experiences on career development.

Research pertaining to community partner perspectives, outcomes, and impact is part of a growing body of scholarship, yet still remains an underexplored area of inquiry in the community engagement field. Our next two articles focus on partner outcomes and reflections. Derreth et al. tackle this research gap through a study of community partners involved in a service-learning fellows program at Johns Hopkins University. In this year-long program, a cohort of partners and faculty were selected to participate in seminars, meetings, and ongoing reflection of their understanding and practice of service-learning. This mixed methods study highlights partners' knowledge of service-learning, critiques of the pedagogy, concerns, and the importance of relationship and community building within the cohort. This study provides a useful model and important findings that can inform the development of programs seeking to build capacity and connection between community partners and faculty. In comparison, Turner and Piso's study of community partner perspectives explores characteristics they value in community-university partnerships. Using Q sort methodology and semi-structured interviews, the authors developed a typology of the goals and motivations of different partners. This study adds to our understanding of the range of needs and perspectives that may exist when thinking of the type, scale, and transactional or transformational nature of partnerships that may be desired and needed.

The Research Articles section concludes with a look at two studies on institutional community engagement. Ciampa presents case studies of two historical periods of campus expansion and redevelopment and how these periods intersected with campus safety at the University of Pennsylvania and the West Philadelphia neighborhood. Using archival data and stakeholder interviews, Ciampa explores the tension familiar to many universities and local communities around land use, development, and public safety. In the final article of this section, Gregorutti's qualitative case studies of three institutions with significant community engagement efforts employs discourse analysis of institutional websites and other key publications and reports to uncover motives for institutional engagement. The variation and contrast between the three institutions studied provides a view into how institutional narratives are used to frame, promote, and expand community engagement work within their local context.

Our **Project with Promise** section is devoted to showcasing early- to mid-stage projects and research studies with promising indications of impact. In our featured article, Jenkins and Bolshakova's community-based participatory research (CBPR) study follows Indiana's GEAR UP initiative, a federal program focused on increasing the preparation of more low-income students for postsecondary education success. Through university-community partnerships developed by Purdue University and community partners, a family-focused survey was developed and implemented to better understand declining enrollment post-pandemic. This study explores the first phase of the design and implementation of a family postsecondary survey and future plans for research analysis of the findings.

JHEOE's **Dissertation Overview** section explores emerging scholarship from recently completed dissertations and theses related to community engagement approaches. Edwards' qualitative dissertation explores town-gown dynamics, as well as perceptions of the benefits experienced by students, teachers, and leaders through a university's service-learning partnership with a local school district that created an after-school tutoring and sports program.

Our issue concludes with a provocative book review by Eric Hartman of Aboagye and Dlamini's (2021) edited volume, *Global Citizenship Education: Challenges and Successes*. Hartman critiques the book's strengths and weaknesses by situating each chapter's view of global citizenship education within the larger context of the challenges and opportunities around global and civic education's purpose and practice. Ways that we teach and develop educational experiences that value our global interconnectedness are important questions raised by Hartman's review and in some aspects by this book.

It is gratifying to see the broad range of scholarship being produced on such diverse topics reflected in the journal's pages. We once again invite you to contribute your scholarship to this ongoing dialogue.

Thanks, as always, to our editorial team, associate editors, reviewers, and authors who have added such richness and diversity of perspectives to the journal.

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Providing Faculty-to-Faculty Support: Moving the Needle Forward in Service-Learning From Limited Exposure to Implementing a Campuswide Program

Rhonda K. Lewis, Chelsea Redger-Marquardt, and Kara Fischer

Abstract

The benefits of service-learning have been well documented in the literature in terms of student outcomes (i.e., increasing retention rates). The purpose of this article was to gather the experiences of faculty who participated in the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program, a faculty development program designed to infuse service-learning into their courses and across campus at a midsized university in the Midwest. Faculty participated in a faculty cohort model. Listening sessions were held to gather faculty input, and a total of seven faculty participated. Participants were asked a series of open-ended questions. After a thematic analysis of the data, several themes emerged: service-learning competency/development, challenges, cohort effect, scholar experience, program-level support/resources and training, student experiences, community partner relationships, and faculty reflections on course design. Limitations and future research are discussed.

Keywords: service-learning, faculty development, high impact practices (HIPs), C-BAM, faculty cohort model

The benefits of, motivation for, and impact of service-learning have been well documented in the literature (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Berkey et al., 2018, Clayton et al., 2012; Gallini & Moely, 2003; Jacoby, 2014; Prentice & Robinson, 2010; Weigert, 1998). Although the exact definition of "service-learning" varies depending on the institution, the common components include academic/curricular connection, meaningful service with community partnerships, and reflection: These are the hallmarks of the pedagogy (Clayton et al., 2012; Weigert, 1998). Service-learning as a high impact practice (HIP) has had profound impacts on student learning, including working collaboratively with diverse populations, developing an enhanced understanding of community problems, and increasing intentions for future volunteer engagement (Gallini & Moely, 2003). Further, through the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), we understand that HIPs demonstrate positive outcomes related to student persistence and retention (Indiana University School of Education, 2021; Kuh, 2008, 2009). Thus, the purpose of this article is to examine the role a faculty cohort model played in moving the needle in service-learning on a midsized college campus in the Midwest.

Faculty Development

With the motivation for student retention and the desire to create impactful student experiences through HIPs specifically, service-learning, faculty support and development, and institutional resources are necessary (Berkey et al., 2018; Cummins et al., 2023; Gelmon et al., 2012; George-Paschal et al., 2019; Harwood et al., 2005; Jameson et al., 2012; Pribbenow, 2005; Robinson & Harkins, 2018; Stanton, 1994; Surak & Pope, 2016; Tijsma et al., 2023). For HIPs to be effective, they must be executed well and with intentionality (Kuh, 2008). The role of the faculty is key to the development of meaningful service-learning projects and community connections. Further, the importance of professional development opportunities in helping faculty with their vital role in the success of HIPs is critical (McNair & Albertine, 2012).

Faculty are motivated to engage in service-learning by a variety of factors, the highest of which is increased student learning related to course-based understanding or teaching and learning (Abes et al., 2002; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). Other motivations include building community partnerships, impacting student perceptions, and having an impact in the local community (Abes et al., 2002; Cummins et al., 2023). Engaging in service-learning pedagogy has led to "more meaningful engagement in, and commitment to, teaching" (Pribbenow, 2005, p. 27). Also, it is important to note that the Abes et al. (2002) study, which collected survey data from over 500 faculty at 29 institutions, found that incentives, including stipends or course release, are crucial to recruiting faculty to design or redesign service-learning course components. Faculty taking a leadership role in the view of both students and the community partners is critical for successful service-learning partnerships (George-Paschal et al., 2019). In the same study the researchers found that faculty viewed their role as that of enabler or facilitator of learning, which often requires the responsibility of managing the workload of the service-learning partnership while still keeping the design of their courses up to date. Further, faculty noted that through service-learning they can build new connections and work outside their typical faculty circle.

Faculty are deterred or challenged by several factors as well. Faculty may be discouraged by the insufficiency of time, logistical support, funding, evidence of student learning, and recognition or value in tenure and promotion (Abes et al., 2002; Baker & Lutz, 2021; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Berkey et al., 2018; Bringle et al., 1997; Hammond, 1994; Zlotkowski, 1998). Due to the increased rigor and unique needs of community-engaged scholarship and service-learning practice, it is also important for institutions to note the role of tenure and promotion in this conversation and how faculty development might be created to support early-career faculty with interest in this work (Glass et al., 2011). Faculty are expected to disseminate new knowledge via publications and presentations; thus, it would behoove institutions to frame opportunities for recognition of the intersection of teaching and scholarship for any interested faculty (Berkey et al., 2018).

Foundational Understanding of Faculty Development

Earlier research in faculty development focused on the effectiveness of seminars and set curriculums for faculty. Given the need for an introduction to service-learning pedagogy, workshop topics that focused on reflection, community partnerships, student and course assessment, and models of effective practice were established (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; Stanton, 1994). As practice has evolved, the continued need for faculty development and the expanding scope of community-engaged scholarship continues. Current faculty development trends focus on helping faculty understand labels for current practices and building an understanding of service-learning and community-engaged practices as a multidisciplinary umbrella of engaged scholarship (Jordan et al., 2012). Other effective faculty development practices have included mentoring and coteaching (Cordie et al., 2020).

Furthermore, much of the current literature related to faculty development has focused on online and pandemic-related teaching approaches, which will be discussed later in this section. As we emerge from the pandemic, recent scholars are calling for a "new age of faculty development—The Age of the Global Community," including a theme dedicated to leveraging community-based learning (Baker & Lutz, 2021, p. 55). This theme encourages faculty to partner with our communities in meaningful ways as we all emerge from challenges caused by the pandemic. It also calls on faculty developers to create cross-campus conversations to leverage engagement. Finally, the theme encourages universities to seek ways to ensure that community-based learning can serve faculty in their career advancement (Baker & Lutz, 2021). It is important to note that many faculty see the benefits of service-learning pedagogy and report an interest in learning about service-learning practices while also noting that this work is not an integrated aspect of their role but rather an addition to their workload (Borkoski & Prosser, 2020). Lewing (2020) noted that faculty development programs that emphasize the development of community partnerships and a space to reflect on teaching and scholarship are more valued by faculty members.

Faculty Development Approaches

How we engage in faculty development varies from campus to campus and as we assess and change our own approaches. Welch and Plaxton-Moore (2017) surveyed campus centers with the goal of identifying faculty development program offerings and trends. Through their study, a variety of faculty development plans emerged, including one-on-one faculty consultations, workshops (1–2 hours), half- and full-day workshops, community partner guest speakers, faculty learning communities, faculty fellows seminars or cohort modules, book clubs/readings, training videos, or writing retreats. The study also noted "that the most common faculty development formats all require minimal time commitments and in case of consultations and mentors, can be organized around individual faculty schedules fairly easily" (p. 144). With the variety of approaches available, our study focuses on the experiences of faculty engaged in a more rigorous group approach to faculty development.

Group Approaches

A clear difference between faculty learning communities (FLCs) and faculty cohort or faculty fellows seminars is established. In an FLC, the faculty within the community play a role in contributing to the learning and establishing an agenda for group learning. A faculty cohort or fellows program has an instructor/leader model that sets the curriculum and facilitates the learning process; it is the most immersive of all models (Berkey et al., 2018; Welch & Plaxton-Moore, 2017). The cohort model "provides significantly more time for faculty to acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for community-engaged scholarship than sporadic faculty development program offerings" (Welch & Plaxton-Moore, 2017, p. 144). Cohort approaches lead to the development of peer faculty networks and a space for idea sharing and learning (Cummins et al., 2023).

Additionally, Berkey et al. (2018), in their book *Reconceptualizing Faculty Development in Service-Learning/Community Engagement*, established that extended and immersive programs hold the potential for program outcomes related to an "increased sense of belonging, program development and lasting relationships" (p. 90). The cohort model requires more extensive resources, logistical support, time commitments, and potential monetary costs. Benefits include the ability to support faculty in creating safe spaces for open discussion and discourse, a method for identifying roadblocks and moving beyond them into practice, the ability to impact scholar identity with the introduction of "new language," the sharing of expertise and the potential for new collaborations, and the chance to create synergy and enthusiasm for service-learning practice (Abrams et al., 2006; Jameson et al., 2012; Rice & Stacey, 1997; Surak & Pope, 2016). Regardless of approach or design for faculty development, a recent study aimed at understanding the initialization of service-learning or community service-learning established three phases in this process: start-up, scaling up, and sustaining (Tijsma et al., 2023). Within the start-up phase, Tijsma et al. distinguished between top-down (started by a governing board or upper administration) and bottom-up (originating with active faculty members, students, or even local community partners); the program in this study is rooted as a bottom-up approach.

Pandemic Impact

Although we are still learning the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is recognized that the unprecedented nature of the pandemic highlighted the need to support faculty development in a rapidly changing environment. Recent studies have emerged seeking to understand student learning and perceptions with the transitions required during the onset of the pandemic (Burton & Winter, 2021; Morton & Rosenfeld, 2021; Schmidt, 2021; Shaw & Halley, 2021; Vicente et al., 2021). Hollander et al.'s (2020) study involving the creation of 3-week summer faculty development with a focus on remote learning utilized a service-learning approach to the creation and assessment of the intervention. The researchers looked toward the future to understand how remote delivery might promote future service-learning engagement, noting that geographical constraints may be lessened, and that flexible delivery could free up student time, allowing for more time spent in service. The primary focus of the research, however, was to establish an understanding of faculty's confidence in utilizing educational technology tools and remote learning course design best practices. Using a scoping review, Khiatani et al. (2023) examined 13 studies to better understand the practice of service-learning within the pandemic context. This review shared the importance and increased practice of virtual service-learning and the need for technology support. Finally, the overall practice and pedagogy proved to responsive and adaptable during uncertain times.

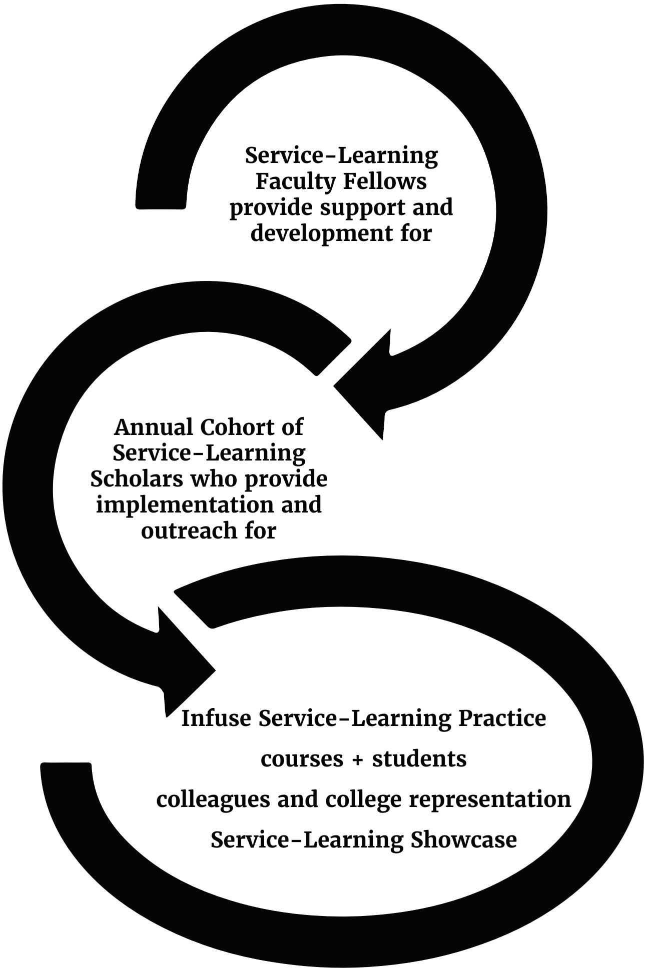
Purpose and Background/Context of the Study

This study extends the literature related to cohort-based faculty development models by seeking to understand the faculty scholars' experience and offering a peer-to-peer development model in which service-learning faculty fellows (consistent faculty mentors and the research team for this study) serve as instructors and mentors for an annual cohort of faculty scholars (called service-learning scholars). The diagram in Figure 1 illustrates the peer-to-peer model.

Further, some participants in this study were serving in their scholar year during spring 2020, in which the pandemic greatly altered their service-learning practice and approach. Their lessons learned help provide an account of the continuing and changing needs in the development of faculty engaging in service-learning pedagogy.

The Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program is offered each year, and all full-time faculty members are eligible to apply. Faculty selected to be a part of the annual group spend one year as part of a cohort designed to support faculty in course design and development. Faculty receive a stipend ($1,500) for their time. The average annual cohort has four to five members and is representative of the different colleges and departments. This unique aspect of the program allows for a diffusion effect across the different colleges and departments on our campus. Scholars can serve as a repre-

Figure 1. Faculty Fellow and Faculty Scholar Model: Peer-to-Peer Cohort Model


Service-Learning Faculty Fellows provide support and development for
Annual Cohort of Service-Learning Scholars who provide implementation and outreach for
Infuse Service-Learning Practice
courses + students
colleagues and college representation
Service-Learning Showcase

sentative or a “service-learning champion,” broadening the reach of the service-learning program. This program is an extended, immersive program that focuses on meeting individual faculty needs (Berkey et al., 2018). The scholars are led by a team of service-learning faculty fellows who form a faculty-to-faculty mentoring and professional development community. A scholar year includes cohort meetings (four to six per academic year), individual consultations with the service-learning faculty fellows as needed, support for syllabus review, resource sharing, and the expectation to participate in the annual campus service-learning student showcase. To date, four cohorts of faculty have completed a scholar year. Nearly 200 students have participated in the annual Service-Learning Showcase, which is a venue to display the meaningful service that has occurred in the community.

By creating an annual cohort of scholars, the institution can further their goals of incorporating HIPs to increase student development, involvement, and retention, and to enhance the student experience. The Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program was a milestone in the journey of infusing the campus with academic service-learning practice. The timeline in Figure 2 illustrates the evolution and journey of the academic service-learning program. In the beginning, the initiative started with workshops and moved toward launching the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program, which built a community for like-minded and interested faculty. Workshops presented several problems: low attendance, lack of interest, and time conflicts with classes. Prior to the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program, the service-learning approach was more passive; with the introduction of the scholars, the approach became more proactive, requiring interested faculty to apply for engagement in the program.

Through the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program, a relatively young service-learning program was able to find anchors in intentionally diffusing service-learning throughout the university’s various colleges and departments. Past scholars serve as allies for community-engaged scholarship, current scholars serve as spokespersons for current community partnerships, and the annual Service-Learning Showcase allows community, student, and faculty synergy to culminate and renew each academic year.

The reach of the scholars program is articulated by the diagram in Figure 3. In this immersive program, service-learning faculty fellows support the service-learning faculty scholars cohort, providing training and development for scholars representing their various colleges and departments, with the potential to inform classroom instruction throughout the university, with the goal of increasing the quality of academic service-learning pedagogy.

With the annual service-learning faculty scholars as the key stakeholder in this process, the need to understand their experience is essential to understanding peer-to-peer modules and their impact on faculty

Figure 2. Moving the Needle: Momentum in Academic Service-Learning

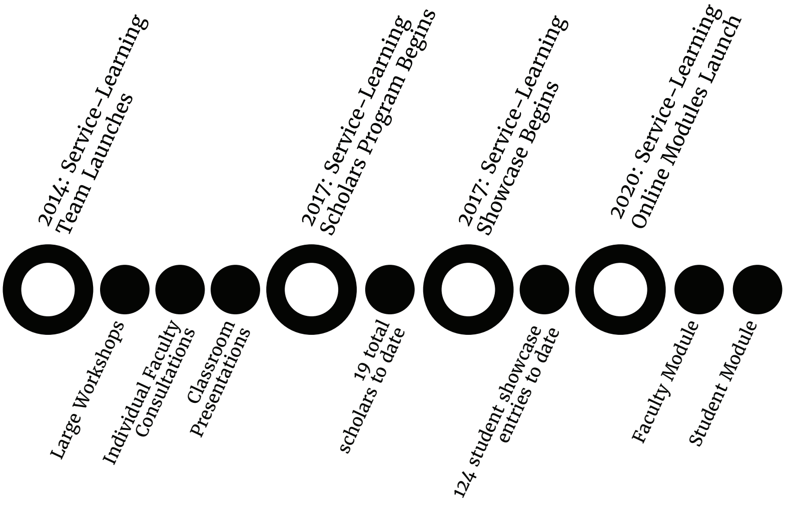
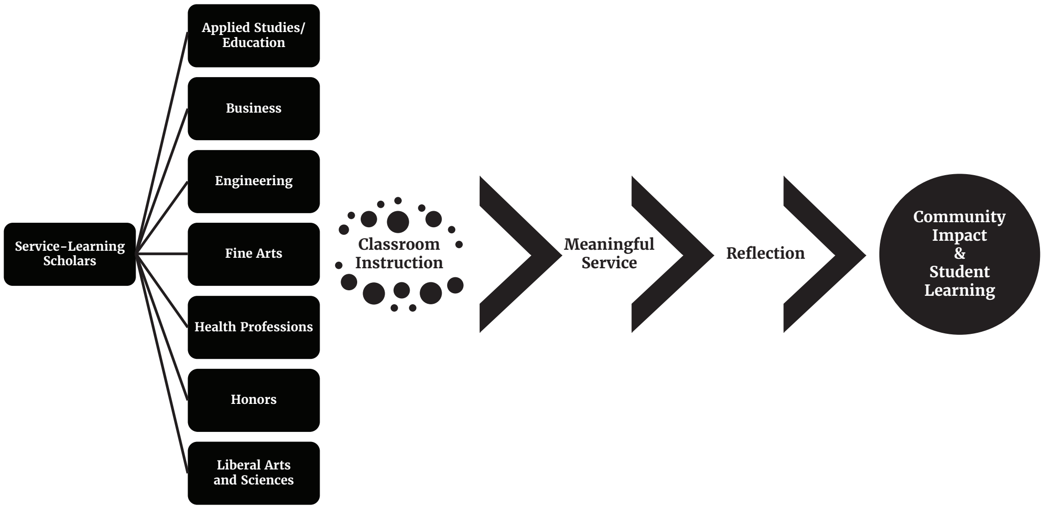

2014: Service-Learning Team Launches
2017: Service-Learning Scholars Program Begins
2017: Service-Learning Showcase Begins
2020: Service-Learning Online Modules Launch
Large Workshops
Individual Faculty Consultations
Classroom Presentations
19 total scholars to date
124 student showcase entries to date
Faculty Module
Student Module

Figure 3. Service-Learning Scholars Ecosystem


Service-Learning Scholars
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Business
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Health Professions
Honors
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Meaningful Service
Reflection
Community Impact & Student Learning

development, continued and lasting service-learning engagement, and faculty support.

Theoretical Framework

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (C-BAM) provides a framework for practitioners interested in implementing change with meaningful results (George et al., 2006; Hall, 1974). The model was developed in the 1970s and 1980s at the University of Texas at Austin by a research team at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education. The model has been consistently updated for validity and reliability and continues to be used to help leaders and educators understand implementation of new practices. The C-BAM model focuses on the human dynamic as an often overlooked but vitally important element of implementation. The framework provides three diagnostic dimensions: innovation configurations, stages of concern, and levels of use (SEDL, 2015). For this study, we focused on the second dimension, stages of concern, as a theoretical framework that provided a lens to understand the phenomena of focus that service-learning faculty scholars experience as a method of "moving the needle" in campus-based service-learning implementation.

The seven stages of concern address areas of potential concern, worry, or trepidation related to the innovation (service-learning practice). Table 1 describes each of the stages of concern and provides a representative statement reflecting it (SEDL, 2015).

Understanding how service-learning scholars describe their challenges or concerns can make the cohort experience dynamic and useful for all faculty participants. This model will be further utilized in the discussion of this study.

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences, lessons learned, and insights of faculty as they develop their service-learning practice. "Adopting innovative pedagogy such as service-learning is a challenging prospect for many faculty. It is therefore imperative they be given support to develop and refine their practice, philosophy, and scholarship" (Harwood et al., 2005, p. 48). We can fulfill the need for support only by understanding, redeveloping, and retooling our continued efforts to provide meaningful and engaging development for faculty and the impact they have on students and the broader community.

Method

Design and Procedure

We conducted this study by first conducting listening sessions to gather input from university faculty members who participated as service-learning faculty scholars. The program was designed to increase meaningful service opportunities for students with community-based organizations and infuse reflection and curricular components in the classroom. Listening sessions were created to assess the impact of this program at our university from the beginning in terms of moving the service-learning needle. Current and past service-learning scholars

Table 1. Stages of Concern, Concerns-Based Adoption Model

Stage of concern	Typical statement
Unconcerned	"I think I heard something about it, but I'm too busy right now with other priorities to be concerned about it."
Informational	"This seems interesting, and I would like to know more about it."
Personal	"I'm concerned about the changes I'll need to make in my routines."
Management	"I'm concerned about how much time it takes to get ready to teach with this new approach."
Consequence	"How will this new approach affect my students?"
Collaboration	"I'm looking forward to sharing some ideas about it with other teachers."
Refocusing	"I have some ideas about something that would work even better."

Note. Source: SEDL, 2015.

were asked a series of questions about their experiences. Table 2 outlines the questions posed to faculty participants.

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Wichita State University. The research team consisted of two faculty members and one undergraduate student. Faculty from all ranks (tenure track and non–tenure track) participated in two listening sessions. Each listening session was approximately 60 minutes in duration and was audio recorded and transcribed. A total of seven faculty participated in the listening sessions. Faculty names were changed to pseudonyms to protect their identities. Table 3 outlines the college they represented and basic demographics. Each listening session consisted of four to six faculty who shared their lessons learned and experiences being a service-learning scholar.

Service-Learning Scholars Program Cohort Participants

A program titled the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars was implemented that paid $1,500 per participant to faculty across each college to infuse service-learning as defined by the initiative into faculty members' classes. Each year faculty members from across campus apply for this program. A total of 14 (two male and 12 female) faculty scholars have applied and were selected to participate. A total of 15 classes have been exposed to service-learning in their classes through this cohort-based program.

Data Analysis

For the purposes of this qualitative study a thematic analysis was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), using a four-step process.

> *Step 1. Become familiar with the data: Open coding.* Two listening sessions were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The goal of thematic analysis is to find the themes and patterns that come from the participants and are guided by the research questions.
>
> *Step 2. Generate initial codes.* The research team consisted of three coders (the three authors). Each coder was trained on qualitative methods and the research questions that guided the qualitative study. Each coder coded the listening session they were assigned individually, and they met with the first author to discuss themes that emerged.

Table 2. Listening Session Questions

All faculty questions (including current scholars and past scholars)
Tell us about your overall experience with the Service-Learning Scholars program.
Share about your challenges and recommendations.
Any lessons learned?
Past scholar additional questions
Are you still engaging in service-learning?
What changes have you made in your service-learning practice?

Table 3. Participants of Listening Sessions

College	Participant*	Description of the appointment
Liberal Arts and Sciences	Female faculty: Dr. Nova, Dr. Smith, Dr. Snow	Tenure-track (3)
Liberal Arts and Sciences	Female faculty: Dr. Moore	Tenured
Fine Arts	Female faculty: Dr. Lane	Tenured
Engineering	Female faculty: Dr. Pine and Dr. Ling	Tenure-track (2)

Note. *The male faculty selected as service-learning faculty scholars chose not to participate or were not available for the listening sessions. Two scholars chose to give their responses through email.

> *Step 3. Search for themes*. At this point each coder met with the first author to discuss what significant themes emerged from the different listening sessions. The most emergent themes were related to the research question.
>
> *Step 4. Relevant themes*. Once the themes were identified in each session, all themes were reviewed, modified, or developed depending upon the number of mentions until consensus was reached.

Through this thematic analysis process, 18 codes were created and then collapsed into eight overarching themes.

Results

A total of eight themes emerged from the listening sessions: (1) service-learning competency/development, (2) challenges, (3) cohort effect, (4) scholar experience, (5) program-level support/resources and training, (6) student experiences, (7) community partner relationships, and (8) faculty reflections on course design. Table 4 outlines the details of each theme and gives an example quote from program participants.

Service-Learning Competency/Development

Service-learning competency/development was defined as skills and strategies that further developed the scholar's knowledge and confidence about service-learning and helped them understand service-learning practices. One example of service-learning competency/development is provided by Dr. Snow:

> I learned early on that it was more than just direct service and I think that my view of service-learning was expanded in terms of thinking beyond that and even though my service was really intended to be

Table 4. Emergent Themes, Overview of Results

Theme	Description	Example
1. Service-learning competency/ development	Service-learning scholars developed skills and strategies to further their educational mission and incorporate service-learning practices.	"I learned early on that it was more than just direct service, and I think that my view of service-learning was expanded in terms of thinking beyond that and even though my service was really intended to be direct, and it made me think about like other ways or other methods that I could infuse that in other courses or, you know, just beyond the actual provision of direct services, like in research, or even like advocacy work and so I thought that was unique."—Dr. Pine
2. Challenges	Service-learning scholars found difficulty in making service-learning meaningful, finding adequate preparation time, working with COVID-19 and the logistics of their student groups in terms of implementation, and getting projects up and going for students.	"My biggest challenge was recruitment this past year, and I think a part of that was COVID. And I not even sure how much of it, you know, could have changed because of COVID. You know, and it's kind of in thinking about what was what it's been said so far."—Dr. Ling
3. Cohort effect	Service-learning scholars used current and previous scholars as well as faculty fellows as a resource for guidance, answering questions, brainstorming, and concerns.	"I can come and tell you that if I have a problem, if something is challenging, I have somebody to talk to, right. And that aspect was fantastic."—Dr. Smith
4. Scholar experience	Service-learning scholars' personal takeaway from their participation.	"So, there's a lot comes with being a service-learning scholar, but I think in terms of how you guys structure the program, I think I had very positive experiences."—Dr. Nova
5. Program-level support/ resources and training	Service-learning scholars found individual support in faculty fellows, felt meeting times were appropriate, and attended the annual Service-Learning Showcase.	"I can come and tell you that if I have a problem, if something is challenging, I have somebody to talk to, right. And that aspect was fantastic."—Dr. Smith
6. Student experiences	Service-learning scholars made note of student-to-student interactions, the importance of student reflection, and students' need for structure and guidance.	"Like one group did something about Latino mental health, and they did a bunch of interviews and . . . so at the end, they had a really long video that nobody was, I don't think people would really watch like the whole thing if they saw it on social media. And it wasn't really, it didn't really, like grab your attention at the beginning, so it just seemed more like a class project rather than something for the purpose of addressing an issue in the community."—Dr. Moore
7. Community partner relationships	Service-learning scholars' feedback on finding community partners, managing relationships, and bringing their partnership into the classroom.	"I think, in my case, the lesson I've learned is that spending time on building relationships with community partners, and teaching students to build this relationship really pays off."—Dr. Nova
8. Faculty reflections on course design	Service-learning scholars give feedback on potential improvements and changes to be made in future courses.	"I guess for me, one of the things that I considered more intentionally was how to incorporate reflection throughout."—Dr. Nova

> direct, and it made me think about like other ways or other methods that I could infuse that in other courses or, you know, just beyond the actual provision of direct services, like in research, or even like advocacy work and so I thought that was unique.

Consistently, participants shared that their understanding of service-learning as an overall concept and practice was expanded.

Challenges

Another theme that emerged for scholars was the challenges that occurred when trying to implement service-learning in their classrooms. Challenges were defined as difficulties in making service-learning meaningful and getting service-learning implemented for students, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when their program was being implemented. Dr. Lane shared:

> I'm still learning. You know, I agree, it's like you know. I need to start to make a better effort and focused direction earlier. You know. That's, I think really key because it takes a while to get your mind wrapped around everything and start to get things percolating. And then of course, if you run into issues, where, like I'm having with people getting back with you, and know, it's slow starting and then here I am mid-semester.

Subthemes were also discussed; these included trying to build community partnerships during COVID-19, logistic issues, and time management issues that occurred for students who were juggling work demands and their academics. The pandemic was often discussed among this group of scholars, as those in the program were active in their scholar year during various stages of the current pandemic.

Cohort Effect

In the listening session, scholars mentioned that the role of being a part of the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program or the impact of going through the process with others was beneficial to their growth and development. "Cohort effect" was defined as using the knowledge and wisdom from current and previous scholars as a resource and guidance in answering questions, avoiding pitfalls, gaining new insights, and getting inspired by fresh ideas. Dr. Smith shared,

> You know, it was lovely to see what other people were doing. And also, other people from different fields, right. So, I'm in linguistics, but you know [our cohort is] in social work and engineering and [it] was great to see what everybody else was doing. Because I think, you know, prior to me being a service-learning scholar, when I was, when I was doing service-learning in one of my classes, I was just on my own doing what I thought was right for my class, the cohort that we kind of created I think as part of the service-learning scholarship was what was really, really useful for me, it was kind of like, okay, I can come and tell you that if I have a problem, if something is challenging, I have somebody to talk to, right. And that aspect was fantastic.

The scholars identified the benefit of a cohort of peers focused on learning, growing, and developing service-learning practice. The camaraderie that was developed due to a shared experience was noted.

Scholar Experience

Scholars also mentioned the feeling of how they experienced the process overall. Overwhelmingly, the scholars shared a positive reaction toward their participation in the program. Dr. Pine reflected,

> So, my experience was great because this is something that it was not only aligned with the university, like vision of what education should look like, but also with the professional vision in our, in the case of our, our major vision of you know how being an active part of the community needs to be reflected as an outcome of how students learn . . . So, there's a lot that comes with being a service-learning scholar, but I think in terms of how you guys [service-learning faculty fellows] structure the program, I think I had very positive experiences.

Scholars consistently shared a feeling of positive experience, impact, and growth. They also shared that the program was worthwhile and not overly demanding of their time versus the impact on their development.

Program-Level Support/Resources and Training

"Program-level support/resources and training" was defined as providing individual support to the scholars through individual meetings or consultation sessions, by providing feedback or through resources (i.e., books, articles, reflection pieces, syllabi, websites on service-learning, problem solving). One of the scholars provided a quote that captured how they felt supported by the program. Dr. Smith stated, "I can come and tell you that if I have a problem, if something is challenging, I have somebody to talk to, right. And that aspect was fantastic." The need for and the appreciation of resources was another common theme discussed in both listening sessions.

Student Experience

One scholar wanted to expose the students to different experiences in the community. The scholars discussed how one aspect of the importance of including service-learning in their courses was its enhancing the student experience. Dr. Pine mused,

> So these, these experiences, and that's why I like I wanted to bring it here, because it now exposes students that you know, now you have a worker that is not a robot, you know like has rights, and even a person has rights, rights and has health and you know to, and mental health, to worry about that you have to worry about that if you want your company or your organization to move forward because it depends on workers.

Scholars discussed that service-learning impacted their student learning and understanding. As evidenced in the above quote, the practice brought real meaning and real-world application to the classroom curriculum.

Community Partner Relationships

Community partner relationships involve managing the relationships between the faculty and the community partner, establishing the service-learning activity for the students, and working out the meaningful service-learning component. This process takes time. A relationship must be formed between the community partner and the service-learning scholar. The importance of building these partnerships and engaging in an ongoing flow of communication was discussed by the scholars. One scholar, Dr. Nova, commented, "I think, in my case, the lesson I've learned is that spending time on building relationships with community partners, and teaching students to build this relationship, really pays off." By deepening these partnerships and sharing the importance of building these relationships with students, the scholars shared how vital the community partners are in service-learning practice.

Faculty Reflections on Course Design

Service-learning faculty scholars provided insights and recommendations for course design. Dr. Ling shared,

> I learned with my first-year seminar. I mean, I taught it last semester, and I'm not teaching it this semester, but I learned a lot of lessons. It'll be a lot different for the fall semester. But I think the biggest thing for me was . . . and I still don't necessarily know how to do it, but I know that I left it too open ended for my students to just kind of find their service. And so, I realized like I need to provide them more guidance and maybe select a few options instead of here's the whole world at your fingertips. Go find something.

A common point of discussion in both listening sessions was related to this theme of reflecting back on practice and making improvements in future course design. The scope of change differed depending on the scholar; however, the spirit of future improvement was evident.

Discussion

Overall, the goal of this exploratory study was to gather input from faculty who were selected as service-learning faculty scholars at a midsized Midwestern university to incorporate a service-learning component into their courses. Listening sessions were conducted to collect information to determine how effective the program was at meeting intentional goals and objectives. We also wanted to ascertain how well the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program was able to provide resources and increase the service-learning competencies among its scholars. Other studies have used numerous methods, including mentoring, workshops, fellowships, and trainings to improve faculty development to create applied learning opportunities for faculty (Berkey et al., 2018; Cummins et al., 2023; Jordan et al., 2012; Robinson & Harkins, 2018; Welch & Plaxton-Moore, 2017). Service-learning has been identified as a high-impact practice to recruit and retain students for colleges and universities (Kuh, 2008). Service-learning has also been a tool to retain students (Celio et al., 2011; Gallini & Moely, 2003; Kuh et al., 2017). The study also used the C-BAM to address scholars' concerns in adopting the service-learning practice as an innovation into their classes (de Vocht & Laherto, 2017; de Vocht et al., 2017; Hall et al., 1977; SEDL, 2015).

The findings from this study highlight that service-learning faculty scholars' approaches mostly fell into five broad categories of the concerns model: informational, management, consequence, collaboration, and refocusing. The categories unconcerned and personal did not apply as easily to these faculty scholars. The C-BAM model has been used as a model for teachers when adopting innovative teaching methods (de Vocht & Laherto, 2017; Trapani & Annunziato, 2019).

First, it is clear that scholars did relate to the informational stage of the concerns model. The scholars found the information provided by the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program interesting and informative (de Vocht & Laherto, 2017). Second, the management stage of the concerns model also seemed to connect with the scholars in that they were concerned about how much time it would take to connect with building up community partnerships in terms of placing students in service-learning placements. Once this process was completed, the scholars found it was a rewarding experience for the students. Scholars did note that service-learning placement would continue to be an area of concern for each semester. In contrast to implementing a traditional curriculum, the concerns for management were fairly low and were similar to other research findings (Trapani & Annunziato, 2018). Third, in the consequences stage, the scholars did experience challenges connecting with community partners in this stage of the concerns model. The scholars were concerned that challenges connecting with community partners would impact their students' experience with service-learning in the community and with their class.

Fourth, collaboration was another stage in the concerns model that the scholars were able to share. In this stage the scholars noted that they were able to share their concerns with each other, and they shared their successes and failures and their lessons learned with other cohort members. At the monthly meetings they looked forward to the opportunity to express their ideas and hear what other scholars had been engaged in over the month. This insight was shared in the study by de Vocht et al. (2017) related to this stage. Further, our findings support the more recent conversations in service-learning faculty development via Cummins et al. (2023), who noted the positive impact on collaborative or cohort-based learning. Fifth, in the stage of the model that targets refocusing, scholars had the opportunity to reflect on their ideas for course improvement and thus practiced refocusing their ideas with goals of what they could work on in the future (de Vocht & Laherto, 2017). For instance, scholars mentioned providing more guidance to their students in the future on how to engage in service-learning in the community and ways to implement reflection throughout the projects in the classroom.

Taken as a whole, the concerns model of providing an innovative way to integrate service-learning into the classroom provided several insights for the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars program. Faculty all have concerns before implementing any kind of innovation into the classroom. These concerns may be addressed. Faculty need to have the information and tools to address their concerns to effectively communicate the questions, fears, and uncertainty of their students and potential community partners. From a management and implementation perspective, faculty need to know "how much is my investment on top of the things I am already doing?" This study was conducted at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when faculty were stretched. Universities need to find ways to lower the burden on faculty and find ways to engage faculty and lighten workloads.

We need to address consequence from the concern model. "Consequence" refers to how this approach will impact students. Will a new concept, such as service-learning, relate to the students in a positive way? The literature is clear that HIPs such as service-learning benefit students in healthy ways, leading to retention and persistence (Kuh, 2008; Kuh et al., 2017). The scholars in this program reconfirmed many of these benefits in regard to impactful student learning and immersion with community and course content.

Collaboration was another component that allowed members of the cohort of scholars to find a group of like-minded individuals to learn from and collaborate with. They could lean on each other for social support when they didn't know who to go to for answers on how to implement service-learning into their course. The value of collaboration is supported by previous literature that recognizes an increased sense of belonging in the development of lasting relationships and the power of a cohort for collaboration (Berkey et al., 2018; Cummins et al., 2023).

Lastly, refocusing scholars' efforts was another way to implement an innovation with faculty. Future course improvement was the most frequent type of comment. Scholars consistently shared their ideas for the next implementation of service-learning in their respective courses. These stages are critical to getting innovations implemented.

For the purposes of this article, the stages unconcerned and personal did not emerge as categories relevant to these scholars. Scholars had already made the commitment to participate in the program, thus establishing an interest or concern. Furthermore, scholars had thought about how participation might impact their personal routine and elected to apply to the program. Collectively, they were all concerned about the information and invested in the progress of the service-learning initiative being implemented in their respective colleges and on our campus.

Limitations

Several limitations were noted. First, it is not clear whether saturation was reached, but there was consensus on how the service-learning faculty scholars viewed the program in terms of service-learning competencies gained, challenges shared, and positive experiences learned from the entire program. The goal of qualitative research is to provide thick and rich descriptions of participants' experiences within their contexts. Second, in this study it is also hard to know whether the scholars sought to give socially desirable answers to the leadership team. The leadership led the focus groups and asked the questions of the scholars. However, the number of challenges presented indicated that the scholars felt comfortable expressing the issues and concerns they experienced with implementing service-learning in their courses; further, they acknowledged having the opportunity to ask for help from the program leadership and their cohort of scholars. Third, the sample of program participants included only female scholars. Thus, the results of this qualitative study might have been slightly different if the views of male scholars had been included. Finally, the results were gathered during the peak of COVID-19, so some scholars' struggles and challenges were overshadowed by COVID-19 in terms of collaboration with community partners. COVID-19 protocols, the mental health challenges of students, remote learning, and having students conduct their service-learning remotely was a challenge.

Future Research and Recommendations

In the future, individual interviews with scholars may provide more information on how the scholars felt independently from each other. These interviews would give each scholar the opportunity to reflect on their own experience without the influence of other scholars. In addition, a quantitative survey of how they might use service-learning in the future could also be added to a future study. More research is needed on enhancing the relationship between the faculty member and the community partner. The impact of COVID-19 on establishing and conducting service-learning during a pandemic needs to be explored in more detail. Other studies might include the students' perspectives to determine how service-learning has affected their college experience. What are faculty and students gaining from the experience? Existing literature supports that service-learning does increase retention among students (Kuh et al., 2017). Service-learning is an important HIP. It is too early to tell if it is having its intended effect here at our university. Using the NSSE, we can determine if service-learning is retaining students.

In conclusion, these findings suggest that providing support and resources for faculty for service-learning was beneficial. The support should be with others who are going through the process together (faculty-to-faculty). Faculty ideas and concerns were shared, and problems were solved. Faculty want to know they are not alone. Universities can use this information to design programs that are not one-time workshops but are learning communities for faculty that create climates in the classrooms for students to venture out into the community to create lasting change. The program supports faculty development and supports student retention, which is a win-win for the university, faculty, students, and community: all benefit. The adoption of service-learning into the classroom by using a cohort model versus a traditional lecture method (i.e., workshop) allowed scholars observe how others were adopting service-learning in their classrooms, make changes, examine syllabi, problem solve, collaborate with community partners, and be creative. In the long run the C-BAM established a framework to help the service-learning scholars articulate their concerns in a systematic manner and at the same time develop a comprehensive approach to implement service-learning in their classrooms and in the university ecosystem. It is anticipated that service-learning will retain students and keep them engaged in the institution.

About the Authors

Rhonda K. Lewis *is a professor and graduate coordinator in the Psychology Department, in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Wichita State University. Her research interests include adolescent health and development, health equity, substance use prevention, service-learning, and community-engaged and participatory research. She received her PhD in developmental and child psychology from the University of Kansas and a master of public health from the University of Kansas School of Medicine.*

Chelsea Redger-Marquardt *is assistant dean of The Dorothy and Bill Cohen Honors College and assistant professor of organizational leadership and learning at Wichita State University. Her research interests include experiential learning, leadership development, service-learning, and place-based learning. She received her EdD in educational leadership from Wichita State University.*

Kara Fischer*, entry-level doctor of occupational therapy student at the University of Kansas Medical Center, received a bachelor of psychology with honors from Wichita State University. Her interests include researching the impact of service-learning opportunities for graduate-level students.*

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Bridging the Gap Between Faculty Motivations and Institutional Aspirations Using the Community Engagement Institutional Assessment Rubric

Sandra Sgoutas-Emch, Kevin G. Guerrieri, and Colton C. Strawser

Abstract

This article examines faculty motivation to integrate community engagement (CE) into teaching and research, in relation to faculty identity, rank and status, experience, and faith. Building upon previous research that focused on intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, our study also examined the role of an institutional definition of CE with clear criteria, as outlined by the Community Engagement Institutional Assessment (CEIA) rubric, in the motivational cycles of faculty reflection on current and aspirational aspects of CE. Surprisingly, our results illustrate that even when colleges and universities support CE across the institution, faculty may not be significantly motivated by this expressed valuing of CE. Importantly, our findings indicate that faculty would like to achieve the aspirational status on all criteria, pointing to the potential for the rubric to bridge the gap between institutional mission and individual faculty motivations. Enhancing this alignment may increase sustained and meaningful impact on the community.

Keywords: community engagement (CE), faculty motivation, institutional assessment, CEIA rubric, faith-based institution

Higher education's commitment to public purposes and the common good is manifested in many different actions, including community engagement (CE), which can be conceptualized using a wide range of taxonomies, spectra, and matrices within any given institution (Holton et al., 2015; Janke & Medlin, 2015; Starke et al., 2017). Similarly, at the individual level, community-engaged faculty members' trajectories can be extremely diverse, given the plethora of fields, disciplinary paradigms, and departmental cultures that collectively comprise the academic institution, especially at larger universities. Moreover, it is not uncommon that a faculty member's degree of involvement in CE varies at different stages of their career and throughout professional and personal life transitions. For these reasons, the university's efforts to develop a collective understanding of CE must be continual, expansive, and inclusive—in order to support faculty in their varying positions, positionalities, and unique circumstances—while also defining guiding principles of CE and a developmental path that align with the institutional identity, mission, and vision.

This article is part of a broader ongoing exploration of the spaces between, on the one hand, institutional discourses and practices of CE and, on the other, the diverse range of motivations that lead individual faculty members to commit to, implement, and carry out the work over the long term. Ultimately, in general terms, CE's potential for sustained and meaningful positive impact in the community, aimed at contributing to structural and systemic change through a social justice lens, inevitably depends on a critical mass or scalability. Likewise, the same applies to the need to support a wide range of methodological approaches and disciplinary frameworks for the work of CE. Accordingly, a greater understanding of motivations can potentially strengthen the recruitment, professional development, and support of faculty in this work.

Literature Review on Faculty Motivations

Some important research on faculty motivations has been conducted previously. For example, in their research focused on exemplar engaged scholars, which utilized a document analysis of Erlich nominee essays, O'Meara (2008) determined seven categories of faculty motivation: (1) to facilitate student learning and growth; (2) to achieve disciplinary goals; (3) personal commitments to specific social issues, places, and people; (4) personal/professional identity; (5) pursuit of rigorous scholarship and learning; (6) a desire for collaboration, relationships, partners, and public-making; and (7) institutional type and mission, appointment type, and/or an enabling reward system and culture for community engagement (p. 14). The author emphasized that these categories were often interrelated, had areas of overlap, and included internal aspects that required disentangling (pp. 23–24). In their revision of a previously designed Faculty Engagement Model from 2009, Demb and Wade (2012), in turn, identified 23 different factors that influence faculty engagement, which they organized into four broader dimensions: (1) institutional (mission, type, leadership, budget, etc.); (2) professional (tenure status, faculty rank, etc.); (3) personal (race/ethnicity, gender, personal values, etc.); and (4) communal (socialization, department support, discipline support, etc.). In their discussion, the authors underscored that "faculty choice about participation needs to be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon, which balances the multiple roles they are asked to perform" (p. 364). Building upon studies such as these, Morrison and Wagner (2016) emphasized the need to base faculty typologies and classifications on the "participants' own internal perceptions and their overall perspective rather than their responses to the researcher's specifically defined and operationalized variables" (p. 8). In order to achieve a more nuanced understanding of faculty motivation and perhaps challenge existing conceptualizations, the authors proposed using Q methodology, in which the participants themselves sort each of the multiple factors in relation to the others, such that varied points of view are captured and the complexity of faculty engagement is not oversimplified.

In response to the challenge of managing the complexity of multiple factors, Darby and Newman (2014) followed a different approach to examining faculty engagement: applying Bandura's (1997) motivational theory led them to view "motivation not as a sum of factors that encourage or discourage faculty members' persistence in the pedagogy, but as a cyclical process that continually influences faculty members' motivation with each academic service-learning experience" (p. 117). In their coding of interview transcripts, the researchers identified four themes—"(1) faculty members' goals, (2) faculty members' expectations, (3) faculty members' perceived successes, and (4) faculty members' perceived challenges"—and then created a model aimed at illustrating "how faculty members' motivation is contingent on a cycle of reflection that occurs before and after an academic service-learning course" (pp. 98–99). A key finding from this study, which is directly related to the present article, is that "anticipatory cognitive motivators, in the form of cognized goals and outcome expectancies, fueled their motivation to pursue the academic service-learning experience and provided a framework through which to examine its successes and failures" (p. 100). This observation points to two key underlying questions: How can the motivational cycles of individual faculty members be better aligned with institutional objectives, and how is CE collectively understood at the institutional level?

With regard to institutional type, broadly speaking, O'Meara (2008) echoed previous studies (Holland, 1999; O'Meara 2002b; Ward 2003) in affirming that "strong preexisting service missions at the institutional level favorably influence faculty engagement," and of the engaged scholars whose essays she analyzed, "50 percent noted motivations for their service-learning and engagement related to institutional type and mission" (p. 22). The interplay among an institution's type and mission; its reward systems; and faculty members' work allocation, motivations, and involvement in service-learning and CE has long constituted a fundamental space for examination and reform. For over three decades now, since Boyer's (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered*, there have been calls for expanding definitions of scholarship, reconfiguring hierarchies of knowledge production, and institutionalizing CE, all of which is reflected in many studies that focus on interrelated aspects of these broad efforts (for example, Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Eatman et al., 2018; Furco, 1999, 2002; O'Meara, 2002a, 2005, 2006; Saltmarsh et al., 2019).

Although some advances have been achieved in this transformation, Eatman et al. (2017) underscored that "many faculty members who identify as publicly engaged scholars are often discouraged and made vulnerable by existing tenure and promotion policies" (p. 363). Formal policy reforms may help candidates feel more comfortable about emphasizing CE in their applications, but, as O'Meara (2005) suggested, "without necessarily changing their chances of success at the decision point" (p. 507). This contradiction is a persistent and deep-rooted challenge: In an article published a decade later, O'Meara et al. (2015) continued to highlight that "even at institutions that are among the most engaged in their local communities, reform of tenure and promotion guidelines has not accomplished much more than the incorporation of definitional and valuing language" (p. 56). Finally, it must be emphasized here that, as Sdvizhkov et al. (2022) have argued, the reform of these guidelines and recognition for community-engaged scholarship and public engagement also have diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice implications for faculty in non-tenure-track ranks and other employees. It follows that, although the institution type—referring here to those with an explicit service mission or ones considered or classified as more engaged—may influence faculty engagement positively, vital gaps remain in their reward systems across campus.

Also in relation to institution type, the question arises as to the role of faith-based missions and identities in faculty motivation. Specifically in reference to faith-based institutions, Demb and Wade (2012) asserted that the "research seems to be fairly consistent and shows that private, two-year and religiously affiliated institutions are more likely to engage with the community" (p. 342) and "faculty at private universities, Catholic, or religious institutions had higher levels of engaged scholarship as compared to those at public universities" (p. 343). Some faculty and CE professionals at faith-based institutions conceive of their work and faith as intertwined and inseparable in that their professional work is a lived expression of their faith (Green et al., 2020). Similarly, the faith-based values of some institutions are inextricably linked to both students' overall education and their role in service to others and in response to injustice; this connection is exemplified in the stated principles of Jesuit higher education (Sweetman et al., 2020).

Nonetheless, tensions exist in the context of CE at faith-based institutions. Some approaches to engagement that are implemented may reflect or be driven by opposing perspectives, such as, for example, a charity-based or volunteer service-oriented paradigm that may (inadvertently) contribute to maintaining the status quo, on the one hand, and social justice frameworks designed for systemic change, on the other. In this context, Ray (2017) underscored that differences within religions—comparing "liberal" and "conservative" Christians, for example—also influence how likely people are to engage in social change and social justice work (p. 44). Additionally, faith-based institutions may assume amnesic attitudes and apolitical or ahistorical postures rather than confronting their faith-based traditions' complicity in past colonialism and ongoing oppressive practices. The ways that the personal experiences, beliefs, and values of individual faculty members interface with these tensions is an important area of exploration for analyzing motivations in critical CE.

A salient aspect of many studies on faculty motivations to participate in CE consists of the acknowledgment that the term itself can be broad, ambiguous, and interpreted very differently. O'Meara (2008) stated, for example, that "further research directed at ascertaining motivations needs to more carefully examine the types of community engagement faculty are talking about. The term 'community engagement' is a big tent" (p. 25). Similarly, Demb and Wade (2009) indicated that their "exploration of faculty engagement behaviors clearly revealed a spectrum of definitions whose complexity could undermine further research until those definitions are made specific and explicit" (p. 14). In a later article, the same authors underscored once again that the "most important aspect of future survey research will be the explication in the survey instrument, of specific definitions of different types of outreach and engagement activity" (Demb & Wade, 2012, p. 363). To date no study has specifically sought to bridge the gap between faculty motivations and the articulation of a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of CE at the institutional level. This question is located precisely at the foreground of the present article.

Study Context, Purposes, and Research Questions

This research project builds upon a previous study designed to develop a tool that provided a clear vision and expectations for CE at the institutional level, which led to the creation of the Community Engagement Institutional Assessment (CEIA) rubric (Sgoutas-Emch et al., 2021). This rubric contains four primary criteria areas: (1) democratic, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial partnerships; (2) societal issues and the common good; (3) critical reflection; and (4) civic learning, citizenship, and democratic values. In the application of the CEIA rubric during a previous pilot study of course-based CE, the results revealed a significant divergence between faculty perceptions and the vision projected in the rubric, which suggested the need for building a more collective understanding of CE and exploring faculty motivation for doing this work.

The CEIA rubric has been institutionalized at the University of San Diego (USD), in that faculty can apply to have their courses flagged with a "C" (community engagement) in the university-wide online platform of all courses offered. The searchable designation enables students and faculty to find courses with these components while also serving to acknowledge faculty who explicitly develop their courses with CE. The designation is also aimed at fostering a collective understanding of these activities at the institutional level in alignment with the university's mission, core values, and strategic plan, while simultaneously valuing a diversity of discipline-based approaches. Finally, as more courses receive the designation, it will be useful for helping to track the work at an institutional level, effectively assessing outcomes for both the community and student learning, and providing opportunities for collaboration across units and areas. It should be noted that two separate designations have been implemented at USD, community engagement (C) and public service (PS), based on the distinction between two broad categories in which the university contributes to the common good through course-based activities: Whereas "public service" is used to describe activities that are "relatively more unilateral and unidirectional in the sense that the university provides services to the public," the "community engagement" designation is based on the Carnegie Foundation definition and emphasizes the "reciprocal exchange of knowledge enacted through partnership" (Janke & Medlin, 2015, p. 129).

USD is a faith-based university with a well-established office of community engagement that has guided the work for over 30 years. The university received the community engagement classification from the Carnegie Foundation and is also an Ashoka U Changemaker campus. The transformation of CE at USD since the 1980s aligns with an ongoing tendency in this field across the nation to emphasize a more critical and intersectional approach aimed at confronting inequality and disrupting interconnected systems of power (Chupp & Joseph, 2010). Within this framework, CE is not only understood as a high-impact educational practice (Hoy & Johnson, 2013; Kuh et al., 2017), but also focuses on the work of antiracism and antioppression (Allen et al., 2023) and on developing collaborations within a paradigm of social justice (Mayhew & Fernández, 2007; Mitchell, 2007; Mitchell & Soria, 2016); positive community impact (Chile & Black, 2015; O'Mara-Eves et al., 2015); and equitable, democratic, and mutually beneficial university–community partnerships (Holland, 2005; LaDuca et al., 2020; Sgoutas-Emch & Guerrieri, 2020). USD recognizes partners as coeducators in students' learning process, which underscores a focus on relationship building and the collective determination of the institution's objectives and purposes, in which the wisdom and multiple ways of knowing beyond the walls of the academy are equally valued. The CEIA rubric seeks to reflect these aspects across the four criteria.

The previous pilot study was conducted to assess how faculty perceived the effectiveness of their CE within academic courses. Building on those results, the purpose of the subsequent study described here was to further validate the CEIA rubric, but this time specifically in relation to faculty motivations for participating in this pedagogy. We examined many of the same intrinsic and extrinsic motivators identified by previous researchers, but, most importantly, we also integrated a more detailed conceptualization of CE into the study through the CEIA rubric. In this way we were able to explore the four different components of the rubric itself as motivators for faculty to undertake this work. In this sense, the rubric could serve as a framework that faculty use in the development of anticipatory cognitive motivators—following Darby and Newman's (2014) motivational cycles here—that help bridge the gap between the myriad factors that influence their work overall at the university and the institution's discourses and practices of CE.

In sum, the purpose of this exploratory research was threefold: first, to further validate the Community Engagement Institutional Assessment (CEIA) rubric (Sgoutas-Emch et al., 2021); second, to further understand faculty motivations for participating in CE efforts (course- and research-based) at their university; and third, to examine if the CEIA rubric can help bridge the gap between individual faculty members' numerous motivations for participating in CE and the university's institutionalized definition and understanding of CE. Our research team then broke these purposes down into the following more discrete questions to analyze:

1. What are the most significant motivators for faculty to integrate CE into their courses?
2. To what degree are the university's faith-based identity and faculty's personal faith linked to faculty motivation?
3. Does faculty status and demographics make a difference in motivational levels?
4. Can the CEIA rubric serve effectively as a framework for faculty to reflect on and evaluate their previous experience in community engagement?
5. Can the CEIA rubric serve an aspirational function as a framework to fuel future faculty motivation?

Methods

Participants

The participants were selected by working with USD's Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action to identify faculty who have participated in previous CE efforts. This process included identifying faculty who served on CE councils or had previously signed up for professional development workshops on CE, and compiling a list of faculty who had incorporated CE in their classes. We excluded all faculty members who had previously volunteered to participate in research on the CEIA rubric to minimize potential bias due to previous knowledge of the purpose and content of the rubric.

Materials

The online survey, created by the research team and distributed by email, was divided into four sections (see Appendix). All questions, with the exception of Section 4 of the survey, were on a 5-point Likert scale. Section 1 focused on motivating factors at the intrinsic and department levels. Section 2 focused on organizational and faith-based motivators. Section 3 had two parts: Participants rated both their perceived current (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) and aspirational (in future courses) levels of engagement in CE as they pertain to each of the four criteria in the CEIA rubric. The last section of the survey contained demographic and occupational questions that could be used to examine any differences across variables such as gender, race, and faculty status levels.

Procedure

A list of 286 individuals was compiled, which contained a total of 100 viable candidates after eliminating duplications and candidates who did not meet the criteria for participation. Invitations to participate and surveys were distributed using university emails. We gave all potential participants a month to complete the surveys, and reminders were sent out after 2 weeks and during the final week. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board for Human Participant Research, and all those who participated completed an online consent form.

Results

Participants

Forty-one faculty completed at least the first half of the survey, which focused on the motivations behind their CE work. Only 31 faculty completed the entire survey, which included questions about the rubric. The majority of the sample identified as female (65.9%) and Caucasian (80.5%); 7.3% of the sample identified as African American, and the same percentage identified as Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian. Only one faculty member identified as Native American and one as Asian American. Most respondents (73.2%) reported being full-time tenure-track/tenured faculty, and 26.8% identified as nontenured/tenure-track faculty. The majority of the faculty (53.7%) came from the College of Arts and Sciences, followed by 22% from the School of Business, 14.6% from the School of Nursing and Health Science, and 9.7% from the School of Leadership and Educational Sciences.

The sample was diverse with regard to years of experience, with 19.5% having less than 10 years of college teaching experience, 17% with 10–14 years, and 39% with more than 15 years experience (24.5% of the sample did not answer this question). As for years of experience with implementing CE, almost half the sample reported less than 10 years experience (48.8%), with 9.8% reporting 10–14 years, and 21.9% reporting more than 15 years experience (19.5% of the sample did not answer this question). Furthermore, faculty reported being engaged in nonacademic community service: 31.7% reported contributing more than a few times per year, and only 9.8% reported never participating. With regard to donations, none of the faculty stated that they never donate to charitable organizations: 41.4% indicated that they donate a few times a year, and 34.1% reported donating monthly. Finally, 41.5% reported that they participated in CE as undergraduates and 43.9% during graduate school.

Spearman Correlations

Table 1 displays the correlation between general motivation factors and specific factors related to their institution. Ratings are from 1 = *extremely unlikely* to 5 = *extremely likely*. No significant relationships were found between the likelihood that a faculty member would include CE in their courses and any of the other motivation questions. Faculty ratings for CE in their scholarship were related to their perceptions that CE work is valued in their discipline and that the university provides enough resources for CE work.

Table 2 presents the correlations between the CEIA rubric ratings (both current and aspirational) and the main question of whether the faculty member plans to include CE as part of their courses. Faculty perceptions of their current ratings for critical reflection and civic learning were significantly related to whether they would include CE in their courses. No significant relationships were found for the current ratings on partnerships and societal issues. Alternatively, significant relationships were found between the likelihood to include CE and all criteria aspirational ratings. The data suggests that faculty who are motivated to reach higher levels on all criteria on the rubric are more motivated to include CE in their courses.

Comparisons Across Groups

Years of Experience Employing CE

Independent *t*-tests were employed to compare less than 15 years experience with CE versus 15 years or more experience with CE across the responses on the motivation questions. Those with more experience did report they were more likely to include CE ($M = 4.44$) compared to the less experienced faculty ($M = 4.00$); however, this difference

Table 1. Spearman Correlations Between Ratings of Motivation and Institutional Specific Factors

	Likely to include CE in course	CE in scholarship	CE valued in discipline	CE valued in rank and tenure	University values CE work	CE as a way to serve others
CE valued in discipline		.62** (40)		.52** (40)		
University values CE work			.37* (31)			
Adequate resources		.36* (32)			.45** (40)	
Catholic identity						.38* (40)

Note. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 2. Spearman Correlations Between Likelihood to Include CE as Part of Their Courses, Current and Aspirational Ratings, Across the Four Rubric Criteria

	Partnerships		Societal issues		Critical reflection		Civic learning	
	Current	Aspirational	Current	Aspirational	Current	Aspirational	Current	Aspirational
Likelihood to include CE	NS***	.45* (31)	NS***	.39* (31)	.45* (31)	.59** (31)	.63** (31)	.55** (31)

Note. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***NS = Not significant.

was not significant. Additionally, no other motivators were significantly different across these two groups. It is important to note, however, that only nine faculty fit into the more experienced group, compared to 24 in the other group. The same results were found when comparing years of experience in teaching overall. The same faculty ended up in both groups.

Faculty Status

Comparisons across non-tenure-track (NTT) and tenured and tenure-track (TT) faculty indicated a significant difference for likelihood to implement CE in their courses, with $t(39) = -2.03$, $p < .05$. TT faculty were less likely to state that they would implement CE ($M = 4$, $SD = 1.11$) compared with NTT ($M = 4.73$, $SD = .65$). Significant differences also were reported for the extent to which the university provides adequate resources, with $t(39) = -2.40$, $p < .02$. Again, NTT faculty reported that they perceived the university providing more resources ($M = 3.91$, $SD = .83$) compared with TT ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .99$). This means that, overall, NTT faculty are more likely than TT faculty to implement CE and to see the university as providing adequate resources. That being said, one NTT participant stated that precisely their status as NTT required them to be much more proactive in seeking resources to support their CE work.

Educational Experience With CE

In order to examine whether past experience with CE as an undergraduate and graduate student made a difference on motivation to implement CE, chi-square analysis showed no significant differences. Moreover, no differences were found across gender for any of the measures. No analysis was completed across race because of the low numbers of BIPOC faculty, which in itself constitutes an essential area for further research.

Current Versus Aspirational Rubric Score Comparisons

Paired *t*-tests were employed to compare the current ratings on the CEIA rubric to the aspirational scores—scores faculty indicated that they would like to achieve—for each criterion on the rubric. Significant differences were reported across all four criteria, with the aspirational ratings being significantly higher than the current ratings. Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, and *t*-scores for each criterion. Ratings are from a range of 1–4: 4 = *exemplar*, 3 = *emerging*, 2 = *basic*, and 1 = *below basic*.

In terms of current perceptions, faculty collectively scored partnerships as the lowest criterion and societal issues as the highest rated criterion aspirationally. For all four criteria, however, faculty reported they would like to achieve emerging to exemplar ratings. These data suggest that faculty are motivated to reach higher ratings on all criteria, and faculty report that they still have work to do to achieve these goals.

Discussion

In response to our first research question, focused on determining the most significant motivators, overall, the data suggest that intrinsic motivators were the factors most closely related with faculty's likelihood to implement CE. Many of the survey respondents stated that they elected to include a CE component within their course or scholarship because it was rewarding to them personally and professionally. Previous research in the area of faculty motivation (Demb & Wade, 2012; O'Meara, 2008) indicates that tenure and promotion, for example, consis-

Table 3. Descriptive and Paired *t*-test Statistics for Current Versus Aspirational Ratings Across the Four Rubric Criteria

Rubric Criteria	Mean	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Partnerships					
Current	2.55	.77	−6.06	30	<.001
Aspirational	3.22	.78			
Societal issues					
Current	2.87	.88	−4.81	30	<.001
Aspirational	3.45	.62			
Critical reflection					
Current	2.71	.82	−5.44	30	<.001
Aspirational	3.35	.71			
Civic learning					
Current	2.71	.74	−6.04	30	<.001
Aspirational	3.26	.68			

tently appear as a key motivator for faculty participation in specific programs, conducting engaged research, or incorporating CE pedagogical approaches. In the case of this study, the connection between faculty implementing CE and rank, tenure, and evaluation processes was positive. Furthermore, the correlation between a faculty member's perception that their discipline supported CE and that their department valued CE in rank, tenure, and evaluation processes was significant. However, in their comments some faculty did point to the persistent gap between the expressed support of CE at the department or academic unit level and CE being undervalued in the rank and tenure process. It is important to note here that we articulated the question of faculty evaluation in an inclusive manner for both tenured/tenure-track faculty and non-tenure-track faculty, given that the performance of these two groups tends to be assessed through different processes. Overall, a salient conclusion drawn here is that support at the departmental level for CE appears to be a stronger motivator for faculty participation than support at the university level.

Some important results emerged in the second research question, which explored the degree to which the university's faith-based identity and faculty members' personal faith motivated their CE work. Although faculty did report a link between the faith-based mission of the institution and the value they place on the importance of serving others, they did not indicate a strong relationship between that institutional mission and their implementation of CE. Faculty may be less aware of the importance of CE at an institutional level than in more intimate and immediate settings, such as their departments and community organizations, in which they engage regularly and have direct experiences. Many nuances remain to be explored with regard to how faculty conceptualize their own faith traditions, the faith-based identity of the institution, and the intersection of these factors and how they may be embodied through the work of CE. It is significant that faculty may not be highly likely to link institutional faith-based values with rank and tenure expectations and other faculty evaluation processes. However, this finding does align with O'Meara and Niehaus's (2009) study in which only three cases, out of 109 faculty narratives analyzed, "explained their service-learning from an explicitly religious perspective" (p. 26). This outcome suggests that, broadly speaking, institutions need to do a better job—both discursively and through concrete practices—of helping faculty make the connections among their faith-based and other institutional core values, faculty evaluation and status, and CE, as a key part of fulfilling their missions.

Another goal of this study, as reflected in the third research question, was to observe if faculty status and demographics played a role in the types of motivators related to CE work and the CEIA rubric. Years of experience with CE, as well as past engagement with CE as former students, were not significant factors. Interestingly, nontenured faculty were more likely to see the institution as providing more resources for CE and were more likely to indicate that they would include CE compared with tenured and tenure-track faculty. It is also important to note that no significant differences were seen across gender, race, or type of school, because of our small and skewed sample. Determining if these are important factors in motivation is an area for future research with a larger and more diverse sample.

Our fourth and fifth research questions should be discussed together, given that they focus on key aspects of the motivational cycles of faculty members, as they reflected through the lens of the CEIA rubric, first on their past and present CE and then on their aspirational CE. Comparisons between current and aspirational ratings on the rubric confirmed that faculty were motivated to rank higher across the four criteria. Aspirational ratings were positively related to the question of how likely faculty were to include CE in their work. Furthermore, faculty reported the desire to work on reaching emerging or exemplar levels of practice. In particular, faculty were most inspired to improve their ability to teach about societal issues. These data are promising, as they illustrate the respondents' awareness that they can dive deeper, especially regarding societal issues, into improving the overall effectiveness of their CE efforts. Similarly, developing democratic, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial partnerships, a fundamental element of CE, was elevated in faculty's awareness through their reflection and continues to be a central imperative. The potential to develop such awareness is evident, for example, in O'Meara and Niehaus's (2009) analysis of narratives written by exemplary faculty practitioners of service-learning, some of which reflected a unidirectional approach to university–community partnerships: "In cases where the service mission of the institution was emphasized, the discourse seemed to situate the institution as the major player and the community as the recipient of its gifts" (p. 28). The findings in the present study illustrate the importance of having institutional-level metrics for assessing past and ongoing CE and providing parameters for partnership development, as well as for guiding future work with clearly defined expectations that are inclusive of different approaches to CE and yet provide a framework that helps align individual faculty motivations with the mission of our institutions.

Limitations

As mentioned earlier, this study was preliminary and included a number of limitations. Although the research questions included aspects that apply to faculty in most places, a subset that focused on motivating factors from one particular institution's mission and values may not be generalizable to other institutions. As our university is faith-based, for example, we were interested in examining the relationship that faith plays as a motivator for CE work but included only one question about faith in our survey. Previous research has shown a positive relationship between religion and involvement in civic engagement in the general public (Ray, 2017; Smidt, 1999). However, little is known as to how religion and spirituality act as motivators to engage in CE work in higher educational settings, even though these factors are important drivers of the missions of many institutions. Other limitations included the majority of participants being from the College of Arts and Sciences, so comparisons across different types of school—namely, between professional schools and the College—were not possible. In relation to these types of differences, Saltmarsh et al. (2019) suggested that examining the implementation of community-engaged scholarship at the college/school level can help close the gap between department- and institutional-level efforts. Furthermore, the sample was relatively small, given the total number of faculty who implement CE in their courses and the broad range of engaged scholarship at our institution. We also saw that only half of the participants completed the entire survey. In particular, the questions focused on the rubric and aspirations were not completed by all respondents, which further reduced the sample size for those questions. In addition, this study focused on faculty who already implement CE, which, in a sense, constitutes a self-selecting group, albeit driven by a wide range of motivators. A much larger population of faculty on campus are not practitioners of CE, especially as it is conceptualized in the CEIA rubric. Accordingly, a redesigned study could target this broader faculty body to analyze both "unengaged" faculty's understanding of CE and the factors that discourage them from implementing CE.

Conclusions and Next Steps

The results from this study indicate that faculty are intrinsically motivated to participate in CE, but extrinsic motivation is primarily correlated with whether CE is supported by their academic department (i.e., often the group making tenure and promotion recommendations and closely involved in other faculty evaluation processes). Although colleges and universities can support CE across the institution, faculty may not be motivated by this perceived institutional commitment; however, the study found that faculty who perceive the value of CE within their discipline are more likely to implement it within their teaching or scholarship.

Historically, CE and the definitions surrounding it have been fluid, causing unclear guidelines as to what is and is not "effective" (Demb & Wade, 2009, 2012; O'Meara, 2008). By using a clear definition of CE organized into its principal areas—as in the CEIA rubric—as a point of departure, this study showcases how that definition can be applied in the motivational cycle in which faculty evaluate their previous or present CE by reflecting on clear criteria and assessment metrics, which then also serve as a framework for anticipatory cognitive motivators that guide future CE components, thereby linking institutional aspirations and individual faculty motivations.

Future research using the CEIA rubric is necessary in order to further understand its utility in different contexts. For example, the rubric will be used in collaboration with additional colleges and universities to explore how it can be utilized to enhance the definition and evaluation of CE at the institutional level in different higher education settings (large versus small campus, public versus private, etc.). The university's mission and values, and how faculty are perceiving them as manifested in their professional activities, should not be disconnected, especially in relation to the promotion and tenure process, the merit process and other incentives, and the onboarding of new faculty, given that all these factors influence a faculty member's likelihood to engage—and how they engage—with the local community through their research, teaching, and service. A comparison across different faith-based institutions, including those with specific orders such as the Jesuits or Franciscans, could help examine faculty motivation in relation to the nuances around personal meaning and purpose as related to faith traditions, as previously indicated in the discussion section. Similarly, a deeper dive is required around faculty's previous experiences in CE, volunteerism, and service-learning as youth and former students.

Although many institutions indicate a value for CE, a disconnect often appears between said value and the actual implementation of CE across the institution and in how faculty perceive the value. The alignment between the incentive structures and the faculty evaluation processes needs to be examined at the institutional, school or college, and departmental levels in order to be successful. Therefore, the espoused value (valuing CE) and the enacted value (incentive and recognition structure) are divergent. Further research is needed to pinpoint where this divergence is happening to address the tensions faculty face between institutional and departmental values.

As mentioned previously, the CEIA rubric has been adopted at the institutional level at USD for course designations. Therefore, a future direction of this research may explore different facets of this institutionalization through the analysis of the integration of the rubric into faculty development activities, the training of peer evaluators, cocurricular and extracurricular community-based activities, and institutional assessment and reporting requirements (e.g., Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement), among other areas. These data also suggest that the CEIA rubric—and other such rubrics adapted to or designed by other institutions—may be effective tools for developing more equitable recognition in the tenure, promotion, and merit processes at the university level for engaged scholars and teachers of all ranks, which can also advance the university's mission by bridging a key community engagement gap.

About the Authors

Sandra Sgoutas-Emch *is a professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences and former director of the Center for Educational Excellence at the University of San Diego. Her research and teaching interests focus on community health and engagement and the psychosocial variables related to wellness. She received her PhD from the University of Georgia.*

Kevin G. Guerrieri *is a professor and former chair of the Department of Languages, Cultures and Literatures at the University of San Diego. His research, writing, and teaching interests focus on Latin American and Colombian literature and cultural production, human rights, social justice education, and scholarship of engagement. He received his PhD in Spanish from the University of California, Riverside.*

Colton C. Strawser *is the executive director of the North Texas Nonprofit Institute and adjunct professor at Louisiana State University–Shreveport. His research interests include community leadership, community engagement, and nonprofit capacity building. He received his PhD in nonprofit and philanthropic leadership from the University of San Diego.*

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Appendix

Survey Instrument

Survey format altered for publication.

Section 1
Please rate the following questions on a scale of 1 (Extremely unlikely) to 5 (Extremely likely) as they pertain to the following questions:

- How likely is it for you to include community engagement as part of your courses?
- How likely is it for you to include community engagement work as part of your scholarship?
- How likely is it for community engagement to be valued within your discipline?
- How likely is community engagement work to be valued during the rank, tenure and evaluation process for your department/program?

Section 2
Please rate the following questions on a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 5 (To a very great extent) as they pertain to USD specifically:

- To what extent do you believe the University values community engagement work?
- To what extent do you feel the University provides adequate resources for community engagement?
- To what extent do you believe the University's Catholic Identity and Mission align with community engagement?
- To what extent does a faith tradition motivate your community engagement work?
- To what extent do you see community engagement work as a way to serve others?

Please explain your above responses: (open-ended)

Section 3

RUBRIC—CURRENT LEVEL

The following survey has been designed to examine faculty motivations and perceptions about course-based community engagement. **Please answer each question with a particular course and community partnership prior to COVID-19 in mind.** The first set of questions will be based on the following rubric for community engagement. Please refer to the rubric when responding to the questions.

Upon reviewing the following categories, which best describes the community engagement occurring within your course(s) prior to COVID-19? (Below Basic, Basic, Emerging, or Exemplar)

- Democratic, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial partnerships
- Societal issues and the common good
- Critical reflection
- Civic learning, citizenship, and democratic values

Please explain your above responses: (open-ended)

RUBRIC—ASPIRATIONAL LEVEL

Please indicate the level which you would personally like to see your community engagement achieve when you teach this course again in the future. (Below Basic, Basic, Emerging, or Exemplar)

- Democratic, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial partnerships

- Societal issues and the common good
- Critical reflection
- Civic learning, citizenship, and democratic values

Please describe any factors or circumstances that would be necessary in order to reach (or maintain) your aspirational level for each criterion of your community engagement course.

Section 4

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please help us further our analysis by providing some demographic information

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer
- Not listed (please specify)

Ethnicity

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Other

Academic Department/Program: (open-ended)

Academic Rank

- Instructor (part-time)
- Lecturer
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Professor
- Professor
- Not Listed

Are you a tenure-track or non-tenure-track faculty member?

- Tenured/Tenure-Track
- Non-Tenure-Track

How many years have you been teaching university level courses?

- 0–4
- 5–9
- 10–14
- 15–19
- 20+

How many of those years (in total) have you been utilizing some form of community engagement?

- 0–4
- 5–9
- 10–14
- 15–19
- 20+

How often do you volunteer with community (non-academic) organizations during your personal time?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- A Few Times A Year
- Once A Year
- Never

How many times a year do you make a charitable donation to support a nonprofit organization?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- A Few Times A Year
- Once A Year
- Never

Did you participate in community engagement activities as an undergraduate student?

- Yes
- No
- Do Not Recall

Did you participate in community engagement activities as a graduate student?

- Yes
- No
- Do Not Recall

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Civic Engagement as a Course-Level Strategy for Integrative Learning

Maia F. Bailey and Julia M. Camp

Abstract

Engaged learning seeks to cultivate integrative approaches that require students to use multiple points of view or approaches in their coursework. Similarly, civically engaged courses ask students to consider public problems that involve multiple stakeholders, institutions, and policies. We are interested in whether courses designed to meet civic engagement goals might also improve student self-assessment of integrative learning at our institution and could serve as a developmental step toward more holistic strategies. To test our hypothesis that student participation in civic engagement would improve student self-assessment of integrative learning, we compared summative student survey scores from students enrolled in similar courses with and without a civic engagement component (n = 275). Boxplot and statistical analysis (unpaired two-sample Wilcoxon test) were used to determine if civic engagement pedagogy made any meaningful impact on integrative learning. Our results show strong overall improvement in survey scores after civic engagement courses.

Keywords: curricular assessment, curricular change, interdisciplinary learning, integrative learning, civic engagement, community-engaged learning

In the book *Branches From the Same Tree*, the authors quote Albert Einstein: “All religions, arts, and sciences are branches from the same tree” (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018, p. 1), asserting that multiple bodies of knowledge are connected and should be integrated. Their study examines efforts to provide an integrated model of learning “that proponents argue will better prepare students for work, life, and citizenship” (p. 1). The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has identified integrative and applied learning as an essential learning outcome, defining integrative learning as “an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus” (AAC&U, 2009). Many schools are interested in improving integrative learning but lack a good road map to achieve these goals (DeZure et al., 2005). Model programs for integrative learning employ holistic strategies that help students incorporate their experiences across their education: cocurricular and curricular, general education and their major, entry-level courses and capstones (e.g., Richards-Schuster et al., 2014). The reality of institutional change is that most schools will not be able to implement complex new programs from scratch, but will need smaller, simpler stages to bridge their development (Lake et al., 2019). We are proposing civic engagement courses as one such bridge.

Civic engagement in higher education has increased in visibility and importance, reflecting recent civil rights movements and the effects of changes in civics education in K-12. As schools have moved to incorporate civic engagement, many have articulated civic learning objectives that can be integrated into coursework across disciplines

(Matto et al., 2017). When students struggle with public issues from lenses of citizenship and disciplinary expertise, civic engagement may also exemplify integrative learning by asking students to synthesize their roles, skills, and experiences from all parts of their lives; however, this possible effect of civic engagement on integrative learning, even when integrative learning is not an explicit goal of the course, has not been demonstrated.

At our home institution, all students are required to take a course that fulfills civic engagement learning objectives. Here, we define civic engagement to encompass learning that promotes the common good through course knowledge content on public issues and their stakeholders, student reflection on their various civic roles, and analytical skills development to tackle such complex, ill-structured problems. In response to this requirement, many different departments have developed courses that meet these goals, including Accountancy, Biology, Finance, and Political Science. In each of these courses, students must engage with a public problem, explore the forces that act on this issue, articulate their own roles and responsibilities, and analyze the challenges to solving the problem. Beyond those requirements, courses may also include disciplinary content or goals and may use different methods to achieve their learning goals, such as service-learning, problem-based learning, reflection, and so on.

As instructors for civic engagement courses, we felt that there was considerable overlap between the learning outcomes for civic engagement and integrative learning. Certainly, it is possible for courses to address questions integrating views of multiple disciplinary lenses without being civic engagement courses. For example, a course on how nature has been defined over time by philosophers and biologists is interdisciplinary, but if these insights are not applied to how they affect conservation attitudes and policies, it is not a civically engaged course. Similarly, a purely civic course that focuses on the facts and history of government is unlikely to be integrative. However, due to the emphasis on personal agency and the complex nature of public problems and actors, civic engagement courses require students to incorporate reflection and multiple viewpoints, making them necessarily integrative.

To test this intuition, we devised an integrative learning survey tool to administer to students in civic engagement courses. The survey combined seven questions developed from the reflective and integrative learning engagement indicators of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2013) and a published survey with 31 questions used to evaluate ePortfolios as an integrative learning approach (McGuinness, 2015). Each survey question asks the students to self-assess their attainment of specific components of integrative learning. Surveys were administered within the first 2 weeks of 16-week semester courses and again in the last 2 weeks of the same courses. Both civic engagement and non–civic engagement courses were surveyed.

Overall, we have found that courses designed to meet civic engagement goals may also help develop and improve students' integrative learning, even when integrative learning goals are not an explicit part of course design. Although single courses do not meet all the goals of integrative learning or provide the same outcomes as other methods, such as ePortfolios, civic engagement courses are one tool among many for helping students feel more engaged and apply their learning across disciplinary boundaries.

Literature Review and Research Questions

Integrative learning involves both making connections and using knowledge from across the curriculum to solve problems both in other courses and outside the learning experience (AAC&U, 2009). Students learn how to apply learning from a classroom setting to different domains such as community service by using skills involving beliefs, learning experiences, and both academic- and self-interests (Richards-Schuster et al., 2014). Integrative learning is using different strategies to "pursue learning in intentionally connected ways" (Galvin, 2006).

> One of the key goals of integrative learning activities is to assist students in bringing to the forefront what they have learned and the impact of that learning on their day-to-day interactions and future goals. (Richards-Schuster et al., 2014, p. 133)

The AAC&U sees integrative learning as one of the most important aspects of higher education and has worked to encourage it across campuses in the United States. Integrative learning fosters the skills needed to tackle real-world experiences and problems. In general, situations encountered outside the academic setting involve a variety of disciplines and often need varied approaches to solve (e.g., wicked problems; McCune et al., 2021). For example, if one examines the COVID-19 pandemic, the problem involves not only science, but also disciplines involving philosophy, politics, communication, economics, and sociology. Policymakers must consider not just epidemiological factors but also ethics, effective communication, and other social factors in order to craft effective policies.

Integrative learning can be considered an "umbrella term" (Klein, 2005) covering different strategies and activities that work to connect knowledge and the application of knowledge to problems. Students develop insights into different perspectives to help put together pieces of a larger puzzle (Newell, 1999). "Interdisciplinary studies" is often included as a subset of integrative learning (Klein, 2005) and involves using multiple disciplines to study a topic for a wider breadth of knowledge. Within interdisciplinary knowledge other disciplines help support and connect the main idea, but their status and importance are not equal (Kratochvil, 2013). The main difference between integrative and interdisciplinary is that integrative approaches involve making connections to analyze and synthesize problems outside the academic setting (Huber et al., 2005), whereas interdisciplinary learning tends to be limited to a purely academic setting (Newell, 1999).

Although integrative learning is noted as being important to education and has been discussed since the 1850s (Klein, 2005), definitions and assessment remain problematic. DeZure et al. (2005) noted that many schools still struggle to practice integrative learning across their curriculum in more than a basic way and do so inconsistently. These researchers also identified the lack of accepted metrics for measuring integrated learning as a barrier to improvement. More recently, Luo (2021) expanded the intended outcomes of integrative learning to include cultural competencies such as diverse interaction across college campuses and exposing students to differing points of view. Conversely, most of these studies agree on the impact integrated learning provides for improvement in skills and career success.

Other research has assessed strategies of incorporating integrative learning within curriculum and campus communities. For example, Galvin (2006) and Newell (1999) emphasized experiences outside typical classroom courses as important pieces of integrative learning. These studies identified information literacy as a portable skill that students can learn and apply through experiences such as writing across the curriculum, first-year experience programs, service-learning, study abroad, and learning communities. Lake et al. (2019) argued that engaged learning across different departments across years is effective for integrative learning but acknowledged the many challenges regarding workload and institutional support. Other research has focused on the idea of capstone courses and using projects such as ePortfolios to help connect concepts learned across the curriculum (Kinzie, 2013; Richards-Schuster et al., 2014; Stubbs et al., 2013). Carpenter (2015) discussed how outreach programs helped improve integrated learning among graduate education students and improved interest in civic engagement. These studies agree that integrative learning helps students apply concepts to experiences they will encounter in work and life outside college. Going one step further, Hancock et al. (2010) provided a case study in how to encourage student engagement by building community partnerships to address real-life applications and problems.

Similar to research emphasizing the importance of integrative learning, research on civic engagement also draws attention to the centrality of civic engagement as a higher education outcome. The report *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* (National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012) called for colleges and universities to educate students on engaged citizenship. The report found that civically engaged students are better students, have skills that are employable, and are more socially responsible. Similarly, Halonen and Dunn (2018) argued that incorporating service-learning, among other strategies, can help students and their parents understand the application and value of their degrees.

Compared to the literature on integrative learning, studies of civic engagement in higher education seem to have broader agreement on the goals and outcomes but focus more on modalities (e.g., project-based, service-learning, community-based) of learning and measuring life-long impact. Holland (2001) discussed the movement of bringing civic engagement into the world of higher education. Overall, she pointed out how engagement can improve student learning and also involve academic institutions within their communities. In addition to Holland's report, other studies also have discussed the importance of measuring the impact of civic engagement and have provided examples of projects from a number of institutions (Campbell, 2009; Egerton, 2002; Liszka et al., 2022; Mehta et al., 2015; Orphan & Hartley, 2021; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

However, some research has cast doubt on the effectiveness of civic engagement. Egerton (2002) went so far as to conclude that higher education did little to change the civic engagement of students and that the relationship of their families and professional occupations had more important connections. Barnett (2020) carefully reviewed work on the impacts of various civic engagement pedagogies (social justice content, service-learning, intergroup dialogue, etc.) to show that they may be less effective in improving learning outcomes for students of color. In particular, she identified how instructors design and deliver their courses, including whether they integrate learning and handle conflict and negative interactions between students, as key in ensuring these courses benefit students of color (Barnett, 2020).

Service-learning is often used in colleges to promote civic engagement and student learning. Celio et al. (2011) presented a meta-analysis of how service-learning impacts student learning and found that service-learning does have a positive effect on civic engagement. Other specific studies reflect similar findings confirming an improvement in civic engagement from service-learning (Conner & Erickson, 2017; Lichtenstein et al., 2011; Rochford & Hock, 2010; Rockenbach et al., 2014). In a longitudinal study, Keen and Hall (2009) found that students involved in civic engagement and service-learning over 4-year programs continued to be involved after graduation. Ngai et al. (2019) presented an empirical study to discuss success elements of service-learning and discussed civic learning outcomes associated with service-learning. However, the study did not discuss integrated learning as a benefit and left a gap in the literature regarding the connection.

Community-based learning is a category that includes service-learning but may also include courses where students do not perform service directly but work on projects that indirectly serve the community (Kuh, 2008). McClellan et al. (2021) assessed the impact of community-based learning on NSSE indicators, including reflective and integrative learning. Like Barnett (2020), they found that the impact of these civic engagement pedagogies depends on other factors. In their study, arts and science majors were more likely to benefit from community-based learning than professional studies majors (McClellan et al., 2021).

Other studies on civic engagement discuss how service-learning alone cannot address issues of civic engagement (Bringle, 2017; Morton & Bergbauer, 2015). Bringle (2017) discussed how integrating service-learning with other pedagogies can enhance the overall learning experience. Without specifically mentioning the term "integrative learning," the study discussed how the use of multiple strategies gives students a deeper experience. Our study adds to this previous research by explicitly testing effects of service-learning and non-service-learning civic engagement on integrative learning.

Literature discussing the overlap of civic engagement and integrative learning is minimal and focuses on the effects of integrative learning on citizenship as an outcome. *Branches From the Same Tree* (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018) discussed how integrated learning improves skills such as communication, critical thinking, and teamwork and can lead to "productive citizenship." Other research (Kahu, 2013) has presented a framework for student engagement in higher education, suggesting that a consequence of student engagement is citizenship. New assessment instruments include both civic engagement and integrative learning domains as separate entities. For example, Richards-Schuster et al. (2014) discussed using ePortfolios to assess integrative learning and civic engagement. Their study uses items from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2013) and the VALUE rubric from AAC&U (2009) to measure civic engagement and integrative learning, among other skills. The study presented ePortfolios merely as a way to assess civic engagement and integrative learning but did not draw any conclusions on any impact of civic engagement on the integrative learning experience. Our study shows how civic engagement across the curriculum shares cognitive skills with integrative learning such that civic engagement instruction improves integrative learning self-assessment.

Given the minimal prior literature regarding civic engagement and integrative learning together, we have developed the following research question:

> RQ1: Do courses designed to meet civic engagement goals improve integrative learning survey responses?

Williams Howe et al. (2014) articulated the range of pedagogical tools that can be used in civic engagement courses and how these tools can be developmentally ordered to enable scaffolding skills over time. Our sample included diverse courses each with their own activities, assessments, and time spent on civic engagement. This variety of courses allows us to see if integrative learning happens only as a by-product of particularly high-impact courses that incorporate service-learning or community engagement throughout the course or if courses with much more limited civic engagement content are adequate to improve student self-assessment of integrative learning.

> RQ2: Are more active civic engagement courses, i.e., those that incorporate interaction with community members or service-learning, better at improving integrative learning survey responses?

Methods

Our experimental design is a case-study approach utilizing existing student enrollments at our primarily undergraduate, liberal arts college in the northeast United States. Our independent variable is the type of civic engagement pedagogy used in the course, and changes in self-assessed survey responses by students in those courses are the dependent variable.

Our institution has substantial general education requirements for graduation, including proficiency in civic engagement. Courses that may be taken to fulfill this proficiency can be from any discipline but must include the learning goals specific to civic engagement and provide evidence in the syllabus that appropriate texts, activities, and assessments are in place to support these learning goals. According to the legislation that created this curriculum requirement (Providence College Faculty Senate, 2010), the civic engagement proficiency courses must include the following learning goals:

- Offer students the opportunity to examine, in depth, a public problem or civic issue that concerns them.
- Explore the nature of social, cultural, political, and/or environmental forces, institutions, and ideas that influence public problems and their resolution in public life.
- Encourage students to consider their own role in the larger community and their responsibilities within that community. This consideration would include an analysis of citizen obligations to promote key elements of the common good, such as social justice, solidarity, human rights and dignity, participation, peace, subsidiarity, cultural and economic justice, and environmental sustainability.
- Analyze the challenges associated with seeking the common good (e.g., collective decision making, public program implementation, community service provision).

Civic engagement courses have often included service-learning at our institution; however, the current legislation does not require service-learning to fulfill the proficiency.

For our study, course instructors were recruited from traditional (political science) and nontraditional disciplines (accountancy, biology, economics, and finance) for civic engagement, using databases of approved civic engagement courses and current course offerings (Table 1). We also recruited two additional finance course instructors to administer the survey as controls. These two finance course sections did not include any civic engagement learning goals but were similar to the civic engagement finance course in level of content knowledge and discipline and could be considered broadly representative of upper level courses in our institution. Among the civic engagement courses, there was some variation in the modality of engagement. The biology course we evaluated included significant hours of service and weekly reflection. Two of the four sections of the political science course included community-based learning in which the students spent time with community organizations. None of the surveyed courses included explicit integrative learning goals. Surveys were administered starting with the authors' own courses (accountancy and biology) in Fall 2016 and grew to include six additional instructors in three other disciplines in Fall 2018.

Our survey tool (see Table 2) was developed by combining survey questions from two sources: the National Survey of Student Engagement questions on reflective and integrative learning (NSSE, 2013) and an instrument for evaluating the integrative learning outcomes of ePortfolios (McGuinness, 2015). These sources were chosen as validated instruments for assessing integrative learning outcomes that will allow us to assess our results relative to other schools and to a particular pedagogical methodology for fostering integrative learning. This instrument and our administration of it to students were approved by our Institutional Review Board as exempt.

Table 1. Surveyed Courses and Their Civic Engagement Content

Discipline	Title	Primary civic engagement assignment	Survey responses (*n*)	Civic engagement type*
Accountancy	Taxes and Business Decisions	Tax policy paper: "Research and describe the law, identify the stakeholders, make your opinion on the law, write a communication to a Legislator, and reflect upon your research."	25	CE
Biology	Service Learning in Biology	Service requirement: "Perform 100+ hours of service with a local community non-profit working in a biology-related field."	15	SL
Economics	Environmental & Natural Resource Economics	Term paper: "Examine in depth an important challenge facing the sustainable use of our environmental and natural resources and . . . write a policy position paper explaining their position."	20	CE
Finance	Financial Institutions and Markets	Civic engagement project uses a finance lens "to explore . . . institutions and ideas that influence public problems and their resolution in public life," "to consider your [the student's] role in the larger community and your responsibilities within that community," and "to analyze the challenges associated with seeking the common good."	55	CE
Finance	Managerial Finance	None	99	No CE
Political Science	Politics	Political issue group project: "Class presentation covering research issue in depth including areas of debate, source of disagreement, possible resolutions."	30	CE
Political Science	Politics	Community-based experiences: "You will get an opportunity to learn from these organizations from a variety of different perspectives, including staff, youth, board members and allies. You will also get to see these organizations in action, whether it's visiting program, participating in a workshop, attending a fundraiser, observing a meeting and more!"	31	COM

Note. *Course civic engagement types are abbreviated as follows: CE = includes civic engagement components; SL = includes service-learning civic engagement; COM = includes community-based civic engagement; No CE = did not include civic engagement as a planned course component.

Table 2. Survey Instrument and Responses

NSSE Reflective & Integrative Learning (2013)			Civic engagement courses			Non-CE courses			2017 NSSE Carnegie peers	
	Question text	Response scale	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	1st years' mean	seniors' mean
1	During the current school year, how often have you combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	176	2.45	2.93	99	2.35	2.59	2.6	2.9
2	During the current school year, how often have you connected your learning to societal problems or issues?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	176	2.52	3.15	99	2.46	2.50	2.6	2.8
3	During the current school year, how often have you included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	176	2.44	2.92	99	2.43	2.54	2.6	2.7
4	During the current school year, how often have you examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	175	2.45	2.96	98	2.56	2.53	2.8	2.9
5	During the current school year, how often have you tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	176	2.71	3.09	99	2.73	2.77	2.9	3.0
6	During the current school year, how often have you learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	176	2.49	2.99	97	2.70	2.69	2.8	3.0
7	During the current school year, how often have you connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge?	1–4 (never, sometimes, often, very often)	175	2.91	3.14	99	2.91	2.96	3.0	3.2

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Table 2. Continued

McGuinness (2015)			Civic engagement courses			Non-CE courses		
	Question text	Response scale	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean
8	I can identify my strengths and the challenges (e.g., gaps in my knowledge) I encounter in specific learning or work situations (e.g., in writing a paper or doing research).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.90	4.01	99	3.95	4.09
9	I make choices to enhance my strengths and address my gaps/challenges in specific work or learning situations (e.g., going to office hours when I am struggling to understand something).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.92	3.96	99	3.77	3.87
10	I can provide evidence (i.e., in an essay, story, or other course assignment) of how I have expressed my strengths and/or taken action to address my challenges in specific situations.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.75	4.05	99	3.70	3.77
11	I can articulate specific examples of my personal values and beliefs (e.g., believing in values such as “self-motivation” or “contributing to the well-being of others”).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.19	4.34	99	4.03	4.08
12	I can identify examples of how my personal values and beliefs influence my learning, decisions, and actions (e.g., in the subjects I have chosen to study, or the groups I have chosen to join).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.03	4.26	99	4.02	4.01
13	I can provide evidence (i.e., in a reflective essay, video, or other course assignment) of how my personal values and beliefs have informed my decisions and actions.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.89	4.16	99	3.73	3.84
14	I am aware that my background and social identities (e.g., my race, gender, nationality, social class, religion, sexual orientation) influence my perspective—how I see the world and make sense of things.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.33	4.49	99	4.20	4.14

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Table 2. Continued

McGuinness (2015)			Civic engagement courses			Non-CE courses		
	Question text	Response scale	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean
15	I can identify specific experiences (e.g., moments in my classes or in social situations) where I have learned about the strengths, limitations, and/or biases inherent in my own perspective.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.87	4.16	99	3.75	3.80
16	I can provide evidence (i.e., a reflection essay, presentation, or other course assignment) of the knowledge and insights I have gained regarding the strengths, limitations, and biases within my own perspective.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.67	3.95	99	3.57	3.72
17	I recognize how interacting with people from backgrounds and cultures different from my own enhances my work and learning.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.35	4.44	99	4.27	4.23
18	I actively seek to understand the views of people with backgrounds and perspectives different from my own.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.89	4.11	99	3.97	3.87
19	I can demonstrate (i.e., through stories, reflection essays, or other course assignment) the specific ways in which I have learned from people with backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives different from my own.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.81	4.06	99	3.71	3.60
20	I understand that different types of knowledge/skills are gained from different kinds of experiences (e.g., in general, the knowledge/skills gained from taking an English class are different from the knowledge/skills gained from participating on a sports team).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.36	4.39	99	4.25	4.08
21	I can clearly identify the specific types of knowledge and skills I have gained from different learning and life experiences (e.g., from academic classes, paid work, personal challenges, or leadership opportunities).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.19	4.31	99	4.20	4.04

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Table 2. Continued

McGuinness (2015)			Civic engagement courses			Non-CE courses		
	Question text	Response scale	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean
22	I can clearly demonstrate (i.e., through a reflective essay, video, PowerPoint, or other course assignment) the specific types of knowledge and skills I have gained from a wide range of learning and life experiences.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.98	4.17	99	4.00	3.94
23	I understand the need to connect knowledge I have gained from one place (e.g., the skills gained from participating on a sports team) to other situations (e.g., working with a group to solve a math or chemistry problem).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.29	4.36	99	4.10	4.08
24	I can identify several different examples of how I have applied the knowledge or skills I have gained from one experience (e.g., learning to convey the essence of complex information for a science presentation to other situations (e.g., creating an interesting website for a student organization).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.93	4.09	99	3.85	3.90
25	I can provide evidence (i.e., though an essay, video, presentation, or other course assignment) of the specific ways in which I have applied the knowledge/skills I have gained in one experience to other situations or contexts.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.89	4.06	99	3.80	3.80
26	I can clearly identify the passions, interests, and sources of curiosity that influence my learning, work, and social life.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.11	4.26	99	4.23	4.08
27	I have the habit of creating learning and/or professional goals that are informed by my passions, interests, sense of purpose, or sources of curiosity.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.01	4.14	99	4.10	4.14

Table continued on next page

Table 2. Continued

McGuinness (2015)			Civic engagement courses			Non-CE courses		
	Question text	Response scale	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean
28	I can demonstrate to others (i.e., through a PowerPoint presentation, paper, video, or other course assignment) the knowledge/skills I have gained from pursuing an area of study, or engaging in a series of actions, that reflect my passions, interests, and sources of curiosity.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.89	4.17	99	4.04	3.96
29	I can identify the standards that both myself and others will use to evaluate my learning and/or work (e.g., the criteria a professor or supervisor will use to assess my work as "excellent," "good," or "needs improvement").	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.90	4.14	99	3.87	3.86
30	I often reflect on if and how my work (academic and otherwise) is meeting my own standards and expectations.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.13	4.26	99	4.03	4.04
31	I seek feedback on a regular basis in order to understand if and how my work (academic and otherwise) meets the needs, standards, and/or expectations of others.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.82	3.97	99	3.61	3.67
32	I can demonstrate (i.e., through a reflective essay, feedback from supervisors, or other course assignment) how I have changed my perspective, decisions, or actions as a result of my own reflections or feedback from others.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.73	4.00	99	3.61	3.78
33	I can work with others to identify a problem or need within a specific field, group, organization, or community (e.g., a school or non-profit organizations needing additional funds or resources in order to fulfill their mission).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.07	4.33	99	4.00	4.03

Table continued on next page

Table 2. Continued

McGuinness (2015)			Civic engagement courses			Non-CE courses		
	Question text	Response scale	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean	*N*	Pre-course mean	Post-course mean
34	I can work with others to develop a plan and take action in order to address the needs of a group, organization, or community (e.g., creating a stable funding stream to support a non-profit organization in an ongoing basis).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.06	4.27	99	4.12	4.04
35	I can provide evidence (through a presentation, video, letters from others, or other course assignment) of how I have worked with others to identify and address a problem, need, or challenge within a group, organization, or community.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	3.85	4.16	99	3.88	3.76
36	I recognize the need to reflect on how my decisions and actions affect others (i.e., asking myself, “Do my decisions contribute to the overall care, well-being, or positive functioning of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities that are a part of my life?”).	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.15	4.33	99	4.09	3.99
37	I can identify specific moments or experiences where I have developed or practiced ethical principles (e.g., the principles of equity, justice, fairness, compassion, care) in my decision making and actions.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.20	4.27	99	4.03	3.98
38	I can provide evidence of decisions and actions where I have either developed, or expressed, one or more ethical principles (e.g., equity, justice, fairness, compassion, care) in the context of working with individuals, groups, organizations, or communities that are a part of my life.	1–5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree)	176	4.08	4.21	99	3.88	3.94

Note. Questions 1–7 are from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2013) and have a scale of 1–4 (*never*, *sometimes*, *often*, *very often*); Questions 8–38 are from McGuinness (2015) and have a scale of 1–5 (*strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree*, *strongly agree*). NSSE comparison data are from all peer Carnegie schools administered in 2017 (NSSE, 2017). Similar comparative data is not available for the McGuinness (2015) survey questions; therefore, we removed this final column from the table for questions 8-38.

For each course, the survey was administered within the first 2 weeks of class and readministered in the last 2 weeks of class. Ideally, surveys would be administered before any significant learning has occurred in the course; however, due to constraints on class time to devote to the survey and the uncertainty of course enrollments during the first weeks of instruction, we were unable to administer surveys any earlier.

Pre- and postcourse survey questions were matched using a nontraceable identifier made of letters from a parent's name and digits from the student's phone number. In some cases, near matches were included, though we tried to be conservative in allowing nonexact matches. Unmatched surveys were excluded from analysis.

The response scale varied between the portions of the survey derived from the NSSE (Kuh et al., 2001) and McGuinness (2015). The NSSE questions had possible responses of *never* (1), *sometimes* (2), *often* (3), or *very often* (4); the questions derived from McGuinness had a Likert response scale of *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *neutral* (3), *agree* (4), and *strongly agree* (5). For each administration (pre- and postcourse), we report the mean responses for each question (Table 2).

The two portions of the survey, the NSSE-derived portion and the portion from McGuinness, were considered proxies for assessing integrative learning as a whole for each student. Therefore, rather than focus on individual questions in our analysis, we calculated differences between a student's precourse and postcourse surveys for each question, then summed across survey questions for each portion of the survey for each student. We then averaged among students within civic engagement course types for these summative measures. The resulting two scores (labeled "NSSE" and "McGuinness") preserve the variation due to differences between students while producing a more continuous metric that gives a conservative holistic assessment of impact.

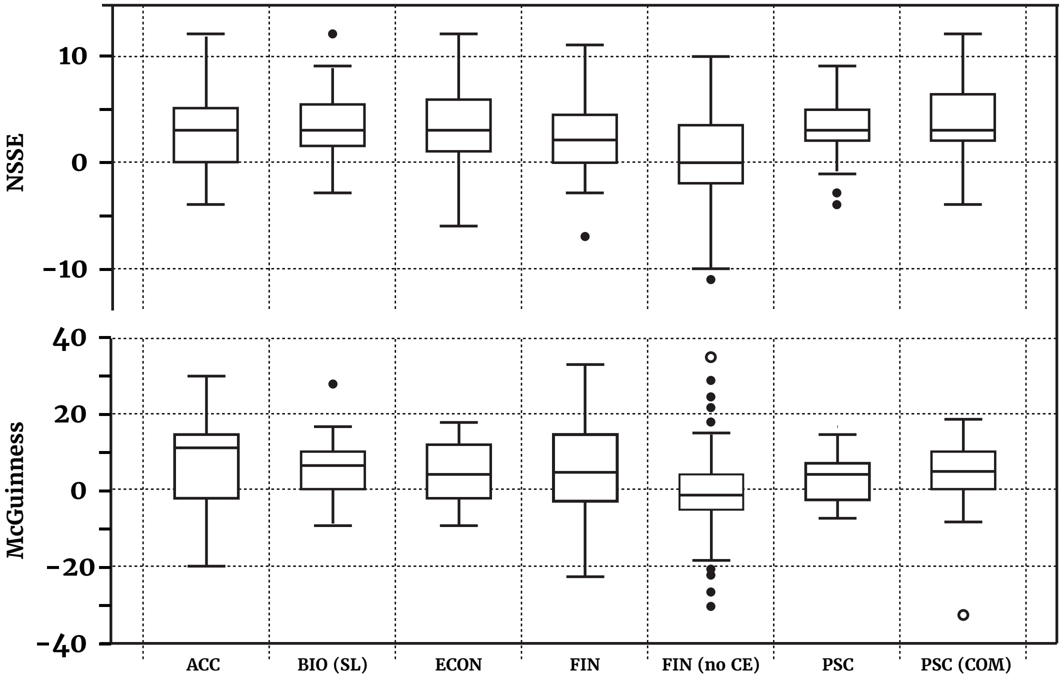
Despite using summative scores rather than raw Likert data, the distribution of NSSE and McGuinness scores did not meet assumptions of normality (NSSE: Shapiro-Wilk test $W = 0.990$, p-value = 0.048; McGuinness: Shapiro-Wilk test $W = 0.985$, p-value = 0.00653). The unpaired two-sample Wilcoxon test lets us compare NSSE and McGuinness scores among different civic engagement groups without assuming normality of the data. We compared paired groups of students according to the traits of the courses they took: students in civic engagement courses versus those in courses without civic engagement, students enrolled in finance courses with civic engagement versus those without, and students in political science courses with substantial community-based learning versus those without. Finally, we used the Kruskal-Wallis rank sum test to compare among the five disciplines that we surveyed that included civic engagement.

Results

We collected paired surveys from 275 students in 11 sections of six courses from five disciplines: 176 students in civic engagement courses and 99 in non–civic engagement courses. Mean precourse scores indicate that students arrived in our surveyed courses with some exposure to integrative learning. In some cases, we may not have been able to capture improvement due to students starting our surveyed courses with responses at or near the maximum score. However, when looking at mean responses, our students scored similarly to other samples from Providence College and nationally as reported by the NSSE (Table 2). Summative differences in scores per student varied between -11 and +12 for the seven NSSE-derived survey questions and -32 to +35 for the 31 questions from McGuinness (2015; Figure 1).

Whether we look at the total of our dataset or limit our analysis to students in sections of the same course as our control sections (finance), civic engagement courses had a positive effect on integrative learning (Table 3 and Figure 1). When we compared among political science course sections with different types of civic engagement (community-based versus campus-based), all students showed similar improvements in integrative learning (unpaired two-sample Wilcoxon signed rank test, two-tailed: NSSE $W = 482$, p-value = 0.600; McGuinness $W = 400$, p-value = 0.176). Lastly, looking among all five disciplines surveyed, the effect of civic engagement on integrative learning was similar (Kruskal-Wallis test: NSSE chi-square = 2.26, $df = 4$, p-value = 0.688; McGuinness chi-square = 1.74, $df = 4$, p-value = 0.783).

Figure 1. Boxplots of the Distribution of NSSE and McGuinness Posttest Minus Pretest Difference Summed Across Survey Responses per Student



Note. Responses are grouped by discipline with type of civic engagement indicated ("no CE" for courses without civic engagement; course sections with service-learning and community-based learning are marked SL and COM, respectively). Boxes indicate the first quartile (bottom of box), median (line through box), and third quartile (top of box) of the data distribution. Whiskers indicate the most extreme value within 1.5 times the interquartile range (IQR). Closed circles are outliers within 3 × IQR; open circles are extreme outliers beyond 3 × IQR.

Table 3. Results of Unpaired Two-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test One-Tailed

	NSSE	**McGuinness**
All courses with civic engagement vs. courses without	*W* = 5451.5 *p*-value = 1.18e-07	*W* = 5885.5 *p*-value = 3.96e-06
Finance courses with civic engagement vs. finance courses without	*W* = 1899.5 *p*-value = 0.000928	*W* = 1959.5 *p*-value = 0.002006

Discussion

Our results support the efficacy of civic engagement courses to improve self-assessed integrative learning. Across disciplines and pedagogical approaches, students completing civic engagement courses scored themselves higher in areas of integrative learning: the ability to integrate knowledge across disciplinary boundaries, curricular and extracurricular experiences, and to understand diverse points of view.

The integration of knowledge occurred across a range of disciplines, civic engagement topics, and pedagogical strategies. As a general education requirement at our institution, civic engagement components have been integrated into courses in social science, humanities, STEM, and business. Some courses are introductory and open without prerequisites, whereas others are upper level courses open only to majors. Perhaps surprisingly, we did not see an effect of community-based versus campus-based learning within the political science courses surveyed. This null result may reflect our small sample size of 31 and 30 students, respectively. Alternatively, this outcome may reflect the utility of both approaches to integrated learning goals whether or not they vary in their effectiveness in meeting high-level civic engagement learning goals.

Overall, our study design limits the conclusions that we can reach from this data. We surveyed courses only at our small, liberal arts institution in the Northeast, and our conclusions may not be broadly applicable to other schools. Even within our institution, the use of self-evaluations of student skills may have been affected by student biases. Analyses based on self-assessed skills have inherent limitations due to their subjective nature, especially when individual students are the unit of analysis (Pike, 2013). Moreover, as students self-selected courses our results may be an effect of student predispositions or other experiences during the course of the semester. Finally, we did not collect student demographic information, such as race, class year, or major, which may have indicated some of these uncontrolled variables. Future research would be necessary to validate our results, including extension to other institutions, analysis of the effects of student demographics, and validation of self-assessed gains in skills.

Our results are consistent with 2017 NSSE scores for our institution and our peer Carnegie Classification schools (Table 2). When we look at courses without civic engagement and precourse surveys, student scores are similar but slightly lower than first-year scores for all surveys at similar schools. Only students at the end of civic engagement courses scored themselves higher than first-year students at peer schools. In fact, postcourse scores for civic engagement courses approach scores for seniors at peer institutions, which may reflect the importance of these courses in producing the gains we see across class years.

On a theoretical level, our findings suggest that the cognitive domains of civic engagement and integrative learning overlap. Although not all civic learning is engaged or integrative and not all integrative learning involves civic engagement, civic engagement, broadly defined to include activities developing personal knowledge and views on public issues to action in the public sphere, can also be listed under the umbrella of integrative learning (Klein, 2005). By encouraging students to consider real-world problems (Huber et al., 2005) and the concerns and views of diverse communities (Luo, 2021), civic engagement meets the goals identified by integrative learning experts. As metrics and outcomes for assessing integrative learning are developed, experts may look to the civic engagement literature for models and approaches that may be helpful in defining this related cognitive domain. For example, a developmental model similar to Williams Howe et al. (2014) might be developed for integrative learning.

By measuring the impact of civic engagement courses on integrated learning, we hope to help higher education institutions value, develop, and integrate civic engagement courses as part of efforts to meet integrated learning goals. Civically engaged courses across disciplines and spread throughout a student's college career may solve problems of faculty workload and institutional support for integrative learning (Lake et al., 2019). Of course, civic engagement courses are valuable in their own right as components of developing citizens for our democratic society (Matto et al., 2017); however, with this research we hope to emphasize the integrated learning dimension of civically engaged courses that may not be given the attention it deserves through being overlooked or assumed without evidence. Our results are broadly consistent with civic engagement research that has noted integrative learning as an outcome (e.g., Liszka et al., 2022; McClellan et al., 2021). However, critiques of civic engagement as not always effective across student identities (Barnett, 2020) and majors (McClellan et al., 2021) may also apply to the integrative learning outcomes of these courses.

Of course, we are not arguing that single civic engagement courses are sufficient to produce integrated learning. In the future, we will compare the impact of civic engagement courses to other strategies and assess learning outcomes directly. With the adoption of ePortfolios in some programs at our institution, we are interested in designing a more rigorous study that can assess the impacts of these two methods in isolation and combination.

To meet integrative learning goals, institutions have employed many different strategies (Huber et al., 2005) beyond pedagogical approaches within specific courses. By establishing the efficacy of civic engagement courses at improving self-assessments of integrative learning goals, our research supports offering civic engagement courses as an early stage of developing more holistic, campuswide strategies for integrative learning. For example, a strategy for growing integrated learning might progress from extracurricular civic experiences and civic engagement in general education courses, to civic engagement in the major, and further develop through capstone work and ePortfolio production. Each piece of such a strategy would contribute to important learning outcomes and form a developmental progression of increasing mastery.

Conclusion

At our institution, the requirement for all graduates to complete a course that meets civic engagement learning goals has had multiple benefits beyond the direct learning outcomes articulated in the legislation that established the requirement. Currently, departments across schools and disciplines offer civic engagement courses that integrate disciplinary ways of knowing with real-world questions of public concern, offering students rich integrated learning experiences. As we grow new programs for first-year experiences and signature work, we hope to weave integrated learning throughout our students' years at our institution and beyond.

Although our results are preliminary in that they are limited to our institution, they suggest a new area for civic engagement and integrative learning researchers in exploring possible overlaps of these cognitive domains, a pathway for institutions to grow integrative learning organizationally and developmentally for students, and increased incentives for faculty and departments to devote time and resources in developing civically engaged courses.

Author Note

We have no known conflicts of interest to disclose. Approval for this study was granted by the Institutional Review Board of Providence College, protocol number 17-015-B.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Maia Bailey, Department of Biology, Providence College, 1 Cunningham Square, Providence, RI 02918. Email: mbailey9@providence.edu

About the Authors

Maia F. Bailey *(https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1881-6783) is associate professor of biology and director of the Feinstein Institute for Public Service at Providence College. She currently focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning, looking at the effects of integrating social justice issues into STEM education. She received her PhD in biology from Indiana University.*

Julia M. Camp *(https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8051-5466) is associate professor and department chair of the Accountancy Department at Providence College. Her research interests focus on federal taxation, and accounting and taxation education. She received her PhD in accounting from the University of Kentucky.*

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Service-Learning in Times of Crisis: Early Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Their Effects on Reciprocity

Eduardo Urias, Sevgi Fruytier,
Floortje Opbroek, and Marjolein B. M. Zweekhorst

Abstract

This study has two main objectives: (1) to analyze how different constituencies (students, teachers, and community partners) in service-learning courses at VU Amsterdam (Netherlands) responded to the COVID-19 crisis during the first outbreak and (2) to investigate the effects of these responses on reciprocal interactions between them. Our results show that the switch to an online environment caused a high burden on teachers. However, their motivation, adaptability, and creativity have been essential to safeguard students' academic outcomes and the benefit to community partners. Also, the responses to the COVID-19 crisis have created opportunities for urgent and relevant community-based activities and for new conceptualizations of community. This article presents the current state of the impact of a crisis situation on experiential pedagogies such as service-learning and provides recommendations on how to safeguard different types of reciprocity in an online environment and better respond to crises in the future.

Keywords: service-learning, COVID-19, online education, reciprocity

The outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has heavily impacted everyday life of citizens around the world. Higher education has had to adapt to these rapidly changing circumstances under great pressure (Marinoni et al., 2020). In the Netherlands and many other countries, social distancing measures forced universities to transition to virtual learning, trying their best to sustain courses and rescue the semester. These sudden changes are thought to have amplified and magnified challenges that existed before the crisis (European University Association, 2020). For example, students who have difficulty learning independently or socially disadvantaged students, who lost their jobs or have limited access to technology and high-speed internet, may have fallen further behind (Christian et al., 2021; Sahu, 2020).

Making the abrupt change from in-person to online education has proved difficult for many students and lecturers. This rupture was even more challenging in relation to experiential learning pedagogies, such as service-learning, because the nature of the COVID-19 crisis created significant barriers for hands-on approaches (Butler, 2022). Due to social distancing, in order to successfully coordinate and sustain experiential education, teachers had to create new constructs they could use to make meaning of this new experience in order to function in the changed world (Christian et al., 2021; Morton & Rosenfeld, 2021). These obstacles were particularly frustrating as the benefits of experiential education are more needed than ever, as some have suggested (e.g., Butler, 2022), given the newly emerged challenges that society faces and the flexibility, adaptability, and new ways of connecting that the pandemic requires from students, teachers, and communities (Grenier et al., 2020; Lederer et al., 2021). Service-learning offers a conspicuous example because this experiential pedagogy holds great potential for making connections and providing support and solutions in times of crisis (Grenier et al., 2020).

Introduction to Service-Learning

Service-learning is defined as

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

Service-learning pedagogy is increasingly integrated in higher education to provide students the opportunity to learn from experience in practice, rather than from more formal sources of knowledge, such as textbooks (Kolb, 1984; Tijsma et al., 2020). This form of learning is thought to have many benefits for students. These benefits include enhanced civic engagement competences, such as civic responsibility and cultural sensitivity, as well as improved employability competences, such as problem-solving and collaboration skills (Celio et al., 2011; Jackson, 2015; Sevin et al., 2016; Simons & Cleary, 2006). Through reflection on their experiences in the community in relation to the course goals, student learning is broadened and deepened (Hatcher et al., 2004). In addition, service-learning is considered a valuable method for universities to contribute to addressing problems in their surrounding community as well as tackling broader societal issues. Therefore, fundamental to service-learning practices is the concept of reciprocity: providing diverse benefits to all stakeholders involved (Salam et al., 2019).

Service-Learning in Times of Crisis

Recent studies indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted service-learning in various ways. Some cancelled service-learning activities, because the physical and psychological concerns and needs that emerged due to the rapid changes did not leave space in their mind for such creative strategies (Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020). Others were able to continue courses, but noted that the balance between community service and academic learning, characteristic of service-learning, shifted away from the service component toward an increased focus on academic learning (Morton & Rosenfeld, 2021).

Some early studies seem to indicate that online service-learning can have benefits for students similar to those of face-to-face service-learning (Hall, 2020; Lin & Shek, 2021). For some, online service-learning improved the efficiency of the course, leaving more time for translating findings into action items (Guy & Arthur, 2021). The encountered problems in pivoting to new ways of education in virtual classrooms were even turned into opportunities to learn and foster more equitable partnerships with greater impact (Berkey & Lauder, 2021; Lin & Shek, 2021). Some also responded to the new demands created by the pandemic and tailored service activities to emerging needs (Gresh et al., 2021; Tsima et al., 2020) or noticed strengthened connections between stakeholders due to the shared experience of disruption of all of our lives (Grenier et al., 2020). However, others found that face-to-face service-learning was still preferred by students and teachers, mostly because of communication and technological challenges (Doody et al., 2020; Hall, 2020; Wong et al., 2020). Particularly for fostering connections between participants and engagement in the process, as well as for developing trust, virtual learning seems to fall short (Filoteo et al., 2021; Guy & Arthur, 2021). Mejia (2021) noted that, in times of crisis, the risk of reproducing "community–campus connections, obligations, and responsibilities that are hierarchical and detrimental and, at times, exploitative" (p. 47) becomes more visible; she pressed for centering the community partners' needs to ensure reciprocity is sustained.

Overall, the literature reports mixed experiences. In this article we investigate the various effects of early responses to the COVID-19 pandemic on service-learning activities and their beneficiaries at the VU Amsterdam, in order to better understand how a crisis situation influences innovative pedagogies such as service-learning and how, in such a situation, shortcomings of these pedagogies could be accounted for, or mitigated in the future.

Specifically, we aim to answer two research questions:

- How did key service-learning actors (students, teachers, and community partners) respond to the COVID-19 crisis in the early phase of the outbreak?

- What are the effects of these responses to the crisis on reciprocal interactions between students, teachers, and community partners?

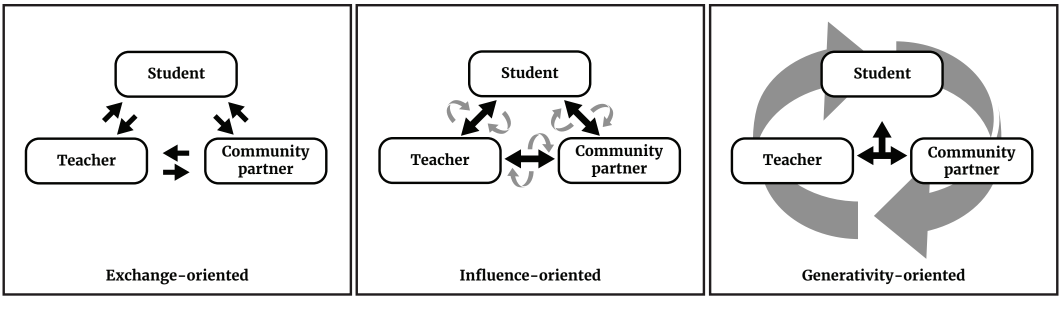
Theoretical Background

To study the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on service-learning activities and subsequently the reciprocal interactions between key actors, reciprocity needs to be conceptualized. In some of the foundational service-learning literature, the idea of reciprocity is conceived as an essential element of service-learning (e.g., Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; Honnet & Poulsen, 1989). The concept of reciprocity as a specific form of relational exchange between individuals and groups has been discussed in various contexts in community engagement literature. The few that have examined the multiple possible understandings of reciprocity in service-learning in more depth tend to describe the concept on a dichotomous spectrum of transactional and transformational, technocratic and democratic, "thin" and "thick," or traditional and enriched (Enos & Morton, 2003; Henry & Breyfogle, 2006; Jameson et al., 2010; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

Though each of these authors uses slightly different nuances in their framing of such a spectrum, the one end of the spectrum is generally described as a mutually beneficial transaction between the actors, where actors perform activities separately and service is seen as a charity and/or where power balances are unequal. Whereas the other end of the spectrum is described as mutual transformation, challenging and stimulating each other's growth, transcending unequal power balances with combined commitment to a larger goal and with an ability to change the system. These dichotomies can be seen as problematic because they present the latter end of the spectrum as the ideal relationship between service-learning actors, failing to acknowledge the diversity of objectives and contexts, for example in the needs and capacity of the different actors, and the dynamics of the relational processes (Sachs & Clark, 2016).

To provide more depth and nuance to the discussion on the concept of reciprocity, Dostilio et al. (2012) have built on literature from various disciplines to delineate three categories of reciprocity: (1) exchange-oriented, characterized by "the interchange of benefits, resources, or actions" (p. 19); (2) influence-oriented, wherein "processes and/or outcomes of the collaboration are iteratively changed as a result of being influenced by the participants and their contributed ways of knowing and doing" (p. 19); and (3) generativity-oriented, wherein "as a function of the collaborative relationship, participants (who have or develop identities as co-creators) become and/or produce something new together that would not otherwise exist" (p. 20). This conceptualization steps away from a dichotomous framing of reciprocity with one orientation being inherently better, more ethical, or of greater value than the other, and instead embraces the various orientations in which reciprocity can play out in different contexts and can be influenced by a multitude of factors. This flexibility is important, as it allows for the evaluation of relationships as organic processes, without being tied to a focus on a specific orientation as being ideal (Sachs & Clark, 2016). Therefore, these categories are used as a lens through which relationships between key actors in service-learning courses conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic are evaluated (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Three Categories of Reciprocity



Note. Based on Dostilio et al., 2012.

Study Context

Community Service-Learning at the VU Amsterdam

In the *Strategy 2020–2025* the VU Amsterdam indicates that it wants to "develop future-proof forms of education" (p. 39). The ambition of VU Amsterdam is to involve students and researchers in addressing social issues as a central theme. With the A Broader Mind project, the VU Amsterdam is giving concrete expression to this strategy through, among other initiatives, the implementation of community service-learning (CSL) throughout the university (VU Amsterdam, 2020, p. 43).

The implementation of the CSL program is conceptualized, planned, and coordinated by a dedicated CSL team. The CSL team consists of teachers, researchers, and support staff. Implementation strategies are investigated following an action research approach, in which the CSL team seeks to realize transformative change in both the university and local communities through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research (Reason & Bradbury, 2005).

The team recognizes four phases: (1) matching of societal issues with education and learning activities; (2) codesign of classroom-based and community-based activities; (3) execution, monitoring, and evaluation; and (4) knowledge sharing. During all phases, CSL activities are taking place. These CSL activities can have diverse levels of interaction with the community, varying from very intense contact to a couple of contact moments. Within the context of the VU Amsterdam CSL program, community partners collaborate with the CSL team. The community partners provide the research questions on which students can work. In this way the community partners are commissioners of projects with societal relevance in lieu of the community. The CSL team thus has to identify potential partners, locate course coordinators, and align interests and possibilities to collaborate.

On March 13, 2020, the Dutch government implemented a lockdown in the Netherlands to slow the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. As a result of social-distance measures, all higher education institutions were closed and education started being offered online. This change also affected the CSL courses offered at the VU Amsterdam. The timing of the distancing measures meant that the ongoing courses had to switch to an online format halfway through, and courses offered in the period April–June had to be adapted. The CSL team, teachers, and community partners had to come up with alternative design choices in a very short time frame.

Methods

Overall Research Design

Given the severe and abrupt disruption caused by the lockdown in the Netherlands, we adopted an exploratory design in our study. This research design is appropriate for the novel character of the research topic and allows for identification of new facts, issues, and conditions that are also specific to our research context. Thus, we intentionally did not rely on an existing theoretical framework to guide our study. Instead, we chose to adopt an abductive reasoning approach, allowing us to dynamically shape our study based on the evolving empirical evidence. As our investigation progressed and we delved deeper into our research, we found it valuable to incorporate the categories developed by Dostilio et al. (2012). These categories proved instrumental in guiding our exploration, especially in addressing our second research question. Their insights not only provided a structured foundation for our analysis but also enabled us to uncover meaningful patterns and connections within our data, ultimately enhancing the depth and rigor of our research.

Sampling and Data Collection

In this study, we selected four CSL courses offered at the VU Amsterdam. The selection was based on the starting date, which indicates how much time was available for the actors involved to adapt to the online education context. In line with the exploratory nature of our research, inclusion criteria sought for diversity in this regard so that a wider range of perspectives could be identified. Nevertheless, the number of included courses was constrained by the restrictions in place during the study. To preserve anonymity, we have omitted the names of the courses. As described in Table 1, Course 1 was running when the lockdown was announced and had to switch to online during the course activities. Course 2 and Course 3 started in May 2020, and thus they had 3 weeks for a complete switch to online, whereas Course 4 started in June.

Participant Recruitment and Data Collection

Invitations were sent to all teachers, coordinators, and commissioners to schedule interviews and focus group discussions just after the end of each course. Students were contacted through the course coordinators and lecturers, either via the electronic learning environment or during (online) course activities. Included participants by stakeholder group and course can be found in Table 2.

We collected data through semistructured interviews (n = 23) and focus group discussions (n = 3) to explore the experiences of teachers, students, and community members during the rapid switch to online learning. Interviews have enabled us to gather individual perspectives and experiences, and focus group discussions have facilitated the exploration of shared experiences and group dynamics. The use of both interviews and focus group discussions has also contributed to the overall quality and validity of the study, since the diversity in perspectives has helped us to uncover nuances and contradictions within the data, leading to a more robust interpretation of findings (Ottmann & Crosbie, 2013). For both methods, we developed a topic list for each stakeholder group. The main topics in these guides were the design of community-based activities, the benefits for the community partners involved, and students' reflection and outcomes.

Interviews were conducted in Dutch or English depending on the participants' preference. Due to the COVID-19 situation, all interviews were conducted online via Zoom. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes and focus group discussions 60 minutes. All data was transcribed verbatim.

Table 1. Overview of Courses Included in the Study

Course	Time	Description
Course 1	February–June	An elective master's course offered to master's students of any faculty in the VU university. In this course, 11 students from various master's programs were enrolled in two interdisciplinary teams: • The Connected City team addressed digital possibilities and challenges for all Amsterdam citizens, and the increasingly data-driven society. • The Clean City team addressed waste management, circularity, sustainability, and a healthy living environment in Amsterdam.
Course 2	April–May	An 8-week bachelor's course offered within the Faculty of Science. In this course, students perform tasks for clients from society within the framework of community service-learning. In addition to social services, the aim is to learn to reflect further on their role as an academic professional in the field of health by entering into a discussion about health & well-being with groups in society that are distant from the academic world. In other words, this course is aimed at introducing students to the translation of academic knowledge into daily practice in society.
Course 3	April–May; June	An 8-week master's course in health communication science and its practical application. The course consists of a theoretical component that addresses behavioral change and (health) communication science, which students learn to apply during the collaboration with a community partner acting as the commissioner, to whom students present a recommendation report. The same course is also offered in June (4 weeks long, but with the same study-load).
Course 4	June	A 4-week second-year bachelor's course that is part of one of the programs offered within the School of Business and Economics at the VU Amsterdam. In this course, students have to propose a solution to a real-life business problem by applying relevant theories and methodologies, and to convincingly present a set of evidence-based recommendations to a broader audience.

Table 2. Overview of Participants by Stakeholder Group

Course	Students	Teachers	Commissioners
Course 1	11 (interview)	4 (FGD*)	1 (interview)
Course 2	2 (interview)	3 (interview)	1 (interview)
Course 3	8 (2 FGD*)	1 (interview)	2 (interview)
Course 4		1 (interview)	1 (interview)
Total	21	14	5

*Note.** FGD = focus group discussion.

Data Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis was conducted to generate themes. In the first step, the first three authors read a selection of two transcripts and inductively developed codes. Codes generated by the first three authors were then discussed and a harmonized codebook developed. Using the codebook, authors FO and EU analyzed all the transcripts. Themes were iteratively developed from the analysis of the transcripts. To better understand the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on reciprocity, those themes were clustered around the categories defined by Dostilio et al. (2012), and they give the structure to report our findings in relation to the second research question. These categories proved instrumental in guiding our exploration, especially in addressing our second research question.

The inclusion of interresearcher analysis and frequent discussion among the authors played a pivotal role in enhancing the quality and validity of our study. This collaborative process helped in identifying biases, challenging assumptions, and ensuring that the research was grounded in a rigorous and well-rounded interpretation of the data (Swanborn, 1996).

Ethics

All participants received and signed an online informed consent form prior to the interview or focus group they volunteered to be part of. This consent form included the purpose of the interview and the study, and the procedures around how the data are processed and stored. Interview transcripts were stored on a protected VU Amsterdam server. We also ensured participants' confidentiality in the reporting of this data. To this end we have anonymized the courses, referring to courses with a generic name. Additionally, quotes have not been ascribed to individual participants. To ensure that students did not feel coerced or concerned about implications of participation on their grades, data collection took place after the course was completed and the final grade provided.

Results

From March until July 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures that were implemented in response resulted in a crisis situation in the Netherlands. In our study we investigated how the crisis affected the reciprocal interactions in four service-learning courses at the VU Amsterdam during this period. In all courses included in this study, teachers were able to adapt and continue their course. However, redesign of community-based service activities was considerable. In this section, we first summarize per course how courses and respective activities were redesigned due to the crisis (Table 3). Next, we describe the effects of the crisis on different views of reciprocity.

The Effects of the COVID-19 Crisis on Reciprocity

Exchange-Oriented Reciprocity

High burden on teachers. In all courses included in this study, course coordinators were able to adapt their courses to the circumstances and change the course to an online format. In doing so, they carried out the courses according to the intended schedule, as both classroom-based and

Table 3. Redesign of Courses Due to COVID-19 Crisis

Course	Initial community-based activity	New community-based activity
Course 1	Team members (master's students) devoted their thesis, research project, or internship to a discipline-specific subquestion of the challenge, and integrated the individual, discipline-specific insights into a collective interdisciplinary report based on interviews and focus groups, presented during a final event.	Switch to online data collection and the final event took place online. New service opportunities were identified during the course. The Clean City team created a website to disseminate their findings to a wider audience. The Connected City team supported the digital inclusion of a community of migrants who could no longer meet in person due to the pandemic.
Course 2	The initial assignment comprised a collaboration with the Municipality of Amstelveen for whom students would research the needs of the Indian community of the city regarding health care services. This collaboration was put on hold as students could no longer recruit and speak with participants in person, and online recruitment could not be arranged on such short notice.	The new community-based activity consisted of identifying how the student community at the VU Amsterdam experienced COVID-19-related issues and how this impacted their well-being. Students presented their findings and policy recommendations based on interviews with fellow students.
Course 3	The assignment consisted of a collaboration with the tobacco/antismoking team of a national mental health and tobacco, alcohol, and drug (mis)use research institute and the communications department of the VU responsible for the "smoke-free campus" campaign. Students focused on a specific stakeholder group and presented their insights and their own proposed health communication intervention based on interviews with different groups of stakeholders, including fellow students.	The mode of communication, data collection, and final presentation were now all online).
Course 4	The community-based activity was designed in an online context, as this was the first time this course included a service-learning component.	COVID-19 presented the coordinator with the opportunity to include a real case in addition to the existing fictional cases. Students acted as a team of consultants and analyzed the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on the employees of the Salvation Army. Based on qualitative and quantitative research, the students provided recommendations to management on how they could mitigate the negative effects of the crisis on the organization and its employees.

community-based activities were adapted (or completely redesigned) to match current challenges and be carried out with online methods and materials.

To meet this schedule, however, teachers interviewed reported that they had to commit additional working hours to their courses. This additional time was necessary to adapt courses to the online environment and to get acquainted with the required technology. Also, in two courses, the teaching staff decided to offer additional online contact time with students to maintain a steady pattern of knowledge exchange and to discuss how to adapt to the changing and uncertain circumstances.

Teachers reported facing considerable barriers and challenges and stressful conditions during the initial phases of adaptation. Specific challenges included the very uncertain nature of the new online setting resulting from COVID-19 measures and the associated increased workload to keep courses running in the best way possible. Teachers in Courses 1, 2, and 3 emphasized that they did not have enough time to prepare for the abrupt transition to online teaching. Course 1 was the most extreme case, as the course had to be moved online while it was in progress. Nevertheless, teachers and students indicated that the long duration of the course (20 weeks), in combination with the relatively low frequency of classroom-based activities, made it possible for them to respond more effectively to the changing circumstances. In the case of Course 3, which was offered in two periods, the teachers noted that the experience acquired with online teaching in the first edition of this course helped to make the course smoother in the second edition.

In all courses, teachers reported they were unfamiliar with the platforms they could use (e.g., BigBlueButton, Skype, or Zoom) and the resources available in those platforms (e.g., private chat, whiteboard, pools, breakout rooms). Also, they were unfamiliar with other tools that they could use to make meetings more interactive, or as interactive as they had been when offline (e.g., use of sticky notes, mind maps). Most of the time, teachers engaged in a trial and error process and the outcome could be different from what was initially intended. They relied on information shared either informally between colleagues or more formally through official university communication channels to cope with these challenges.

> I think, like in, when we moved online we were not well prepared for that as teachers. Like, I think we did our best and it was good enough. . . . Also, we had the benefit of this interaction between the two groups [of teachers], so we could also learn from each other. (Teacher)

Safeguarded Students' Academic Outcomes. Overall, teachers felt that the academic outcomes for students, such as the integration of course-specific theoretical knowledge and the development of writing, presentation, and collaboration skills, were not affected by the COVID-19 crisis and therefore were mostly realized as intended. In line with this finding, students felt adequately prepared for their exams and indicated they were able to carry out written assignments and online presentations as required. However, evaluations of outcomes such as civic engagement, reflexivity, and social responsibility were mixed. On the one hand, a teacher in Course 3 believed that the learning objective of connecting academic, disciplinary knowledge with civic engagement was realized. She observed that independently collecting data and formulating a policy recommendation for the community partner helped the students to identify issues of public concern and gave students a clear perspective on the value of academic theory.

> I have to say that this year, in spite of Corona, I'm actually very enthusiastic about how the assignment went. . . . The partners hosted one lecture together, so around half an hour each. I got the impression that it gave the students a clear impression of the link with the community partner, and why it was important for this course. (Teacher)

This point of view was supported by the students, who noted that the community-based activity showed them the value of academic theory for practice, making the theory much less abstract.

Moreover, all teachers indicated that it was difficult to instigate and observe reflexivity. Reflection is one of the key pillars in service-learning, and one teacher explained (Course 4) that the opportunity for valuable reflection was an important reason for incorporating service-learning into his course in the first place. Teachers attributed the struggles they experienced to the limitations of the online learning environment. Several teachers explained that, during previous editions of the courses, they facilitated reflection on the collaboration process and on students' views and ideas by asking context-specific questions during group discussions. In an online setting, the teachers felt unable to instigate this type of interaction and unable to adequately and specifically respond to students' ideas and arguments. They described the online conversations as forced, rather than spontaneous:

> Seeing reflection online, I think is much, much more difficult than offline. . . . It's different if you talk to them individually in the room. . . . But here, remotely, really experiencing reflection from the side of the student was really difficult. (Teacher)

Community partners experienced direct benefits from community-based activities. In all courses, community-based activities moved online due to the social distancing measures. Students and community partners noted that the online format allowed for more flexibility, making it easier to include all target groups in research. All community partners received a report, a poster, or a video, and/or attended a live presentation online wherein the students communicated the outcomes of the community-based activity. The community partners interviewed were satisfied with the findings and recommendations they received. In general, the partners noted that the students were able to present a good overview of the issues, interventions, and recommendations and formulate concrete conclusions. For example, in Course 3, the two partners felt that the collaboration was a win-win for both of them because the collaboration resulted in original and relevant insights and interventions. One group in this course placed COVID-19 at the core of their intervention by stressing the importance of lung health in their antismoking campaign. The partners reported that the online nature of the course did not seem to have an impact on the project outcomes. The community partner explained the value of directly collaborating with the students in the service-learning project:

> I can read all the articles about youth programs I want, but I would much rather just have a conversation with them. . . . I'm always curious about what students come up with themselves, what they think works. (Community partner)

The community partner in Course 2 shared this view, indicating that the collaboration contributed to his improved understanding of student perspectives and that the outcomes could be used to enhance the communication between the university and the students regarding the impact of COVID-19 on student well-being. One partner in Course 3 specifically noted that she was pleasantly surprised with the concreteness and specificity of the interventions that the students recommended, and felt they were "very practical." The community partner in Course 4 also felt that the recommendations from the students were practical and helpful, providing concrete insights to build upon.

Generativity-Oriented Reciprocity

The need to switch courses to an online format has enabled teachers and course coordinators to demonstrate creativity, adaptability, resilience, and motivation to contribute to a relevant societal issue. Thus, the COVID-19 crisis also opened up opportunities for urgent and relevant community-based activities and for new conceptualizations of community. The nature of the community-based activities in Courses 1, 2, and 3 was directly related to the COVID-19 outbreak and the resulting social-distancing measures. In Course 1, the crisis sparked a sense of urgency for addressing topics related to digital literacy and digital inclusion among the students. It motivated a group of students working on the digital divide to go beyond course requirements and, supported by a teacher and a community partner, design a new community-based activity wherein the students assisted community members in connecting with each other during the crisis (e.g., teaching them how to set up a video-conferencing or chat account).

In Course 2, to avoid the cancellation of the course, the teachers had to come up with a new community-based activity on short notice. They then saw an opportunity to respond to a need that emerged as a result of the pandemic, namely investigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on student well-being. This choice opened up new opportunities for service and research. After the start of the course, the Student and Educational Affairs department at the VU Amsterdam showed an interest in this assignment and got involved as a community partner, as the results could be used to inform their policy toward students' well-being during the crisis. Also, during the course, due to a collaboration between the course coordinators and other research in the same department, this assignment was embedded in an international research project on comparing the impact of COVID-19 on students in different countries.

Finally, in Course 4, the teacher had decided to incorporate a community-based service activity for the first time, introducing a real-life business problem as one of the topics a subset of the students (32 out of 150 students, in eight groups of four students) worked on. The collaboration arose from the need of a community partner, the Salvation Army, who searched for advice in mitigating the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on its organization and its employees, and who was brought into contact with the teacher of this course via the service-learning team at the VU Amsterdam. The teacher's decision to collaborate with the community partner was motivated by a perceived match between the community issue and the goals of the course, as well as a sense of urgency to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the teacher did not observe substantial difference in motivation between the students who collaborated with the Salvation Army and the students who worked on a fictional business problem, which he attributed to the limitations that online education imposes on the types of experience offered to students:

> I didn't experience a big difference between the engagements in the case with a real organization compared to a fictional case. And it's a bit disappointing, to be honest. . . . It might have made a difference if in a non-COVID world, if we go with these students into [a shelter of the community partner], and you know, students see what's going on and why they are doing it. (Teacher)

Interestingly, in the only course of our study that did not incorporate a topic explicitly related to COVID-19 (Course 3), several students in this course were somewhat frustrated that they could not develop a health communication intervention for COVID-19. Given the urgency and relevance of the topic, students expected that the course would be more responsive to the crisis:

> I thought [the assignment] could have been a bit more responsive to Corona time. I thought maybe they were going to explain how to go about conveying information to the whole of society, for example, . . . that Corona is out there, and that you have to wash your hands. I thought it would be nice to respond to that. . . . So I thought that it was a shame [that this was not the case], because that was sort of my expectation. (Student)

Influence-Oriented Reciprocity

The redesign of both classroom-based and community-based activities to fit an online environment influenced the frequency and quality of interaction between the different constituencies. For instance, in Course 2, workgroup sessions were shortened considerably (from 4 hours per session to approximately one hour per session) because the teachers deemed it too intense for the students and for themselves to participate in 4-hour online sessions. We also noted that the abrupt change caused by the COVID-19 crisis had a negative impact on one teacher's motivation and commitment to the course:

> Yes, very honestly, I think I was a lot less involved in the course as it was now. Well, part of that was due to the change in the assignment, if we still had the [original community-based activity] I think I would have invested a bit more than I have done now. (Teacher)

This teacher's reduced investment may in turn have had an impact on students' outcomes. This kind of negative perception toward online education can be a relevant barrier to realizing principles of reciprocity in online service-learning. In most of the courses (Courses 2, 3, and 4), this redesign resulted in less frequent involvement of community partners in the collaborative process. In Course 2, the need to develop a completely new community-based activity on very short notice meant the course started without a community partner. As the community partner became involved when the course had already started, there were no opportunities for interaction between the students and the partner at the beginning of the project. In Course 3, the frequency of interaction between the students and the community was reduced from three to two moments in the course. Also, the format of one interaction changed: The initially planned live lecture and Q&A session, wherein the community partners introduce the assignment to the students, was replaced by a prerecorded lecture and the opportunity to ask questions via email. This change was implemented to give more flexibility to both students and partners. The second interaction moment was at the end of the course, when the community partners attended an online presentation session where they were invited to directly engage with the students. The first and second edition of this course were both organized according to the same design. The community partners did not report any difference between the two courses. In the case of Course 4, the teacher was reluctant to overburden the community partner and therefore did not incorporate any meetings between the students and the community partner during the course.

Those design choices seem to have impacted the way community partners perceived their service-learning experience. Several of them noted that, partly due to the COVID-19 crisis, they were not able to have as much direct interaction with the teachers and the students as they would have liked. For example, the partner in Course 2, due to the urgency of the redesign, unfortunately was unable to participate in the design and framing of the community-based project. In normal circumstances he would have been able to specify that a more in-depth focus on the views of a particular target group (i.e., international students and students with a foreign background) would have benefited his department more. The partner stressed that, in the future, he would like to be more involved in formulating the research questions and designing the activity, as well as to have more interaction during the course to be able to fine-tune the question and build on students' preliminary findings. The community partner in Course 4 also noted that he missed the opportunity to discuss the outcomes with the students and gain a better understanding of their thought process:

> It would have been nice [for me] to be able to just ask [the students] a few critical questions. Yes, it's great that you offer this recommendation report, but what can I do with this? So it is important for them [the students], to learn from this [collaboration], but it's also just about the connection between who is asking the question [the community partner] and the answer that is being given [by the students]. (Community partner)

Finally, in relation to the interaction with their peers, both students and teachers reported that student-student interaction remained functional in the online environment, and students did not perceive online communication as a major issue. This mode of communication was facilitated by their previous knowledge and experience with some technologies for online communication and collaboration.

Discussion

Since March 2020, as a result of social-distance measures to slow down the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, service-learning courses at the VU Amsterdam have had to switch to a full online format. In this article we have assessed to what extent reciprocity principles have been upheld in community-based activities undertaken in four courses at the VU Amsterdam during these initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic. By the means of a case study design, we have assessed the overall experience of the online setting of those courses according to different constituencies, namely teachers, students, and community partners, as well as their perceived outcomes.

Reciprocity builds the most important foundation of service-learning (Furco, 1996). To a larger extent, we found that it was possible to achieve an exchange-oriented view of reciprocity in all the courses with online service-learning, in spite of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 circumstances. The need to switch courses to an online format has enabled teachers and course coordinators to demonstrate creativity, adaptability, and resilience. This finding is consistent with the empirical analysis of Iivari et al. (2020) on basic education in India and Finland. These authors have found that educators arrived at creative and innovative solutions and showed resilience and perseverance that supported the learning and well-being of their students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the context posed by COVID-19 measures, we found that teachers had to adopt those technologies even when their expertise in learning and teaching online was not well established, and in the absence of extrinsic motivators. However, lacking the appropriate time to prepare, design, and implement the online learning and community-based activities was an important challenge faced by teachers. The need for time to prepare and implement courses is often a critical element present in the literature on both online education in general (Gacs et al., 2020) and online service-learning (Bringle et al., 2016; Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007; Guthrie & McCracken, 2014; Helms et al., 2015; Meyer, 2014; Waldner et al., 2010, 2012). In times of crisis, however, redesigning the course to be virtual was not entirely possible, especially in the case of courses that were running during or about to start just after the announcement of COVID-19 measures. To some extent, teachers tried to compensate by working extra hours, increasing contact time with students, and other creative solutions. The high burden on teachers as a result of the pandemic pivot is true for the majority of courses, whether or not they had service-learning components (Bruggeman et al., 2022; Stevens et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the burden on teachers who are involved in service-learning has been considered higher because they also were often confronted by additional workload and stress associated with the need to safeguard reciprocal relationships with partners involved in those courses (Khiatani et al., 2023) and to manage the increased contextual uncertainty of service-learning activities during the pandemic (Andrade et al., 2022). It is also worth noting that some teachers discontinued the adoption of service-learning due to the constraints and restrictions posed by the pandemic (Andrade et al., 2022; Khiatani et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, both students and community partners reported issues they faced that might have been avoided if the transition to online education and the required changes in the community-based activities had taken place in a noncrisis context. In retrospect, we believe teachers can be proud of what was achieved in their courses given the circumstances. In spite of the challenges, they were able to maintain the integrity of the community-based activity while being sensitive to students' additional commitments and the needs of community partners.

The community partners we interviewed did not experience the sudden online switch negatively. Rather, they valued the students' input and effort, and in most instances valued the output that was presented to them. They did not experience working in an online setting as an obstacle, but rather appreciated the efficiency in terms of scheduling and communication. As in the context of the courses we assessed, the intended outcome and benefits for the community partner generally concerned the output (results and recommendations by students); the sudden switch did not affect the outcomes. We have seen that within the context of CSL within the VU, online communication between students and community partners remained after the COVID-19 pandemic. Now most courses combine both online and face-to-face meetings.

In our study, we could also observe that in some cases generativity-oriented reciprocity was achieved. The flexibility required from students and teachers offered new opportunities for the community partners, as the nature of the assignment/project was adjusted to meet the current needs and problems experienced due to COVID-19. Donnelly et al. (2021) pointed to the flexible and adaptable nature of CSL projects, which is often positioned as a limitation of this type of education because of a lack of rigor, and argue that, in times of crisis, it could actually be a benefit. We showed that some courses creatively focused on the students' community and their relation with the VU Amsterdam in COVID-19 times. The outcome of this choice was appreciated by the partners and, to some extent, by students—especially in the assignment about smoking-prevention campaigns. This outcome suggests that the collaboration in the community project posed new opportunities and benefits during the observed periods during the COVID-19 crisis, particularly to community partners, and that the perceived lack of rigor of CSL methods could result in creative and insightful adaptations in response to changing circumstances (Donnelly et al., 2021).

Particularly, we would like to point to two examples of students' creativity in response to the circumstances of the pandemic. First, a group of students saw an opportunity to work with a social worker in order to help a group of women from a disadvantaged background connect to each other digitally during the pandemic, as the way they were used to gathering together in the past was no longer possible. Second, in the same course, another group of students came up with the idea of building a website to showcase their work online. These findings confirm the suggestions posed by others that the integration of digital technologies may expand students' use of technology to creatively approach and contribute to civic and social issues in communities (Bringle & Clayton, 2020; Grenier et al., 2020). However, the process of collaboration was hindered due to limited interaction between students and community partners as a result of the COVID-19 measures. The intended site visits and in-person meetings with the community partner were cancelled, and all interactions and communication took place online. The result was a reduction in essential elements of the community project: for students, a personal affinity with the activities and goals of the community partner; for the community partner, a deeper understanding of the development process of recommendations on which students based their report. Our results suggest that in order to establish and maintain a stronger and deeper connection between students and community partners, purely online work and learning environment may not suffice. Thus, our findings are in line with other studies that reported that in the online context of service-learning in times of crises, students' learning outcomes were attained (Lin et al., 2021; Morton & Rosenfeld, 2021), but engagement and transformative learning were impaired (Guy & Arthur, 2021; Sturgill & Motley, 2013; Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020).

Transformative learning is often presented as a critical component of service-learning because it empowers students to become active, engaged, and ethical citizens who are capable of making a positive impact on their communities and society at large. However, there is, at least in the European context, a rising demand for service-learning as a pedagogy to increase employability by promoting competences deemed valuable by the labor market. This expectation is not a problem per se, but our findings suggest that transformative learning outcomes may not happen if there is no careful consideration for them in the service-learning activity—even in the presence of more generative (or less transactional) forms of reciprocity. Thus, in a context wherein an increasing number of universities include service-learning as a pedagogy that contributes to society, careful—and preferably explicit—considerations must be made to accommodate not only what kind of contribution is aimed for, but also the envisioned benefit to students' learning.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

An important strength of this research was the inclusion of a variety of courses, disciplines, and levels of previous experience with both service-learning and online education. This abundance of sources has offered thick data and multiple perspectives.

One important limitation of the current study refers to the limited number of student interviews. We found it particularly hard to recruit and engage with this group as a result of absence of face-to-face contact. For one course we were not able to collect from the student perspective, so this element was assessed indirectly through interviews with the course coordinator and community partner. For the other courses, however, the limited number of students also yielded, at best, a partial and nonrepresentative view of this group.

Another limitation refers to the fact that the community-based activities in the majority of the courses in this study included some sort of primary data collection that could be relatively easier online. As suggested by one of the courses in which the original community-based activity was deemed "impossible to continue online" by the course coordinator and teachers, other variations of service-learning are facing additional challenges due to COVID-19. These challenges, most likely, have an impact on perceived benefits and reciprocity. Although we agree with Krasny et al., (2021) when they affirm that social distancing is no reason to stop service-learning, when teachers switch to online service-learning, they must make sure that existing social exclusion and divides are not accentuated.

Implications for Service-Learning

Our results indicate that the crisis offered an opportunity to break through perceived barriers of online education, and of online service-learning more specifically. It is possible that such a forced adoption of online education under significant time pressure caused by the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated existing negative preconceived ideas about online education and online service-learning displayed by some teachers. However, this study confirms that the use of digital technologies and virtual environments due to the loss of physical shared space forced creative and innovative ways of conducting service-learning that can stretch and expand everyone's ideas of community (Bringle & Clayton, 2020; Grenier et al., 2020). Our findings show that digital technologies are helpful but a blended approach may be necessary, as some essential elements, such as engagement and deeper learning, may have received less attention in the response to the crisis. Relationship building between teacher and student, teacher and community partner, and student and community partner are key to a successful online service-learning experience (Grenier et al., 2020). Specifically, an in-depth interaction that informs both the students and the community partner of one another's expectations, progress, and satisfaction with the outcomes of the project is one of the most valuable elements of the collaboration process (Seru, 2021), and unfortunately this type of interaction appeared to be at risk during the evaluated courses. Therefore, more attention must be given to involving the community in the design and through the collaborative process, including activities aiming to facilitate community-student interaction.

However, our findings corroborate recent research on online education which suggests that at least some online features will most likely stay in the long term (Nogales-Delgado et al., 2020; Witze, 2020). Therefore, to ensure that teachers are offered the best conditions to support online experiential education, institutional platforms for training and (formal and informal) mechanisms for knowledge sharing on digital technologies for education must be implemented and nurtured (Sotelino-Losada et al., 2021). This type of support is essential to building teachers' self-efficacy with digital technologies and online tools, to enhance their education and thereby their interactions with students and communities. Also, knowledge sharing of best practices and positive experiences can help to address existing negative perceptions toward the adoption of digital educational technologies. It is also important that teachers consider the familiarity of both students and community partners with the core technologies used in the course (Tapia & Peregalli, 2020). Although in our case study, students reported that their existing knowledge and experience in online collaboration with their peers helped, such familiarity cannot be taken for granted in other contexts. Actually, we also found some evidence that additional measures should be taken to make sure communities that are already facing difficulties accessing digital technologies are not further excluded due to the quick transition triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person interactions between students and community partners have raised important questions about the potential impact on transformative learning in service-learning initiatives. Although it's clear that students can still achieve learning outcomes through online interactions, the deeper level of engagement and transformation may be compromised. Here are some considerations and strategies to deepen transformative learning even in an online service-learning environment:

1. Consider virtual immersion experiences. Virtual immersion technologies may contribute to bridging the gap caused by the absence of physical site visits. Although challenges remain, these technologies may contribute to the construction of joint narratives and create transformative learning experiences (Yepez-Reyes & Williams, 2021).
2. Action projects with real impact have the potential to encourage students to design and implement action projects that have a real impact on the community partner's goals. Within the VU Amsterdam, the interdisciplinary community service-learning module is a successful example of this approach (Tijsma et al., 2023).
3. Long-term engagement can extend the service-learning project beyond a single semester or academic term. Through long-term engagement, students can develop deeper relationships with community partners and experience more profound transformations over time (Tijsma et al., 2021).

Conclusion

In line with the ever-growing literature on service-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, our study showed that courses that were redesigned in the early months of the crisis at the VU Amsterdam were still able to provide reciprocal relationships and outcomes to the parties involved. Nevertheless, it is important that teachers receive optimal support both on mastering online education technologies and on the different design possibilities that can offer both students and communities the best service-learning experience possible. Such support is particularly relevant because switching to an online environment without a proper consideration of the challenges and opportunities may accentuate existing social exclusion and divides. Finally, our findings also show that the redesign of service-learning activities has varying impacts on different kinds of reciprocity, and more research on how these outcomes relate to each other is needed.

About the Authors

Eduardo Urias *is assistant professor innovation and participation in sustainability transitions at the Athena Institute, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. His current research focuses on inter-*

and transdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge integration in research, education, and policy, and how these processes can enable more inclusive, just, and equitable sustainability transitions.

***Sevgi Fruytier** is PhD candidate and lecturer at the Athena Institute. Her work focuses on the involvement of patients and publics in health research decision-making. She is interested in how people give meaning to these collaborations and what underlying assumptions and systemic structures hinder them from realizing their expectations. She has received her MSc in global health from Maastricht University.*

***Floortje Opbroek** was affiliated as a junior researcher with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam. Her research interests focus on urban livability and the public policymaking process, specifically systemic change and the disruptive potential of experimental practices. She received her MSc in urban geography from the University of Amsterdam.*

***Marjolein B. M. Zweekhorst** is professor innovation and education in the health and life sciences at the Athena Institute, VU University Amsterdam. Marjolein has expertise in transdisciplinary research, training and development of interdisciplinary courses, participatory research in and with society, public engagement in education, community service-learning (CSL), and with Science Shops. She participates in various national and international projects on these themes.*

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Investigating the Long-Term Impacts of "Place-Rich" Community-Based Learning Experiences on University Students

Charlene A. VanLeeuwen, John A. VanLeeuwen,
Jennifer Taylor, and Cornelia V. Gilroy

Abstract

This study aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the long-term impacts of place-rich community-based learning on university students. This study was informed by transformative learning theory, which recognizes how learning experiences that expand the learner's worldview help develop autonomous thinking. A mixed-methods approach was used to explore the perspectives of graduates who participated in immersive community-based learning (CBL) experiences. Graduates from two programs at the University of Prince Edward Island between 2004 and 2017 completed the Civic-Minded Professional scale online. A subset of respondents were invited to participate in interviews. Students' experiences of dissonance, transformational learning moments, reflection, and civic engagement were also assessed. Key findings include participants' expanded and deeper appreciation for cross-cultural awareness, their more deliberate engagement with volunteer opportunities, and their emergence as advocates for the communities they worked with. Findings will be used to improve, diversify, and develop new CBL experiences for university students.

Keywords: veterinary, nutrition, transformational education, community-based, survey, interview

Preprofessional practice experiences for postsecondary students are designed to develop competence in clinical skills alongside social and emotional aptitudes. However, the vast majority of these experiences take place in settings very similar to the clinics and practice settings where students will be employed following graduation. Opportunities where students are living and practicing in "place-rich" settings, which are culturally, economically, and socially different in substantive ways from typical settings, may impact students' emerging practice perspectives in powerful, transformative ways. There is evidence of the positive impacts of community-based learning (CBL) on graduates' attitudes, levels of community and civic engagement, personal and professional growth, and work-related skills such as professional communication, reflective practice, leadership, and teamwork skills (Bringle & Clayton, 2012; Celio et al., 2011). Students have reported that when it comes to their CBL activities, their cognitive and personal development were stronger motives than the more pragmatic motives of furthering their career, reducing personal guilt, and making friends (Bringle et al., 2011). Providing opportunities for these volunteer activities enables students to achieve an overarching goal of higher education: producing civically oriented and civically involved graduates. A civic-minded graduate is assumed to be "a person who has completed a course of study (e.g., bachelor's degree), and has the capacity and desire to work with others to achieve the common good" (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010, p. 429).

Researchers in CBL have used a variety of quantitative and qualitative approaches to identify and confirm long-term outcomes of CBL experiences on graduates (Fullerton et al., 2015; Hatcher, 2008; Lake et al., 2021; MacFall, 2012; Newman & Hernandez, 2011; Warchal & Ruiz, 2004). Many factors, such as preparation, intercultural competency, and adjustment to new environments and expectations, can contribute to students' academic and practice-related success and their satisfaction with their personal growth and professional development during and immediately after the experience. We also see societal institutions and organizations continuing to emphasize the role of higher education in advancing social development agendas, such as the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada or addressing international inequities and embracing social justice through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Canadians with a university or college education are much more likely to volunteer in their communities than those with a high school education or less (Vézina & Crompton 2012; Munro, 2014). In fact, the percentage of Canadians who are members of a group, organization, or association is increasing, with 78% of university degree holders participating in these types of activities (Turcotte, 2015). Graduates from the programs involved in this study would have many of these opportunities and experiences. We are not aware of any research that focuses on the long-term impacts of CBL for the veterinary or dietetics professions. Given the desire to expand international and intercultural CBL experiences at the University of Prince Edward Island and other higher education institutions, the results of such an assessment can inform recruitment strategies as well as funding and planning to expand and diversify postsecondary CBL in similar professional programs. Professional programs need to consider how CBL experiences such as those in this study impact graduates long-term into their careers and the contributions that may occur as a result.

Relevant Literature

Community-Based Learning

There is an abundant literature noting that students who participate in CBL or service-learning programs demonstrate positive changes in attitudes, civic engagement, social skills, and academic performance, outcomes in keeping with high impact educational practices (e.g., Celio et al., 2011; Kuh, 2008). There is general consensus that CBL can promote critical thinking and civic responsibility if CBL activities (1) are designed thoughtfully with a clear purpose, (2) are relevant to future endeavors of students, (3) address affective dimensions of their learning in ways that deepen the integrity of these experiences, and (4) provide opportunities for ongoing student reflection to develop lifelong habits of engagement (Bringle et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2015). Concurrently, there is research that suggests that CBL is an amalgam of approaches drawing from experiential education, action research, critical theory, adult education, and social justice education, among others (Butin, 2006). Further, some studies characterize the learning in short-term immersive settings as thin and nonsystemic (Hansen & Clayton, 2014), where learners are characterized as "visitor/tourists" (Miller, 2015, p. 227). More recent studies have built on this work by examining deep learning (Ibrahim et al., 2016; Nelson Laird et al., 2008). However, scholars have suggested that attending to intercultural aspects of place, regardless of the duration of the CBL experience, can promote deeper and more critical engagement of students with the complexities, identities, and values of local lived experience, as well as the broader historical, political, ecological, and cultural forces shaping these CBL contexts (Siemers et al., 2015).

Advocates for CBL with critical, civic, and social justice orientations (e.g., Mitchell, 2008; Rice & Pollack, 2000; Zlotkowski, 1995) encourage students to see themselves as agents of social change using their CBL experiences to address and respond to injustice in communities while working as partners in authentic relationships. This community participation would be consistent with contemporary models of civic engagement for higher education outlined by Bringle and Clayton (2012). In Whitley and Yoder's (2015) comparison of curricular civic engagement, extracurricular civic engagement, and participation in a living-learning community, they found that all three CBL approaches increased students' civic engagement attitudes and behaviors; however, due to the voluntary nature of extracurricular engagement, this approach had greater impact. In a study examining students' civic-mindedness and orientation to philanthropy, Hatcher and Studer (2015) found that when students had a choice of where they engaged in CBL activities, this choice led to greater student engagement and understanding of that nonprofit sector and its social issues, and higher student willingness to volunteer in other community activities. Such flexible visions of civic engagement encourage students in professional programs to move beyond just being participatory citizens and encourage the development of tools and skills that enable students to recognize and address social inequality through critical consciousness (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). This development involves "opening professional eyes and imaginations to the civic responsibilities and possibilities of their work" (Peters, 2004, p. 49). Settings different from those where new professionals are most likely to practice upon graduation, such as those involved in place-rich approaches to CBL described by High et al. (2015), can be viewed as potential routes to deeper civic learning and social awareness. Place-rich CBL extends past place-based levels of engagement, which focus on the location, to a place-engaged orientation where place is considered as a partner shaping the CBL experience and contributing significantly to potential impacts. According to Siemers et al. (2015), a place-engaged CBL experience has four guiding principles: (a) integrating ecological perspectives and values, (b) incorporating diverse ways of knowing and being embedded in distinct places, (c) taking seriously the power of story to make meaning and build community, and (d) grappling with contradictions and tensions that often surface when we realize that the past is always with us as a living legacy.

Research Rationale

Studies have demonstrated that CBL and service-learning experiences during university have a lasting consequence because students are likely to continue volunteering as graduates (Sax, 1997). Although there are some studies of longitudinal impacts of CBL (e.g., Carlisle et al., 2017; Clayton et al., 2013; Finley & McNair, 2013; Hatcher et al., 2017; Kiely, 2004, 2005), to our knowledge, the longer term impact of short-term immersive CBL experiences in settings that are culturally, economically, and socially different for students, such as those described later in this article, has not been a focus in the research literature. We do not have a clear understanding of the long-term outcomes for these graduates as they move into their professional careers. For example, we do not understand the impact of awareness and action tensions of graduates and community members as the graduates struggle to enact change arising from what they learned during their CBL experiences, a phenomenon that has been referred to as the chameleon complex (Kiely, 2004). Such gaps in the literature reinforce the crucial need for follow-up research to determine the long-term impacts and contributing factors of place-rich CBL, which can provide lessons learned for future CBL experiences. Such guidance will optimize benefits to students, the communities and populations they serve, as well as their professions and broader society following graduation.

Theoretical Foundations

Two theories believed to be most relevant to this examination of the civic journey of students in place-rich CBL experiences are transformative learning theory and self-determination theory. Transformative learning theory looks at learning as a process of effecting change through the assumptions within which we understand experiences. Transformative learning is said to occur in three dimensions: psychological (changes in understanding of self), convictional (revision of belief systems), and behavioral (changes in lifestyle). Frames of reference can be transformed through critical reflection on the assumptions upon which students' interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind or points of view are based. CBL experiences can serve as opportune occasions for university students to become aware and critical of their own and others' assumptions, with chances for them to redefine problems from a different perspective and develop autonomous thinking skills while being supported in critical reflection and discourse (Mezirow, 1997). However, to be effective, transformative pedagogy through international service-learning must focus on enabling and motivating students to relate to the community through experience in order to promote transformation and understanding (McKee, 2016). Self-determination theory provides a framework for examining the internalization of a student's motivation while helping to understand the interplay between the environment and their internal motivation and engagement through the development of a sense of relatedness, competence, and autonomy in their learning activities (Deci et al., 1999; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Coupling these two theoretical perspectives served as the basis for this examination of the long-term impacts of place-rich CBL experiences.

Research Context

At the University of Prince Edward Island in Canada, instructors have coordinated three immersive CBL experiences for students for many years.

The Chinook Veterinary Rotation is a 1- to 2-week senior-year clinical course that provides essential veterinary care to remote, mostly Indigenous communities in Canada's north. The senior year of the veterinary program is divided into modules of 1-, 2-, or 3-week practical rotations. Since 2006, each year, with the exceptions of 2020 and 2021 due to travel restrictions, the Chinook project has responded to requests from northern communities, taking two to four volunteer veterinarians and technicians and four to eight students in a veterinary medicine program to the community for 3 to 10 days. While there, they set up a temporary veterinary clinic and offer spaying/neutering, vaccinations, and deworming, primarily for dogs, as well as providing other veterinary care as needed. Unique and integral parts of the project experience are the creative nonfiction pieces that participants develop and publish in the year following their experience, based on their project journals.

International Smallholder Dairy Health Management Rotation is a 3-week senior-year clinical course that has been offered every year since 2004, although no students were able to participate in this course in 2008 and 2021 due to travel restrictions. The course provides practical experience, in the context of an international development project, for three veterinary medicine students on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of common animal diseases and dairy management problems encountered in Kenya. A local nongovernmental organization (NGO), called Farmers Helping Farmers, partners with the university and local Kenyan farmer groups for this experience. In most years these students are joined by three to six Kenyan veterinary medicine students from the University of Nairobi. Collaboratively these students write three blog posts published on the website of the NGO partner, develop and maintain a case log of daily cases, and write a new chapter for a handbook for local smallholder dairy farmers related to an important topic they observed that was not in the handbook at that time.

International internships have also been offered to preclinical students in veterinary medicine and senior students in human nutrition to live and work in rural Kenya for 8–12 weeks during the May to August semester. Starting in 2008 and 2010, respectively, students became engaged in training and research related to veterinary medicine and human nutrition initiatives with Canadian and Kenyan partner organizations. Veterinary medicine students were involved with a variety of nutrition and animal welfare research projects for dairy cows and calves, while the human nutrition students were involved in food-based education with local women's groups and schools. Using a train-the-trainer model, activities were designed to reduce micronutrient malnutrition as part of a population health internship placement or a directed studies academic credit. The same local NGO partners with the university for this experience, along with local Kenyan farmer groups, women's groups, and schools. These students write weekly blog posts that are shared through the NGO website and social media accounts.

These three opportunities accommodate four groups of students: (1) senior veterinary students enrolled in a clinical course in northern Canada ("Chinook Vet Rotation" group), (2) senior veterinary students enrolled in the clinical course in Kenya ("Kenya Senior Vet Rotation" group), (3) preclinical veterinary students engaged in veterinary medicine and research activities in Kenya as an independent studies course ("Kenya Vet Medicine and Research" group), and (4) senior nutrition students engaged in nutrition and food security activities in Kenya as an independent studies course ("Kenya Nutrition and Food Security" group). To date, there has been no assessment of the long-term impacts of these CBL experiences on the perspectives, lives, and professional practices of the four groups of students involved in these place-rich CBL opportunities.

Prior to their departures, the selected students engage in orientation sessions where they learn about the region and the specific communities—the history, climate, socioeconomic realities, common cultural practices, languages, health and safety concerns, and agricultural systems (where applicable). Students also participate in focus group debriefing sessions devoted to assessing their improvements in program-related competencies and collecting their perspectives on the overall CBL experience. The CBL experiences described above have a strong "place-rich" dimension that make them very different from typical clinical experiences in veterinary schools or nutrition care placements focused on population and public health in human nutrition/dietetics programs.

Research Objectives and Questions

Our main objectives for this study were to develop a deeper understanding of the intermediate- and long-term impacts of place-rich CBL experiences on university students, and to explore whether these experiences lead graduates to become involved in professional organizations, their local and/or global community, or promoting social justice and sustainable development after graduation. The following were our research questions.

> In what ways are graduates engaged in civic activities in their personal and professional lives 2 to 14 years following their CBL experiences in place-rich communities?
>
> How do graduates describe the impact of their CBL experiences in place-rich communities 2 to 14 years later?

Methods

This study received approval from the Research Ethics Board of the University of Prince Edward Island prior to the start of the study.

Recruitment of Survey Respondents and Interview Participants

The sampling frame consisted of graduates who had been participants in any one of the four CBL experiences of interest at the university 2004–2017. Recruitment and data collection consisted of two phases, a quantitative survey phase and a qualitative interview phase. All graduates of the CBL experiences 2004–2017 were eligible to participate in the quantitative phase of the study, a 15-minute online survey. The recruitment process for the online survey included one or more of the following: (a) email invitations where active email addresses were available, (b) sharing through the Chinook course blog, and (c) sharing through social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter). Recruits were provided with an invitation to participate and information on the research project. Graduates who had participated in both a Kenyan experience and a northern Canadian experience could choose to complete the survey for both experiences or only one experience. As the Kenyan experience was primarily agricultural in nature and the northern Canadian experience was primarily dog-oriented, only two students were known to be involved in both experiences.

Participants for the qualitative phase of data collection consisted of survey respondents who responded to the invitation to participate in an interview at the end of the online survey. From this sampling frame, participants from each of the four groups (*n* = 20 in total) were selected to represent the different CBL experiences and were invited to participate in a telephone/internet interview. Purposive maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2015) was employed to ensure participants reflected all the various CBL experiences being explored in this study. For confidentiality, self-identified respondents to the online survey and participants in the interviews were identified by pseudonyms in the database.

Measures

The online survey utilized questions from the 26-item Civic-Minded Professional scale (Hatcher, 2008), with the addition of some demographic questions to describe the respondents. Most of the survey questions asked the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a statement. Example statements included "I keep very well informed about current issues of social justice" and "I am currently active in one or more non-profit organizations related to my profession/career." Response options consisted of a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). There were five yes/no questions as well, inquiring about respondents' following of local, national, and international current events and volunteer activity within their communities.

Using Fullerton et al. (2015) as our basis, we developed an interview guide to explore how participants now understand changes that occurred during or immediately after their CBL experience, as well as any subsequent impacts that have occurred over time.

Data Collection

A research consent form was presented to each person who agreed to be a participant prior to starting the online survey and again prior to each interview. All survey respondents were offered the opportunity to be entered into a drawing for one of fifteen $20 gift cards. Selected interview participants were contacted by their preferred method, including phone, WhatsApp, or Skype. Interviews lasted 30 to 60 minutes (45 minutes on average), and interviewees were also offered the opportunity to be entered into a drawing for one of ten $20 gift cards. The same team member conducted all the interviews. Interviews were digitally recorded to allow for transcription and qualitative analysis. Survey respondents' emails were collected if they wanted to (a) be in the drawing for the incentive gift cards, (b) receive the final report for this study, and/or (c) participate in interviews.

Data Analysis

Data handling involved coding for survey Questions 1 to 23, using the response scale 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*disagree slightly*), 4 (*neither agree nor disagree*), 5 (*agree slightly*), 6 (*agree*), 7 (*strongly agree*). Coding for Questions 24 to 26 included the responses 0 (*no*), 1 (*yes*). A data dictionary was developed for this coding, along with the demographic variables (available upon request). The survey data were imported into Excel and checked for errors or data that did not make sense. For quantitative analyses of these survey data, descriptive statistics were calculated (means and proportions for ordinal and dichotomous data, respectively) for each study group and for the study population as a whole. The four group results were compared using analytical statistics (ANOVAs and chi-square tests).

Interviews were transcribed and shared with participants for member checking. For qualitative analyses, a first round of open coding was conducted by four team members to generate initial codes in the data. Initial codes were discussed by team members to reach consensus on coding and write definitions for each code. Using the coding framework, another round of coding was conducted to ensure initial coding met the coding consensus and to identify themes. Further review of codes and refinement of themes was performed prior to final analysis and writing of findings (Nowell et al., 2017).

Rigor

Careful consideration was given to procedures that would enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the qualitative findings by addressing accepted standards in the design, data analysis, and reporting of results (Patton, 2015). First, authors ensured the presence of an audit trail by systematically documenting processes and materials (Freeman et al., 2007; Patton, 2015). Second, interviewees were given the opportunity to review and revise their transcribed interviews. Third, sensitizing concepts were used during the data analysis to organize the data and make informed decisions about the significance and importance of findings (Patton, 2015). Fourth, recognizing our positionality with respect to the research, coauthors' prior experiences were acknowledged during the analysis, a process that can help readers understand how data were interpreted (Freeman et al., 2007; Merriam, 1995). All authors are interested in CBL, and three have traveled with students as they engaged in these CBL experiences. Fifth, to reduce bias in data analysis, three team members analyzed the qualitative data independently before collaborating in order to reduce the possibility of imposing individual biases and influence on other team members' interpretations. Sixth, reliability was addressed through constant comparison of findings during data analysis and through discussions with other team members (Merriam, 1995) and data triangulation (Patton, 2015). Seventh, member checks were conducted by emailing participants the transcript of their interviews, with 19 participants responding to the member check and no participants requesting modifications to their transcript. Finally, in presenting the qualitative findings for this study, thick descriptions and rich quotations are provided to allow readers to determine whether findings from this study are applicable to their own contexts (Merriam, 1995; Patton 2015).

Results and Findings

Online Survey

A total of 66 out of 124 (53%) invited graduates completed the online survey. The response rates for each of the four groups ranged from 41% from the Chinook Veterinary Rotation group to 91% in the Kenyan internship groups (both veterinary and nutrition). There were 11, 11, 20, and 24 respondents in the Kenya

Vet Medicine and Research group, Kenya Nutrition and Food Security group, Kenya Senior Veterinary Rotation group, and the Chinook Veterinary Rotation group, respectively.

Reflecting the gender of the invitees, 80% of the respondents self-identified as female. Over half (52%) graduated in 2004–2012, with the International Smallholder Dairy rotation group graduation years being slightly older, reflecting the earlier start to this program. There were no differences in demographics between the four groups, or between respondents and those invited to participate in the study ($p > 0.25$).

Table 1 provides a color-coded overview of the average responses for each question, for the whole study population as well as by study group, with a legend at the bottom describing the meaning of the colors. Visually, it is easy to notice where the respondents agreed more with some questions (blue and dark green) than others (light green and yellow). Given that the statements are all positive in nature, higher agreement indicates more positive impacts than lower agreement.

For the first 23 categorical questions, respondents had lower levels of agreement with Statements 2, 3, 11, 13, and 20. Statements 2, 13, and 20 relate to the respondents' self-perceived levels of knowledge on social justice, nonprofit organizations, and volunteer opportunities in the community; Statements 3 and 11 relate to the respondents' level of political/citizen engagement and recruiting others for citizen engagement. Conversely, respondents had higher levels of agreement with Statements 4, 6, 12, and 15. Statements 6 and 15 relate to the respondents' belief that people should use their education and knowledge to serve/volunteer in the community. Statement 4 relates to the respondents' self-perceived ease with working with people with diverse ethnic backgrounds, and Statement 12 demonstrates the respondents' self-perceived level of passion for their work.

For the yes/no questions (Questions 24–26), respondents answered "yes" more often for Statements 26b and 26c, but less often for Statements 24, 25, and 26a. Statements 26b and 26c relate to self-perceived knowledge and keeping up with national and international news; 26a relates to northern Canadian news. Regarding Statement 24, "I am currently active in one or more non-profit organizations related to my profession/career," only 51% indicated "yes." However, when that question was specified to "I am currently active in one or more non-profit organizations not related to my profession/career," Statement 25, only 32% indicated "yes."

For some statements, responses were heterogeneous among the groups. Whereas 95% of respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with Statement 4, "Others I work with would likely describe me as someone who is at ease working with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds," only 30% of the Kenya Senior Vet Rotation group strongly agreed with this statement, but the other three groups stated they strongly agreed 55–71% of the time and this difference approached statistical significance ($p = 0.06$; Table 1). Only 45% of respondents from the Chinook Vet Rotation group said they agreed at some level with Statement 2, "I would describe myself as a politically active and engaged citizen," whereas at least 60% of the other three groups at least slightly agreed with this statement (Figure 1). None of the respondents in the Kenya Vet Medicine and Research group agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Others would likely describe me as a person who is well informed about a variety of volunteer opportunities in the community," whereas at least 25% of the other three groups agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (Figure 2). Similarly, 9% of respondents in the Kenya Vet Medicine and Research group agreed or strongly agreed with Statement 23, "I am aware of many opportunities to use my skills and abilities in community, voluntary, or pro bono service," whereas at least 36% of the other three groups agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (Figure 3). Statement 24 had substantial differences in response proportions between groups: To the statement "I am currently active in one or more non-profit organizations related to my profession/career," the Kenya Senior Vet Rotation group said "yes" 70% of the time, but the two Kenya intern groups said "yes" only 36% of the time.

Interview Findings

As expected, interview participants spoke at

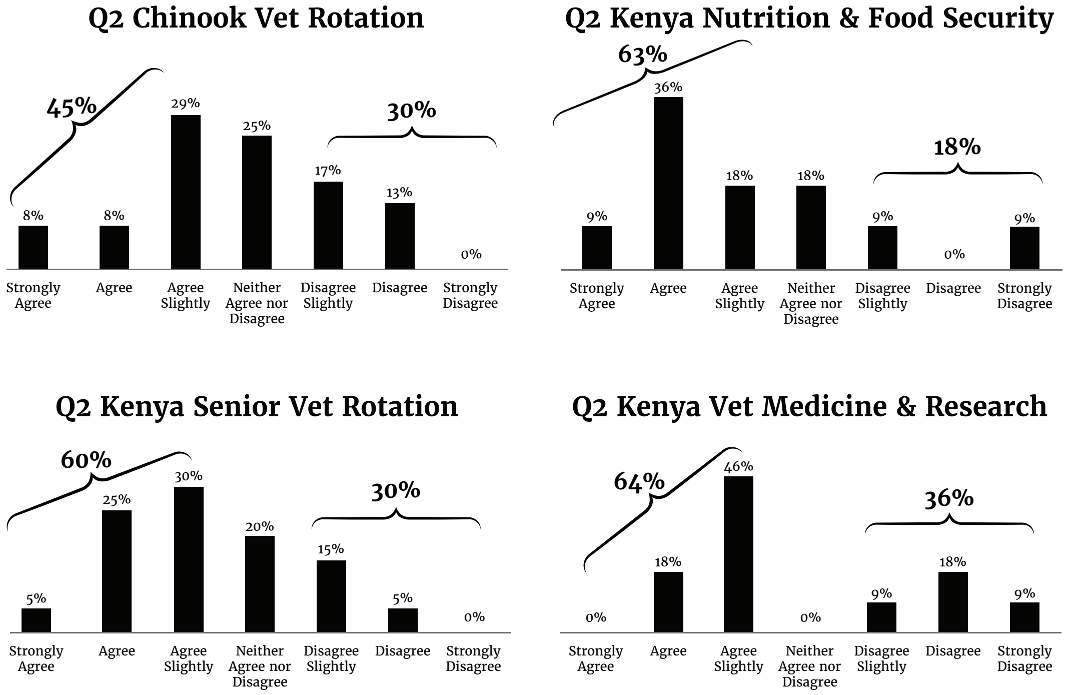
Table 1. Color-Coded Table of the Average Responses for Each Question, for the Whole Group of 66 Respondents, and by Group

Question Number	Kenya Nutrition Intern Course	Kenya Veterinary Intern Course	Kenya Veterinary Rotation Course	Chinook Veterinary Rotation Course	All Respondents Combined	ANOVA *p*-value
1	6.18	5.90	5.65	5.79	5.83	0.43
2	4.81	4.09	4.7	4.29	4.47	0.56
3	5.18	4.64	4.8	4.75	4.82	0.79
4	6.55	6.64	6.00	6.67	6.44	0.06
5	5.73	5.55	5.45	5.62	5.58	0.89
6	6.09	6.09	6.30	5.92	6.09	0.64
7	4.82	4.64	5.05	5.00	4.92	0.77
8	5.73	5.91	5.90	5.88	5.86	0.97
9	4.91	4.55	5.40	5.33	5.15	0.33
10	5.55	5.64	5.60	5.75	5.65	0.97
11	4.55	5.00	4.75	4.54	4.68	0.66
12	6.09	5.55	6.05	6.13	6.00	0.43
13	5.00	4.00	4.65	4.58	4.58	0.37
14	6.09	5.82	5.42	5.38	5.58	0.20
15	6.27	6.27	6.10	6.13	6.17	0.89
16	4.82	5.18	5.25	5.25	5.17	0.84
17	5.91	5.82	5.79	5.67	5.77	0.96
18	5.91	5.18	5.53	5.38	5.48	0.48
19	5.91	5.45	5.85	5.79	5.77	0.82
20	5.09	4.73	4.55	4.96	4.82	0.66
21	6.27	5.45	5.85	5.79	5.83	0.27
22	5.64	5.64	5.85	6.04	5.85	0.37
23	4.73	4.36	5.20	5.13	4.95	0.40
24	0.36	0.36	0.70	0.50	0.51	0.20
25	0.55	0.27	0.40	0.21	0.32	0.22
26a	0.36	0.45	0.20	0.38	0.33	0.48
26b	0.91	0.55	0.80	0.75	0.76	0.24
26c	0.82	1.00	0.70	0.71	0.77	0.22

Color coding legend:

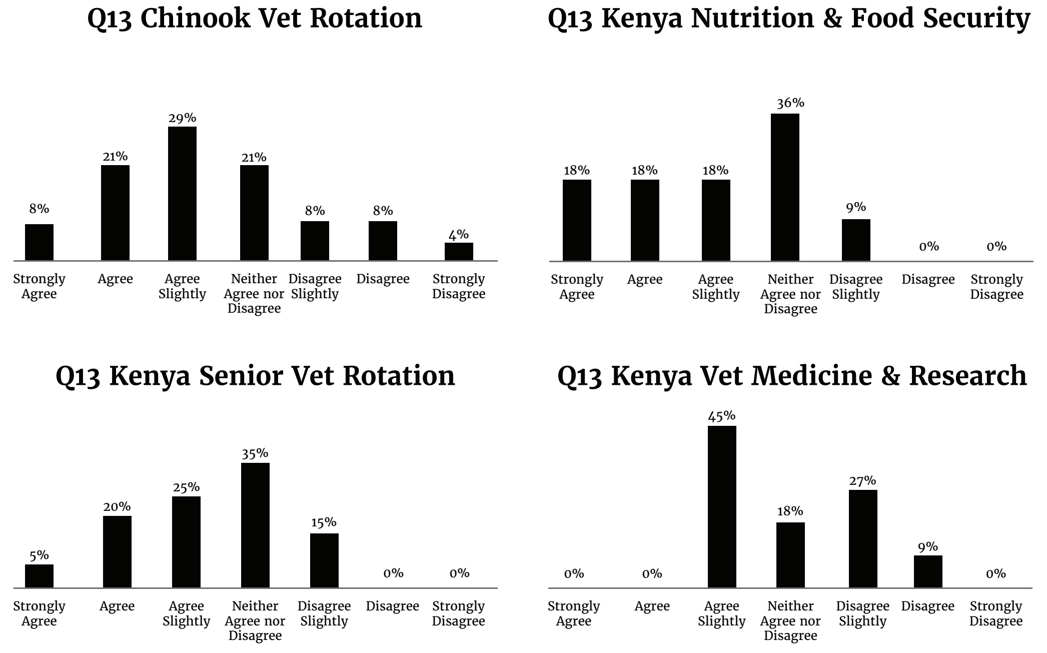
	0 to 1	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 6	6 to 7
Agreement	🟥	🟥	🟧	🟨	🟩	🟩	🟦
	0 to 0.2	0.2 to 0.4	0.4 to 0.6	0.6 to 0.8	0.8 to 1		

Figure 1. Descriptive Statistics of Responses to the Statement “I Would Describe Myself as a Politically Active and Engaged Citizen,” by Study Group



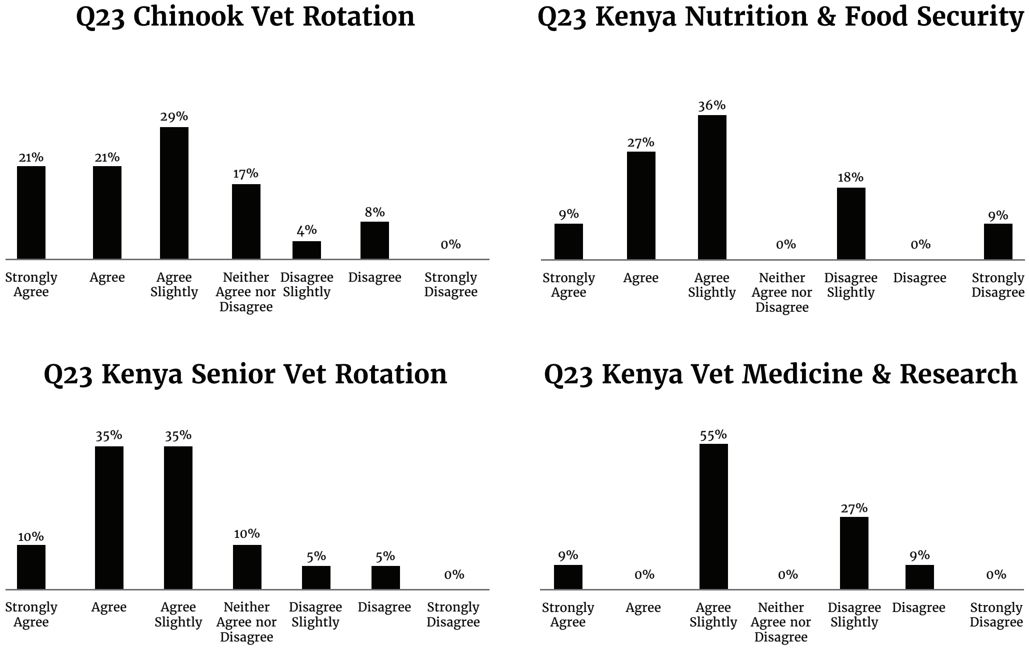
Note. Not all percentages total 100 due to rounding.

Figure 2. Descriptive Statistics of Responses to the Statement “Others Would Likely Describe Me as a Person Who is Well Informed About a Variety of Volunteer Opportunities in the Community,” by Study Group



Note. Not all percentages total 100 due to rounding.

Figure 3. Descriptive Statistics of Responses to the Statement "I Am Aware of Many Opportunities to Use My Skills and Abilities in Community, Voluntary, or Pro Bono Service," by Study Group



Note. Not all percentages total 100 due to rounding.

length about the transformational nature of their CBL experiences in Kenya or northern Canada. Findings presented here focus on the place-rich dimensions and impacts of these CBL experiences and how participants described the ways their experiences have continued to influence them over time, both personally and professionally. Through analysis, this distilled down to three main themes: expanded and deeper appreciation for cross-cultural competence, more deliberate engagement with volunteer opportunities, and emerging as advocates.

Expanded and Deeper Appreciation for Cross-Cultural Competence

Participants commented that despite various preparatory sessions prior to departure for their CBL placement, they had limited cultural knowledge and understanding in the moment, but they recognized the lasting impact of these CBL experiences over time. "I really appreciate how little I do know about it [living in a northern Indigenous community], how complicated that history is, and once again, just having some firsthand experience acknowledging that was very valuable, and always will be" (Participant 23—Chinook Vet Rotation). In addition, participants spoke of the ways that their CBL placement influenced their developing cross-cultural competencies at the time of their placement and later, as they embarked on their careers in their respective professions, sharing insights such as "I think it made me think about things in a different light. It made me, maybe not jump to conclusions quickly. . . . And, I think that kind of came a lot from the learnings there, just living in that different culture" (Participant 19—Kenya Nutrition and Food Security). Participants shared examples of experiences where they gradually came to develop a broader, more critical and inclusive perspective. For example, Participant 23 (Chinook Vet Rotation) said:

> It was so difficult to engage the kids because they just saw dogs in different ways and they were talking about kicking them sometimes, and that sort of thing. It made me a little bit sad, but also, I think it was good to hear that and understand why they might feel that way. Dogs there are sometimes rabid or feral or dangerous; they have to be careful. That's part of it too.

A second example reflected participants' deeper awareness of resilience and the positive aspects to life in the communities, despite differences in expectations relative to the standard of living. Resilience in the face of social and economic hardships that residents faced on a daily basis was illustrated by the following:

> I stayed with this family who walked to work an hour and half both ways every day. They have no electricity, no running water. They get up in the middle of the night and milk their six cows by hand at two o'clock in the morning . . . they've watched their family members die of AIDS right in front of them. You know they don't have a lot. And by our standards we would say they have nothing, and yet they are gracious and giving and happy. (Participant 50—Kenya Senior Vet Rotation)

Participants also noted ways that these CBL experiences changed the trajectory of their thinking, remarking on their increased awareness.

> I think a lot of people in northern Labrador are in tough situations and in various northern communities, probably across Canada. I don't think it is necessarily that I put into any concrete practice trying to make a change there. I think it's more of an ideology that's changed, recognizing that in this country, that I think is wonderful, there are a lot of people who have a hard time. Maybe it just brought that to light for me. (Participant 14—Chinook Senior Vet Rotation group)

Interview participants shared how their CBL experiences led to broader and deeper understanding of community and cultural issues (both current and historical) and systemic interconnections, acknowledging their previous lack of knowledge and gradual changes in their perspectives that surfaced over time from their CBL experiences. Impacts on their cross-cultural awareness and competencies as new professionals led them to emerge as advocates.

More Deliberate Engagement With Volunteer Opportunities

When asked about their engagement with volunteer activities in the years following their CBL experiences, several participants referred to their strong predisposition toward civic engagement and volunteerism with statements such as

> I think I always had some drive to volunteer, to get active in the community, even before my trip to Labrador. I think that's interconnected, the thing in me that made me want to go to Labrador in the first place. (Participant 14—Chinook Vet Rotation)

However, as participants elaborated on their volunteer activities, the influence of these CBL experiences for some participants became evident. The experiences were contributing to their decisions to dedicate their time and energy to other volunteer initiatives, and they were becoming involved in new, challenging roles that they might have delayed until later in their careers.

> I started working with Farmers Helping Farmers, which was one of the partner organizers for my placement in Kenya. After coming back, they asked if I wanted to continue to work with them, and I said yes. So now I'm on their board of directors, continuing my volunteer work. (Participant 24—Kenya Nutrition and Food Security)

CBL experiences also contributed to participants' capacity to work with various organizations, as Participant 3 (Kenya Nutrition and Food Security) explained: "Later, I participated on more boards and committees . . . having that early exposure really helped later on when I was on more committees." In addition, participants spoke about being more discerning in their choices around the volunteer efforts they undertook. One clearly articulated example came from Participant 19 (Kenya Nutrition and Food Security), who said:

> I guess that's probably the biggest thing I got from the Kenya experience, was really being able to look at volunteer opportunities and which ones are more meaningful than others. Which ones are gonna actually be sustainable, which ones

> are actually gonna make change versus what makes you feel good. Those are two different things. And, I think that's where that experience really helped.

Emerging as Advocates

The third theme connected to some of the longer term impacts of these CBL placement settings that were so different from those where participants would typically train and work. Their CBL experiences allowed them over time to look beyond their awareness and understanding of issues as allies and move toward action, where they became advocates. "I now advocate more for those small communities, those remote communities, that don't have access to veterinarians. I'm hoping to go back on another Chinook project trip . . . with other organizers of spay and neuter clinics" (Participant 2—Chinook Vet Rotation). This same participant later said,

> I can carry on a knowledgeable conversation about it [issues and concerns of residents in northern communities], having been there before. And I've kept ties with one of the host families. I guess I will continue to get information about the sort of things that are happening in that area.

Another example of how participants' place-rich CBL experiences have had longer term impacts has been in their examination of issues of power and privilege. Although the data for this study were collected prior to the explosion of awareness in 2020 with the Black Lives Matter movement, participants spoke of their own engagement with these issues. For example, Participant 15 (Kenya Nutrition and Food Security) shared:

> I would say, also, on the point of White privilege or power, I think it did give me, when I started to read and research and think about myself as a White person in this world, more context and what that actually means, and the types of power structures that I have access to just because of my skin color. . . . I don't know if it's really helped me so much in an applied sense, but it's really more theoretical, sort of a worldview where it kind of impacted me later.

Discussion and Implications

This study is one of a growing number of research studies examining the CBL experiences of graduates using both a quantitative and qualitative approach to gain a more holistic understanding of the long-term outcomes. Our findings reinforced and expanded upon the small number of previous research studies specifically focused on long-term effects of CBL experiences (e.g., Fullerton et al., 2015; Lake et al., 2021; Warchal & Ruiz, 2004). Many important impacts of CBL are formative and realized long after the experience; consequently, longitudinal research studies examining CBL impacts in the longer term are crucial (Polin & Keene, 2010). Key findings in this study revolve around participants' expanded and deeper appreciation for cross-cultural awareness, their more deliberate engagement with volunteer opportunities, and their emergence as advocates for the communities they worked with and served. These findings reveal a variety of implications for postsecondary programs offering CBL opportunities, such as those in this study, to students in professional programs. The CBL settings for this study, in remote communities in northern Canada and in small communities in rural Kenya, meet the four criteria for place-rich CBL described by Siemers et al. (2015). Our findings affirm that this approach to CBL can contribute in substantive ways to intermediate- and longer term impacts on individuals, as participants talked about their learning about communities, societal structures and systems, and living landscapes and how this appreciation often emerged well after the end of their CBL placement and grew stronger over time. Below we discuss a variety of ways that researchers and practitioners may use these results to ensure positive outcomes for students and the place-rich communities that partner with them.

The quantitative results revealed some high and low agreement among respondents, and some homogeneous and heterogeneous responses among the groups. For example, there were indications of high levels of cultural awareness and competence in survey items related to working with individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds and the degree to which participants follow current events. These survey results were confirmed through interview descriptions of the gradual evolution in their perspectives over time from their CBL experiences and impacts on their cross-cultural awareness and competencies as new professionals, findings consistent with previous studies (Diaconu et al., 2018; George-Paschal & Saviers, 2016). High degrees of awareness and engagement with civic issues at local and global levels in ways that reflected the complexities of the partner communities were expected. Programs, professional associations, and employers should consider ways to assist new graduates in applying and/or transferring the knowledge and understanding gained from their CBL to their professional practice, and support actions to employ and share their emerging insights within their new professional community. In closer examination of the smaller subgroups, we expected to see Chinook Vet Rotation participants indicate that they follow current events from northern Canada more than the other participants who went to Kenya follow current events there, but this was not the case. We speculate that some of the group differences observed in the results of the online survey could reflect that participants who graduated more recently may have still been engaged in postdegree programs, such as internships, residencies, or graduate programs, leaving limited time to pursue other ventures. Another explanation could include participants' living outside Canada, where current events from northern Canada are not readily available through the avenues they use to keep current with news and current events. Other differences in their volunteer activities might be expected as a result of their life stage, with demands arising from new careers or young children consuming a good deal of their attention and energy.

Value of Place-Rich CBL for Emerging Professionals

Studies have clearly confirmed that students who engage in service as undergraduates develop a greater commitment to civic involvement in the years following graduation, regardless of their preuniversity inclination to become involved in volunteer activities (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010; Ma Hok-ka et al., 2016; Sax, 1997). CBL experiences also serve as a means for students to internalize a sense of social responsibility (Newman & Hernandez, 2011). Survey results and interview comments from this study are consistent with these findings, with participants stating that their CBL experiences spurred them to be more discerning and open to volunteer opportunities that they might otherwise have delayed. Valuing the local lived experience has been raised as an effective means for deeper and more critical engagement (Siemers et al., 2015). In a review of international service-learning projects, McKee (2016) noted that CBL projects where students are learning with and from the community become more than just service to a community; the project becomes a relationship-forming task where everyone involved has opportunities to learn about each other, and students can develop deeper understandings that they do not have all the resources and answers. Relating with a place-as-partner perspective rather than just as a location can provide students with a broader appreciation for how places themselves play key roles in shaping the substance and process of their CBL experience (Siemers et al., 2015).

Nonreflective Modes of Learning and Tensions in Moving From Awareness to Action

The important role of debriefing and critical reflection to help participants place their experiences into context is well established in CBL and service-learning (e.g., Ash & Clayton, 2009; Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Kolb, 1984). However, some researchers of CBL and service-learning have challenged the primacy of constructivist-led critical reflection in promoting action when critical reflection occurs in the classroom away from the community (Kiely, 2005). Studies have found that nonreflective modes of learning, such as collaboration with the community, caring, relating, and listening, can lead to action, as these personal connections help students bridge their experiences (Kiely, 2005; King, 2004; McKee, 2016). Collaboration with the community, caring, relating, and listening are ways of connecting with a community that do not require critical reflection (Kiely, 2005). These attributes were noted as part of the place-rich CBL experiences included in this study, given the types of preprofessional learning and research activities students pursued during their CBL placements. To maximize the effectiveness and longer term impacts of place-rich CBL, students need opportunities to relate and collaborate with community members in multiple ways, rather than relying on critical reflection alone. As professionals-in-training, participants in this study were able to practice these important ways of learning in place-rich settings that were unfamiliar, and very different from the typical training settings they would encounter in Canada. Learning to work in meaningful partnerships with individuals and communities requires openness to varied perspectives and sensitivity to historical experiences, which when coupled with critical reflection activities, can augment the positive outcomes for all relationships described in the SOFAR model (Bringle et al., 2009). Our findings were consistent with those of other studies (e.g., Clayton et al., 2013, Nickols et al., 2013 . Paying attention to intercultural aspects of place has been suggested as a way students can achieve deeper and more critical engagement with the complexities, identities, and values of local lived experience as well as the broader historical, political, ecological, and cultural forces shaping these CBL contexts (Siemers et al., 2015). Being attentive to these nonreflective ways of learning can build capacity for action among new professionals, such as the foods and nutrition and veterinary medicine students participating in this study.

Many studies have noted that critical reflection is a crucial element to support students as they move from reflection into action (e.g., Kiely, 2004, 2005; King, 2004); however, students often find themselves in a strange place between awareness and action. The need for change is acknowledged, but they encounter challenges in the process of enacting that change, based on what they learned during their CBL experiences (Cabrera & Anastasi, 2008; Kiely, 2004). Time for deeper reflection and processing along with repeated opportunities to apply their new knowledge and awareness in varied settings may be ways to support students working through these disconnects that Kiely (2004) has labeled the chameleon complex. Further engagement through nonreflective modes of learning may support deeper reflection and ultimately help participants move toward action and change.

Limitations

As a pilot study this research does acknowledge several limitations. One limitation is the small number of participants for each of the four study groups. This group sample size restricted the statistical analyses employed for comparing responses between groups. A larger study would help to determine if there truly are differences between such groups. Another limitation is not including a group that did not participate in place-rich CBL experiences. A future larger study comparing the civic engagement of graduates who did not participate in place-rich CBL experiences with those who did would provide a more robust understanding of differences and similarities between these two groups of graduates. We also recognize that the preparatory sessions for the groups working in northern Canada and those in Kenya differed and evolved over time. Those traveling to Kenya had three to five half-day workshops with sessions to familiarize them on sociocultural and linguistic context, safety concerns, food, and more. Participants in the Chinook Vet Rotation had three to five preparatory sessions with training on vaccination protocols and treatment of common medical problems including parasite control, in addition to anesthetic and surgical techniques. They also spent time learning about sociocultural awareness, as well as travel, food, and lodging logistics. During the CBL placement, some participants had the opportunity to stay overnight with a local family or participate in local events and activities (e.g., religious services, an agricultural fair); others did not. We do not know how some of these particular experiences impacted our findings. The different degrees of involvement in day-to-day community activities may have led to different perceptions of the community and ultimately long-term outcomes. Finally, there were differences in the length of time that participants spent in these place-rich communities, ranging from 1 to 12 weeks. Research has shown that transformative impacts are stronger when students spend longer periods of time immersed in their CBL settings (MacFall, 2012).

Future Research

This exploratory study highlights the importance of long-term follow-up and the need for larger samples. One challenge for a mixed-methods study such as this is that the statistical analyses cannot dictate how many students are selected to participate; this is determined by factors such as funding and community capacity. The Civic-Minded Professional scale (Hatcher, 2008) draws out notable details, but when the sample is small, other research designs might be more appropriate. A study examining graduates who have participated in place-rich CBL and comparable peers who did not could yield very helpful data for understanding the long-term impact of these learning experiences. Alternatively, a more in-depth qualitative study might provide richer insights into the long-term impacts. In addition, future studies could explore whether the long-term impacts of place-rich CBL experiences include gender differences.

Conclusion

This study has generated new knowledge and understanding of the lasting impacts of CBL in place-rich settings on the civic engagement and professional practice perspectives of graduates from these two professional programs in veterinary medicine and dietetics. Many important impacts of CBL are formative and realized long after the experience, reinforcing the critical importance of longitudinal research and studies examining CBL impacts in the intermediate and longer term (Polin & Keene, 2010). Even though they had not fully realized it at the time of their CBL experience, participants in our study clearly felt that, in retrospect, development of their critical awareness of communities, societal structures and systems, the importance of their ongoing civic engagement through volunteer activities as a professional, and how to be an advocate were among the deepest learnings of their CBL experience in these place-rich communities. Decision makers might keep these benefits in mind during selection and orientation processes and explore opportunities for participants to engage in structured reflection at various points during and after the CBL placement. This study has made an important contribution to the literature examining the intermediate and long-term impacts of CBL by using methods (i.e., open-ended interviews and thematic analysis) recommended by other researchers to address gaps in knowledge (Fullerton et al., 2015). This study also probed participants' current levels of civic engagement and volunteer activity in relation to their experiences of dissonance, moments of transformative learning, and opportunities for reflection stemming from their CBL placement. Given the potential for positive long-term implications, an increased number of similar opportunities for students should be considered as part of their university studies.

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Ethics Declaration

The research reported in this paper received ethics approval from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Prince Edward Island, Certificate # 6007644.

Declaration of Interest

None of the authors have a conflict of interest.

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About the Authors & Author Contributions

__Charlene A. VanLeeuwen__ is head of the Teaching and Learning Centre at the University of Prince Edward Island. Her research interests focus on community-based learning experiences of university students, digital education in higher education, faculty development, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. She received her PhD in educational studies from the University of Prince Edward Island.

__John A. VanLeeuwen__ is a professor and chair of the Department of Health Management at the Atlantic Veterinary College at the University of Prince Edward Island. His research interests focus on smallholder dairy cattle health management. He received his PhD in veterinary epidemiology from the University of Guelph.

__Jennifer Taylor__ is a professor and director of the Foods & Nutrition program at the University of Prince Edward Island. Her research interests focus on food insecurity in both domestic and international settings as well as Indigenous communities. She received her PhD in nutritional sciences from the University of Toronto.

__Cornelia V. Gilroy__ is a board certified veterinary clinical pathologist and associate professor in the Department of Pathology and Microbiology, Atlantic Veterinary College at the University of Prince Edward Island. Her research interests include topics in the area of veterinary clinical pathology, pedagogy, and professional identity formation. She obtained her doctor of veterinary medicine and master of veterinary science degrees from the University of Prince Edward Island.

The Principal investigator (CV) was responsible for research design, research protocol development, obtaining ethics approval, recruitment of the research assistants (RAs), mentoring the RAs during the research process, directing data collection & analysis, and reporting research findings. The Co-investigators (JV, JT, CG) were responsible for assisting with ethics review, participating in participant recruitment, data collection and analysis, and dissemination of research findings. The three research assistants were involved with preparing the online survey, communicating with participants, collecting data through surveys and interviews, transcribing interviews and assisting with data analysis and reporting. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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Community Partner Experiences in a Service-Learning Development Program

R. Tyler Derreth, Katie E. Nelson, Charlie H. Nguyễn,
Alexandria Warrick Adams, and Mindi B. Levin

Abstract

In response to continued calls for research centering community perspectives in service-learning and community engagement, this mixed-methods article examines the experiences of community fellows who were a part of a university service-learning development program. The purpose of the program was to train faculty and community partners in service-learning pedagogy and implementation practices. We analyzed self-reported data from 25 community partners over eight cohorts of the program. In the article, we find that community fellows grew their knowledge of service-learning terms and practices. At the same time, they identified logistic and equity challenges in service-learning implementation and partnerships. Amid these experiences, community fellows highlighted the formation of a shared community among all fellows as the strongest outcome of the program. The shared community afforded them space to build meaningful relationships, collectively plan, and problem-solve together as they practiced service-learning.

Keywords: service-learning, development programs, community partners

Universities often engage with local communities through community-based educational practices (Ehlenz, 2018). When leveraging antioppressive approaches, pedagogies such as extension education, internships, and service-learning can be used to develop lasting community-university partnerships that integrate learning and community development as complementary processes. However, these pedagogies have a long, imperfect history, having gone through many revisions after pointed critiques from faculty, students, and communities. Often, these critiques highlight the power imbalance between universities and communities (Bowen, 2014; Clifford, 2017; Santiago-Ortiz, 2019).

Historically seen as a learning approach, service-learning has prioritized student experiences and knowledge over community experiences (Raddon & Harrison, 2015; Stoecker, 2016). The results of these approaches have been mixed (Danley & Christiansen, 2019). In some cases, these methods have resulted in worsened community-university relationships (DiPadova-Stocks, 2005). In response, researchers and practitioners continue to revise service-learning approaches, attempting to address and subvert lingering power imbalances between universities and communities (Mitchell & Latta, 2020).

Some of the latest revisions, stemming from critical service-learning (Mitchell, 2008), work to prioritize community goals, knowledge, and needs. Where traditional service-learning might be seen primarily as a learning process, critical service-learning advocates argue it is (or should be) a process of social change, community development, or activism (Bowen, 2014; Vincent et al., 2021). Centering community goals rather than student learning marks a significant shift in the approach and intention of curricular community engagement. Critical service-learning (CSL) aims to directly affect social change efforts through community-based courses by building authentic relationships and redistributing power to create more equitable outcomes (Mitchell, 2008). Community partners are cocreators of course content and activities. At the same time, they work to build strong relationships with faculty and students to collaborate on community-identified activities. This model is not intuitive and works against decades of unjust power dynamics. Even in this form of progress toward power redistribution, however, community partners are not given the resources to learn how to engage in these partnerships.

Background

Research on service-learning partnerships and practices has historically centered faculty and student experiences. There is a robust, decades-long field of literature that has tested, measured, theorized, examined, and otherwise analyzed student experiences and outcomes in myriad ways (e.g., Astin et al., 2000; Mason & Dunens, 2019). Although not as multifaceted as student-centered analyses, the faculty-centric research is no less ubiquitous. These studies are often faculty accounts and reflections, case studies, and analyses of faculty development in service-learning (e.g., Cooper, 2014; Lambright & Alden, 2012; Morrison & Wagner, 2016). Comparatively, community perspectives and voices are noticeably lacking in service-learning literature, as evidenced by the frequent calls for further inclusion (e.g., Blouin & Perry, 2009; George-Paschal et al., 2019). Researchers have responded with a slowly increasing field of study. Only within the past few years have we begun to see a more robust examination of community experiences of service-learning (e.g., Tinkler et al., 2014) offering an answer to the question: “Is service-learning an effective tool for communities in community-university partnerships?”

To date, answers have been mixed. Some community partners have highlighted the added value of student projects to their organizations (Cronley et al., 2015). Others have noted the individual growth in their experiences with service-learning (Chika-James et al., 2022). Another finding that has arisen is community partners’ intentional focus to ensure successful student learning experiences (Rinaldo et al., 2015)—a finding that may recenter student experience and merit calls for further critical analysis of the power dynamics at work.

Many of these same studies have also pointed out the challenges community partners experience in the context of service-learning. It takes extensive time and labor from community partners to make partnerships effective and sustainable (Barnes et al., 2009). Studies have recognized the varying range of success many student projects achieve in meeting goals (Matthews, 2019; Walker et al., 2021). Additionally, many partners have noted a lack of preparation, support, and resources for engaging in service-learning (Petri, 2015). Blouin and Perry (2009) explained that community partners do not always participate in designing the service-learning experience. Additionally, Davis et al. (2019) found that community partners can be unclear on the differences between service-learning and more transactional forms of engagement like internships. This confusion can lead to faculty and community partners having different definitions of core terms, different expectations of the experience, and ultimately a less effective partnership.

Given these findings, the literature suggests there is a lack of support and training for community partners in service-learning, which may result from lingering dynamics of traditional service-learning that devalue community partner labor and marginalize their perspectives. The purpose of this study was to examine a critical service-learning development program designed to address this need for more support and training for both faculty (Derreth et al., 2022) and community partners, in a more equitable approach. Hereafter, this article focuses on community partner experiences in the service-learning development program. We explore community partners’ key learnings and experiences from the program and the factors community partners find challenging and/or valuable in engaging community-university partnerships through service-learning.

The Service-Learning Fellows Program

Local Context

The Service-Learning Fellows Program (SLFP) that is the subject of this study was conducted by Johns Hopkins University (JHU). An R1 university, JHU has a long, troubled history with Baltimore’s local communities (Pietila, 2018). In the recent past, JHU campus development relied on a public-private partnership that implemented eminent domain to remove over 700 families from their homes (Gomez, 2019). Doing so radically changed the landscape and neighborhoods surrounding JHU, along with the community-university relationships. Additionally, JHU has just instituted a state-approved private police force, despite much community critique (Smith, 2021)—further exacerbating a strained relationship.

Considering these macroinstitutional movements, it has been an "uphill battle" in some ways for university faculty and staff to gain and sustain trust among communities and local organizations (Harms, 2021). The SLFP is designed to engage with this history as a means of contributing to its repair. The overall intention of the SLFP is to train faculty instructors and community partners, together, in critical service-learning pedagogy. CSL is designed as a justice-based approach for developing a community-university relationship that accomplishes a shared goal. Some development programs separate faculty and community because of their disparate needs and differing roles in service-learning. The SLFP brings these individuals together in hopes of engaging in the needed work of collaboration from the start of a project. As is evident from JHU's history, trust should lead before any appropriate action can be taken. The SLFP is designed to develop trust and collaboration as a prerequisite to project design and implementation.

Program Design

The SLFP is led by the university's Community Engagement and Service-Learning Center for the graduate health professional school (the Center). The Center's team of faculty and staff have expertise in education research, public health education, community development and engagement, and leadership development. The leadership team also includes senior fellows (three faculty and two community leaders): past fellows who have each previously completed the SLFP and have been highly successful in implementing service-learning courses and projects.

Each year, the Center's local community partners are encouraged to apply to become community fellows in the SLFP, a year-long service-learning development program. Three community partners are selected each year, alongside faculty instructors from each eligible school (Schools of Nursing and Public Health) supported by the Center. On average, each yearly cohort has totaled nine people—three community partners, three public health faculty, and three nursing faculty. The SLFP is designed to support community partners and faculty instructors in learning CSL pedagogy together. The end goal is for fellows to facilitate service-learning courses and projects. The SLFP begins before fellows start designing projects, and then program leaders work with fellows through the design and implementation phases of their courses and projects.

The SLFP has four major elements to its structure (Table 1): an introductory seminar, a Center-supported community fellow project, mandatory cohort meetings, and All-Fellows Community of Practice meetings. The program begins with a 2.5-day summer seminar that serves as an intensive learning experience for all fellows. The seminar prioritizes social cohesion and trust building among the cohort, offering informal spaces for sharing meals and conversations. In addition, faculty and community fellows are trained, through several sessions, on CSL practices such as course facilitation, project development, and reflection activities. Finally, the seminar offers reflection, discussion, and planning times for faculty and community fellows to plan, share ideas, and ask questions of each other as they chart out their projects and courses for the coming year.

The seminar is followed by individual and group activities that support fellows. Faculty fellows work with designated advisors from the Center to develop their courses while community fellows work as a group with Center team members to develop action plans based on the community fellows' needs and goals for their service-learning projects.

Community fellows also collaborate with Center staff to develop a shared project that benefits the Center's greater network of partnering community-based organizations (CBOs). Past community fellows projects have included a community fellows-led training for CBOs to learn the basics and benefits of service-learning, an online community preceptor training module, and an updated *Opportunities Guidebook* for CBOs to understand a menu of engagement activities available through the Center.

Alongside individual and group advising, the SLFP organizes bimonthly mandatory

Table 1. SLFP Program Elements, Duration, and Objectives

Program element	Duration	Objectives
Kick-off Summer Seminar	2.5 days (June)	• Cohort-building and deepening relationships • Foundational CSL training through instructional sessions • Course/project planning sessions • Practice critical reflection
Advising and community fellow project	8 months (Sep-April)	• Codesign a project to further support the Center's network of community partners • Practice academic–community partnership with the Center • Strengthen community–university relationships • Mentorship of community fellows in CSL activities
Mandatory cohort meetings	Bimonthly 1-hour sessions (Sep, Nov, Feb, April)	• Focused instruction on facets of CSL (e.g., holistic assessment, reflection assignments, project management) • Discuss progress on course/project design and implementation • Work to address problems or questions related to courses/ projects • Celebrate successes
All-Fellows Community Meetings	Bimonthly 1-hour sessions (Oct, Jan, March)	• Bring together the full SLFP community (spanning nearly 10 years of fellows) • Discuss cutting-edge developments in CSL • Learn useful practices and skills from senior fellows • Integrate justice practices into CSL partnerships and designs

cohort meetings. These meetings gather the faculty and community fellows cohort to receive further training on specific issues related to service-learning. In these sessions, fellows discuss course and project assessments, reflection activities, and student engagement practices before taking time to reflect on how to integrate these practices into their own projects or courses.

Center staff and senior fellows also organize All-Fellows Community of Practice meetings every other month. All fellows, from past and current cohorts, are invited to these meetings. Here, fellows discuss current projects. Fellows share challenges and successes for furthering the CSL mission of social change in their courses and projects. These meetings serve as a way of building a long-term network of faculty and community leaders committed to CSL. They also provide an open space where fellows can hone their service-learning facilitation skills through dialogue with each other.

Community fellows in the SLFP have consistent engagement with each other and with faculty fellows. They are also supported by Center staff who are experts in service-learning design and facilitation. The program is intended to provide the training and networking relationships that community fellows need to be successful service-learning preceptors. By the end of the program, community fellows should be ready to partner with faculty and students on their CBO-identified needs.

Methods

A cross-sectional survey was distributed via Qualtrics at three distinct time points: preprogram (May), postseminar (June), and postprogram (April), to elicit experiences and feedback from fellows participating in the SLFP. Faculty fellows completed one version of the survey, tailored to course design (Derreth et al., 2022). Community fellows took another version, focused more on academic partnerships and project design, which is the focus for this analysis.

Community fellows were over 18 years of age and worked at various nonprofit organizations throughout Baltimore. There were 25 community fellow participants in the program between 2013 and 2021. The university Institutional Review Board deemed this study to be exempt (IRB00005944), as survey completion implied consent to participate.

Data Analysis

We used a mixed-methods analysis to interpret Likert scale and open-ended items in the survey. The first level of data analysis examined the Likert scale questions. Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS for Windows (Version 27.0) and were summarized by descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations. Quantitative survey items were categorized by two authors (RTD, CN) to facilitate clearer presentation of data. The items were categorized as addressing academic partnership, community benefit, or both. The "academic partnership" category focuses on community fellows' perceptions of building a relationship between university affiliates (faculty) and the partnering CBO. The "community benefit" category addresses fellows' perceptions of how service-learning impacts them and their communities. In some cases, survey items encompassed both concepts (Table 2). These codes, derived through a discourse analysis of the language construction of survey items, were informed by the research questions and foundational service-learning definitions (Derreth et al., 2022). These categorizations frame the statistical significance of longitudinal change (via paired *t*-tests) of individual items to show perception of growth for each item and category.

Categorized quantitative findings were then used to contextualize and synthesize open-ended survey responses (examples in Table 3). The template organizing style was used to organize qualitative data (Brooks et al., 2015) by generating a spreadsheet of textual material that was stored in NVivo software. Data were organized by case and by question.

Qualitative data were open coded independently by two authors (RTD, KEN), following the principles of qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012). Coded segments were sorted into respective themes and subthemes. Subtheme reduction involved analyzing the data for broad concepts related to the categories used to sort the quantitative survey items as noted above, while analyzing for potential countervailing data.

Through a method of abduction, or comparative inductive/deductive thematizing, authors analyzed data using the quantita-

Table 2. Likert Scale Survey Items by Thematic Category

Item #	Likert scale text	Thematic category (subcategory)
1	I have an understanding about the Center's role with service-learning courses.	Academic partnership
2	I can define service-learning in the context of the health professions.	Academic partnership
3	I can identify the important principles of community-campus partnerships.	Academic partnership
4	I can identify the ethical implications of service-learning partnerships.	Academic partnership
5	I understand how experiential learning contributes to student learning.	Academic partnership
6	I understand how to design a project based on community-identified needs.	Community benefit
7	I feel comfortable engaging students in reflection activities.	Academic partnership
8	I feel that I can effectively assess students' work in service learning.	Academic partnership
9	I have the ability to effectively evaluate a service-learning course.	Academic partnership
10	I feel comfortable preparing students to work in the community.	Academic partnership
11	I can identify how community-identified needs have been carried out in previous Center projects.	Community benefit
12	I have a sense of how to integrate community partnerships into my professional goals.	Community benefit
13	I believe that my work in the Fellows program will advance the mission of my organization.	Community benefit

Note. Items 6 and 9 were added to the survey in later years. Due to small sample sizes, they were excluded from quantitative analysis.

Table 3. Representative Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions text
Please identify a few goals you have for participating in the Service-Learning Fellows Program.
What excites you about the Fellows Program and service-learning?
What challenges do you anticipate around service-learning collaborations?
In your own words, how do you define service-learning?
In your own words, how do you define critical reflection?
What topics would you like more information about or for us to cover more in depth during subsequent meetings?
What are you excited about for future service-learning collaborations?
What would you like to focus on or expand during the upcoming check-in meetings?
Do you have any additional comments about the Seminar?
What were some of the challenges you experienced this year applying what you learned during the Fellows Program at your organization?
What surprises did you encounter related to service-learning collaborations?
What lessons learned do you intend to apply in your service-learning work next year?
Now that you have completed the Fellows Program, what are your *long-term* goals for upcoming service-learning collaborations or service-learning in general?
How do you envision continuing your work with the Faculty and Community Fellows Program?
What would you change about the Faculty and Community Fellows Program to improve it?
What would you like to focus on or expand on as a Community Fellow Alumni?
Do you have any additional comments about the Fellows Program?

tive coding framework, while also affording potentially new complementary or dialectical codes to surface (Osman et al., 2018). Results were established through team discussion and review of quantitative data to verify conclusions. Finally, analysis and results were reviewed by a SLFP senior community fellow (AWA), as a method of member checking and maintaining a community partner perspective throughout the study (Chase, 2017).

Results

Quantitative Results

Each of the eight analyzed Likert scale items measuring perceptions of academic partnerships reveals increased mean scores between pre- and final surveys (Table 4). Items 1 through 4 show a large effect size (Cohen's *d*) for the difference in means, indicating improved perceptions of learned material. Each of these items focuses on participants' perceived understanding of and ability to identify core functions and definitions of service-learning as they are used in academic partnerships. Paired *t*-tests comparing mean scores for pre- and final survey responses reveal statistically significant increases for these four items. There was also a positive increase in mean scores for community-benefit-focused items, though only one item (11) shows a large effect size. The paired *t*-test for items 11 and 12 were the only statistically significant findings. These data indicate there is room for improvement in measuring community fellows' perceptions of the community benefit of service-learning. Full statistical results are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4. Statistical Comparisons for Likert Scale Survey Items

Academic partnership focus

Survey item	Presurvey mean	Final survey mean	Pre/Final difference in means (SD)	*t*-value (df)[a]	Cohen's *d*[b]
1	4.18	4.82	0.65 (0.61)	4.40 (16)**	**1.07**
2	3.29	4.59	1.29 (1.05)	5.09 (16)**	**1.24**
3	3.82	4.65	0.82 (0.81)	4.20 (16)**	**1.02**
4	3.71	4.59	0.88 (0.86)	4.24 (16)**	**1.03**
5	4.29	4.59	0.29 (0.59)	2.06 (16)	0.50
7	3.94	4.29	0.35 (0.99)	1.46 (16)	0.35
8	3.67	4.00	0.33 (1.23)	0.94 (11)	0.27
10	4.12	4.41	0.29 (0.92)	1.32 (16)	0.32

Community benefit focus

Survey item	Presurvey mean	Final survey mean	Pre/Final difference in means (SD)	t-value (df)[a]	Cohen's *d*[b]
11	3.47	4.41	0.94 (0.89)	4.32 (16)**	**1.05**
12	4.18	4.65	0.47 (0.87)	2.22 (16)*	0.54
13	4.71	4.47	−0.24 (0.75)	−1.29 (16)	−0.31

[a] Two-tailed *t*-test. [b] **Bold text** indicates large effect size at > 0.8.
*$p \le .05$. **$p \le .01$.

It is important to contextualize results in the aggregate for each of the two thematized categories to show changes in overall perceptions of community fellows related to academic partnerships and community benefits of service-learning. Figure 1 shows the proportion of responses corresponding to each point on a five-point scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* for all survey items coded as "academic partnership."

These aggregate percentages of the eight survey items relate to community fellows' overall perceptions on whether they can identify the value of and enact mechanisms for academic partnerships in service-learning. Over time, community fellows increased their percentage of "strongly agree" responses to over 54% by the program's end, up from just 17% before the program, an increase to more than triple the earlier percentage.

Similarly, Figure 2 displays the proportions of responses to items thematically categorized under "community benefit" to show whether participants can identify how service-learning might benefit them, their communities, and their organizations. By the end of the program, nearly 60% of responses were "strongly agree" regarding the general community benefit of service-learning. There was a smaller overall change from preprogram to final responses to these items compared to responses to items coded as "academic partnership"; the proportion changed by less than 100%. Additionally, Figure 2 reveals an already relatively high percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses in the preprogram survey (79%), possibly contributing to the lack of large effect sizes shown in Table 4.

Qualitative Results

The categories for the quantitative data and subsequent results offered an organizing frame for analyzing open-ended survey responses. In other words, authors used

Figure 1. Proportions of Responses on "Academic Partnerships" at Each Time Point

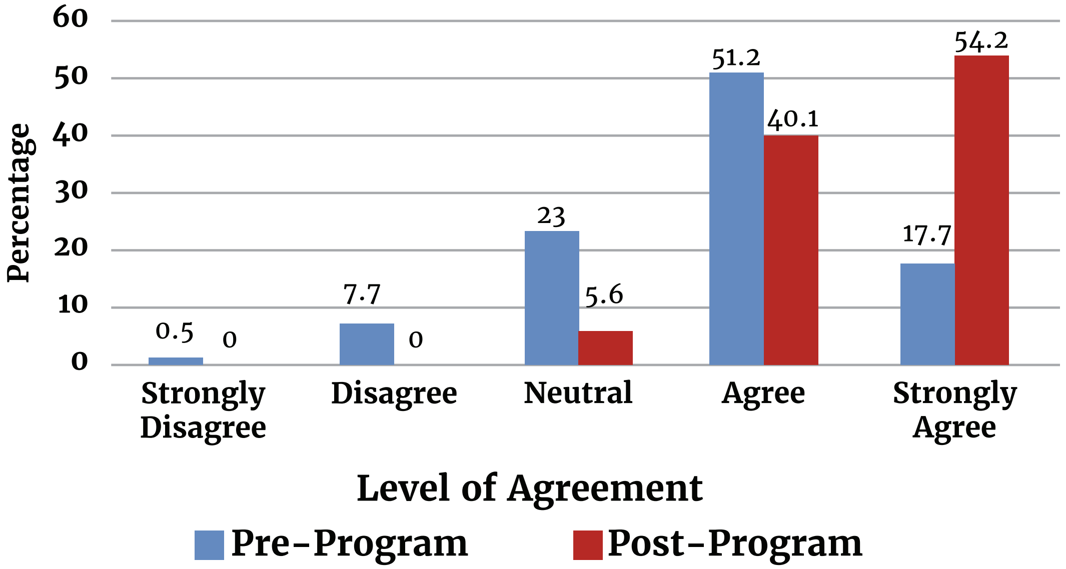
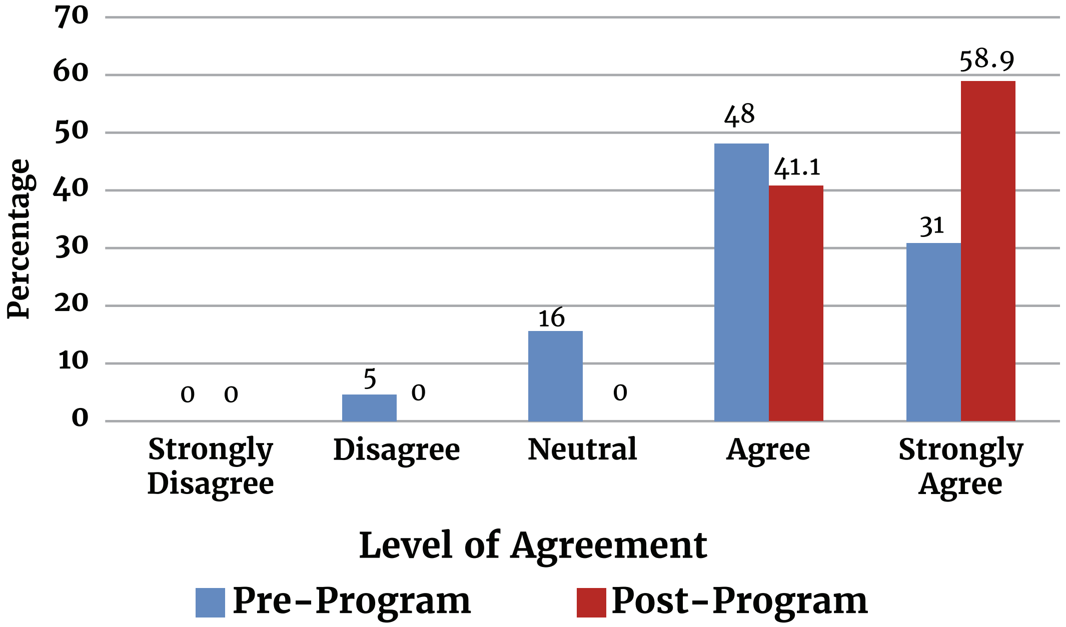


Figure 2. Proportions of Responses on "Community Benefit" at Each Time Point



the categories of academic partnership and community benefit as broad directives for analyzing open-ended data, before integrating a deductive analysis in alignment with abductive coding.

The community fellows' open-ended responses prove particularly useful for revealing deeper elements of participant learnings and the challenges of service-learning partnerships. Additionally, some qualitative findings complicate the simplified quantitative categories in important ways for the field to consider.

Four main themes were deduced from the qualitative analysis:

1. *Community fellows' development*. There was integration of service-learning concepts and skills into community partners' language and practice, suggesting that fellows learned service-learning content from the SLFP.
2. *Program critiques: Partners at the margins*. Our analysis reveals the need for further development of program equity and ways to address power dynamics.
3. *Partner concerns: Practical limitations and responsibilities*. Partners offered comments on limitations related to service-learning.
4. *Finding a "community" as a community partner*. Community partners shared a profound connection with their cohort as they progressed through the program.

Theme 1: Community Fellows' Development

Using Service-Learning Terms and Concepts. Qualitative data supported that community fellows' knowledge of service-learning concepts improved throughout the SLFP, evidenced by changing language usage over time. For example, partners largely began the program defining service-learning in ways that restated "learn" and "service," using general terms and descriptions for their definitions.

Fellows' definitions of service-learning revolved around identifying students' need to "learn" about communities—such as, "Service-learning involves students learning about a community and developing skills from the classroom that could be applied in the community." Additionally, respondents relied on service projects to explain service-learning: "Service learning is a reciprocal process of engagement, learning and community service activities." Importantly, community partners had a clear understanding of service-learning elements, such as reciprocity; balancing practice and theory; and shared engagement between students, faculty, and community partners. Yet, as existing literature purports, the purpose and methods of integrating these elements can be complicated (Mitchell, 2008). These nuances, particularly related to a *critical* service-learning approach, were infrequently acknowledged in preprogram definitions.

The SLFP set out to clearly define the CSL approach used at Johns Hopkins. By program end, fellows were using program-specific language to explain their definition of service-learning, which involved concepts and terms related to identifying power dynamics and centering community voice. Final survey responses echoed commonly shared language of "mutually beneficial partnerships" and "ensuring that [service-learning] is not merely *transactional*, but *transformational*" (emphasis added to highlight program language). This terminology reflects fellows' learning and suggests achievement of a programwide objective of establishing a shared vision and definition of critical service-learning as it is practiced at the university.

Critical Reflection in Action. Several participants emphasized the value of critical reflection with students, organizational colleagues, and other community members—particularly toward the end of the program. Notably, it was not until the postprogram responses to questions asking about priorities, definitions, and future practice that community partners highlighted the necessity of critical reflection to successful service-learning practice. One participant shared the importance of including community partners in reflection exercises as part of service-learning courses:

> [I want to] create a space for the learning element of service learning to really be present in my workspace. This goes in tandem with critical reflection and now that I know what elements are necessary for this process to occur and that we as CBOs play a role in facilitating this process, I can work to institute this at my organization.

This community fellow blends the learning and service components of the pedagogy, suggesting a complex understanding not just of the value of critical reflection, but of its utility in the context of community-engaged partnerships. This statement also highlights the practical education the fellow gained, when she stated her confidence to "institute this at my organization."

In the postseminar and postprogram responses, we saw community partners valuing critical reflection and planning to enact it in their future work both as partners and community leaders: "I plan to do more reflection activities with my service learning and with all of my volunteers." Partners viewed critical reflection as fundamental to meaningful engagement with students, staff, and other community members. As one community partner succinctly stated, "The core of service learning is to plan together . . . execute together . . . reflect together."

Theme 2: Program Critiques: Partners at the Margins

The SLFP showed success in training community partners in the conceptual and practical foundations of service-learning; however, fellows' responses also underscored areas for improvement. Foreshadowing deeper reflections on their positionality explored in the discussion section of this article, community partners felt the program, at times, centered faculty needs and roles above their own. "The fellows program is mostly dedicated to didactics in JHU education. It was difficult to apply the concepts to outside education environments." Due to the course-based nature of service-learning, most seminars focused on leading courses, designing curriculum, and assessment. Another participant noted: "The primary focus of most meetings was often on course creation and faculty support. While this was interesting, . . . meetings felt like an obligation and not something I was getting much out of." Community partners play an important role in these course elements; however, their comments highlighted the need for more dedicated focus on their role(s) and responsibilities in the academic-based elements of service-learning.

There was also evidence of unchallenged power dynamics that center academic roles and experiences over those of the community partners, which were pushed to the margins.

> My main critique is that some meetings felt much more focused on the faculty as opposed to the community fellows. For example, multiple sessions included concrete examples of reflection activities used in the classroom, but we rarely had the same kind of focus on reflection that can be done at the CBO.

Here a community fellow identified that the most concrete examples stemmed from a faculty-first perspective, offering resources on critical reflection that were not as relevant to community-based organizational leaders who are rarely in classroom settings.

Theme 3: Partner Concerns: Practical Limitations and Responsibilities

Many participants were very clear about the practical limitations of CSL, proposing important considerations for sustainability of the pedagogy. Community fellows were concerned about being able to (1) clearly explain the value of service-learning partnerships to others in their organization and (2) provide necessary training for their colleagues on the elements of service-learning. Further, many highlighted their severely limited time capacity and anxieties about being equipped to lead students in a meaningful service-learning experience, given these types of organizational constraints.

The responses revealed how complicated the development and implementation of a successful service-learning project can be for community partners. For example, some fellows in executive roles noted the need to train others in their organization who would have ongoing contact with communities and students. "My biggest challenge will likely be communicating goals/plans for service learning to staff at our various sites in a way that is clear, meaningful, and easy for them to implement." This statement indicates that fellows need to be trained in service-learning pedagogy well enough to train others who are already spread thin. One community fellow noted, "It can be difficult to 'make the case' for service-learning opportunities/projects with already stretched staff members."

The program, it seems, was able to do some of this training. However, even fellows who felt equipped with the skillset noted that this element of being a community partner only added further time constraints—an ongoing limitation many participants highlighted. “As a community fellow, time is precious, and at times, having to do another doodle, read some articles or attend another meeting is something that while I view as worthwhile, I am just having difficulty squeezing in.” Another fellow similarly noted, “I have many things competing for my time and attention. I suspect there will be times when I want to devote more time than I have.” Perhaps blending these two practical issues, that same fellow continued by expressing concern about clearly communicating the critical nature of service-learning as a transformative relationship, not a charity model. “[I don’t know how to] ‘sell’ the idea that service-learning is more than an internship to my work peers—or at least not having it ‘slip’ to that.” This idea highlights the difficulty in communicating the difference between critical partnerships, which challenge power dynamics, and more conventional internships.

Finally, community fellows expressed practical anxieties over how to facilitate and engage students in a meaningful experience: “There is this collective concern that emerged in a couple conversations of ‘are we CBOs creating meaningful service-learning opportunities?’” Another community fellow wrote, “I feel strongly that my work could be improved by being more intentional about what type of volunteer work students complete [with us]. I am hoping to learn about best practices.” These responses highlight a potential limitation of the program in preparing community fellows to be effective facilitators. However, it also reflects the deep care they have as educators of service-learning students (Compare et al., 2022). They frequently revealed their strong commitment to the learning process and care for students as valued members of the collective project.

Theme 4: Finding a “Community” as a Community Partner

Perhaps the most impactful finding, in relation to outcomes of the SLFP, was the value of the cocreated community. Community fellows consistently made comments that developing collaborations and relationships with their cohort was the most valuable element.

> The best part of the program was the opportunity to get to know other community partners and faculty in a very comfortable environment while also gaining an “insider’s” understanding of how service-learning courses are developed and what their needs and goals are.

Community fellows also found value in building relationships beyond the program and toward the benefit of their organizational and community work. “I really enjoyed engaging with other professionals and faculty to consider our organizational needs from a fresh and more research-based perspective.” Through the program, community fellows found a space to connect with each other and share perspectives, successes, and challenges that supported the way they design their community work. The program fostered a place of authentic sharing:

> I thought that we were able to develop relationships naturally without it being forced. I’m very excited about continuing to grow the conversations that we have around meaningful collaboration. I think that we were really open and honest with one another, and I hope that that leads to many productive projects and opportunities.

More than networking (Compare & Albanesi, 2022), fellows built relationships and cocreated a space of support and innovation—developing a more complex and sustaining community of practice (Wenger, 2000). One fellow’s comment highlights this cocreation:

> I love to learn about individuals in general, but this opportunity is unique in the sense that we get to learn so much from each other as we continue through the program. There are conversations that we’ve already had around service-learning with JHU staff and faculty that change the way I view service-learning in the classroom.

Although service-learning practice and training still work imperfectly against ingrained inequalities, the cocreation of community among fellows may offer a way forward for innovating more equitable, community-centered models of service-learning. As community fellows identified here, the formed community gave them new insights, ideas, and practices to engage with their partnerships *and* their communities.

Discussion

Our discussion mirrors the above qualitative themes as we work to make sense of the usefulness of these results for advancing academic–community partnerships. We establish four arguments based on the study results. First, the SLFP has positive outcomes related to the community fellows' development using service-learning concepts and practices. The program is successful in teaching core concepts, and it could be used as a model for community partner education. Second, there are practical limitations and equity concerns for the SLFP that must be addressed. We suggest some initial remedies for these limitations and concerns. Third, we highlight the implicit pressures community fellows reference related to community voice and justice that feed into their concerns and anxieties. We name this their "in-between" positionality. We further call on academic centers and faculty to better support community partners who experience these pressures. Fourth, we present future directions that can build on SLFP successes and address limitations and concerns. These future directions rely on designing more communal development programs so that community partners can depend on and contribute to a network of people engaging in similar work.

Program Impacts and Community Fellow Development

Results suggest that the SLFP was effective in establishing shared terms and practices of CSL. This outcome is particularly noteworthy considering that community partners and faculty can often have different service-learning definitions in the absence of collective discussions or trainings (Davis et al., 2019). Results also showed success in engaging community fellows in critical processes like critical reflection.

Overall, quantitative and qualitative findings suggest the program was successful in educating, engaging, and developing a group of community fellows, alongside their faculty peers (Derreth et al., 2022), in the foundations of academic service-learning partnerships. This outcome could mean that service-learning development programs are an essential component for developing strong partner relationships and establishing the skills and knowledge necessary to carry out service-learning projects effectively. Further, having a space to explore shared sense of purpose, definition, and practice can be a way of building authentic relationships that support individuals through service-learning design and implementation (Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell & Latta, 2020). It can also give community partners language and agency in projects to vocalize their position and their communities' goals throughout the service-learning process. Such contributions are especially important when considering how to mitigate negative impacts or damaging relationships in service-learning.

Program Limitations and Community Fellow Concerns

Study results contribute to ongoing discussions regarding the effectiveness of service-learning for communities' benefit (Mitchell & Latta, 2020). It is clear from our quantitative and qualitative findings that community partners are thinking deeply about this topic. Quantitative results were mixed, especially on the development program's contributions to the wider communities CBOs serve. This community perspective was bolstered by our qualitative findings around program limitations and inequities.

University service-learning practitioners need to consider the limitations that the fellows presented to better empower service-learning partnerships to benefit communities. The limitation on community partners' time is well-known (Barnes et al., 2009), but it remains a top concern. Streamlining service-learning engagement through a development program may help limit time-consuming problems during implementation—a question we encourage future researchers to explore.

A less discussed limitation is the fellows' concerns about communicating the value of service-learning to their colleagues. First, this concern shows that community partners are thinking about how to institutionalize service-learning through engaging multiple individuals within an organization. This inclination may indicate that (1) partners recognize the value of service-learning and want to extend its reach, and (2) partners expect service-learning to be engaged at an *institutional* level. Even with this positive orientation, service-learning professionals should think practically about how to work with CBO leaders to share the workload among multiple organizational members. Development programs might better account for these concerns by engaging community partners in a train-the-trainer model, thereby supporting them to facilitate foundational service-learning trainings. Alternatively, development programs may consider site-specific training days to alleviate the community fellows' training burden at their organizations.

In addition, we must also take seriously the inequities that community partners identified when they expressed concern about their roles, perspectives, and expertise being pushed to the margins throughout the program. At the crux of the comments appeared to be a fundamental paradox of service-learning: Community partners are expected to lead social change projects in communities, while also remaining within the confines of an academic model of education. If this dynamic remains unchanged, development programs are destined to reify this prioritization. The SLFP exemplified this challenge through the extensive focus on course-design training over project development. University-based service-learning practitioners should work with community-based partners to reprioritize the relationship between classroom-based work and community projects. This change in orientation may warrant a redefinition of service-learning as a pedagogical method outside university framing. What might it look like, for example, to have a framing where the university is considered the partner to community social change projects? A framing like this would reprioritize the purpose of service-learning as a pedagogy of collective social change, rather than coopting social change language in an academic program for university benefit and student learning.

Community Fellows and the "In-between"

Fellows' critical reflections on their own positionality may provide insight into why they reported such mixed responses on whether academic–community partnerships benefit communities. Partners had strong words of support for service-learning but also challenged the program leaders to think more critically about the role of community partners in the service-learning space.

One way that service-learning research and training tends to flatten the community partner role (instead of exploring it more deeply) is by assuming a monolithic definition of "community partner" as representative of "community." This simplistic framing is not indicative of how community fellows represent themselves. Fellows mused about lessons learned that were helpful in communicating to their colleagues and community members. Others highlighted the need to ensure community voices were present in the service-learning project, revealing a self-defined positionality separate from "the community." Indeed, the simplistic framing of community partner *as* community can ignore the nuance of the relationships between community partners and the communities they represent or engage with. Further, a simplified definition of community puts partners in the difficult position of speaking on behalf of a whole community. To do so seems an impossible task, a challenge that may speak to why fellows were torn over service-learning's impact on community benefit—or at least whether they had standing to claim such benefits for "the community."

Still, community fellows voiced wanting to integrate service-learning pedagogy and include other community leaders and partners, but they were unsure how to hold space for that goal. Community partners took on an in-between role, where they were responsible for both representing a generalized "community" perspective in academic spaces and being a university "affiliate" who vouched for university service-learning to communities and CBO colleagues. University-affiliated practitioners should both support community partner efforts here and alleviate the expectation that all partners are the embodied definition of "community."

Indeed, fellows' comments have helped us more closely consider *who* we were partnering with—"community fellows" in service-learning—and what relationship they see between themselves and "the community." These findings open space for the question: Who gets to be a community partner in service-learning, and how do they relate to their broader communities? This is a particularly important line of questioning if the field of service-learning expects to impact social change within local communities.

Cocreating a Way Forward: Recommendations for Development Programs

Findings from this study may suggest a way to critically engage in greater reflections on the complicated, unsupported, in-between role in which community partners often find themselves. The strengths of the cohort community in the SLFP may be an effective way to reenvision service-learning, community roles, and even who gets to be involved in service-learning practice. Community fellows were clearly excited to develop and engage in the cohort community and appeared adept at recognizing how to leverage said community to advance their organizations' and communities' missions. Above all, they were grateful to learn from others in diverse roles, all of whom had an interest in using service-learning methods to address community progress and social change.

Service-learning development programs should work on building collaborative spaces that allow community fellows to learn from others such that it advances their community work. A community fellow's role as organizational leader is one that engages in community partnerships often. Making space for service-learning cohort members to inform each other on how best to implement service-learning proved especially valuable and may be improved if these types of programs delve deeper into the complex role of what it means to be a community partner. In doing so, we might engage in a practice that one fellow described as

> Creating a service-learning opportunity that is part of a wider vision—shared goals between the university and community partner—not just combining two separate sets of goals (each maintaining their own territory). Creating service-learning that transforms the usual goals of each into something new.

In other words, we might make space for fostering solidarity for change among students, community, and faculty practitioners through their engagement in a transformational partnership.

Conclusion

This study examined the perspectives of community fellows who engaged in a service-learning development program. Our goal was to understand what community fellows learned, and what they found challenging and valuable from the experience. One practical recommendation out of these findings is the implementation of a communal service-learning development program to establish shared language, definitions, and purpose between university and community partners. This kind of institutional support can address existing problems of miscommunication and lack of training identified by community partners. This type of program should also provide space to explore and refine the community partner role and experiences of those who take it up in ways that are more equitable and less university centric. Development programs can act as spaces of facilitation and connection in addition to spaces of knowledge development.

The formation of a sustaining community of practice among faculty and community fellows proved to be a highly valued method of working through the responsibilities and roles of a community partner. Above all, the development program made space for all participants to ask questions, reflect, and solve problems together, outside the demanding pace of their work, all while learning skills and knowledge necessary to be facilitators themselves. Engaging in questions on purpose, justice, and positionality prior to enacting service-learning projects might lead to more effective partnerships and deeper discussions on the complexity of engaging with diverse communities in social change. Development programs that are equitably organized can be launchpads for community partners to learn and share how to best use and apply service-learning within their respective contexts.

About the Authors

***R. Tyler Derreth** is an assistant teaching professor at Johns Hopkins University in the Department of Health, Behavior, and Society. He is also the associate director of SOURCE—the community engagement and service-learning center for the JHU health professional schools. His research interests focus on building equitable community–university partnerships, developing critical pedagogies, and addressing racism in the academy. He received his PhD in higher education from Penn State University.*

***Katie E. Nelson** is an assistant scientist in the Center for Indigenous Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her research focuses on serious illness care access and* *provision for socially marginalized populations using participatory action research approaches. She received her PhD in nursing from the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing.*

Charlie H. Nguyễn *is a research coordinator at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Department of Epidemiology. His research interests focus on structural racism and health, including novel measures and quantitative methods for assessing health inequity and injustice. He received his MHS in general epidemiology and methods from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.*

Alexandria Warrick Adams *is executive director of Elev8 Baltimore. Her work focuses on advocating for educational equity and access for all youth in Baltimore City. She particularly focuses on issues and advances related to Black youth educational and developmental outcomes. She earned her BA in child and family studies at Portland State University.*

Mindi B. Levin *is associate practice professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Department of Health, Behavior and Society and founder and director of Johns Hopkins University (JHU) SOURCE—the community engagement and service-learning center for the JHU health professional schools. Her research interests focus on the impacts of academic–community partnerships and critical service-learning pedagogy to promote health and social justice. She received her master's degree in health administration from Towson University and is a certified health education specialist.*

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Sustaining Community–University Partnered Sustainability Research: A Typology Grounded in Community Partners' Goals and Motivations

Tia N. Turner and Zachary Piso

Abstract

Community–university partnerships are a critical vehicle for promoting sustainability, and the partnerships themselves can be sustained by ensuring that participants achieve mutual benefits in terms of their respective goals and missions. Although the literature emphasizes mutuality and reciprocity, fewer studies investigate community partners' motivations for participating in community–university partnerships in their own terms. Drawing on semistructured interviews and Q methodology, we identify four distinct perspectives among our community partners, each prioritizing a different set of goals and working from different interpretations of community–university partnerships. One perspective stresses solving practical problems, another focuses on building organizational capacity, a third advocates for recognition of their community's lived experience, and a fourth aims to articulate visions of a sustainable future. These four perspectives suggest a spectrum where some partners prefer a more transactional partnership whereas others work toward a fundamental transformation of how society conceptualizes knowledge and expertise.

Keywords: community–university partnerships, transdisciplinary research, participatory research, sustainability, Q methodology

Since the 1990s, universities and funders have become increasingly interested in serving local communities and regions, and many scholars have taken up community-based research in response to this charge (Curwood et al., 2011; Groulx et al., 2021). The emphasis on more systematic and comprehensive campus engagement in local communities has long been facilitated by a number of factors, including (a) federal programming resources, such as funding and technical assistance in creating partnerships; (b) experiential and active learning tactics, such as service-learning and internships; and (c) recognition that mutually beneficial partnerships between faculty and the community should count not only as service, but also as a legitimate form of place-based research (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). More recently, engagement models have shifted from a one-way exchange, emphasizing delivery of knowledge and service to the community, to a two-way mode of exchange that prioritizes partnership, reciprocity, and mutual learning between college institutions and their communities (Barrera, 2015; Groulx et al., 2021; Mtawa et al., 2016). Scholars have tended to rethink campus-community partnerships in terms of whole-systems thinking, for instance through experiential learning programs that reconceptualize students as actors capable of changing their surrounding context by participating in complex social-ecological systems (Beard, 2015; see also critique by Lake & Wendland, 2018). As a methodological approach, university-community partnerships that have effective structures for collaboration promote outcomes that allow for equitable inclusion of diverse partners; enhance the relevance, quality, and sensitivity of the research; decrease community distrust of institutions and research; and further local community goals (Curwood et al., 2011).

Building better partnerships between colleges and their communities is at the heart of renewing community engagement (Kellogg Commission, 1999). Some universities have historically emphasized service to the community, particularly religious colleges and land-grant institutions founded with service provisions already established (Bruning et al., 2006). More recently, theorists and practitioners have interrogated the assumptions that underlie service-learning and developed alternative frameworks such as asset-based community development that refigure the role of the university and community in university–community partnerships (Lieberman, 2014). For the purpose of this study, we define university–community partnerships similarly to Curwood et al. (2011): A "university–community partnership" can be described as a collaboration between institutions of higher learning and community organizations for the purpose of achieving an identified sustainability goal through community-engaged scholarship that ensures mutual benefit for (a) any campus administrators, faculty, staff, and students *and* (b) community leaders, agency personnel, and members of the communities. The key notion here is mutual benefit or reciprocity, since robust community engagement is typically associated with "thicker" relationships that can be transformative for researchers, students, and partners alike (Clayton et al., 2010). These features distinguish university–community partnerships from other sorts of town–gown relationships, such as service-learning, characterized by thinner or more transactional relationships.

Motivations to Partner

Because university–community partnerships are defined by the mutual benefits provided to both campus and community partners, good accounting of the diverse benefits produced through the partnerships is the first step toward evaluating partnership practices and ensuring their long-term sustainability. Often but not always, campus and community partners pursue shared goals, for instance in the coproduction of place-based knowledge (Groulx et al., 2021; Loh, 2016). Knowledge is coproduced because partners bring different expertise to these collaborations; community partners might provide knowledge concerning stakeholders, their needs, and the best approach to meeting those needs, whereas campus partners might provide disciplinary theories or methodologies to design intervention plans, implement those plans, and evaluate outcomes (Plummer et al., 2022). This arrangement is not without its critics, however, with scholars having acknowledged for decades that higher education institutions are sometimes perceived as treating communities as "pockets of needs, laboratories for experimentation, or passive recipients of expertise" (Bringle et al., 1999, p. 9). Alternatively, collaborations focus on honing and leveraging the community's existing strengths, where it is the role of the university partner to link microstrengths to the macroenvironment; to provide external assistance only after gaps in knowledge and resources have been identified; and to help build new connections of people, institutions, and associations (Hamerlinck & Plaut, 2014). In any of its varieties, "co-production aims to reshape relations between the researchers and the researched" (Durose et al., 2021, p. 1; see also Hemström et al., 2021). Similar to coproduction, colearning partnerships function to promote mutual benefits to help overcome a lack of community resources (Mosier & Ruxton, 2018). Ultimately, universities and communities entering into new partnerships require a great deal of participation to land on an arrangement that honors the community's goals and priorities, and so techniques like those developed in the literature on community-based participatory research can ensure that partners' roles are accountable to the broader communities served by the partnership (Tinkler et al., 2014; Wallerstein et al., 2020).

Even when campus and community partners share some of the same goals, they often bring additional goals to the collaboration. Even if campus and community partners share none of the same goals, organizing the collaboration so that it supports their respective goals may keep the partnership mutually beneficial. In either of these cases, the relationship lacks reciprocity when one party's unique goals are granted such priority that the other party gains little from the partnership and their contributions, epistemic or otherwise, are taken for granted or exploited. In practice it is ordinarily community partners who suffer from these inequitable relationships, with scholars prioritizing academic research goals, institutional clout, or the delivery of community-engaged curriculum without ensuring that their partners derive equivalent benefits (Moore & Ciotti, 2021). Leaders of effective university–community partnerships create an understanding work environment that allows room for supplemental or conflicting agendas. Several other variables have been found to affect the building of the collaboration, including lack of symmetry between partners, different perceptions of partnership, role conflicts, culture of the community organization, institutional context, professional views, and an imbalance in decision-making power (Strier, 2011).

In order to avoid these conflicts and asymmetries, partners must at minimum understand the diverse goals that motivate campus and community partners to participate in university–community partnerships. Knowing that the goals may be different is not enough; it is necessary to anticipate unique goals and ensure that they are appropriately prioritized in carrying out the collaboration. Case studies of successful initiatives point to the generation of useful or practical insights to support partners in pursuit of their particular missions; often these insights reflect novel innovations that partners attribute to the collaborative nature of the endeavor, or at least to the excitement and energy that new undertakings are capable of inspiring (Mosier & Ruxton, 2018). Such knowledge coproduction might solve (or at least ameliorate) pressing problems in the community, or contribute to anticipating challenges down the road (Bieluch et al., 2017; Groulx et al., 2021). Even if not directed to a particular problem, community–university partnerships can strengthen not only the relationships between researchers and their community partners but also the relationships among community organizations themselves, building community capacity for the long haul (Simon et al., 2018). Such collaborative strength can be especially valuable when some residents face barriers to participating in deliberation and collective decision making, as partnerships can help to elevate their expertise, motivate perspectives that have gone underappreciated, and reduce stigmas toward particular residents (Goddu et al., 2015; Lee & Van Zandt, 2019). Even for inclusive communities, partnerships might still generate a number of more instrumental outcomes that are important to community partners, for instance by securing funding or by shedding light on the work that an organization is doing and thereby increasing its recognition and credibility (Bengle et al., 2021; Hartman & Khan, 2018). Of note among these instrumental benefits are the organization's own learning goals, as partnerships promote continued learning and improvement within the organization, enable practitioners to maintain qualifications relevant to their field, and help to train a future workforce available for hire (Olabisi et al., 2022; Zimmerman et al., 2019).

Although it is possible to discern these different goals or motivations from case studies of community–university partnerships, community partners' own goals are rarely the central focus of qualitative or quantitative studies of the praxis of community engagement or collaborative research. Our study works toward a richer understanding of community partners' goals in order to better recognize the reasons that organizations engage in university–community partnerships and ensure that these partnerships produce mutual benefits. We pose these questions through a mixed-methods study of different community organizations from the Miami Valley Region of Southwestern Ohio. Specifically, we posed two interrelated research questions:

1. What outcomes motivate community organizations to engage in university–community partnerships focused on sustainability work?
2. Do community organizations fall into logical groups that suggest distinct perspectives or motivational schemas?

These particular questions respond to two tendencies in the scholarship of university–community partnerships. The first is the aforementioned tendency to understand community partners' motivations primarily through the contrast with university partners' goals; the literature is rife with examples of how and when university partners prioritized outcomes such as journal publications or student learning, yet failed to imagine alternative outcomes that could directly support the community partners' goals and mission (Bell & Lewis, 2023). The second is the related tendency to describe community partners as a monolith, under the assumption that different community organizations share similar motivations, and although these motivations must be distinguished from faculty motivations, they need not be distinguished from one another. As we describe in the next section, mixed-methods approaches that draw on Q methodology can shed light on the distinct perspectives that abound between community partners and suggest that different community organizations are likely to prioritize different outcomes when working in collaboration with universities.

Method

To answer these questions, we conducted semistructured interviews including a goals-sorting activity over a 6-week period in spring 2022. After securing approval from our university's institutional review board, participants were recruited based on recommendations from university faculty with extensive histories of partnering with community organizations in the region. Additional organizations were identified based on their involvement in regional conservation networks, but care was taken to construct an invitation list that included both environmental organizations and organizations focused more squarely on social and economic sustainability. Invitations describing the scope and purpose of the interviews were sent to a total of 18 community organizations, with 14 agreeing to participate, including 10 nonprofit organizations and four municipal offices or agencies connected to local and regional governance. Given the continued risks associated with COVID-19, all interviews were conducted and recorded using Zoom. After the 14th interview, the researchers agreed that no new themes were emerging from the conversation. Although no precise estimate exists for the number of participants required for Q-methodological analyses, experts in the method recommend fewer participants than statements in the Q-set (16 in this case), provided the sample is strategically recruited to ensure the inclusion of diverse viewpoints (Ramlo, 2016; Zabala et al., 2018). We therefore concluded that 14 interviews was appropriate for the qualitative methods as well as the quantitative analysis of the particular goals-sorting activity described below (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018).

All interviews were conducted by the first author and explored participants' experiences with, and evaluation of, previous research partnerships, their ideals regarding the process by which partnerships are carried out, and the character traits or virtues of university partners from the community partner's point of view (see the Appendix). To avoid leading with abstract questions about the goals or outcomes that partners value in these collaborations, the interview opened by asking about past projects, and then probed about the outcomes of those projects and whether the community partner found those outcomes valuable. These questions were asked before the introduction of the goals-ranking activity to avoid influencing participants' reflection on their goals and to determine whether the prepopulated goals included in the activity were comprehensive of the goals expressed by participants.

After these initial questions, the participants were asked to complete a goals-ranking activity based off Q methodology, an analytical approach invented by William Stephenson (1953) that investigates distinctive subjectivities or perspectives within a population. In this context, the methodology can determine whether different community organizations prioritize different goals or outcomes and discern how participants see connections among the various goals. An initial review of the literature on community–university partnerships, summarized in the Motivations to Partner section above, identified 40 goals that researchers have found to motivate community organizations. Because the authors believed that the ranking activity should sort only 16 statements to avoid overburdening participants, these 40 goals were distilled to 16 statements by grouping related goals and crafting statements that captured most of the content of those groups.

Given that the interviews were conducted via Zoom, the sorting activity was facilitated using a shared document in Google Docs that participants could access and edit during this phase of the interview. Statements were provided as text boxes that could be dragged and dropped into a diamond-shaped template that guided participants into identifying their highest priority, high but not highest priorities, and so on until disclosing their lowest priority (at this point, participants were reminded that even their lowest priority might be important to them, just less so than the other goals). The diamond template requires participants to sort statements into tiers; they are told that the row where they place a statement matters, but where they place a statement across a row does not matter, and so for instance that two statements in the second row are similarly important to one another, less important than participants' very top row, and more important than the statements placed in lower rows. Q-sorts were later translated into raw data (e.g., the two statements in the second row assigned a value of "2") and analyzed using the R package qmethod (Zabala, 2014).

After the sorting activity, participants were asked to explain why they ranked their top goal as the most important, and depending on how much time had elapsed in the interview, to further elaborate on their second row of goals. They were then asked about the extent to which their previous partnerships have achieved these goals, whether their goals had changed over the course of their partnerships, and whether their partnerships have seemed mutually beneficial for both their own organization and their university partners. Next, they were asked to reflect on the collaborative process of these partnerships and the characteristics or virtues of a university partner that they would hold in high esteem. Interviews concluded with an invitation to add anything about community–university partnered sustainability research that had not been covered over the course of the interview. The total duration of interview conversation times, excluding the sorting activity and instruction time, ranged from 13 to 52 minutes, with a median duration of 29 minutes. Participants completed the Q-sort in roughly 10–12 minutes for a total median duration of approximately 40 minutes.

All interviews were professionally transcribed and qualitatively analyzed based on emergent themes. Both authors independently reviewed three interviews that the first author judged to cover the widest range of perspectives and recorded themes speaking to community partners' goals, success and failure conditions regarding the collaborative process, and university partners' character traits (both positive and negative). The authors shared initial impressions and developed a preliminary set of codes that they then deductively applied independently to the three transcripts using the content analysis software Dedoose. Then the coded transcripts were compared and disagreements over the applicability of codes were reconciled by further clarifying the meaning of each code in the codebook and combining or splitting codes in instances where a broader or narrower concept enabled consistent application (Ahuvia, 2001; Neuendorf, 2018). Once both authors agreed that the codebook provided sufficient guidance to apply the codes consistently, the first author proceeded to code all 14 transcripts, periodically meeting with the second author to describe any challenges in interpretation. Most if not all challenges concerned that specific language used to denote a code, and not the underlying concept, so all revisions to the codebook at this stage involved changes in terminology and not content.

Results

First, we present the findings of the interview analysis to describe the outcomes that motivate community partners to engage in university–community partnerships focused on sustainability research. Second, we present results from the Q-sorting activity to suggest a typology of four distinct groups of community partners in this context.

Outcomes Motivating Participants' Engagement in University–Community Partnerships

Participants expressed a wide range of valuable outcomes prior to the Q-sorting activity, including 15 of 16 outcomes included in the sort—thus aligning with prior literature reviewed above. The average participant invoked five distinct outcomes, with discussions ranging between 1 and 10 outcomes. Table 1 summarizes these outcomes and reports the number of participants who expressed desire for that outcome prior to the Q-sorting activity. Nearly two thirds of participants spoke to the importance of innovation in the service of useful or practical strategies to anticipate, prevent, and solve problems that are facing the community. One partner noted that "they can draw upon the research and information gathering that . . . students have put together to make informed decisions," or that, as another participant put it, "they were looking for what were the best practices, effective strategies." Another explained that "sometimes it helps to have an outside researcher come and see some of the things that you're doing, because they have background, and then . . . things might pop up for them that if you're in the weeds every day, you won't see."

Approximately one third of participants stressed during the opening question that they valued partnerships that generated accessible information, elevated the community's expertise and reinforced their credibility, and helped to dismantle barriers to community members' participation in decision making. It is worth noting that, although these goals came up less frequently in the opening question, they were

Table 1. List of Outcomes Expressed by Participants, Ordered by Number of Participants Who Expressed the Value in the Opening Interview Questions

Labels	Descriptions (A successful partnership with university researchers is one that . . .)	#
Practical	. . . produces more useful, practical, or cost-effective strategies for advancing your mission	9
Solutions	. . . develops and implements plans for solving pressing problems in the community	9
Anticipates	. . . anticipates and prevents problems that might arise within the broader community	8
Innovation	. . . generates innovative solutions to challenges confronting the organization	6
Relationships	. . . establishes, sustains, or expands relationships among individuals and organizations in the community	5
Elevates	. . . recognizes and elevates the existing expertise in the community	5
Accessible	. . . creates and shares information in formats that are accessible to the broader community	5
Barriers	. . . identifies and addresses barriers to community members becoming involved in local decision-making	4
Credibility	. . . increases the reputation, perceived credibility, and recognition of the organization	4
Students	. . . trains students to take an active role in improving their community	4
Perspectives	. . . shares the perspectives of community members who are often excluded from community efforts	3
Funding	. . . secures the necessary funding for accomplishing the organization's goals	3
Energy	. . . brings new energy to the organization by engaging in new and exciting projects	2
Learning	. . . promotes learning and continued improvement within the organization	2
Stigma	. . . reduces stigma towards certain neighborhoods or groups	1
Qualifications	. . . maintains and stays up to date on qualifications in one's profession	0

often highly ranked after the goal-sorting activity, which may suggest that that activity conveyed that these goals were germane to the discussion and worthy of discussion as research outcomes. For instance, those who did express the value of relationships as outcomes tended to emphasize it, with one participant detailing a project wherein "we help neighbors grow their own food, get resources, have educational workshops, and try to build community through that. [The university researcher] focused on how to help us." Another participant offered, "It's more like do you get the sort of specific strategic guidance you were looking for, like a specific deliverable you were looking for? Maybe not, but do you build relationships? Yes."

Others discussed the importance of outcomes that are accessible to members of the community, with one participant stating that "oftentimes research is done on the community instead of with the community, and so making sure that the results are given back to the community so that they can use it . . . is important." The importance of elevating existing expertise in the community was often evoked with discussing efforts to identify solutions to community issues. For example, one participant expressed the belief that "the community teaches us. . . . They're the ones that know their community best, so therefore they tell us what they need and then we try and help them with that." Furthermore, individuals emphasized the importance of addressing barriers (e.g., "We all work together to build a stronger and more resilient regional food system, regional economic system, regional social system"), gaining credibility (e.g., "If you want to go for a big USDA or NIFA grant or something, it really helps to have a research partner on board. . . . It gives your study credibility that we just don't have as a non-profit institution"), and student training (e.g., "There's certain perks to working in this industry in general, just getting out into the parks is nice, so I think these are attractive opportunities for students that are engaging or considering that type of career").

Typology of Community Organizations Working on Sustainability

As noted, participants were invited to sort 16 statements derived from existing research (Table 1) into a grid, positioning the statements so they indicated whether the participants placed higher or lower priority on achieving the stated outcome in their research partnerships. The structure of the sorting activity is based in Q methodology and facilitates recognition of distinctive perspectives among the participants. Effectively, the method investigates the extent to which variation in how participants rank outcomes (their Q-sort) can be grouped into some smaller number of "ideal types" that approximate the perspectives of participants associated with that ideal type. Settling on the number of groups then involves the consideration of multiple quantitative and qualitative factors where one weighs tradeoffs between fewer, potentially oversimplified, ideal types and more, potentially unwieldy, ideal types. The goal is to settle on the number of ideal types—to extract some number of factors—that provides more fidelity to the diversity of perspectives than a simple averaging of everyone's rankings but doesn't introduce so much detail that the resulting typology is too complicated to use in practice.

Initial consideration of a scree plot of Eigenvalues suggested that each additional factor extracted beyond the fifth factor provided diminishing returns toward explaining variation among the participants' Q-sorts. An analysis based on three factors explained 41% of the variation across the Q-sorts; an analysis based on four factors explained 51% of the variation; one based on five factors explained 60%. Qualitative considerations were then weighed to determine whether an analysis based on three, four, or five extracted factors coherently organized the perspectives of participants. For each analysis, we considered the statements deemed characteristic of each factor within that analysis, which represent where participants who are associated with that factor placed relatively greater (indicated by an Eigenvalue greater than 1) or less (indicated by an Eigenvalue of less than -1) emphasis on an outcome as compared to the average participant. An analysis is more coherent when its characteristic statements appear conceptually similar or related and less coherent if its characteristic statements appear unrelated. We also considered which participants would be associated with (or "load onto") each of the factors and reflected on whether the grouping of participants suggested by this quantitative analysis would parallel similarities in their responses across the overall semistructured interview. In light of both sorts of qualitative considerations, we selected the analysis based on four factors to best account for the distinctive perspectives among the participants. Table 2 provides the Eigenvalues for all statements according to the four-factor analysis, with statements considered characteristic of that factor indicated in bold.

We deploy the following labels for each of the four factors in an effort to capture what distinguishes each group: (1) problem solvers, (2) capacity builders, (3) far-sighted visionaries, and (4) community advocates. Problem solvers place comparatively higher priority on innovation and solutions. The term "problem solvers" reflects these organizations' emphasis on solving pressing problems in the community, as well as problems within the organization that may be inhibiting programming efforts. Capacity builders place comparatively greater emphasis on relationships and funding, and though credibility falls just short of the typical quantitative threshold to consider it characteristic, triangulation with interviews suggests that credibility is desired. The term "capacity builders" reflects these partners' strong interest in engaging with university researchers who are in decision-making roles and capable of contributing to executive procedures (e.g., grant writing). Far-sighted visionaries place comparatively higher priority on the outcomes new energy, innovation, practical, and funding. The term "far-sighted visionaries" reflects their emphasis on imaginative and intentional practices to improve organizational programming. Community advocates place comparatively greater emphasis on the outcomes accessible, elevates, and barriers, while placing lower priority on solutions. The term "community advocates" reflects these organizations' emphasis on facilitating impactful research that may be used to advocate on behalf of community needs.

To determine whether a participant belongs to a particular grouping, factor loadings were calculated as the multiplier for the desired level of statistical significance divided

Table 2. Characterizing Statements for Motivational Frames

Outcomes	**Problem solvers**	**Capacity builders**	**Far-sighted visionaries**	**Community advocates**
Practical	0.80	0.27	**1.07**	0.81
Solutions	**1.45**	0.57	0.00	**−1.84**
Anticipates	−0.63	−0.62	−0.71	−0.59
Innovation	**2.03**	−0.58	**1.07**	0.10
Relationships	0.22	**1.09**	−0.35	0.36
Elevates	0.78	**−1.26**	−0.36	**1.54**
Accessible	0.43	0.50	−0.36	**1.20**
Barriers	0.00	0.45	**−1.79**	**1.42**
Credibility	−0.93	**0.99**	0.35	0.00
Students	−0.87	0.11	−0.72	−0.71
Perspectives	0.38	0.62	0.02	0.59
Funding	−0.20	**1.71**	**1.79**	0.00
Energy	−0.75	0.13	**1.06**	−0.30
Learning	−0.73	−0.75	0.71	0.00
Stigma	0.03	**−1.09**	**−1.78**	−0.88
Qualifications	**−2.00**	**−2.14**	0.01	**−1.72**

Note. Outcome statements with Eigenvalues greater than 1 or less than −1 are generally considered characteristic for a factor and are indicated in bold. The intersection of Credibility and Capacity Builders is bolded despite exhibiting an Eigenvalue of less than 1 as respondents frequently emphasized the importance of credibility through lengthier elaborations by the square root of the number of statements in the sort (Watts & Stenner, 2012). At $p < .05$, 13 of 14 participants loaded onto one of these four factors; the one remaining participant was unable to load significantly onto any distinct factor. Interestingly, the typology cuts across the area of sustainability in which the participants work. Problem solvers included community services leaders, city program directors, parks services, and water-protection services. Capacity builders included conservation specialists, farmland restoration specialists, and community services leaders. Far-sighted visionaries included food equity specialists and community health services leaders. Community advocates included city program directors, food equity partners, and energy specialists.

Community Organizations' Rationale for Engagement in University–Community Partnerships

The four factors emerging from the Q methodology were used to group individuals based on the desired outcomes that motivate their engagement in partnerships with university researchers. Interviews were then analyzed to provide qualitative insight into these organizations' participation in, and hopes for, university–community partnerships. This analysis suggests that each of the four groups is motivated differently, and that these motivations inform variation in the type and extent of their partnerships with academics. It further suggests that, depending on the motivation of a particular community partner, their expectations for the conduct or character traits of an "ideal university partner" will differ. Specifically, community partners' understanding of university engagement varies from more transactional in nature to more transformational, with those in the latter category seeking university partners who can rethink the role of academic institutions in a more egalitarian society.

Problem Solvers

The most common perspective among participants, representing five of 14 participants, was that of a community problem solver. In terms of ranked values, problem solvers ranked *innovation* and *solutions* as among the most important goals for sustainable partnerships. As mentioned in the previous section, this type of participant was interested in solving problems in the wider community and within the organization itself. For example, one participant offered:

> If a partnership with university researchers can make us more effective in our work, that's a really important reason to work with university researchers. . . . They might have access to research tools, databases, journals. . . . Or be able to take more of a broad view, like look comparatively across communities at what people are doing that's effective.

Similarly, another participant from the problem solvers group stated that "I would expect the university to be doing research that was new, cutting-edge, exploratory, something that hadn't been thought of before, or looking at problems in ways that hadn't been looked at before. . . ." These quotes exemplify how problem solvers, compared to other types of partners, are primarily motivated to collaborate with university researchers for strategic guidance to increase the likelihood of achieving programming objectives. When asked about the traits that they look for in a university partner, problem solvers are most interested in academic researchers with relevant knowledge or expertise. For example, one participant explained that "when we seek out [a collaboration], it's usually because there's a specific need to understand something that we don't have the capacity for." Problem solvers appeared to prefer collaborations that allow partners to "put their heads together" to come up with new solutions. Overall, interviews with problem solvers emphasized the desire to work with academic researchers who operate similarly to professional consultants.

Capacity Builders

The next most common perspective among participants, representing three participants, was that of a capacity builder. In terms of ranked values, these participants were defined by *prioritizing relationships, funding*, and *credibility* more highly than others. As one participant put it:

> There's a level of legitimacy to the project, to our organization, our initiative, that would be lent to us by having respected institutional partners who, even if they weren't primary financial contributors, by collaborating with us, I believe they would lend a tremendous amount of

> weight to our initiative, simply because we're new and nobody really knows us.

The participant discusses the role of the collaboration in building trust among community members, and this sentiment is echoed by other participants categorized as capacity builders. Across various capacity builders, there was an appreciation of how enhanced credibility can influence the level of funding and relational support offered at the local community, state, and national levels. Compared to others, capacity builders emphasized the importance of collaborating with academic researchers who mobilize scientific knowledge to produce shared outcomes. For example, one participant expressed concern over proprietary information with research and stated, "It'd be great to be able to . . . publish some data . . . on our website that went along with the research project. . . . Research can't be just for the good of one individual researcher." Interview analysis revealed that capacity builders emphasize rather dependable gains from partners instead of flexible, creative, or empathetic characteristics, as evidenced by a participant's input: "We work together [to] meet both of our missions, but again, [it's important] having those goals for that interaction defined and then having ways of measuring whether we're helping each other."

According to both problem solvers and capacity builders, the purpose for collaborating with universities is largely related to overcoming resource limitations (e.g., insufficient funding, gap in specialized knowledge). Without the assistance of the university, the research described during interviews likely would have been impossible for the organization to carry out alone. This point was especially emphasized by newer organizations; for example, one capacity builder participant described how a university partnership was essential, as it lent a "level of legitimacy to the project, organization, and initiative" that allowed "citizens to, over time, trust" their organization. For both sorts of partners, partnerships are more transactional in nature, similar to the relationship between a client and consultant, and aspiring toward ideals such as reliability and transparency.

Community Advocates

Also represented by three participants was the perspective of a community advocate. In terms of ranked values, community advocates rank the outcomes *accessible, elevates,* and *barriers* more highly than others. As one participant stated,

> Every community member has their own expertise . . . they know what they need and they maybe don't know the steps to get there. That's where the city or a community project . . . at the university can help. . . . Work with them to figure out how to get the solution that's needed.

Similarly, another community advocate participant emphasized interest in stakeholder engagement, in which someone was hired as a community engagement representative to "talk to community members to figure out exactly what they want to see through the project" and to identify potential barriers to achieving the goals of a given project. Compared to other types of partners, community advocates appear to operate from an almost entirely bottom-up perspective. This orientation is supported by the finding that community advocates did not place emphasis on the scholarly expertise of their university partners. Multiple interviews with community advocates indicate that the interest in partnering with a university is heavily dependent upon how much of the desired outcome directly benefits community members as opposed to benefiting either the organization or (especially) the university. For example, one participant expressed that because university partners are "looking for student learning outcomes, they [scholars] can easily just be like, 'Well, the student is learning through this, so we've done our due diligence,' . . . but in this case . . . it's not meeting clients' expectations." Community advocates tend to express distrust toward academic institutions and correspondingly value university partners that they find sincere and unlikely to be motivated by self-interest.

Far-Sighted Visionaries

Finally, represented by two participants, was the perspective of a far-sighted visionary. In terms of ranked values, these participants were both defined by prioritizing the outcomes *new energy, innovation, practical,* and *funding* more highly than others. For example, one participant emphasized the following:

> Where we're going from a young emerging non-profit to a grow-

> ing blossoming one, but we're still young and small. We don't have a ton of resources, and so funding is very important obviously, to continue to improve the quality of our programs and expand. . . . We're in an exciting growth and development phase. . . . We need support because it does take a lot of time to engage students for whether it's classes, research, the experiential hands-on learning on site, volunteering, all that . . . so I'm hoping . . . we can expand and increase that engagement for the benefit of, not just as a UD missionary, but the community and their needs we serve.

A different far-sighted visionary discussed the importance of bringing attention to "new and exciting [practices] that bring energy to the organization and allow us to expand our program," as a way to avoid stagnation. Further, these partners expressed a strong desire to be inclusive of all aspects of sustainability critical to the local region that was coupled with an appreciation for "hands-on learning" opportunities that contribute to mutually beneficial partnerships. For example, one participant described their ideal research partner as "actually trying to implement programs or projects that the students worked on . . . through their research project . . . I would like to see projects and ideas come to be a reality." Far-sighted visionaries reported greater interest in academics who exhibit a great deal of intentionality about the purpose of the partnership and consistently dedicate themselves to those purposes.

Participants representing both far-sighted visionaries and community advocates collaborated with universities in a way that challenges the traditional knowledge hierarchy by placing greater emphasis on the contributions and returns to the community. Further, the way the participants with these perspectives discussed the role of the university signaled that, because the university is located within the community, university resources (including skilled researchers) ought to be dedicated to producing knowledge for the larger community. For example, when asked to describe their ideal university partner, one community advocate participant stated the following:

> They're deeply embedded in the community . . . and able to develop deep relationships and trust. And within that trust, I believe their intentions to want to walk with the community and not be like a superman or superwoman, but they acknowledge that strong people don't need strong leaders.

Although some community partners may depend on universities for programming assistance, others emphasize the perspective that the university has a responsibility to offer such services because it is part of the social charge of higher education institutions.

Discussion

These findings suggest that community organizations focused on sustainability work are motivated to partner with university researchers for a variety of reasons. University researchers must recognize these different motivations to generate impactful and inclusive collaborations with community partners and the stakeholders that they serve. Problem solvers were motivated by innovative solutions for pressing problems in the community, whereas capacity builders focused more on building relationships, establishing credibility, and securing support. Capacity builders already possessed relevant sustainability knowledge but were looking for assistance to increase engagement with community stakeholders. Community advocates stressed the importance of elevating community expertise and overcoming barriers to community participation, partly by generating more accessible information. Meanwhile, far-sighted visionaries emphasized the importance of working with university partners who bring new energy and resources to expand as well as continue ongoing programming. Although all four types of community partners described ideal partnerships as ones operating with a two-way exchange of information (Groulx et al., 2021), this vision was strongest in community advocates, who above all emphasized responsibility of the university partner to share critical information with stakeholders and, at times, completely yield ownership to stakeholders.

Closer examination of characteristics of the four types of community partner indicated that in addition to varying motivations for joining a collaboration, community partners differ in how they understand university-community partnerships more generally.

Problem solvers and capacity builders described collaborations in terms of a university providing expertise or at least scholarly resources necessary for programming. Community partners of this mindset appear most interested in collaborations where the primary role of the university is to fulfill a need by providing knowledge and resources. Though we have followed the convention of using "community–university partnerships" and "university–community partnerships" interchangeably, it may serve as a useful heuristic to describe *these* arrangements as "university–community partnerships" to signal that university capabilities are centered. These partners largely endorse the traditional institutional arrangement where universities are fountains of knowledge and university partners are specialized experts who deserve a great deal of epistemic deference. Certainly, many of the research projects described by community partners, for instance studies of water quality or of ecological restoration, fit the mold of scientific study where university partners bring theoretical and methodological insights that can be of tremendous service to the missions of nonprofits and municipal agencies. These expectations should be respected, and they can be codified through memoranda of understanding and other more formal arrangements where outcomes are explicitly specified in advance. There is an important place for partnerships that are more transactional than transformative, and norms that attach to transactions—such as transparency and fairness—are more appropriate to these practical contexts.

In contrast, the way far-sighted visionaries and community advocates discussed collaborations indicated that the most critical knowledge was already held within the community, and the primary role of university partners was to elevate this knowledge and render it more influential in collective decision-making. Community partners of this mindset worked to center the community's lived experience and expressed a lack of interest in working with scholars who acted separately from the community. Therefore, it is suggested that successful collaborative partnerships with community partners of this understanding operate as a function of civic interdependence, in which resources are shared, not controlled, and greater consideration is given to the outcomes desired by both partners (Barrera, 2015). It might be more apt to term these arrangements "community–university partnerships" to signal heuristically that it is the input or epistemic contributions of community partners that lead the way in knowledge coproduction. This terminology can subtly signal resistance to the power dynamic that is implied when listing the university before the community, which is in direct opposition to these partners' reasons for engaging in community–university partnerships. The broad aims of this transformed power dynamic often entail outcomes being more difficult to specify in advance, and though partners should enter the process with forethought on the roles and responsibilities of different members, it can be counterproductive to specify outcomes in terms of an agreed-upon transaction. Here, partnerships are sustained through the facilitation of an inclusive process, with clear checkpoints where goals can be discussed, evaluated, and reimagined. Although we recommend that institutions of higher education work with communities to identify and articulate the perspectives that are distinctive to their particular place, our findings reinforce the literature showing that partners' expectations include both transactional and transformative arrangements. Institutional policies that ensure best practices should differentiate between these types of partnerships and appeal to norms appropriate for sustaining each on its own terms.

Conclusion

Our study suggests that the literature on community–university partnerships has identified many of the goals that community partners bring to these collaborations, but also that further research is needed to survey these goals more comprehensively and systematically. Further, interviews with community partners coupled with a sorting activity reveal distinctive perspectives that tend to place relative priority on particular clusters of goals. In our study, four perspectives emerged, representing partners who emphasized solving practical problems, building capacity within their organization, advocating for underrepresented community members, and coconstructing a vision to orient collective action. Analysis resulting in these distinctive perspectives corroborates others' findings that community organizations may enter into partnerships with a variety of aspirations. Partnerships are most likely to generate mutual benefits and reciprocity if each partner's distinctive focus is made explicit and continually discussed.

An analysis like ours can inform better partnership practices by introducing an initial typology of perspectives that can better enable university partners to recognize the unique goals and motivations that community partners may bring to their collaborations. At our university, faculty do enter into partnerships with an appreciation that their own motivations are not necessarily shared by community organizations, and that partnerships must achieve mutual benefits by generating outcomes that might matter more to their community partners. Although each partnership should begin with a frank conversation about the outcomes that will sustain each partner’s participation, entering that conversation with a preliminary understanding of a fuller range of perspectives can facilitate mutual understanding and recognition. Higher education institutions looking to facilitate transdisciplinary collaboration could work with their community partners to codesign a study along these lines and produce their own typology grounded in their particular place. At some institutions, coproducing knowledge through such a study can better position community-based researchers to advocate for evidence-based reward structures that encourage “thick” reciprocal relationships. More generally, such research helps us reflect and deliberate on the outcomes that qualify a partnership as mutually beneficial, moving beyond a contrast between university and community motivations toward a vocabulary that foregrounds the goals of community partners, whatever they may be.

Declaration of Interest

We have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

Author Note

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tia N. Turner, Wayne State University, 5057 Woodward Ave, Detroit, MI 48201. Email: turner.tia@wayne.edu

About the Authors

Tia N. Turner *is a doctoral student in clinical–community psychology at Wayne State University. Her research interests focus on community program development and evaluation, specifically programs designed to address negative outcomes among highly stigmatized populations such as justice-involved individuals and those experiencing homelessness. Before attending Wayne State, Tia earned her MA in clinical psychology from the University of Dayton, where she also served as a graduate fellow of the Hanley Sustainability Institute.*

Zachary Piso *is the director of the Rivers Institute at the University of Dayton, where he also serves as coordinator of interdisciplinary research with the Hanley Sustainability Institute and as an assistant professor of philosophy. His research explores methods of engaging communities in collaborative environmental governance, and his day-to-day work involves partnerships with civil society groups working toward sustainability and stewardship in Ohio’s Miami River Watersheds. He received his PhD in philosophy from Michigan State University.*

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Appendix. Community–University Partners Sustainability Research: Interview Protocol

Review the consent form and in particular the purpose of the interviews: The literature on community–university partnered research emphasizes the importance of partnerships generating outcomes that support the personal and professional goals of both community organizations and university actors. Different community organizations bring different goals to these collaborations, and this research will contribute to a better understanding of what makes these partnerships valuable to them. Your interview responses will inform programming at the University of Dayton so that we as an institution can support more equitable partnerships, and it may also serve as the basis of scholarly articles to share insights with the broader research community interested in equitable community–university partnerships. If it's alright with you, we'd like to record our conversation for ease of transcription and analysis.

Interview walkthrough: The interviews consist of three stages; first, I'll ask you about your prior experience partnering with colleges or universities. Then, we'll focus on the goals that you have for these partnerships, both to this point and heading forward. Finally, I'll ask you to reflect on the outcomes and processes that qualify a partnership as successful in your eyes, as well as the character traits of partners that you hold in high regard. All told, interviews usually run 30–45 minutes.

Question 1	To begin, have you or your organization worked with researchers from local colleges and universities? What sorts of projects have you collaborated on?
Probing 1.A	[Listen for some of the outcomes of these collaborations] It sounds like one of the outcomes of this project was X. Were there any additional outcomes that you found valuable?
Probing 1.B	[If the organization hasn't collaborated] Are there any projects where you think there would be value in collaborating with local researchers? What would valuable projects produce?
Question 2	Next, I have a small activity that will help us to understand how different organizations assign value to different outcomes. Each of these sixteen statements expresses an outcome that some partners have reported as important goals for equitable partnerships. Over the next ten minutes or so, please place them into this grid, with the outcomes at the top representing the ones that you find most important, the ones at the bottom representing those you find least important (though not necessarily unimportant), and any that share a row as having roughly similar importance. I'm happy to help to clarify any of the statements, and you'll have the opportunity to discuss outcomes that are important but that aren't captured by these sixteen statements.
Probing 2.1	[Ask about the outcome they placed highest and what it means to them] [If time permits (e.g. total time to this point is less than 20 minutes), ask also about the second row of responses]
Probing 2.2	Thinking about the *outcomes* of successful research partnerships—we'll circle around to process shortly—are there any goals that you have for research that isn't included in the grid?
Question 3	When thinking about your past partnerships, do you believe that the partnership achieved the goals that you brought to the collaboration? Where did you find success? Were you ever disappointed?
Probing 3.1	[If total time to this point is less than 30 minutes] Did your goals change over the course of the collaboration? Do you think your partners' goals changed?

Probing 3.2	Have you found your past partnerships to be mutually beneficial for both you and the university researchers with whom you've collaborated?
Question 4	Now these outcomes are the result of your and your partners' collaborative process. Have you found the process of working with university researchers to be conducive to achieving your and your organization's goals? Why and why not?
Question 5	What would you like to see in a university researcher to make you feel confident about partnering with them? Your "ideal university partner" as it were.
Question 6	That covers the questions that we prepared heading into our interview. Is there anything that you'd like to add about community–university partnered sustainability research that we haven't discussed?

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The Interlocking Roles of Campus Security and Redevelopment in University-Driven Neighborhood Change: A Case Study of the University of Pennsylvania

Francesca M. Ciampa

Abstract

Why are many urban universities' relationships with their surrounding communities fraught despite university efforts at community engagement? Relationships between the factors underlying university-driven neighborhood change remain largely unexplored. In this article, I take the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) as a case study and examine the relationship between campus security on the one hand and university-related redevelopment projects in Penn's West Philadelphia neighborhood on the other. I ask what this relationship can reveal about how university-driven neighborhood change operates and why Penn's relationship with its community is persistently tense. I organize my data into two case studies and argue that campus safety and redevelopment have long worked hand-in-hand to securitize campus by creating and reinforcing private zones of exclusivity. Not only have crime and resulting security measures played a key role in driving redevelopment projects, but recently, redevelopment itself has further begun to serve as a form of securitization.

Keywords: university-driven neighborhood change, campus policing, campus safety, redevelopment, University of Pennsylvania

Across the United States, many urban universities' relationships with their surrounding communities are tense, as neighborhoods experience change as a result of campus expansion, gentrification, and university-related policing and surveillance. I take the University of Pennsylvania (Penn)—which has the second-largest campus police force in the country and a long history of campus expansion and redevelopment initiatives in surrounding West Philadelphia—as a case study through which to explore these dynamics.

Drawing on existing theories of urban fear, social exclusion, and "othering," I frame Penn as operating within a context in which elite subsets of the urban population attempt to remove and protect themselves, through gated communities or other means, from groups that they perceive as "other" and as threats to their safety. This attitude among elites leads to the construction of geographic and social spaces of exclusivity that are reinforced by securitization in many forms. This context, I argue, has shaped Penn's approach to campus safety and to expansion and redevelopment projects in its surrounding community. I define campus safety as Penn's overall approach to security, including but not limited to its campus police department. I refer to campus expansion and university-related redevelopment as the facet of Penn's impact on its community that reshapes urban infrastructure. I argue that campus safety and redevelopment have worked hand-in-hand at Penn in that they have both functioned to securitize campus via creating and reinforcing these formally or informally private zones of exclusivity.

I explore case studies from two large waves of expansion and redevelopment in Penn's surroundings, the first during the 1950s–1970s and the second during the 1990s–2000s, and find an evolving relationship between campus security and redevelopment. In both cases, redevelopment emerged from or was justified by crime and resulting security concerns. In the second case, redevelopment itself further served as a form of securitization. Throughout its history, campus policing has contributed to this narrative in that it has continually played a reactive rather than a preventive role. Penn's campus police force has grown by increments into what it is today largely in response to individual incidents of crime, even as these increases have generally been more effective at appeasing concerned students, parents, and investors than at reducing crime rates. Overall, university-driven neighborhood change at Penn is deeply intertwined with dynamics of securitization, exclusivity, and privatization.

These takeaways raise a multitude of new questions for research that seeks to understand universities' relationships with their communities and how community engagement can be made more effective. Whether the patterns I find at Penn hold for urban universities in general is a topic for future research. However, these patterns suggest that universities must incorporate an understanding of historical patterns of privatization and exclusivity into community engagement initiatives, and must endeavor to break down the walls between campus and community that have historically been constructed and reinforced.

Literature Review

Campus Security and Redevelopment

Although scholarship has begun to probe the nature and history of campus security on the one hand and of university-related redevelopment on the other, few have considered whether these two topics are interconnected and what their relationship might reveal about the overall nature of university-driven neighborhood change. Taking Penn as a case study, this article will put these two areas of scholarship into dialogue and explore the results of doing so.

In the existing literature, the history of campus security offers interesting parallels to that of university-related redevelopment, substantiating the idea that exploring their relationship can be productive. Although campus police forces existed as early as the turn of the 20th century, prior to the 1950s or so they were typically small and informal (Paoline & Sloan, 2003; Powell, 1994). A trend toward expansion and professionalization began in the 1950s and accelerated during the 1960s and 1970s; this period saw campus police forces grow in numbers, funding, and technology (Peak et al., 2008). Interestingly, the 1950s–1970s was also the period when urban universities were first taking a hand in transforming their surroundings on a large scale, as Cold War–era defense research funding and urban renewal legislation paved the way for them to realize massive campus expansion initiatives (Bradley, 2018; O'Mara, 2005; Puckett & Lloyd, 2015). In more recent decades, especially during the 1990s and 2000s, a second wave of university-related redevelopment emerged. During this period, universities engaged in efforts at urban revitalization of their surrounding neighborhoods, following the disinvestment that accompanied suburbanization; these efforts were typically realized in partnership with private developers or by stimulating independent private development (Baldwin, 2021; Carpenter et al., 2016). Correspondingly, during these decades campus police forces further expanded and professionalized, undergoing law enforcement training, gaining arrest powers, and employing more and more sophisticated technology (Bromley & Reaves, 1998; Hummer et al., 1998).

Some researchers have begun to explore these connections. For example, Baldwin (2021) framed campus policing and university-driven redevelopment as working hand-in-hand; Carpenter et al. (2016) made connections between the demographics harmed by redevelopment and those targeted by campus police. Even this research, however, does not focus directly on the connection between security and redevelopment in urban universities' histories, instead making this connection a smaller part of a different overall topic. This article will explore this connection at Penn in detail.

Urban Fear, Othering, and Securitization

The dynamics I discuss in relation to Penn and its community reflect broader theories around the psychologies and motivations behind gated communities, private security forces, and similar phenomena. Human society has a long history of the elite seeking to remove and protect themselves from local populations; in recent decades, the psychological lure of defended space has become especially enticing as media coverage and national hysteria surrounding urban crime have created a “culture of fear” (Low, 2001). This fear is closely intertwined with increasing reliance on urban securitization, policing, and segregation, as security systems become increasingly connected with membership, prestige, and personal insulation from “unsavory” groups and individuals (Davis, 2006).

The concept of othering is useful for conceptualizing the basis of urban fear and securitization. The theory of othering can be traced back to 1948, when the term was coined by French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas; since then, othering has received significant attention as a theoretical framework explaining oppression (Boyce & Chunnu, 2019). Othering occurs when some individuals and groups are negated, excluded, and dehumanized, typically by those with power based on class and/or race privilege. Davis (2006) linked othering to urban fear and securitization: Today’s upscale, pseudopublic spaces, Davis wrote, “are full of invisible signs warning off the underclass ‘Other.’” Whereas “architectural critics are usually oblivious to how the built environment contributes to segregation, pariah groups—whether poor Latino families, young Black men, or elderly homeless white females—read the meaning immediately” (Davis, 2006, p. 225). Thus, “othering” is a term that helps to describe a wide variety of phenomena including the dynamics of fear and social exclusion.

To draw this into my research on Penn, a few brief pieces of context are relevant. Penn moved to its current West Philadelphia location (across the narrow Schuylkill River from the city center) during the 19th century, when the area was still a middle- and upper-class suburb. Local demographics changed as upper-class people moved even further afield to escape increasing congestion and industrial pollution, while working-class people moved from the city center to West Philadelphia with the emergence of public transportation lines. West Philadelphia, along with the city as a whole and alongside a national trend, suffered from economic decline starting in the early to mid 20th century. Deindustrialization led to job loss among the working class, and suburbanization caused population loss and economic divestment from the urban core (Elesh, 2017). Sparse population and shuttered businesses led to unemployment, poverty, and vacant urban spaces that created an ideal setting for the growth of the drug trade and rising crime rates starting in the 1960s (Puckett, n.d.-a; Schneider, 2014). Only in the 21st century has Philadelphia, again alongside cities across the country, begun to emerge from economic decline. This upturn has largely been fueled by “meds and eds”: large hospitals and research universities that serve as economic powerhouses in their surrounding cities (Baldwin, 2021). In Philadelphia, Penn is one of the largest of these.

As a result of these historical patterns, Penn is located within a largely working-class and majority-Black community. A shocking wealth gap exists between its campus and the rest of West Philadelphia. In the 21st century, Penn is further one of the most powerful economic players in the city. As I analyze the rise of campus security alongside Penn’s development efforts, I frame Penn as an elite, predominantly White institution, operating within and inevitably shaped by these evolving psychologies of urban fear, social exclusion, othering, and securitization.

Research Methods

This research relies on a mixture of qualitative, quantitative, and archival data. The qualitative component consists of a dozen interviews with various stakeholders, from longtime neighborhood residents to community activists to the head of Penn’s campus safety department. Interviewees are anonymous unless they asked for their names to be included. The appropriate Internal Review Board (IRB) procedures were taken. The quantitative component consists of GIS mapping as well as statistical information drawn from public reports released by the Penn and Philadelphia Police Departments. The archival component is based on newspaper archives as well as archival photos and maps.

I take a largely historical approach, organized around two case studies that correspond with the two most prominent periods of campus expansion and neighborhood redevelopment during Penn’s 20th-century history. The first is set during the urban renewal era of the 1950s–1970s, during which urban universities including Penn frequently took advantage of federal and state urban renewal legislation coupled with Cold War-era research funding to expand their campuses into surrounding communities. The second is set during the urban revitalization era of the 1990s–2000s, during which time state-driven urban renewal had given way to efforts to stimulate private development in cities, and urban universities again frequently engaged in this effort. Taking a historical approach allows me to trace change over time as well as bring out patterns in what has remained the same.

Case Study 1: 36th and Market Streets, 1950s–1970s

Crime, Security, and Campus Expansion in the Black Bottom

During the first half of the 20th century, the area just north of Penn's campus was a working-class, predominantly Black neighborhood known as the Black Bottom. Leading up to the 1960s, as Penn sought to establish itself as a world-class research university, it began eyeing the area as a target for campus expansion. During this time period, federal and state urban renewal legislation authorized the seizure and redevelopment of neighborhoods determined to be "blighted." Penn could not realize its plans to redevelop the Black Bottom unless the city designated the neighborhood blighted. Penn bided its time, but, according to Penn professor and former Black Bottom resident Walter Palmer, not idly. He recalled, "Little by little, they bought properties [in the Black Bottom] and allowed the properties to fall into disrepair" (personal communication, September 30, 2021), creating the signs of blight that they needed.

Penn further played a key role in building up perceptions of blight beyond signs of physical disrepair. It relied significantly on discourses of crime and security in order to do so. Penn's desire to expand its campus coincided with growing attention on the part of Penn administrators and the Penn community at large toward area crime, starting in the 1930s and intensifying in the 1950s and early 1960s—before crime rates on record began to rise as they did during the later 1960s and 1970s. The significant evolution of campus police during this period is an indicator of the university's growing attention. Penn had dormitory watchmen as early as 1912, but they grew into a real campus police force in the early 1930s—around the same time as, according to Palmer, conversations around redeveloping the Black Bottom were beginning. By 1938, Penn had 13 official campus guards, each of whom was commissioned by the city, permitted to carry a revolver, and authorized to make arrests on campus or in the near vicinity ("Finding Dead Man and Carrying Guns," 1938). Their numbers, duties, equipment, and patrol zone only grew from there. Another indication of Penn's increasing focus on crime was its decision, in 1954, to join the Campus Security Association, made up of several northeastern universities with the purpose of exchanging information on campus thefts, suspects, and arrests ("Penn Police Force Joins Campus Security Ass'n," 1954). A third example is Penn's commissioning of a thorough study of "crime and delinquency" that compared its surrounding neighborhoods with one another and with the campus area, published in 1963 (Hornum, 1963). This focus on crime and security reflects an increasing circulation of concern around area crime. Further, unlike during earlier decades when rowdy students had been the university's main disciplinary target, Penn was now locating the threat outside the university's boundaries and in the neighborhoods surrounding campus.

The broader Penn community, as well, was paying increasing attention to crime. Petty theft, for example, which was common on and around campus, was receiving greater attention and gaining press coverage in campus publications such as the *Daily Pennsylvanian*. As one contributor put it, "The exception has become the person whose car hasn't been damaged, whose possessions haven't been stolen." The same contributor added, "The city and campus police seem helpless to stop this petty crime wave" ("Student Complains About Thievery," 1950), indicating a perception that policing was not an effective means of addressing these types of crimes.

Violent Crime as Catalyst

The connection between security concerns and campus expansion was solidified with the 1958 murder of In-Ho Oh, a Korean exchange student at Penn. As historian Eric Schneider has documented, Oh lived near 36th and Hamilton Streets, just north of the Black Bottom. On the evening of April 25, 1958, he was mugged by several local teenagers in search of money for admittance to a church dance. The robbery turned violent and Oh was beaten to death (see Schneider, 2020).

The murder quickly made local, national, and international news. All of the 11 perpetrators were soon arrested. Although they ranged in age from 15 to 18, they were tried as adults; further, the city's district attorney called for a death penalty sentence before the trial even began. The teenagers, who were all Black and all young men, were described in racialized terms in most media stories, to the point where one *Philadelphia Tribune* journalist, speaking out against these characterizations, likened the aftermath of the murder to a "lynch atmosphere" ("Slayers of In-Ho Oh," 1958). Another voiced concerns that the murder had "given rise to an unnecessary wave of hysteria, bordering on racism" and demanded, "Why is there no heat, anger or hysteria about the removal of the conditions that breed juvenile crime?" (Nabried, 1958).

The rhetoric belied the reality. According to a set of interviews conducted by the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the offenders were all from the area and all had at least one parent involved in their lives and dedicated to caring and providing for them. Most parents were shocked that their sons could have been involved in the crime (Philadelphia Tribune Staff Writers, 1958). The revelations in these interviews complicate a line of reasoning that sees environmental factors as wholly responsible for producing young people who commit crimes, again emphasizing the need for humanization.

In-Ho Oh's murder was a focal event that, combined with background attention toward crime and characterizations of the Black Bottom as blighted, provided justification for action. Within a month of the murder, Penn trustees approved a new partnership between the university and the city's Redevelopment Authority to create "University City," their name for the area its residents called the Black Bottom. Less than 2 months after the murder, representatives from Penn, Drexel University, what is now the University of the Sciences, and a range of other institutional partners established the West Philadelphia Corporation (WPC), a real estate development entity. They stated as rationalization for forming the WPC, "We face the potential of an ever increasing and encroaching area of residential slums surrounding our colleges and our hospitals" (West Philadelphia Medical and Educational Institutions, 1958)—demonstrating just how far perceptions of the area as blighted had come.

The extent to which "blighted" was an intentionally manufactured characterization becomes clear when taken against former Black Bottom residents' recollections of the neighborhood. When asked to describe their neighborhood, interviewees almost invariably emphasized its safety due to its tight-knit, family- and community-oriented nature. "I don't have any specific memories exactly, but just an overwhelming feeling that everybody cared about everybody," one former resident recalled. "You could leave your door open at night and no one cared. It was like you had more than one mother and father . . . kinda like a big extended family" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "The 'Black Bottom' Interviews," 1995, p. 2). Others concurred, recalling, "It was like family and no one ever locked any doors" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "Interviews of the 'Black Bottom,'" 1995, p. 6) and "The sense of community was key, we could leave our doors unlocked, we could sleep at night with our doors open, and just screen doors closed" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "Life in the 'Black Bottom,'" 1995, p. 3). Residents also emphasized how much things have changed: "What was so remarkable was that we didn't have the danger or fear that there is today. . . . There was just a great deal of trust that doesn't exist today" (Palmer Papers, "The 'Black Bottom' Interviews," 1995, p. 20). Another recalled, "There was nobody pulling out a knife and stabbing somebody or shooting somebody. There wasn't none of that back in those days. We fought with our fists, and it wasn't about killing nobody" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "Life in the 'Black Bottom,'" 1995, p. 10). The residents' sense of the neighborhood as safe suggests that Penn's perceptions of the area as crime-ridden were likely exaggerations, and that In-Ho Oh's murder, while a tragic event, did not represent a common occurrence.

The Science Center: Redevelopment at 36th and Market Streets

As noted above, the area surrounding 36th and Market Streets was originally the heart of the Black Bottom neighborhood, as Walter Palmer recalled. He lived at 3645 Market Street as a child, in a two-room apartment behind a beauty shop. His family and friends lived nearby, within a block. He described 36th and Market as "the heart of the neighborhood, where people congregated." He recalled the neighborhood's self-sufficiency: "You had everything you needed. You had a veterinarian building on 34th or 35th and Market. You had a Crown laundry, where people went to go to work. I worked there part-time after school." For food and other supplies, "You had the Acme Market on 36th and Market, south side; you had the Baron's Drug Store on the corner of 36th and Market on the west side. You had Titus Apothecary, right next to Baron's. You had Poppy's, an Italian marketplace, at 37th and Market." For entertainment, "It had a nightclub called the Club Vilmar, where I got a chance to play music as a teenager" (personal communication, September 30, 2021; see Figures 1–4).

During the 1960s, the WPC, in partnership with city agencies, redeveloped the stretch of Market Street that includes this intersection into the University City Science Center (UCSC), an urban research park intended to attract gifted scientists and scholars to the area and to establish Philadelphia as a national leader in high-tech research and development (see Figures 5 and 6). After the Cold War push for research and development faded, more recently the UCSC was rebranded as uCity Square, a business incubation center that today includes 17 buildings along Market Street.

As the map in Figure 7 demonstrates, the UCSC thoroughly transformed the infrastructure along this section of Market Street. The blocks enclosed in red dotted lines are from 36th to 38th Streets and from Market to Filbert Streets, the center of the original UCSC redevelopment area. The base image is a land use map from 1962, just before redevelopment. Current building footprints are overlaid in pink. The differences are striking: Whereas these blocks were previously made up of small parcels, they are now dominated by large buildings and complexes. To the south, the infrastructure has transformed in a similar way, with small parcels giving way to large building footprints. To the north, the land was originally redeveloped by the WPC into the University City High School, intended to be a magnet science school. However, the school, which served low-income Black students, was closed in 2013 and demolished in 2015 to make way for further redevelopment, which is currently ongoing.

A total of 2,653 people were displaced from their homes to make way for redevelopment in the area. Roughly 78% of the people forced to relocate were Black, and most were renters (Puckett, n.d.-b). Moreover, the Black Bottom's tight-knit community was destroyed. As one former resident testified, "The University seriously did nothing for the people that lived down here. They turned their backs on them. They're responsible for breaking up the neighborhood." The resident went on, "They said they're doing it in the name of progress. Progress for who? They're giving people like $1,100.00 for their homes, no moving expenses. I mean they just cheated people" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "Life in the 'Black Bottom,'" 1995, p. 21). Others opined regarding both Penn and Drexel, "They ripped up the community" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "Interviews of the 'Black Bottom,'" 1995, p. 6) and "They moved us out and in place of us is a couple of damn buildings. It's ridiculous" (Walter D. Palmer collection, "The 'Black Bottom' Interviews," 1995, p. 9).

In transforming the infrastructure of the area, redevelopment also changed its character: what it is used for, who inhabits it, and which types of people feel at home in it. Whereas it had been an economic and social center for the Black Bottom community, redevelopment transformed it into a space for researchers and businesspeople, so that it first served to further Cold War–era militarization efforts and now serves to incubate businesses (see Figures 8 and 9).

Analysis of the Black Bottom Case Study

Drawing on theories regarding urban fear, social exclusion, and othering helps to frame Penn's approach in redeveloping the Black Bottom. This period was in the midst of industrialization, the Great Migration, and high rates of working-class European immigration. The rhetoric around urban blight, slums, and diseased neighborhoods apparent in characterizations of the Black Bottom was common among upper-class White people who shied away from these neighborhoods and instead retreated into zones of exclusivity, whether suburbs, gated communities, or other types of enclaves. This context shaped Penn's approach, as an elite, predominantly White university adjacent to a working-class, majority Black community. Walter Palmer's description of Penn's intentions echoes these themes of exclusivity and othering. As he opined, "I think Penn really wanted to make a gated community, and I think their perception of Black people being criminals, Black people being subhuman, I think Penn fostered a lot of that" (personal communication, September 30, 2021).

The approach Penn took here, in which it seemed logical to respond to crime by redeveloping a neighborhood, is cast in sharper relief when comparing it with other responses to crime. Oh's murder spurred the development of the WPC, but it also led nearby resident and activist Herman Wrice to found the Young Great Society, a community group that organized sports programs, day care centers, and other initiatives designed to keep young people off the streets and inspire them to become proactive community organizers and leaders. Wrice's response to the murder reflects how he located the issue at hand in gang violence; Penn's response reflects how it located the issue in the otherness of its surrounding neighborhoods.

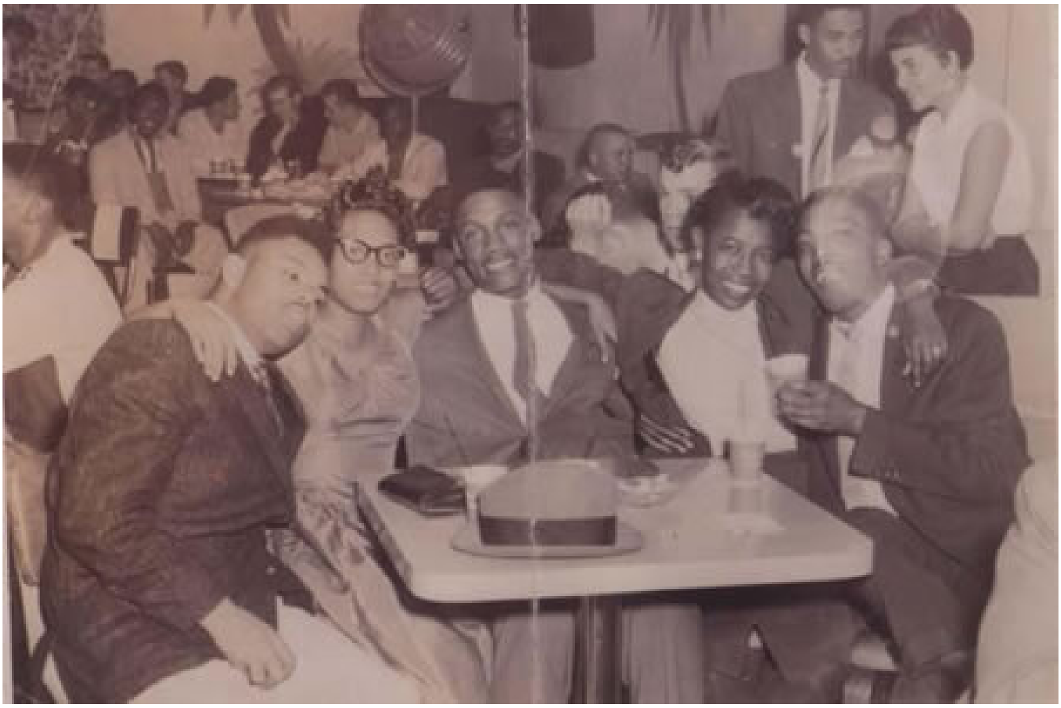
Although statistical data on policing from this era is sparse, anecdotally we can see that policing was deeply interrelated with redevelopment. Chronologically, increased campus policing and Penn's increasing attention toward crime accompanied its growing desire to expand its campus and preceded the Black Bottom's redevelopment. Following from Mike Davis (2006), who argued that "the market provision of 'security' generates its own paranoid demand" (p. 224), perhaps here increased policing and corresponding attention toward crime allowed Oh's murder to gain the public attention and the level of sensationalism that it needed to be used as justification for redevelopment. Anecdotes from former Black Bottom residents and the *Daily Pennsylvanian* also indicate that there was significant police presence in the Black Bottom and suggest that policing, both campus and city, was not effective at addressing crime in the area. These anecdotes suggest a further role that policing played here: paving the way for redevelopment to come to the table. If policing had been perceived as an effective solution, it would likely have been the logical response to Oh's murder rather than redevelopment.

Case Study 2: 40th and Walnut Streets, 1990s–2000s

Background: Rising Crime Rates

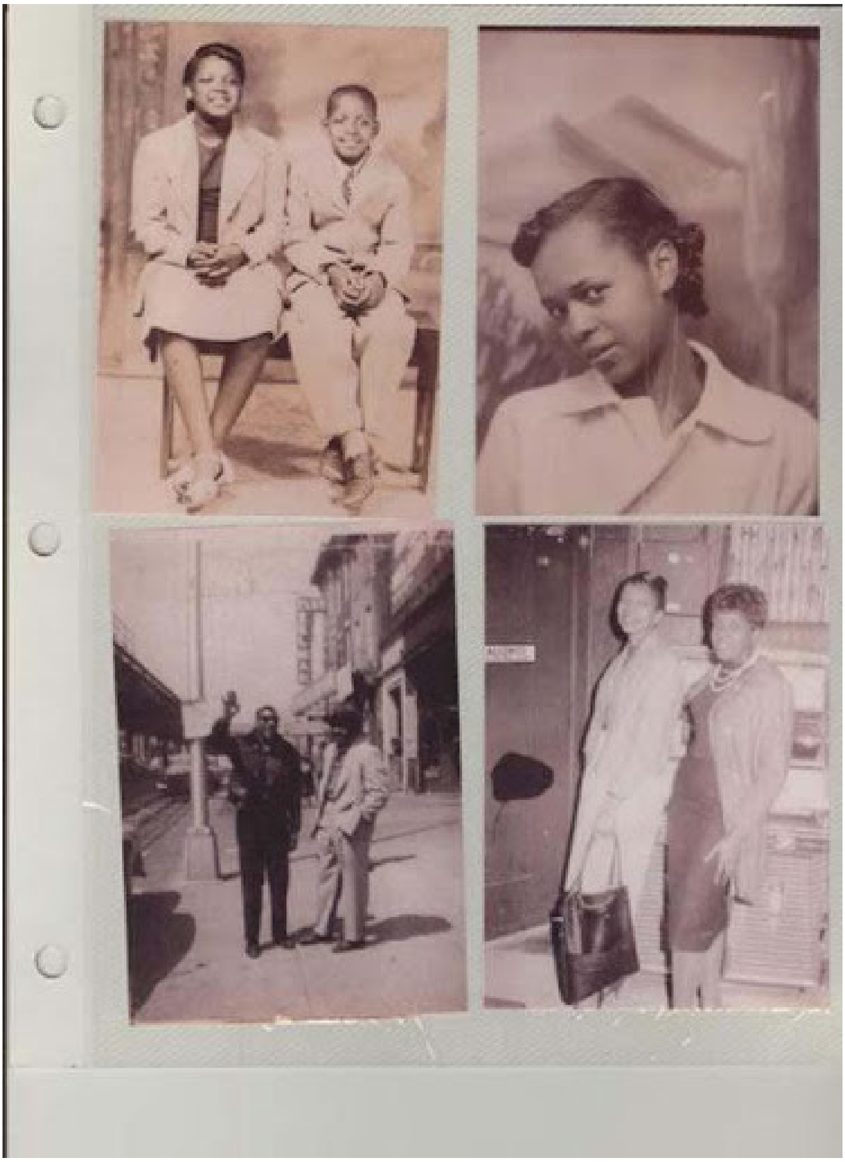
As the 1960s progressed, crime in Philadelphia began to rise steeply. This trend occurred against a backdrop of industrial decline and resulting job loss,

Figure 1. Residents of the Black Bottom



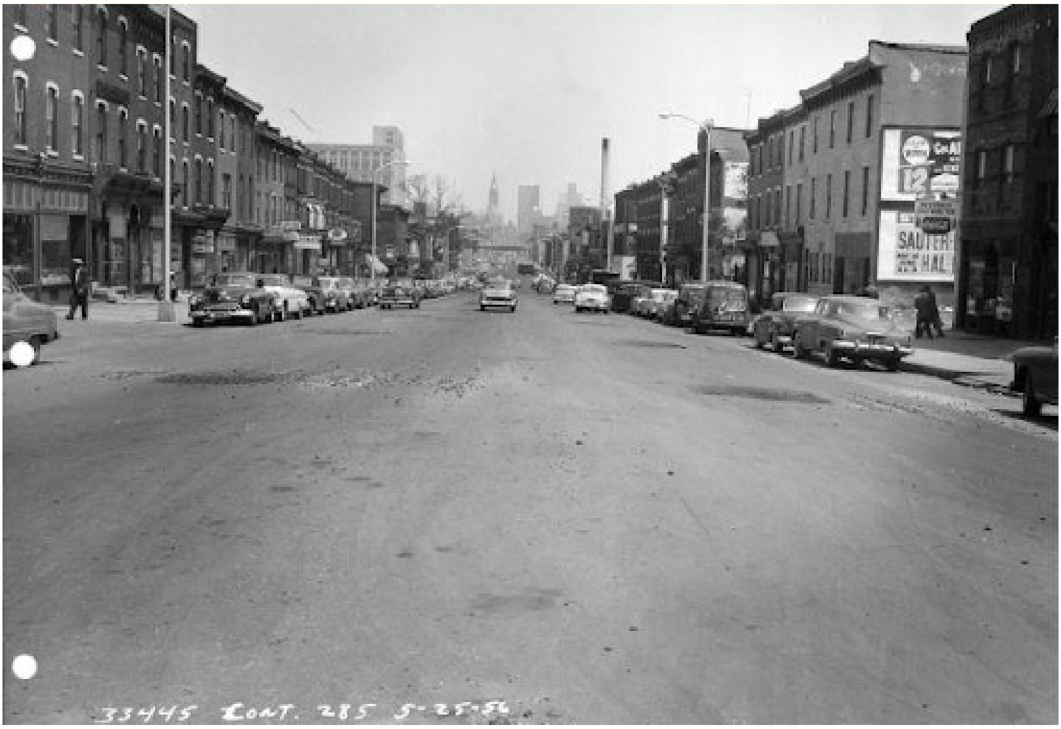
Note. [Photograph of a group of Black Bottom residents], ca. 1960–1970, Walter D. Palmer collection of materials on the Black Bottom Project and other displaced Philadelphia communities (Folder "Black Bottom Photos 1960s"), University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center, (https://findingaids.library.upenn.edu/records/UPENN_ARCHIVES_PU-AR.UPT50P173)

Figure 2. Residents of the Black Bottom



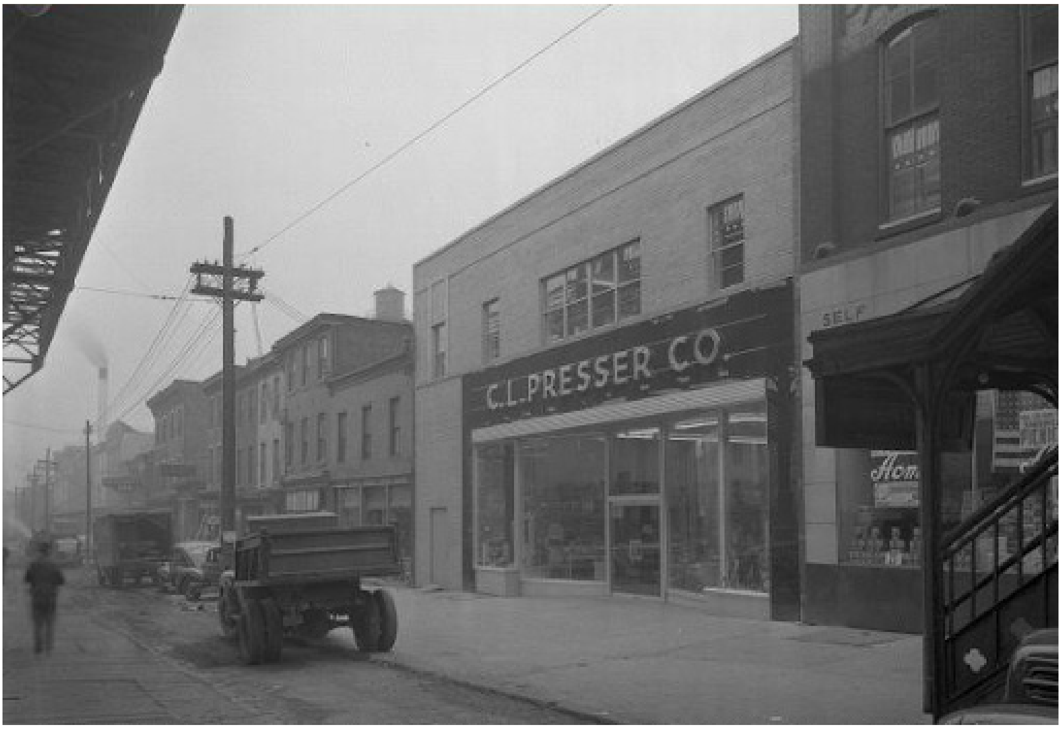
Note. [Photographs of individual Black Bottom residents], ca. 1960–1970, Walter D. Palmer collection of materials on the Black Bottom Project and other displaced Philadelphia communities (Folder “Black Bottom Photos 1960s”), University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center, (https://findingaids.library.upenn.edu/records/UPENN_ARCHIVES_PU-AR.UPT50P173)

Figure 3. View East From 37th and Market Streets, 1956



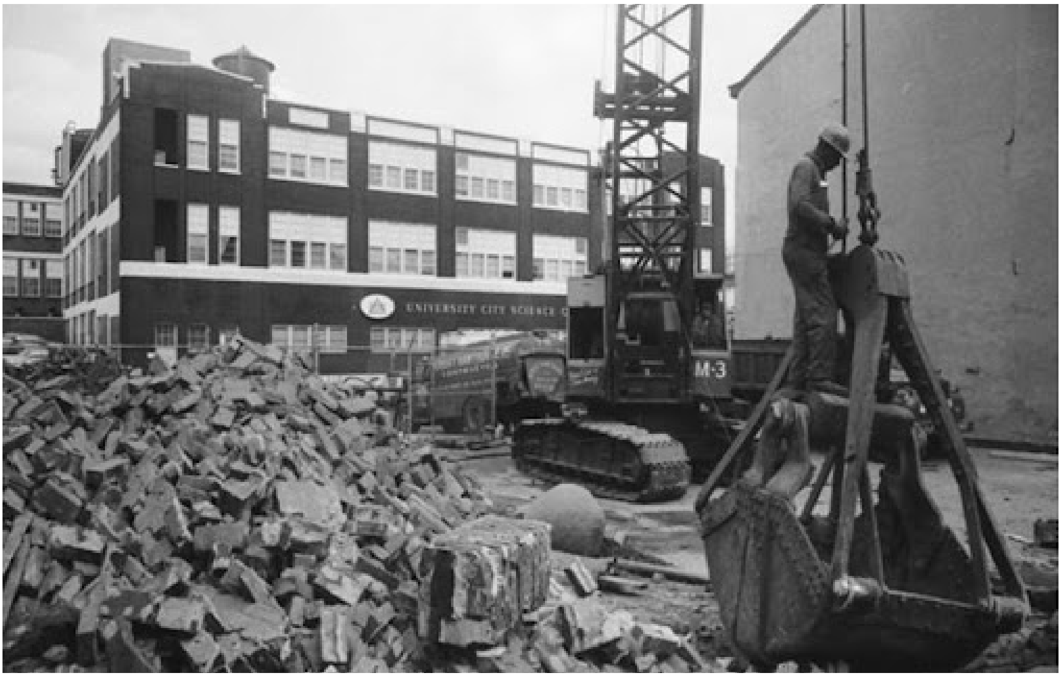
Note. [Photograph of 37th and Market Streets, facing east], 1956, City of Philadelphia Department of Records Archives, (https://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/MediaStream.ashx?mediaId=227900)

Figure 4. 36th and Market Streets, 1949



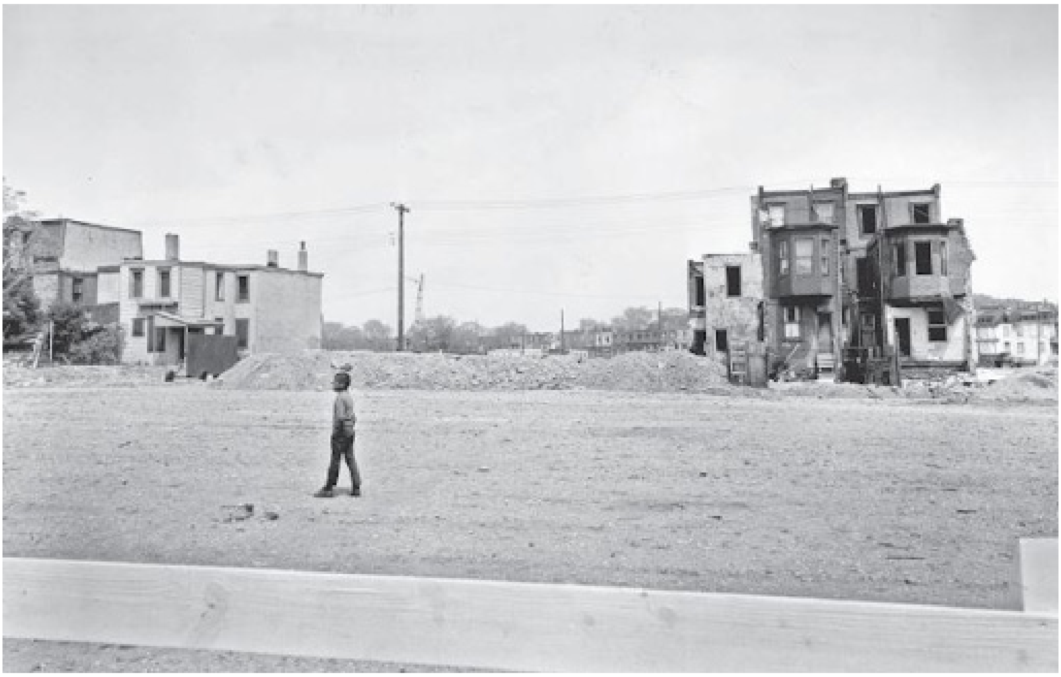
Note. [Photograph of 36th and Market Streets], 1949, City of Philadelphia Department of Records Archives, (https://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/MediaStream.ashx?mediaId=19353)

Figure 5. The Demolition of a Building Near the Southwest Corner of 34th and Market Streets, 1967



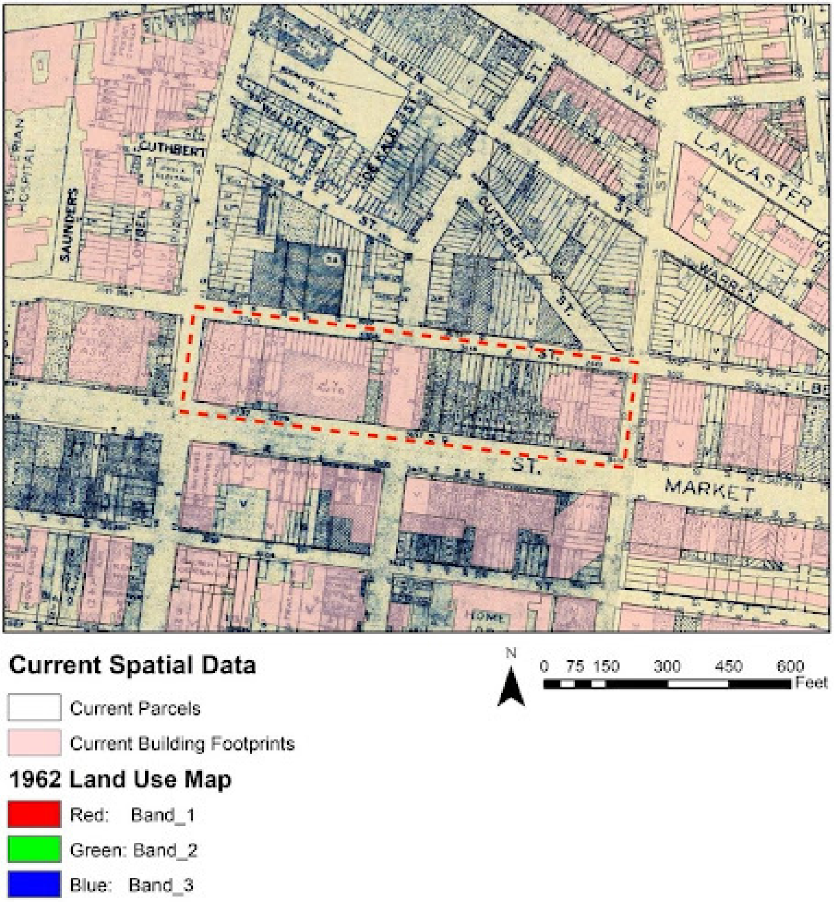
Note. [Photograph of the demolition of a building near the southwest corner of 34th & Market Streets], 1967, University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center, Digital Image Collection, (https://www.jstor.org/site/upenn/universityarchives/?so=item_title_str_asc&searchkey=1715803097009)

Figure 6. View North From Filbert Street to a Site Leveled for the University City High School



Note. [Photograph of the view north from Filbert Street to a site leveled for the University City High School], May 5, 1968, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*. Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia.

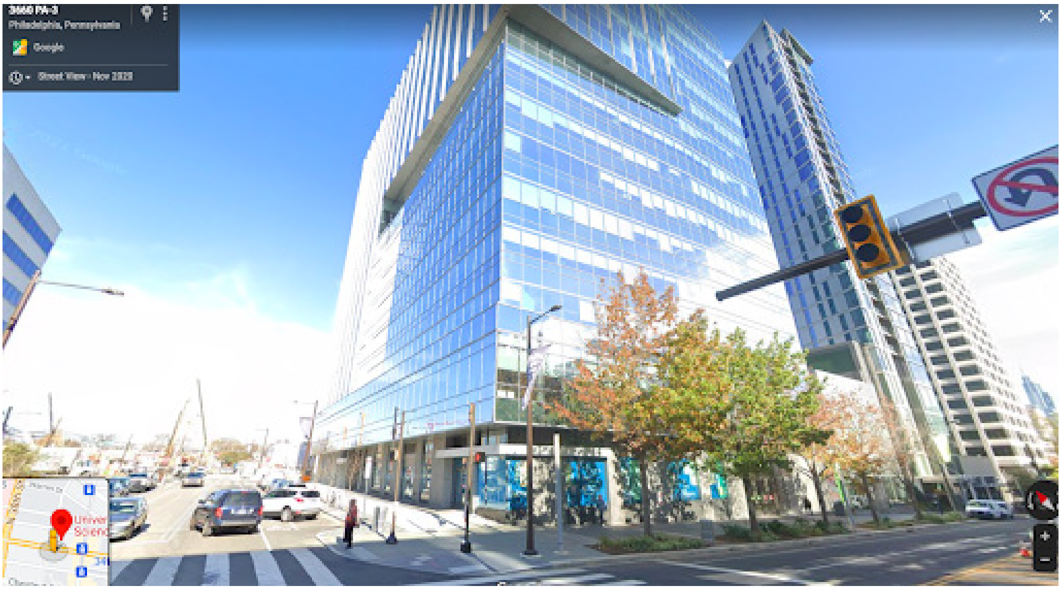
Figure 7. Map of Redevelopment at 36th and Market Streets


WARREN
WALDEN
CUTHBERT
SAUNDERS
AVE
LANCASTER
WARREN
CUTHBERT
ST.
MARKET
ST.
Current Spatial Data
Current Parcels
Current Building Footprints
1962 Land Use Map
Red: Band_1
Green: Band_2
Blue: Band_3
N
0 75 150 300 450 600
Feet

Sources: Philadelphia Geohistory Network, OpenDataPhilly

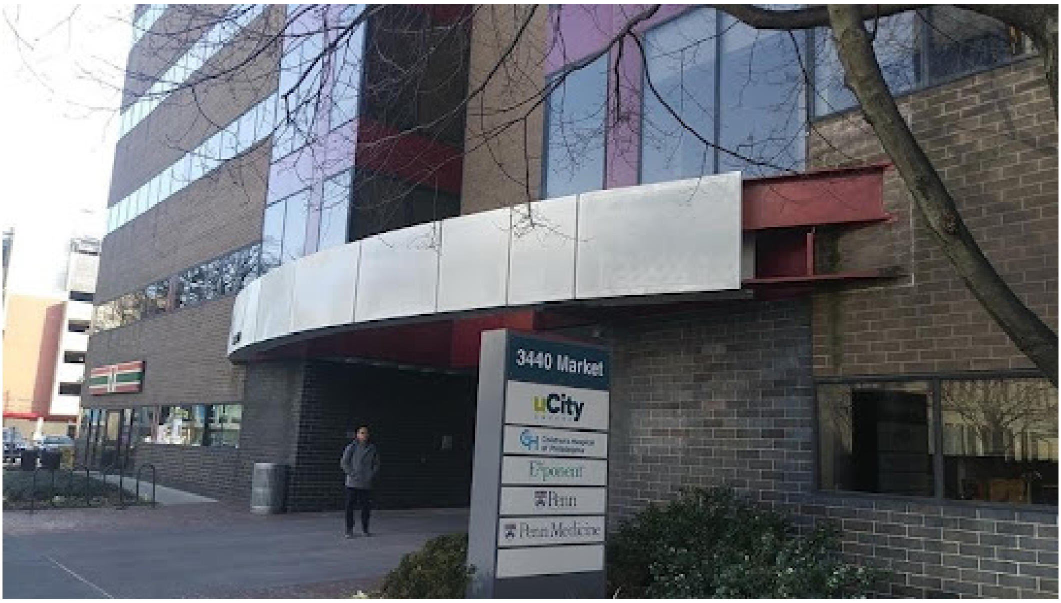
Note. Base image: *Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1962*, 1962, Plans & Registry Division, Bureau of Engineering Surveys & Zoning, Department of Public Works, Federal Works Progress Administration for Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Geohistory Network, (https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/index2.cfm?w=LUM1962) Overlay: *Building footprints,* 2014, City of Philadelphia Department of Transportation, Open Data Philly, (https://opendataphilly.org/datasets/building-footprints/)

Figure 8. The University City Science Center at 37th and Market Streets Today


3660 PA-3
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Google
Street View - Nov 2020

Note. Photo by author.

Figure 9. Sign for uCity Square at 34th and Market Streets Today

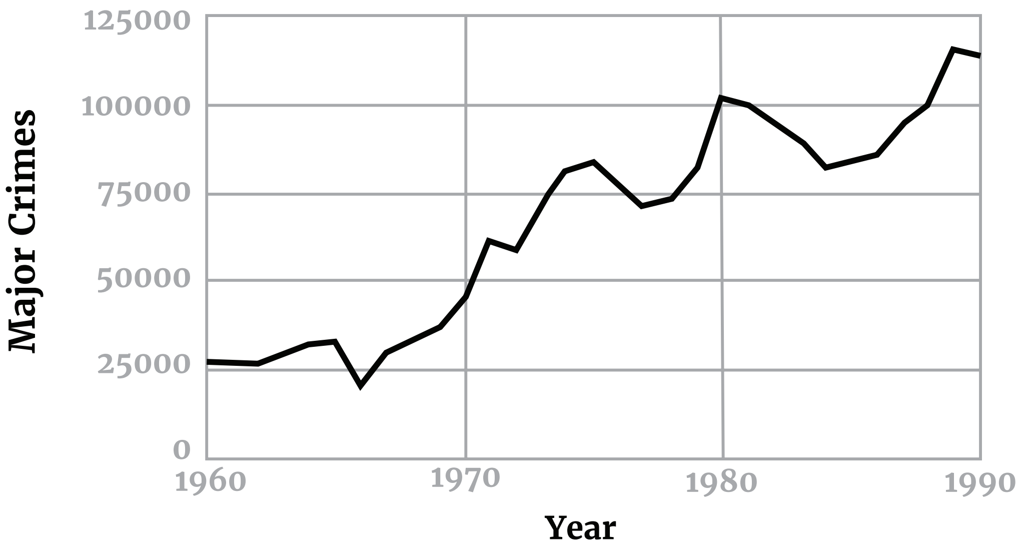

3440 Market
uCity
Exponent
Penn
Penn Medicine

Note. [Photograph of UCity Square at 34th and Market Streets], 2019, Walter D. Palmer collection of materials on the Black Bottom Project and other displaced Philadelphia communities (Folder “Black Bottom 2019 Photos”), University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center, (https://findingaids.library.upenn.edu/records/UPENN_ARCHIVES_PU-AR.UPT50P173) suburbanization and subsequent population loss, and the emerging drug trade. As historians Eric Schneider and John Puckett have documented, these conditions built on one another to create the backdrop for rising crime rates (Puckett, n.d.-a; Schneider, 2014). Sociologist Elijah Anderson (1990) further demonstrated how the drug trade transformed Philadelphia communities' social fabric: Drug dealers became young people's role models in the place of parents and elders, and a "code of the street" that was heavily dependent on one's perceived capability of violence took hold (pp. 77–78).

The chart in Figure 10 illustrates the Philadelphia Police Department's reported number of major crimes, based on data in their *Annual Statistical Reports* (Philadelphia Police Department, 1960–1990). According to their classification system, "major crimes" include violent offenses such as murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, as distinguished from "minor crimes" such as prostitution, vagrancy, and public drunkenness. Evidence indicates that these crime reports are an imperfect reflection of reality. For example, the Philadelphia Police have been known to underreport or underclassify sexual harassment and sexual assault cases in order to keep their crime numbers artificially low (Fazlollah et al., 1999). They are not alone; other departments across the country, for example the Los Angeles Police Department, have underreported serious crimes in order to lower their cities' perceived crime levels (Poston et al., 2015). Notwithstanding, the data are a viable indication of overall trends. Starting around 1966, crimes began to rise steeply and did not fall significantly until the mid-1970s, after which they began another steep rise, then fell, and then rose again as the 1990s approached.

Penn saw bits and pieces of this rising crime rate as students were caught in the crossfire or became the victims of armed robberies. Correspondingly, throughout this period, policing on and around campus grew and evolved. By 1970, Penn was spending half a million dollars a year on campus security (O'Connell, 1970). The campus police force was now made up of 48 guards, and by this point, Penn was combining multiple approaches to campus security. In addition to the campus police, it had installed several dozen emergency phones, a spotlight system throughout campus, and a campus bus to reduce students' need to walk at night. The campus police force also became more official and visible during the 1970s. In 1973, they received new uniforms intended to make them stand out (Berger, 1973). The following year, their name changed from University Safety and Security to the Penn Police Department. Soon after, it was certified by the state as a fully fledged police

Figure 10. Chart Illustrating Number of Major Crimes Reported by the Philadelphia Police Department, 1960–1990



Note. Graph calculated using data from Philadelphia Police Department, 1960–1990.

department (Burnard, 2009). In 1977, the department acquired the name Public Safety to further reflect its role as an official police department, and its headquarters were moved from the Quad to a more official location in the Superblock (Lasker, 1977). The 1980s saw a series of crime waves around campus as the crime rate continued to rise. Penn responded to the increasing violence by bolstering security, including uniformed police officers as well as emergency phones, cameras, and building security (Weber, 1980).

Crime at the 40th and Walnut Intersection

During the 1980s, the intersection of 40th and Walnut Streets became central to violent crime in the vicinity of campus. By 1988 and 1989, the *Daily Pennsylvanian* was reporting on extensive crime waves at this one intersection, as Figure 11 illustrates. The accounts reflected in Spiegel's (1989) article are substantiated by Philadelphia Police Department crime data. Between 1988 and 1989, the number of crimes against persons reported less than a block from the intersection jumped from 18 to 27. Another 27 were reported in 1990—on average, more than one every 2 weeks. By far the majority of these crimes against persons involved either guns or knives, and almost all of the others involved physical violence.

Both the Penn Police and the Philadelphia Police, at Penn's request, took measures to address crime at the intersection. After the crime wave of 1988, the city police added more officers to patrol the area; Penn itself hired a new security guard specifically for the area around the intersection (Taubman, 1988). However, these measures had little effect, as 1989 saw an even worse crime wave and the crime rate increased dramatically (Stone, 1989).

Penn administrators as well as the city police and area business owners believed that the intersection's geography and infrastructure were contributing to its unusually high crime rate. As a Philadelphia Police captain commented, the intersection was a major transit thoroughfare (Link, 1988). But more important, the intersection's infrastructure and in particular the characteristics of its retail development were seen as contributing factors. The intersection housed businesses that catered to Penn students and area residents alike—a McDonald's, a Burger King, a CVS, and similar chains, as well as a theater and an arcade. There was also a parking lot on the northwest corner and a branch of the Philadelphia Free Library on the southeast corner (Figures 12 and 13).

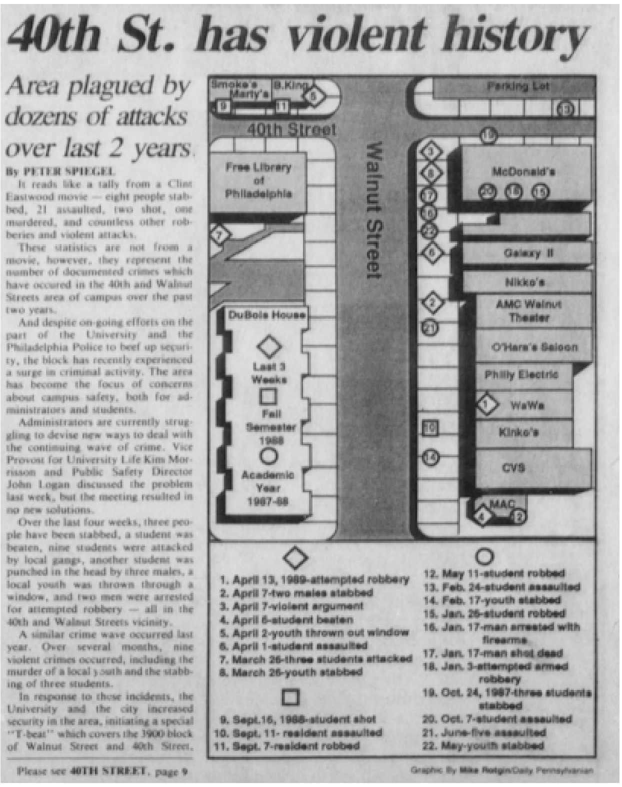
The McDonald's was central to infrastructural safety concerns. Penn affiliates as well as the Philadelphia Police connected its policy of staying open 24 hours a day with the intersection's crime rate, citing how most crimes at the intersection took place late at night and how many happened inside or in close proximity to the McDonald's. Although the Burger King across the street was also open late at night, it closed at 2 a.m. on weeknights and at 3 a.m. on weekends. Correspondingly, it saw its share of crimes, but not nearly as many as the McDonald's. The manager of the McDonald's reported that it was often drunk people coming to the eatery from area bars after the 2 a.m. last call who caused problems (Link, 1988). The owner of another area establishment cited the McDonald's floor layout as part of the problem: "The floor layout is such that there is no way for it to be supervised by those who work there" (Link, 1988 p. 1). The AMC Walnut Theater was another focal point for area crime, as moviegoers inside the theater or leaving it late at night frequently became the victims or perpetrators of crimes (Goldstein & Hilk, 1989; Levi & Spiegel, 1989; O'Donnell, 1990).

As early as the 1980s, Penn began to address these connections. In February 1988, under pressure from Penn, the McDonald's began closing early. Penn's real estate division also met with the other businesses on the block that stayed open late to convince them to cut their hours. However, these arrangements did not last, in particular with the McDonald's (Mitchell, 1988). Around the same time, Penn devised a tentative plan to buy the land where the McDonald's was located. Its owner was amenable provided that Penn could offer it an alternative location. The plan never came to fruition, likely because Penn did not have money to finance it at the time (Parker, 1988).

The Redevelopment of 40th and Walnut Streets

Resources devoted to campus safety grew significantly during the second half of the 1980s. By the fall of 1990, Penn's Department of Public Safety had 76 employees, including 69 police officers, two plainclothes teams, five patrol cars, and 29 contract security guards. Throughout the campus area, there were 250 emergency

Figure 11. Newspaper Report on Crime Near 40th and Walnut Streets, 1988–1989


Smoke's
Marty's
B.King
Parking Lot
40th Street
Walnut Street
Free Library of Philadelphia
McDonald's
Galaxy II
Nikko's
AMC Walnut Theater
O'Hara's Saloon
Philly Electric
WaWa
Kinko's
CVS
MAC
DuBois House
Last 3 Weeks
Fall Semester 1988
Academic Year 1987-88

40th St. has violent history

Area plagued by dozens of attacks over last 2 years

By PETER SPIEGEL

It reads like a tally from a Clint Eastwood movie — eight people stabbed, 21 assaulted, two shot, one murdered, and countless other robberies and violent attacks.

These statistics are not from a movie, however, they represent the number of documented crimes which have occured in the 40th and Walnut Streets area of campus over the past two years.

And despite on-going efforts on the part of the University and the Philadelphia Police to beef up security, the block has recently experienced a surge in criminal activity. The area has become the focus of concerns about campus safety, both for administrators and students.

Administrators are currently struggling to devise new ways to deal with the continuing wave of crime. Vice Provost for University Life Kim Morrisson and Public Safety Director John Logan discussed the problem last week, but the meeting resulted in no new solutions.

Over the last four weeks, three people have been stabbed, a student was beaten, nine students were attacked by local gangs, another student was punched in the head by three males, a local youth was thrown through a window, and two men were arrested for attempted robbery — all in the 40th and Walnut Streets vicinity.

A similar crime wave occurred last year. Over several months, nine violent crimes occurred, including the murder of a local youth and the stabbing of three students.

In response to those incidents, the University and the city increased security in the area, initiating a special "T-beat" which covers the 3900 block of Walnut Street and 40th Street,

Please see **40TH STREET**, page 9

◇
1. April 13, 1989-attempted robbery
2. April 7-two males stabbed
3. April 7-violent argument
4. April 6-student beaten
5. April 2-youth thrown out window
6. April 1-student assaulted
7. March 26-three students attacked
8. March 26-youth stabbed

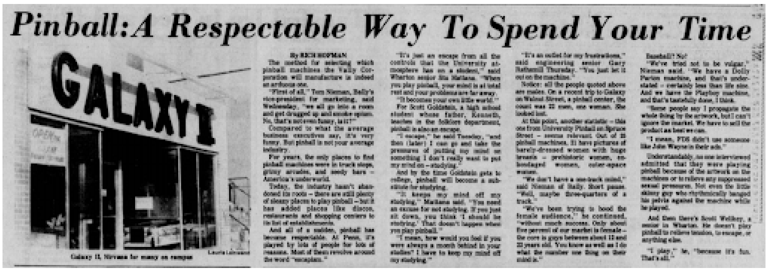
□
9. Sept.16, 1988-student shot
10. Sept. 11- resident assaulted
11. Sept. 7-resident robbed

○
12. May 11-student robbed
13. Feb. 24-student assaulted
14. Feb. 17-youth stabbed
15. Jan. 26-student robbed
16. Jan. 17-man arrested with firearms
17. Jan. 17-man shot dead
18. Jan. 3-attempted armed robbery
19. Oct. 24, 1987-three students stabbed
20. Oct. 7-student assaulted
21. June-five assaulted
22. May-youth stabbed

Graphic By Mike Rotgin/Daily Pennsylvanian

Note. From "40th St. Has Violent History," by P. Spiegel, April 17, 1989, *Daily Pennsylvanian*, p. 1.

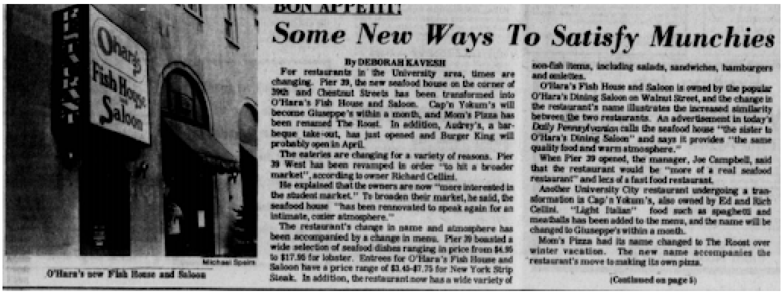
Figure 12. The Galaxy II Arcade, 1980s



Pinball: A Respectable Way To Spend Your Time

Note. From "Pinball: A Respectable Way to Spend Your Time," by R. Hofman (1980, February 1), Daily Pennsylvanian, p. 3.

Figure 13. O'Hara's Saloon, 1980s


O'hara's
Fish House
Saloon

BON APPETIT!

Some New Ways To Satisfy Munchies

By DEBORAH KAVESH

For restaurants in the University area, times are changing. Pier 39, the new seafood house on the corner of 39th and Chestnut Streets has been transformed into O'Hara's Fish House and Saloon. Cap'n Yokum's will become Giuseppe's within a month, and Mom's Pizza has been renamed The Roost. In addition, Audrey's, a barbeque take-out, has just opened and Burger King will probably open in April.

The eateries are changing for a variety of reasons. Pier 39 West has been revamped in order "to hit a broader market", according to owner Richard Cellini.

He explained that the owners are now "more interested in the student market." To broaden their market, he said, the seafood house "has been renovated to speak again for an intimate, cozier atmosphere."

The restaurant's change in name and atmosphere has been accompanied by a change in menu. Pier 39 boasted a wide selection of seafood dishes ranging in price from $4.95 to $17.95 for lobster. Entrees for O'Hara's Fish House and Saloon have a price range of $3.45-$7.75 for New York Strip Steak. In addition, the restaurant now has a wide variety of non-fish items, including salads, sandwiches, hamburgers and omelettes.

O'Hara's Fish House and Saloon is owned by the popular O'Hara's Dining Saloon on Walnut Street, and the change in the restaurant's name illustrates the increased similarity between the two restaurants. An advertisement in today's *Daily Pennsylvanian* calls the seafood house "the sister to O'Hara's Dining Saloon" and says it provides "the same quality food and warm atmosphere."

When Pier 39 opened, the manager, Joe Campbell, said that the restaurant would be "more of a real seafood restaurant" and less of a fast food restaurant.

Another University City restaurant undergoing a transformation is Cap'n Yokum's, also owned by Ed and Rich Cellini. "Light Italian" food such as spaghetti and meatballs has been added to the menu, and the name will be changed to Giuseppe's within a month.

Mom's Pizza had its name changed to The Roost over winter vacation. The new name accompanies the restaurant's move to making its own pizza.

(Continued on page 3)

O'Hara's new Fish House and Saloon

Michael Spears

Note. From "Some New Ways to Satisfy Munchies," by D. Kavesh (1980, January 15), *Daily Pennsylvanian*, p. 1.

phones, and all residences were locked or monitored by a security guard. All student rooms were equipped with a deadbolt or card-proof lock, and windows less than seven feet from the ground had bars or security screens. Penn was even winning nationwide rankings for its campus security (Puckett & Lloyd, 2015, pp. 184–185). However, these measures proved largely ineffective as Penn students continued to fall victim to crimes.

In 1994, Penn PhD student Al-Moez Alimohamed was killed in a robbery near the corner of 48th and Pine Streets. Outrage that followed the murder involved calls for Penn to go beyond increasing police presence and other security operations. For example, Penn Faculty and Staff for Neighborhood Issues (PFSNI), a group that had long advocated for increased off-campus security, stated, "Indications of rapid decline are everywhere. More houses go on the market weekly as residents attempt to flee" (Lees, 1994, p. 3). On behalf of the PFSNI steering committee, Lees (1994) expressed the view that "More police cars, escort vans, and blue-light telephones—while undeniably necessary—are not the answer to University City's security problems. The solution, we believe, lies in investment—a decisive, strategic financial involvement and engagement of academic resources to assist the revitalization of West Philadelphia" (p. 2). This statement recalls earlier appeals for urban renewal and explicitly connects neighborhood revitalization to security concerns, envisioning how revitalization and increased policing might work in concert with one another.

Penn bolstered security throughout the next 2 years, but crime rates continued to rise. On Halloween night, 1996, research associate Vladimir Sled was stabbed to death in a robbery near 43rd and Larchwood Streets. This event finally catalyzed large-scale action, spurring Penn to develop the West Philadelphia Initiatives (WPI), a multipronged neighborhood improvement strategy aimed at thoroughly transforming the university's environs much along the lines that PFSNI had envisioned. Sled's murder yielded reactions both similar to and different from In-Ho Oh's several decades earlier. In both cases, individual murders sparked the beginning of large-scale neighborhood change projects. Penn's motivations, however, differed significantly: In the former case, it wanted to redevelop the land on which the Black Bottom was located and used Oh's murder as justification for doing so. In the latter case, redevelopment was more of a central strategy for responding to crime, and Sled's murder was not an isolated incident but was rather the last straw.

Between 1996 and 2002, the WPI developed programs in five domains: neighborhood safety and cleanliness, housing stabilization and reclamation, neighborhood retail development, West Philadelphia purchasing and hiring, and public education investments. The safety and cleanliness initiative involved hiring new police officers, collaborating with the Philadelphia Police to patrol trouble spots such as the 40th and Walnut area, and setting up closed-circuit television cameras for street-level surveillance. The Division of Public Safety also opened a mini station at 40th and Walnut, behind the Burger King, in 1997 (Lanman, 1997). The safety and cleanliness prong also involved the creation of the University City District (UCD), an institutional alliance of 11 partners including Penn, Drexel University, the University of the Sciences, and (ironically) the University City Science Center. One of the UCD's major programs was the UCD Ambassadors, trained staff members dressed in highly visible blue and yellow uniforms and carrying two-way radios. They patrolled by foot and bicycle day and night. Augmenting them was UC Brite, a UCD-managed program that provided matching funds to homeowners and landlords who agreed to purchase and install sidewalk-level lights on their properties.

The security prong was only part of a larger effort toward improved safety, however. At 40th and Walnut and at other key locations, the WPI addressed infrastructural safety concerns of the late 1980s and early 1990s via redevelopment. Throughout the 2000s, they thoroughly transformed the intersection, overhauling the infrastructure and retail development seen as conducive to crime and replacing it with upscale, student-centered developments designed to interact with one another and create an entirely new environment. This approach was a departure from Penn's earlier strategy of improving safety on the intersection by convincing businesses to close early and attempting to prevent groups from congregating. Now, it was encouraging people to be on the intersection—but specifically Penn affiliates and other higher end clientele.

The Fresh Grocer and Bridge Cinema de Lux

Leading up to this time, Penn did not have a real campus grocery store; it built the Fresh Grocer to serve this purpose and provide a commercial anchor for the redeveloped intersection. Although Penn had purchased the land on the intersection's northwest corner in 1965 during the urban renewal era, for decades it had been a surface parking lot. Starting in 1999, Penn finally redeveloped it alongside the intersection's southwest corner, which had housed the Burger King and now became the Bridge Cinema de Lux entertainment complex. The two structures were meant to complement one another: Members of the Penn community could fulfill their shopping and entertainment needs at once. To reflect this intention, they were designed in the same style (Hanko, 1999a). Executive Vice President John Fry said, "The whole notion is getting people back on the streets at all hours of the day" (Hanko, 1999b). However, the "people" Fry referred to were specifically the clientele that these higher end businesses would attract. As well as Penn students and faculty members, the complexes were intended to draw people from Center City, who would come, as Rodin said, "because they want the University City experience." When the cinema opened, Penn offered promotions such as free parking in the new garage to entice people from further afield to come (see Figures 14 and 15).

Although these projects did not force residents from their homes, they effected a different kind of displacement. Ethnographer Harley Etienne performed an extensive set of interviews with local residents in the aftermath of the WPI. A young squatter from West Philadelphia, for example, shared this opinion regarding the Fresh Grocer: "I hate that store. It's just this rich bougie place that caters to white people who have too much money" (Etienne, 2012, pp. 59–60). Regarding the movie theater, one former West Philadelphia resident shared, "Yeah, I think that the tickets are like $10.75. That's just a n—— tax. They don't want us up in there. Wasn't that theater supposed to be for the community? Who's going to pay that to see a movie? I'll take my ass to sixty-ninth street" (Etienne, 2012, p. 60). (The nearest alternative was a movie theater located on 69th Street.) These interviews suggest that as the intersection was redeveloped and it became oriented toward wealthier, Whiter people, its former clientele were increasingly forced to travel further afield for the services the intersection used to provide them.

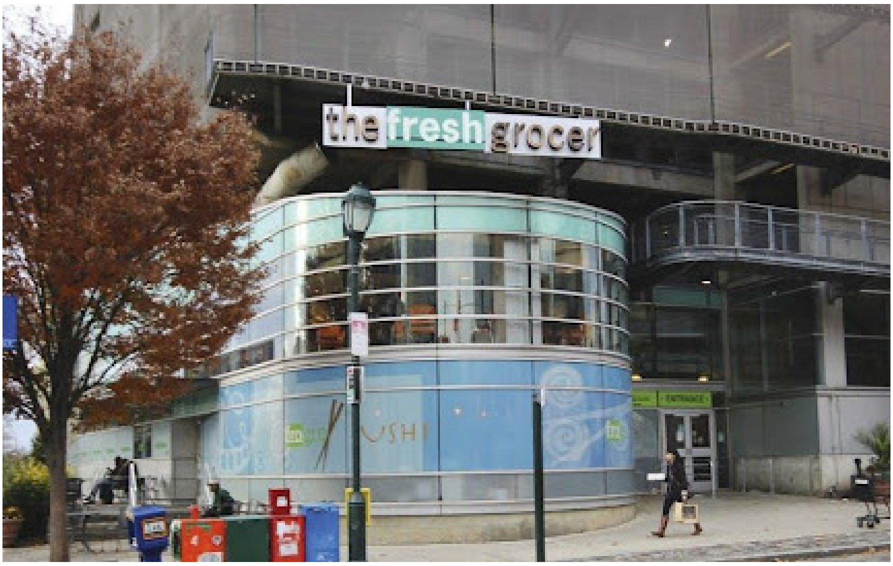
The Radian

The other larger redevelopment project on the intersection was the Radian apartment and retail complex. During the 1990s, the businesses east of the McDonald's had formed a small strip mall on land that had, like the parking lot, belonged to Penn for decades. The strip mall was finally demolished to make way for the Radian, which began construction in 2007 and opened in time for fall 2008 student occupancy. The complex was constructed by a private developer working in partnership with Penn. It is a 12-story, 500-bed residential and retail center with businesses on the ground floors and student apartments on the upper floors. In contrast to the 1950s and 1960s, when the mixed-use character of buildings in the Black Bottom was heralded as a sign of blight, now mixed-use development was embraced as a way to provide students with everything they needed in one place (Figures 16 and 17).

The businesses at the Radian's base were handpicked by Penn's Facilities and Real Estate Services office and were noticeably different from those in the Walnut Mall. The only overlap was a CVS, one of the first businesses to open in the complex, following students' desire to bring one back to the area. Other businesses consisted of, for example, Capogiro, an artisanal gelato store, and City Tap House, an upscale restaurant and bar on the Radian's second-floor terrace. In 2011, the health-focused salad chain Sweetgreen filled the Radian's final retail spot.

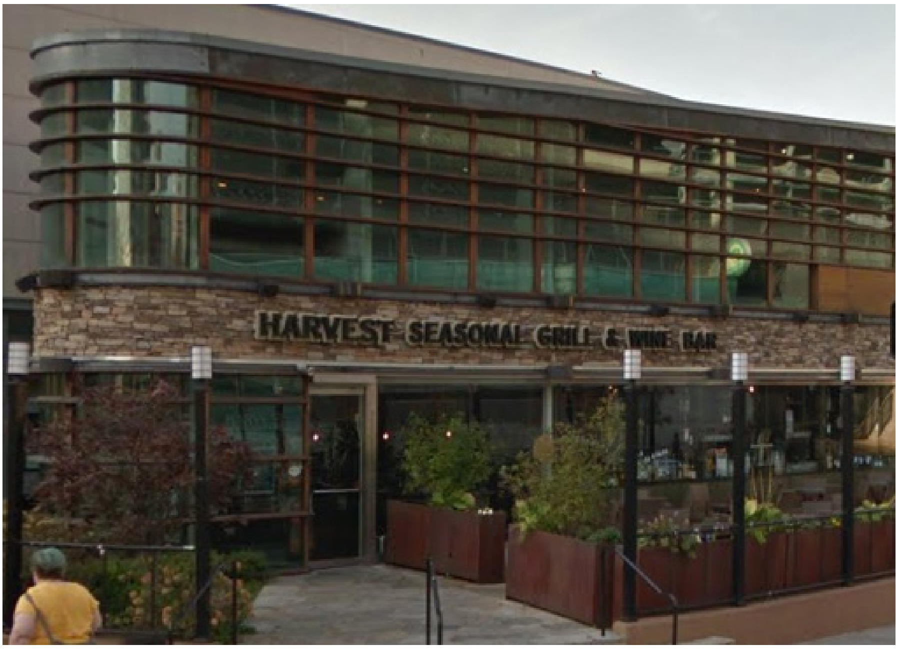
Building an apartment complex at 40th and Walnut was a bold move, considering how many Penn students had fallen victim to violent crime here in the recent past. However, it ensured that the businesses on the intersection would have a strong student clientele base. Like the Fresh Grocer and Bridge Cinema complexes, the Radian was aimed not at keeping students away from the intersection but rather at saturating it with students. Instead of a place where students went for services before retreating back to the safety of campus, it became a student-centered environment. Ed Datz, Penn's Real Estate and Operations director, corroborated this notion of the intersection's changing character. In the late 1980s, he said, there was a "paradigm shift of what retail was" (Brooks, 2011b, para. 4).

Figure 14. The Fresh Grocer



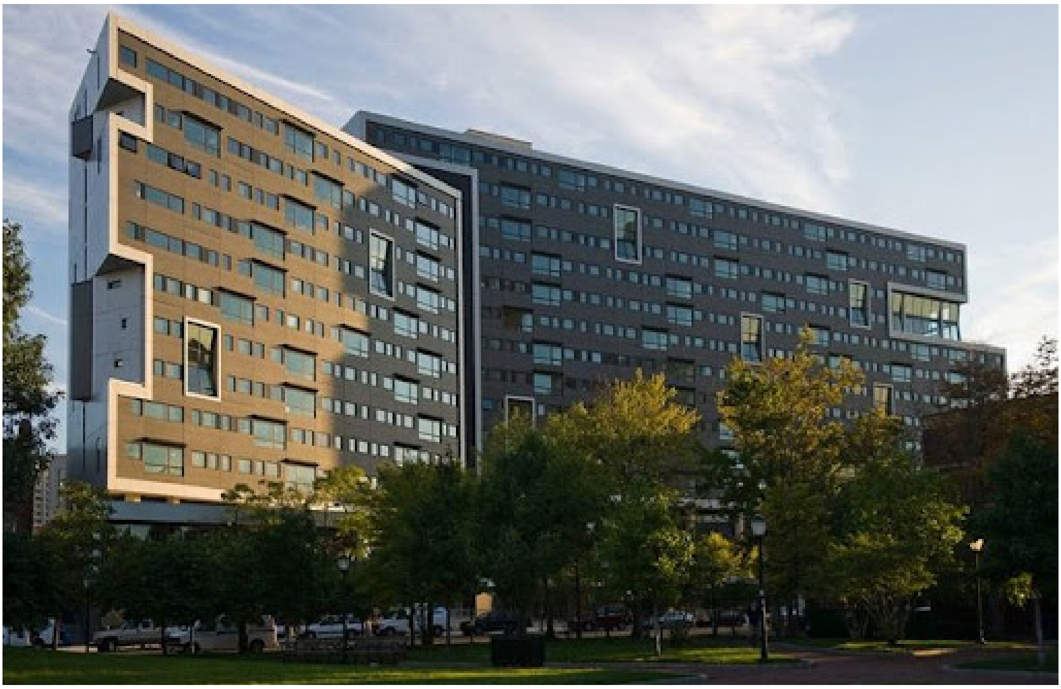
Note. From "Penn Wants to Replace The Fresh Grocer With Acme," by G. Glatsky, December 17, 2016, *Daily Pennsylvanian*, (https://www.thedp.com/article/2016/12/penn-replace-fresh-grocer)

Figure 15. Harvest Seasonal Grill and Wine Bar in the Bridge Cinema de Lux Complex



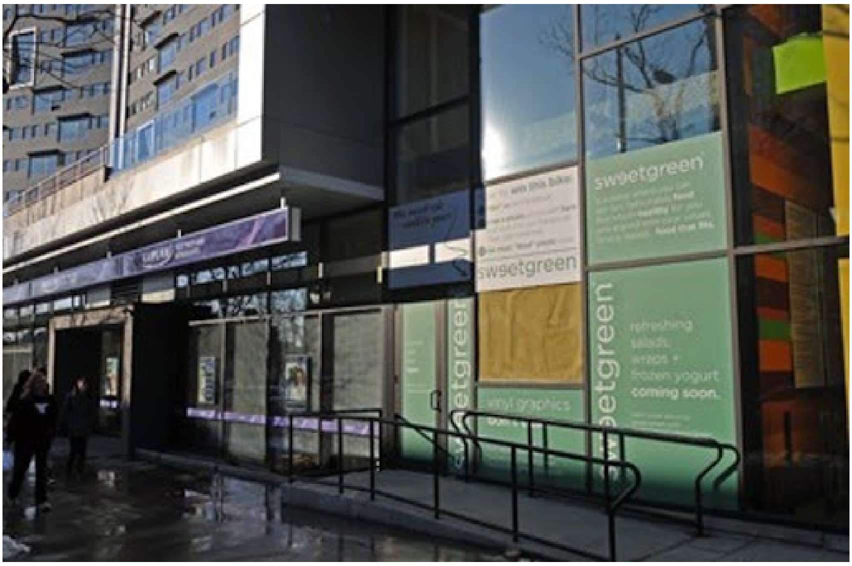
Note. From "Harvest Seasonal Closes Its Location at 40th and Walnut," April 25, 2017, *West Philly Local*, (https://www.westphillylocal.com/2017/04/25/harvest-seasonal-closes-its-location-at-40th-and-walnut/)

Figure 16. The Radian



Note. The Radian, Parallel Co., n.d., (https://www.parallel-co.com/the-radian)

Figure 17. Sweetgreen Filling the Radian's Final Retail Vacancy


sweetgreen
sweetgreen
sweetgreen
refreshing salads, wraps + frozen yogurt coming soon.
sweetgreen

Note. From "Sweetgreen to Fill Final Radian Spot," by H. Brooks, February 4, 2011b, *Daily Pennsylvanian*, (https://www.thedp.com/article/2011/02/sweetgreen_to_fill_final_radian_spot)

Whereas then, most retail in Penn's area catered to service-based needs, the university gradually lured more food, beverage, and "higher-end" retail to the area. As they did so, Datz said, prospective retailers learned that their target demographic was no longer West Philadelphia residents but rather Penn faculty and students (Brooks, 2011b).

"McPenntrification"

Nearly every business on the intersection has changed since the late 1990s due to redevelopment. The McDonald's, once the center of area crimes, is a noticeable exception. This is no accident but is rather the result of a drawn-out conflict involving community opposition to redevelopment.

A 1999 UCD study recommended that the UCD "encourage the McDonald's to update and upgrade the appearance of its store," or alternatively "work with McDonald's to relocate their store to a suitable nearby location, and then redevelop this prime parcel into a higher and better use than the current one-story fast food restaurant" ("McPenntrified Neighborhood," 2002, para. 4). This strategy recalls Penn's plans from the late 1980s to relocate the restaurant as a way of reducing crime at the intersection. Now there was additional incentive as Penn redeveloped the land around it and the property became prime real estate.

In October 1999, the McDonald's corporation bought a parcel at 43rd and Market Streets and announced plans to open a restaurant there. The project encountered numerous challenges, however, including the discovery of soil pollution, the need for zoning changes, and especially community opposition to construction and the gentrification, or "McPenntrification," that area residents believed it would cause. While McDonald's dealt with initial pollution and zoning challenges, residents mobilized into an opposition group called Neighbors Against McPenntrification (NAM). The group combined direct action with political and legal advocacy in their efforts to stop construction (Amorebieta, 2001b; Ruscitti, 2000; Wells, 2001).

One of the group's foremost members was Reverend Larry Falcon, a local community leader and pastor of Covenant Community Church in West Philadelphia. Falcon's own home directly abutted the proposed McDonald's site; construction was set to take parts of his backyard and garden with it. Falcon, who had lived in the area for 51 years, had watched the character of the neighborhood change around him—including its demographics, as its largely African American residents gave way to Penn students and faculty. Penn graduate and area resident Richard Rogers said, "Penn has acted like an invading army since I've been in the neighborhood," operating by "grabbing land, destroying neighborhoods, and driving people out systematically" (Ruscitti, 2000). Numerous articles in local media covered local reactions (Figures 18–19).

In 2004, after numerous delays, forceful resident opposition, and a nationwide economic downturn for the company, McDonald's scrapped its proposed new franchise. The McDonald's at 40th and Walnut continued to stand as one of the few echoes of the intersection's past. In December 2021, however, Penn announced new plans to acquire the land, demolish the existing McDonald's, and construct a high-rise, mixed-use building with a McDonald's at its base.

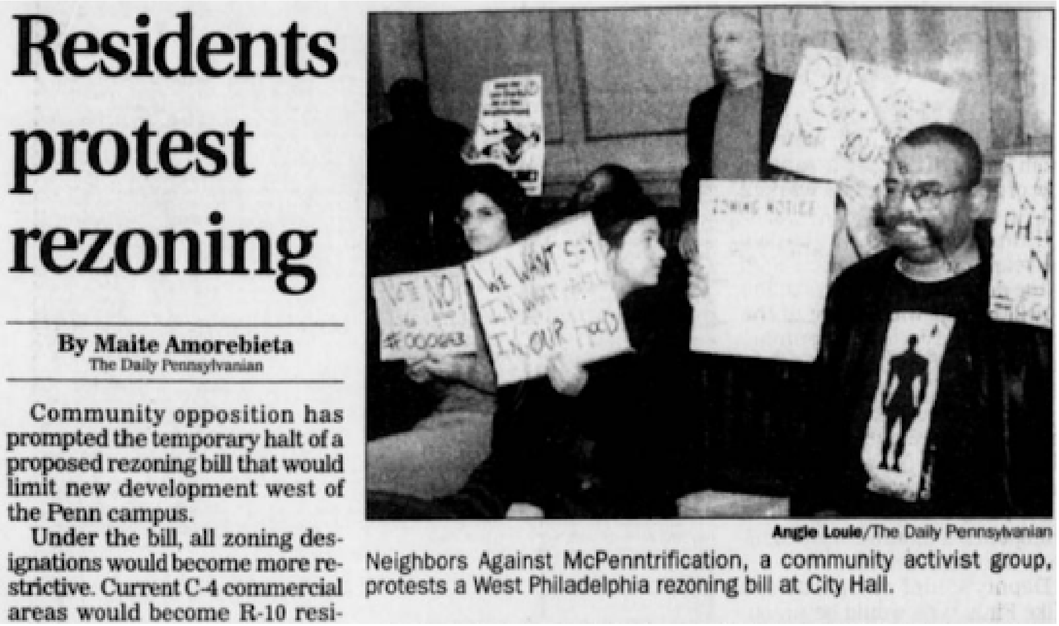
Further Turnover

Notably, redevelopment at the intersection has continued throughout the years as businesses have phased in and out and redeveloped infrastructure has been overhauled to make way for further redevelopments. These changes have not taken the intersection in new directions as much as they have brought it closer to what Penn originally intended for it.

For example, the Fresh Grocer, intended as an upscale store, gradually gained a negative reputation as many health violations were found (Philadelphia Inquirer Clean Plates, 2017–2019). After a legal battle with Penn, it shut down and was replaced by Acme Markets in October 2020. Acme overhauled the inside of the store, improving its layout and cleanliness. The company also tailored this particular location to serve the needs of the Penn community: In addition to a variety of takeout stations and a robot salad bar, more than half of the store was made up of fresh and ready-to-go products that would appeal to busy students and faculty members (Lowenkron & Yildirim, 2020).

Another example is Marathon Grill, which replaced the Burger King after the Bridge Cinema complex was built and eventually closed in 2011. It was replaced by Harvest Seasonal Grill & Wine Bar, which in turn

Figure 18. Representative Article Covering Resident Protests Against Rezoning, West Philadelphia



Residents protest rezoning

By Maite Amorebieta
The Daily Pennsylvanian

Community opposition has prompted the temporary halt of a proposed rezoning bill that would limit new development west of the Penn campus.

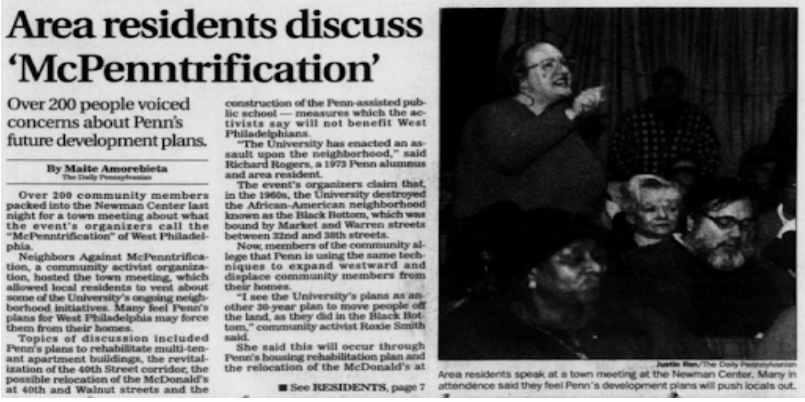
Under the bill, all zoning designations would become more restrictive. Current C-4 commercial areas would become R-10 resi-

Angie Louie/The Daily Pennsylvanian

Neighbors Against McPenntrification, a community activist group, protests a West Philadelphia rezoning bill at City Hall.

Note. From "Residents Protest Rezoning," by M. Amorebieta, February 20, 2001c, *Daily Pennsylvanian*, p. 4.

Figure 19. Representative Article Covering Resident Protests Against "McPenntrification," West Philadelphia



Area residents discuss 'McPenntrification'

Over 200 people voiced concerns about Penn's future development plans.

By Maite Amorebieta
The Daily Pennsylvanian

Over 200 community members packed into the Newman Center last night for a town meeting about what the event's organizers call the "McPenntrification" of West Philadelphia.

Neighbors Against McPenntrification, a community activist organization, hosted the town meeting, which allowed local residents to vent about some of the University's ongoing neighborhood initiatives. Many feel Penn's plans for West Philadelphia may force them from their homes.

Topics of discussion included Penn's plans to rehabilitate multi-tenant apartment buildings, the revitalization of the 40th Street corridor, the possible relocation of the McDonald's at 40th and Walnut streets and the construction of the Penn-assisted public school — measures which the activists say will not benefit West Philadelphians.

"The University has enacted an assault upon the neighborhood," said Richard Rogers, a 1973 Penn alumnus and area resident.

The event's organizers claim that, in the 1960s, the University destroyed the African-American neighborhood known as the Black Bottom, which was bound by Market and Warren streets between 32nd and 38th streets.

Now, members of the community allege that Penn is using the same techniques to expand westward and displace community members from their homes.

"I see the University's plans as another 30-year plan to move people off the land, as they did in the Black Bottom," community activist Roxie Smith said.

She said this will occur through Penn's housing rehabilitation plan and the relocation of the McDonald's at

■ See RESIDENTS, page 7

Justin Ren/The Daily Pennsylvanian

Area residents speak at a town meeting at the Newman Center. Many in attendence said they feel Penn's development plans will push locals out.

Note. From "Area Residents Discuss 'McPenntrification,'" by M. Amorebieta, February 7, 2001a, *Daily Pennsylvanian*, p. 1.

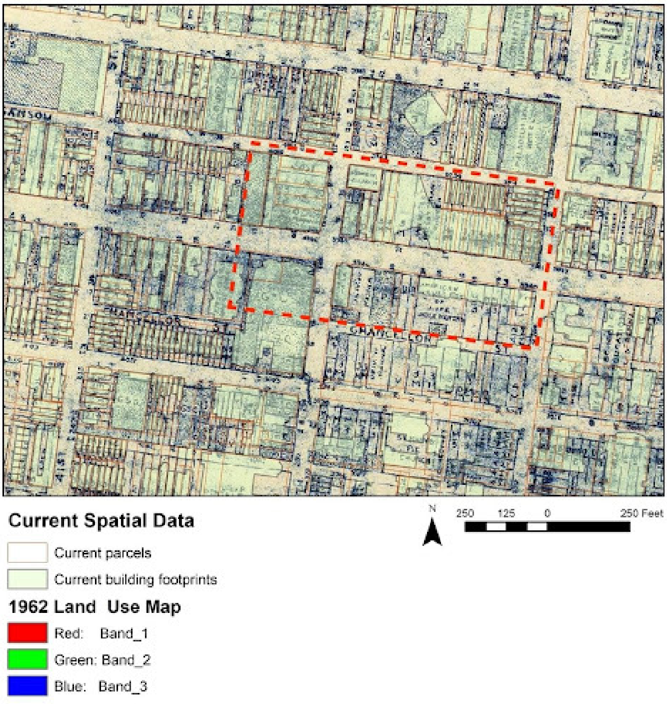
closed in 2017 and was replaced by the Panera Bread currently standing. The Panera added extensive study spaces throughout to appeal to students. These and other changes speak to how the WPI-era redevelopments did not by themselves transform the intersection into what it is today but rather laid the foundations for a continuing process.

As the map in Figure 20 shows, the intersection's infrastructure has transformed almost entirely. On the map, the red dotted line centers around the intersection. The base image is a land use map from 1962, the closest year available. Current building footprints are overlaid in green. The parcel on the intersection's northeast corner (where the McDonald's is located) is the same; however, to the east the Radian complex has thoroughly altered much of that block. To the northwest and southwest, similarly, multiple smaller parcels including the parking lot and the property where the Burger King existed were combined into large complexes. Notably, the most recent building footprint map available does not include New College House West on the intersection's southwest corner, which has further transformed the landscape.

The Results of Redevelopment

After the fact, Penn officials credit redevelopment as partially responsible for declining crime rates in the area, alongside improved security measures. Director of Special Services Patricia Brennan said, "Now we're a little oasis in the middle of a crime-ridden city" (Castellano, 2014). In my interview with her, Vice President for Public Safety Maureen Rush described her department's holistic approach to improving safety: "We have safety and security in the middle, and then we have prongs of all the things that you're now seeing in University City that were not here. All the buildings, the New College Houses, retail space." Rush suggested that Penn is conscious of and even strategizing around how redevelopment and security relate to one another. She also described how the WPI programs were intended to build on one another: The

Figure 20. Map of Redevelopment at 40th and Walnut Streets



Sources: Philadelphia Geohistory Network, OpenDataPhilly

Note. Base image: *Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1962*, 1962, Plans & Registry Division, Bureau of Engineering Surveys & Zoning, Department of Public Works, Federal Works Progress Administration for Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Geohistory Network, (https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/index2.cfm?w=LUM1962) Overlay: *Building footprints*, 2014, City of Philadelphia Department of Transportation, Open Data Philly, (https://opendataphilly.org/datasets/building-footprints/)

housing mortgage program, for example, "stabilized the environment, which again helps move towards the safety and security of that community." She continued, "This was a strategic plan. This was not, oh let's try this. This was all part of the strategy of how to make the environment of Penn and University City/West Philly residents safe." Again, she suggested that Penn's security strategy is not limited to traditional policing or even to surveillance, communication, and lighting programs. Rather, Penn now intends security and redevelopment to build on one another (M. Rush, personal communication, October 25, 2021).

Penn touts striking decreases in area crime as a triumph of the WPI and subsequent similar developments. According to an evaluation of the WPI conducted in 2003, crime reports requiring a response from Penn's Division of Public Safety decreased by 40% between 1996 and 2002 (Kromer & Kerman, 2004). Rush (personal communication, October 25, 2021) cited an overall 63% reduction in crimes in the Penn Patrol Zone between 1996 and 2020 (see Figure 21).

This difference is striking. Also notable, however, is that crime was decreasing all over Philadelphia during this time period, as the drug trade declined in response to strident criminalization of crack cocaine and resulting mass incarceration. In fact, the state of Pennsylvania has raised its number of incarcerated people by 288% since the 1980s (Vera Institute of Justice, 2019). Major crimes reported by the Philadelphia Police Department's 18th District (West Philadelphia south of Market Street) declined by approximately 48% between 1996 and 2020. Citywide, major crimes reported by the Philadelphia Police declined approximately 42% (see Figure 22). Although causation between Penn's efforts and declining crime rates would be difficult to establish, it is telling that Penn saw the highest reduction. Also interesting, however, is how the Penn data show a spike in crime during the WPI before crime rates began to fall more steadily—perhaps because redevelopment-related changes were a longer term process.

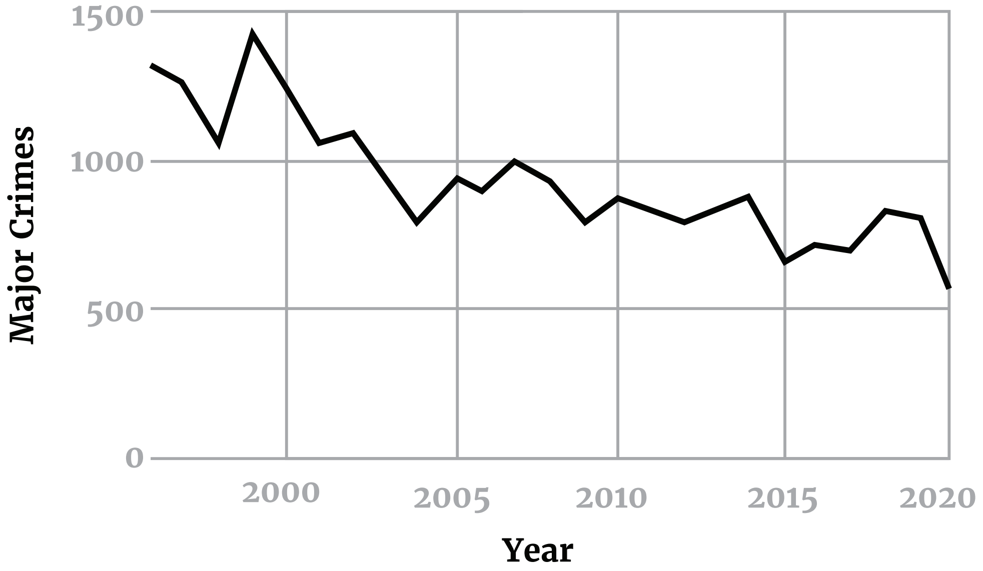
Analysis of 40th and Walnut Streets

Like the murders that sparked their formation, the WPC's creation of the University City Science Center and the WPI played different and yet strikingly similar roles. Although during this later era, Penn was opposed to the kind of campus enclosure and expansion via displacement that had characterized the urban renewal era, the transformation of the 40th and Walnut intersection has affected different forms of expansion and displacement.

Penn's approach to campus security during this later era bears more similarities to than differences from its approach in the earlier urban renewal era. Fear, social exclusion, and othering played similar roles in both periods. Penn responded to incidents of crime by redeveloping the intersection in a way that excluded local low-income people of color and reoriented it toward its "own" types of people. Penn located the issue, as it did during the urban renewal era, not in the drug trade, gang warfare, or urban disinvestment but rather in its surrounding neighborhoods themselves. In the same period as Penn was carrying out the WPI, Herman Wrice, founder of the Young Great Society, went on to found another community organization, Mantua Against Drugs. Wrice and other members of this group would hold antidrug demonstrations in the streets and publicly pressure drug dealers to leave the neighborhood. In contrast to Penn's approach, Wrice located the real issue as in the drug trade and the activities surrounding it.

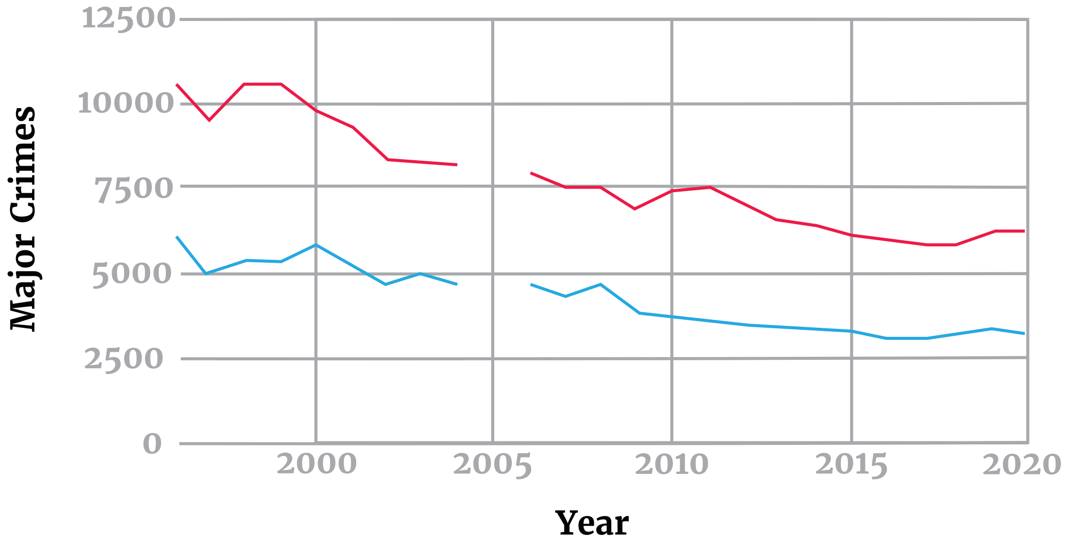
The WPI case study reveals more developed relationships among crime, campus security, and redevelopment than existed in the 1960s urban renewal case study. Here, not only did violent crime catalyze redevelopment, but redevelopment itself served as a form of securitization, alongside a gradual broadening of the Division of Public Safety's approach to campus security. In this case study, more documentation exists to assess the role of policing in relation to redevelopment. Again and again during the 1980s and 1990s, we see anecdotally and in statistical data that as Penn bolstered police numbers and presence in response to area crimes, crime rates continued to rise. As in the first case study, this evidence suggests that policing accompanied redevelopment: Had policing been effective at addressing crime, redevelopment would never have come to the table as a logical response. In the crime data, it was not until redevelopment was well under way that crime rates began to subside. In addition, in this case study, increased policing was intended to work in tandem with redevelopment and other initiatives, further solidifying their relationship.

Figure 21. Chart Illustrating Number of Major Crimes Reported by Penn's Division of Public Safety, 1996–2020



Note. Graph calculated using data from University of Pennsylvania Department of Public Safety, 1996–2020.

Figure 22. Chart Illustrating Number of Major Crimes Reported by the Philadelphia Police 18th District and by All Districts, 1996–2020



Note. Data for 2005 was not available. Graph calculated using data from Philadelphia Police Department, 1996–2020.

Conclusion

Not only have campus security and redevelopment interplayed in Penn's recent history, but they have been evolving toward an even closer relationship. These two case studies have identified patterns of continuity and change across time. Even though both are now historical cases, these patterns are ongoing. Penn's Division of Public Safety continues to grow and evolve, and Penn-related expansion and redevelopment continue. The growth and evolution of campus policing alongside and in combination with redevelopment projects is not only a historical concern; it may be used in order to better university-community relations today. The overarching lesson here is that Penn's relationship with its community has long been shaped by a persistent tendency toward separation and fortification of campus from its surrounding community. An understanding of this tendency on the part of university leadership is the first step toward comprehensive healing of university-community relations. Incorporating this understanding into community outreach and engagement initiatives could mean, for example, extending access to university facilities and resources to the surrounding community. It could also look like encouraging zones of contact and interaction between Penn and the surrounding community; for example, adding affordable retail and service amenities in the vicinity of campus that would draw students and community members alike. Penn leadership could also draw on noncampus urban planning paradigms—for example, participatory planning, which has been gaining respect and popularity in recent years—that are designed to involve community members in the decision-making process and center their input throughout.

Whether these patterns hold true for other urban universities is a topic for future research. Davarian Baldwin's (2021) work affirmed that many urban research universities hold positions similar to Penn's: as wealthy, predominantly White economic powerhouses within largely working-class communities of color. Baldwin's findings offer a basis for further research, which could use a similar premise to that used here to explore patterns at other universities. In addition, this article is only the start of research on Penn itself. Future research could address other historical and contemporary campus-related development projects. Doing so would likely unearth more dimensions of the patterns that have emerged from these two case studies, and potentially more patterns altogether. Further research could also take the patterns that I outline here and explore contemporary community engagement projects in depth with them in mind, suggesting in more concrete detail how university leaders can incorporate the lessons of the past into current community engagement efforts.

If this research is any indication, universities' relationships with their communities can be greatly shaped by long-standing patterns of underlying bias. It is no wonder that urban university-community relations are often fraught: Communities see and remember these biases, and smaller scale engagement initiatives, although they may have an impact, do not have the power in and of themselves to reverse overarching patterns. Penn, for example, runs tutoring programs that pair university students with West Philadelphia children for help in their school subjects. These programs certainly have an impact on children's lives, and the practice does effect more interaction between university and community. But an individual initiative like this one does not address overarching patterns of securitization and fortification. In Penn's case, the university needs a more comprehensive initiative that thoroughly reckons with historical patterns of bias and creates a multipronged approach to healing university-community relations. Such an endeavor could include current community engagement initiatives, but they would be part of a larger organized effort that would address policing, redevelopment, gentrification—all the factors that make up Penn's impact on its community. In order to improve their community engagement initiatives, universities must create more thorough and comprehensive approaches that take into account the complexity of how they have impacted their communities over time. Without this comprehensiveness, individual community engagement initiatives will do little to heal damaged university-community relations or have a genuine impact. Willingness to examine and reckon with all the ways they have shaped their communities is the first step universities can take toward making their community engagement initiatives more effective and building positive relationships with their communities.

About the Author

__Francesca M. Ciampa__ is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests focus on inclusive urbanism, participatory planning processes, and the economics of urban development. She holds a BA in urban studies and political science.

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Unfolding the Community Engagement Narratives of Three Universities Using a Discourse Analysis Approach

Gustavo Gregorutti

Abstract

Although a large body of literature discusses the advancement of community engagement in higher education, a less substantial body of scholarship explores how engagement is promoted and institutionalized within universities. In this exploratory study, using a discourse analysis of official reports posted on the websites of three university cases, the qualitative results unfolded how community engagement was institutionalized. The study identified some of the basic mechanisms social language uses to create institutions within institutions, like university engagement. The study provided data to support the theoretical assumption that language, through a host of possible configurations of texts, generates discourses that engender social actions such as institutionalization. Those processes disclosed how engagement was produced, and it is still evolving. Further research strategies are discussed.

Keywords: university engagement, community service, civic engagement, service-learning, discourse analysis

As universities evolve, embracing new missions and models to transform people and communities, they continue to experience the emergence of new ways to bring out changes within the three critical missions of teaching, research, and service (Gregorutti, 2011; McAdam & Debackere, 2018; Yun & Liu, 2019). Particularly since the 1980s and in the American context, institutions of higher learning have been reacting to an increasing attempt to establish partnerships with surrounding communities. An important landmark that made this trend visible can be traced back to the 1985 creation of Campus Compact, an initiative sponsored by the presidents of Brown, Georgetown, and Stanford Universities and the Education Commission of the States to advance the mission of promoting a healthier democracy through the engagement of higher education with communities. According to its official website (https://compact.org), these leaders were concerned with the lack of involvement of higher education institutions in strengthening democracy and society. Ernest Boyer, with his *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) report from the Carnegie Foundation, set another vital milestone to rethink the purposes of higher education. These and others' contributions were reactions to the increasing questioning of higher education that permeated American society (Hursh & Wall, 2011).

In recent years, universities and communities have been approaching each other, increasing the exchange of resources to partner on behalf of everyday needs (Bortolin, 2011; Hahn et al., 2015; Hoffman, 2021; Schneider, 2022). According to Campus Compact and similar organizations, those activities show remarkable growth involving people from academia and community institutions. At the same time, peer-reviewed publications have proliferated, exhibiting a host of ways in which engagement can be expanded, grounded on its virtues, through different models and activities, to advance communities and learning in the U.S. higher education system (Kuh, 2009; Ozias & Pasque, 2019; Yorio & Ye, 2012; Zepke, 2015).

The initial Academic Profession in the

Knowledge Bases Society (APIKS) survey report, a longitudinal study (Jacob et al., 2020), showed that U.S. universities and their professors are increasingly involved in community engagement. The 1,135 responses from 80 sampled institutions representing the four-year tertiary education spectrum from 33 states and two territories depicted a clear commitment to engagement. About 77% of the APIKS participating professors have been involved in some community service. Most faculty members were engaged, whether their orientation was toward research (72%) or teaching (78%), showing a widespread acceptance of engagement as part of their professional activities. Also, at an institutional level, most professors (70%) acknowledged that engagement is promoted through official mission statements. More than half of the academics reported that their universities provided formal institutional support to advance service. These profound and essential shifts have also influenced students, knowledge production, university relationships, and communities.

One may ask, what prompts universities to participate in transforming communities and themselves? According to Bringle and Hatcher (2002), that question can be approached through different exchange theories, since community engagement is essentially an activity rooted in human and institutional relationships that lead to "trading" mutual benefits. Enos and Morton (2003), borrowing from the transactional–transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978), suggested that "most of our service-learning and community service efforts can be characterized as transactional" (p. 24), and the same authors explained the idea by saying, "Too often, then, we think of campus–community partnerships as linear, transactional relationships between or among representatives of institutional interests" (p. 24), an approach that some researchers have criticized, stressing that engagement must move beyond transactional toward transformational (Bushouse, 2005; Strier, 2014; Welch, 2016). O'Meara (2008) underlined the importance of motivational theories to explain how individual and institutional goals and assumptions prompt engagement in each context. Isomorphism may explain some of the popularity of engagement among universities, as they copy each other (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Universities and faculty members start engaging through the emergence of a new epistemology, as Schön (1995) put it, that prompts them to share their resources. Based on the social theory of cognition, Sloman and Fernbach (2017) proposed that people rarely think alone. Humans build systems of knowledge, with practical implications, by relying on complex interactions not only with one another but also through their bodies and artifacts designed to cope with challenges.

According to Phillips et al. (2004), institutions are based on specific types of texts that configure a coherent discourse with sets of assumptions, principles, and purposes to develop actions that are later institutionalized: "Institutions can be understood as products of the discursive activity that influences actions" (p. 635). That happens through "texts" that can be oral, written, or symbolic, but all converge to facilitate actions. Using a discourse analysis (DA) may be helpful to explore this central question; as De Graaf (2001) put it, "Discourses are constitutive of reality. By looking at what people say and write, we can learn how they construct their world" (p. 301). Little research addresses the institutional discourse associated with promoting community engagement as a new higher education paradigm reconfiguring U.S. tertiary education's core missions. Numerous theoretical discussions have explained the importance of involvement to advance learning (Astin, 1984; Pace, 1980; Tinto, 1993) that provided the basis for engaging students in the context of criticism of higher education (Boyer, 1990; Kellogg Commission, 1999; Kosar, 2011; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Several studies explain how engagement became relevant for higher education by questioning prevalent practices (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009) and how the federal government supported the idea of engagement through funding that prompted several initiatives to advance the trend (Kuh, 2009; Ross, 2002). Other studies provided ideological explanations, such as neoliberalism as the source of engagement (Biesta, 2004; Hursh & Wall, 2011; Zepke, 2015). Several researchers have devoted time to explaining the types and characteristics of engagement (Furco, 2010; Saltmarsh et al., 2009; Strier, 2014; Welch, 2016). Still others focused on what facilitates engagement development (Dorado & Giles, 2004; Enos & Morton, 2003; Gehrke & Kezar, 2019; Hoffman, 2021; Hoyt, 2010; O'Meara, 2008). An extensive body of studies explores the benefits and positive impact on students, universities, and communities (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler et al., 2001; Galiatsatos et al., 2015; Harden et al., 2017; Holley & Harris, 2018; Rama et al., 2000; Roberts et al., 2019). However, the effect of DA as a comprehensive methodology to explain the development of engagement in higher education has not been studied.

Understanding the mechanism and processes associated with the impact of narratives that produce engagement represents a significant gap in the current specialized literature on community engagement. Thus, this article aims to introduce this movement to systematize its general characteristics and explore how three case universities promoted and applied the central elements of this emerging trend. Moreover, understanding global paradigms, discourses, and narratives that configure and reconfigure specific and influential processes impacting higher education can benefit higher education administrators and policymakers in developing and implementing policies such as engagement.

Theoretical Approach

According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (n.d.):

> The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. ("What Is Community Engagement?")

This definition encompasses most dimensions of engaging with communities to advance multiple purposes. It reveals essential aspects of the impact of culture, mission, and environment on organizational behavior in the context of engagement. However, no comprehensive theoretical framework appeared as distinctive (e.g., Hicks & Lloyd, 2021; Warren, 2012) to explain the phenomenon. Since community engagement is built into the fabric of society, involving many factors and social organizations, such as universities and communities, DA can provide some of the epistemological foundations to uncover what influences the configuration and development of engagement in higher education, as Phillips and Hardy (2002) remarked:

> We find discourse analysis to be a compelling theoretical frame for observing social reality[,] . . . a useful method in a number of empirical studies[, and] . . . an epistemology that explains how we know the social world, as well as a set of methods for studying it. (pp. 2–3)

A core epistemological assumption of DA is that social reality is created through language that expresses itself through various types of text, such as verbal, visual, and written (Krippendorff, 2004; Wittgenstein, 1967). In tandem with many contextual interactions, these texts configure the discourses that yield social organizations (Gee, 1999). The final product of the dynamic between texts and context is a discourse that creates specific identities or, as Gee (1999) put it, "spoken and written language as it is used to enact social and cultural perspectives and identities" (p. 4). The same author clarified, "Language-in-action is always and everywhere an active building process" (p. 11), producing social reality: in this case, community engagement among higher education institutions.

It is essential to recognize that organizational and social discourses must be analyzed by different approaches, depending on epistemological assumptions. One available approach is critical discourse analysis (CDA), a variant of DA that is making its way into social sciences, as well as education (Bortolin, 2011; Garrity, 2010; Ozias & Pasque, 2019; Pasquesi, 2019; Saarinen, 2008; Wright & Kim, 2022). Indeed, an impressive amount of research has applied CDA to explore political or social justice problems that are, one way or the other, perpetuating current misbalances within communities. CDA focuses on the power dynamics that emerge from a text to support action; as Wodak (2013) put it, CDA has an "interest in the semiotic dimensions of power, injustice and political–economic, social or cultural change in our globalized and globalizing world and societies" (p. 22). Consequently, CDA examines how any specific actor or organization constructs and utilizes the discourse to substantiate activity within a social power struggle. Through an interconnected set of texts, language creates a discourse that CDA explores in its context but against a critical view of the power struggle (Foucault, 1966).

Instead, this study is concerned with assembling the essential elements that facilitate community engagement—the assumptions, principles, and purposes that are promoted to create an institutional discourse—namely, different variants of community engagement. A general DA approach can better fit the goals of the study, as Phillips and Hardy (2002) put it:

> Not all empirical work is so directly interested in power, however, and many studies explore the constructive effects of discourse without explicitly focusing on the political dynamics. Important bodies of work . . . [are] more interested in developing an understanding of constructive processes than power and politics per se. Rather than exploring who benefits or is disadvantaged by a socially constructed "reality," these researchers are more interested in understanding the way in which discourses ensure that certain phenomena are created, reified, and taken for granted and come to constitute that "reality." (p. 20)

Moreover, DA can be seen as an umbrella methodology to collect and treat data. Based on constructivist epistemology, discourse is understood as a language that formulates and recreates reality. Furthermore, even if the reconstruction of discourse is based on texts, like institutional reports, "We cannot simply focus on an individual text, however; rather, we must refer to bodies of texts because it is the interrelations between text . . . and systems of distributing texts that constitute a discourse over time" (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 5). The reconstruction of discourse therefore must be performed in a "reference to the social context in which the texts are found, and the discourses are produced" (p. 5). This consideration of context is relevant given that discourses selectively assemble a combination of endorsed texts in a particular setting that makes them cohesively influential in creating social action through organizations like colleges and universities. As Gee (1999) asserted, "We continually and actively build and rebuild our worlds not just through language, but through language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways of thinking, valuing, feeling, and believing" (p. 11). According to Gee, a discourse is embedded in a particular context that gives a significant meaning where it is inserted, as discourses are networks of complex interconnected texts expressed in multiple forms. Even though this process morphs as social interactions impact people and change institutions, Smagorinsky and Taxel (2005) argued that discourses allow people to decipher "the ideology behind that vocabulary. Furthermore, one's discourse is intertextual, enabling members of the same culture to instantiate similar referents when hearing the same terms and by and large share the same perspective on those referents" (p. 66). Those intertextual elements are embedded in a multilevel web of meaning crucial to assembling collective ideas that become institutional discourses.

Consequently, within each university, community engagement is guided by those shared meanings that loop back to reconstruct and evolve new dimensions of institutional discourses as implementation and reflection interact. Understanding these cycles of interactions can offer a way to unveil how engagement emerges and varies over time. Moreover, influential actors can use those mechanisms to advance alternative forms of discourses that would become new social actions. In short, DA provided a theoretical frame with epistemological assumptions that guide the method to explore the relationship between different expressions of community engagement discourses within the context of each case study.

Research Design

Using DA, this exploratory qualitative study employed three cases to understand the assumptions and motivators expressed through institutional discourses that the selected universities endorsed to advance community engagement. The research question prompted a qualitative methodology. As Creswell (2013) put it, "We conduct qualitative research because a problem or issue needs to be explored" (p. 47) using that methodological approach. The complexity of the problem makes it very difficult to identify and measure the intervening variables; as Creswell explained, "Statistical analyses simply do not fit the problem" (p. 48). Also, as a central epistemological assumption, qualitative methods contend for understanding variables in their environment, as they are a natural product of contextual interactions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Consequently, this exploratory DA examined three cases to see how institutions generated their narrative to justify social action—that is, community engagement. Creswell and Creswell (2018) clarified the point: "Case studies are a design of inquiry . . . in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals" (p. 14). In addition, multiple-case studies provide more data; as Yin (2014) pointed out, "The evidence from multiple-cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust" (p. 57).

Selection of Cases

Three universities were purposively selected for data collection (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014). The selected cases have shown significant engagement involvement efforts at local, state, national, and even global levels. The three cases provided data to extrapolate theoretical conclusions as well. Yin (2014) recommended this exploratory qualitative option for cases as a methodological alternative to handle complex social issues.

Among the thousands of higher education institutions in the United States, this study considered ones that have already advanced the three main missions for higher education. This strategy is especially important since those institutions are fully committed to all the educational missions identified so far as relevant (Boyer, 1990; Crow et al., 2018; Harden et al., 2017). They look for the evolvement of teaching, research, and transfer of discoveries to the broader community through patents, spin-offs, and commercialization of ideas that generate employment and applied scientific breakthroughs (Baker & Wiseman, 2008). Also, the third mission is unfolded as serving and cooperating with communities, in multiple ways, toward their improvement. Relatively few institutions have pursued innovative ways to integrate their core missions with local, regional, and international communities.

Consequently, institutions with such qualifications have been listed by the Carnegie Classification of Higher Education as actively involved with communities. As shown in their respective websites and activity reports, they have institutionalized engagement through programs that impact the three central missions of higher education. In short, the study was based on the following institutions: (1) Tufts University (TU), a medium-sized private school; (2) Michigan State University (MSU), a major public university; and (3) Loyola University Chicago (LUC), a medium-sized religious-affiliated school. This university exemplifies an extensive network of nonpublic and religious-affiliated institutions in the United States.

Source of Information and Data Analysis

The snowballing amount of information posted on websites is increasingly relevant for research in social sciences. Some recent researchers have successfully explored this data collection approach (Bennett et al., 2017; LePeau, 2015; LePeau et al., 2018). According to LePeau et al. (2018), "The institutional website is an important medium for creating and delivering messages that communicate institutional values" (p. 127). Official websites' contents express information essential to understanding assumptions within each university that evidence institutional discourses, as published reports substantiate perceptions and purposes that impact activities developed at each campus (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003; Lažetić, 2019; LePeau, 2015; Wilson et al., 2012). Moreover, as Bennett et al. (2017) pointed out, institutional websites "shape the public image of an institution and represent an important component of an institution's integrated marketing strategy. As such, websites tend to reflect the most important messages a university wishes to portray in shaping its image" (p. 54). Therefore, websites can provide reliable documents to explore institutional discourses. Since the information was available to the general public through web browsers, no Institutional Review Board process was required to collect multiple types of reports posted online. The three universities posted publicly available information that needed no special permission to analyze. Public information does not involve special authorizations to be studied and published as long as the sources are cited.

The websites of each selected institution were explored to find official written reports. Upon identifying key publications that showed information regarding reasons for activities, academic structures, and statements supporting community engagement, most of them in PDF format, the researcher downloaded them to be later examined using NVivo software.

The written reports from the early 1990s to recent years were clustered into two broad categories. In the first category were institutional reports and papers generated for specific organizational purposes and used for advancing mission or strategic statements that consolidated community engagement. In the second category were endorsed documents or interviews containing relevant data; these were publications produced in other institutional contexts and later posted to support engagement. Examples included annual reports, articles, and special issues that offered different dimensions to explore institutional discourses.

The data from official websites were clustered by university. For instance, the 10 final reports selected from Tufts University's webpages included three endorsed papers and seven institutional reports. All 10 represented a total of 187 pages used for analyses. In the case of Michigan State University, the website screening provided 12 final reports, of which nine fell under the institutional reports category and three were endorsed papers, all totaling 525 pages. For Loyola University Chicago, there were 14 final reports totaling 424 pages. Eleven of those documents were institutional reports and three were endorsed papers.

Upon identifying and downloading the official and institutional reports through accessing the websites, NVivo Software (Version 12) served to process the database. The software facilitated the coding of each report to later configure the emerging themes that provided the bases of DAs. Each document was assigned a code name consisting of a letter identifying its originating university and a number to locate it within each case. "T" was for Tufts-Tisch College, "M" for Michigan State University, and "L" for Loyola University Chicago. Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide a full list of documents examined, with their code names.

Yin (2014) recommended that competent and close-to-the-topic peers review qualitative research. In this study, to ensure that

Table 1. Reports Selected From Tisch College at Tufts University

Code name	Title	Content	Type of report	Length	Year
Report T1	*Declaration of Purpose*	Main purposes for engagement	Institutional report	1 p.	2000
Report T2	*Summer Institute of Civic Studies—Framing Statement*	The basics of Civic Studies	Institutional report	9 pp.	2007
Report T3	*T-10 Strategic Plan 2013–2023*	Global strategies for Tufts University	Institutional report	45 pp.	2013
Report T4	*Tisch College Annual Report 2012–2013*	Citizenship activities in the university's schools	Institutional report	10 pp.	2013
Report T5	Interview with TCRC board members	Explained what the board members expect and endorse for the Tufts Community Research Center	Endorsed interview	9 pp.	2014
Report T6	*Civic Studies*	The principles of Civic Studies	Endorsed paper	5 pp.	2014
Report T7	*Civic Education and Deeper Learning*	Deeper Learning Research Series	Endorsed paper	22 pp.	2015
Report T8	*America's Civic Renewal Movement*	View from organizational leaders	Institutional report	27 pp.	2015
Report T9	*Strategic Plan 2016–2023*	Strategic positioning to develop civic life	Institutional report	26 pp.	2016
Report T10	*The Republic Is (Still) at Risk*	National data report of democratic involvement	Endorsed paper	33 pp.	2017

Table 2. Reports Selected From Michigan State University

Code name	Title	Content	Type of report	Length	Year
Report M1	*University Outreach at MSU*	Defining dimensions of UOE with strategic directions	Institutional report for provost	66 pp.	1993/ 2000
Report M2	*Background Papers*	History, conceptual understanding of UOE & recommendations	Institutional report for provost	281 pp.	1994
Report M3	*Points of Distinction*	Guidebook for planning & quality assessment of outreach	Institutional report	47 pp.	1996/ 2000/ 2009
Report M4	*Outreach Linkages*, Spring 1998	Sharing activities about UOE	Institutional report	4 pp.	1998
Report M5	*Outreach Linkages*, Summer 1998	Sharing activities about UOE	Institutional report	4 pp.	1998
Report M6	*Outreach Linkages*, Fall 1999	Sharing activities about UOE	Institutional report	4 pp.	1999
Report M7	*Criterion Five: Engagement and Service*	Description of the UOE model	Endorsed paper	32 pp.	2006
Report M8	*Scholarly O&E Reported by Successfully Tenured Faculty*	A typology of the engaged university	Endorsed paper	8 pp.	2009
Report M9	*Embracing the World Grant Ideal*	Affirming the Morrill Act for a 21st-century global society	Endorsed paper	21 pp.	2009
Report M10	*World Grant Universities*	The president of MSU explaining UOE	Institutional report	5 pp.	2010
Report M11	*The Engaged Scholar Magazine*, Vol. 10	Sharing activities about UOE	Institutional report	53 pp.	2015
Report M12	*UOE: A Forward Look to New Opportunities*	A provost's steering committee on outreach and engagement at MSU	Institutional report	21 pp.	2018

Note. O&E = outreach and engagement; UOE = university outreach and engagement.

Table 3. Reports Selected From Loyola University Chicago

Code name	Title	Content	Type of report	Length	Year
Report L1	*Immigrant Student National Position Paper*	Dealing with undocumented students in higher education: The Jesuit position	Multiple institutional report	36 pp.	2013
Report L2	*AJCU Presidents' Statement*	Jesuit universities supporting undocumented students across the USA	Institutional report	2 pp.	2013
Report L3	*Impact Report 2013–2014*	Activities of the Center for Experiential Learning (CEL)	Institutional report	17 pp.	2014
Report L4	*Plan 2020: 2015–2020 Strategic Plan*	University 5-year strategic plan	Institutional report	23 pp.	2015
Report L5	*Transformative Education in the Jesuit Tradition*	Principles of Loyola's Jesuit pedagogy	Institutional report	15 pp.	2015
Report L6	CEL *Partnership Statement*	Partnerships with employers and community organizations	Institutional report	2 pp.	2016
Report L7	*Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm at Arrupe College*	Arrupe College as an alternative education for underprepared students	Endorsed paper	23 pp.	2017
Report L8	CEL *Guide to Critical Ignatian Reflection*	Guide to help educators utilize and deepen reflection in their courses	Endorsed paper	22 pp.	2018
Report L9	*Men and Women for Others*	Redefining education for social justice	Endorsed paper	19 pp.	1973/ 2018
Report L10	*Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*, Fall 2019	Discussion and revision of the *cura apostolica paradigm*	Institutional report	45 pp.	Fall 2019
Report L11	*An Education That Empowers and Transforms*	Presenting the main characteristics of Jesuit education	Institutional report	10 pp.	2019
Report L12	*2018–2019 Annual Impact Report*	Activities of the Center for Experiential Learning (CEL)	Institutional report	29 pp.	2019
Report L13	*Mission Priority Examen Self-Study*	A comprehensive strategic examen of the university	Institutional report	164 pp.	2019
Report L14	*Ignatian Pedagogy and Service-Learning*	Analysis of engaged service-learning	Institutional report	10 pp.	2019

the final coding and derivation of themes that emerged from the data were performed accurately by this researcher, a qualitatively trained reviewer was hired to double-check the analyses. The final recoding provided a comprehensive agreement concerning the original coding. With the results identified from the 1,136 pages downloaded and processed from the three universities, the researcher applied a DA for each case.

Analyses were performed using an institutional approach, leaving out specific faculty members' points of view. When some professors and administrators expressed their ideas in a particular report, they represented a larger institutional constituency.

Institutional Discourses

The evolvement to support engagement at each institution was situated in a global set of values and assumptions of education that each of these universities endorsed throughout their history. These ideas were expressed in the reports and appeared as contextual discourses that facilitated specific discourse versions around the main functions of higher education in American society. The impact of those "meta" discourses created multiple types of institutional engagement discourses that are represented as follows.

Tufts University

Since the 1950s, when the Tisch College Center for Civic Education was created, this university has expressed some commitment to civic education. However, some of those ideas were formalized at the beginning of the 21st century. Mainly, the *Declaration of Purpose* (T1, 2000) functioned as a pivotal event in the institutional engagement configuration. The one-page document expressed the framework elements to advance institutional discourses with a civic and democratic leaning:

> We believe that the preservation of our democracy is dependent upon the ability of all citizens to realize that, as we enjoy the rights and privileges that democracy bestows on us, so must we accept the duties and responsibilities it demands from us. (p. 1)

Thus, the overall purpose of the institution was to educate "all members of the Tufts community in the values and skills of active citizenship, with the goal of producing committed community leaders who will take an active role in addressing the core problems of society" (p. 1). The *Strategic Plan 2016–2023* (T9) stated that every university student is interconnected to Tisch College, receiving training "for a lifetime of engagement in civic and democratic life, to study civic life and its intersections with public and private institutions, and to promote practices that strengthen civic life in the United States and around the world" (p. 8). The college facilitates "activities that improve democracy and civic life and that engage citizens and communities in addressing shared social problems" (p. 15), with the ultimate goal of educating "a new generation of committed and engaged citizens who will ensure that the American model of participatory democracy continues to flourish" (T1, para. 15). Tufts University has assembled a version of engagement that leans toward strengthening civic values to advance democracy. These foundational declarations established the bases for further institutionalizing engagement as a vital assumption for strategic thinking.

Paradigm Shifts

The metainstitutional discourse to develop civic engagement trickled down to reconceptualize the specific discourses for the missions Tufts University carries. Throughout the next almost 20 years after the *Declaration of Purpose*, faculty members, students, and administrators unfolded the implications of the new institutional discourse, creating and adjusting to the various aspects that involved teaching, research, and service. Out of those deep revisions, the online published reports evidenced three major discourses that emerged as paradigm changes for this university.

Communities as Partners. The new understanding of engagement made external communities more actively involved as contributors and not as passive receptors of the resources the university can supply: "Bringing together community and university is a strength where we have many things to share and learn" (T5, p. 3). The effort and discourse centered around the necessity of bridging both organizations, making the university more available to communities: "Loosen the control of the information from the university and use jargon less language so community people can understand" (T5, p. 7). The documents expressed an underlying assumption that "there is vast potential in taking a civic approach to these and other problems, applying the concepts and methods of civic engagement in order to leverage the assets of individuals and communities" (T9, p. 10). Due to overwhelming social and, particularly, political challenges that threaten democracy, Tufts University sees in partnering with communities a wealth of assets to expand democratic values. Citizens are seen as "creative agents" who can turn things around, an assumption articulated as "We take the view that human beings can be seen as co-creators and designers of their actions and of the power structures within which they act" (T2, p. 5). In short, communities become a partner for the civic cause.

A Communal Epistemology. The discourse supporting communities as active participants in solving social issues carries the assumption that universities should not be seen as the primary source of knowledge; rather, community is the focus of knowledge that comes through

> bringing together the community representatives in the Tufts host communities and Tufts faculty, students and administrators interested in its local community issues, and with the ultimate goal of doing research that addresses the needs of its population and is beneficial to its communities. (T5, p. 1)

Communities working with faculty produce the best possible scenario as "Tisch College supports engaged research and generates new knowledge about civic engagement" (T4, p. 1). Research becomes "informed by practice and community-identified needs, and it strives to inform policy and practice. It is driven by a pressing need to answer vital questions about the best ways to shape stronger communities and a healthier democracy" (T9, p. 14). The goal is to facilitate a "paradigm-shifting research and scholarship, often in the face of numerous obstacles, and to persist until publishers, funders, and colleagues appreciate how their work fundamentally changes our understanding of the world" (T3, p. 36).

The discourse favored a displacement from academia toward a bidirectional and multidisciplinary approach to generating discoveries. The ultimate intent is to "develop new models of inquiry helpful to citizens" (T9, p. 19) to facilitate new "academic pathways such as Civic Science, the movement to put civic skills and democratic practices at the forefront of scientific inquiry and to make scientific knowledge a vital public resource" (T9, p. 20). These views underscored a deep desire to reverse current models of detached knowledge generation that "distinguishes Tisch College's research and strengthens our ability to impact civic life in America and around the world" (T9, p. 14). This is the institutional research discourse that emerged as a noticeable paradigm shift.

A Collaborative Learning. Several assumptions configured a new emerging discourse of civic learning since it was promoted as "the best vehicle to train young people to sustain our democracy. . . . Over time, investing in civic learning can ensure we train the future generations of citizens to safeguard our democracy" (T10, p. 3). Learning is enlarged to have a civic purpose that goes beyond the university and even personal benefit because the institution looks to "formulate the relevant skills and capacities, and to develop our understanding of the structures of power. . . . to promote the teaching and learning of those skills" (T2, p. 6).

This new idea of civic learning is presented as better than regular education since it contributes to society and enhances a higher level of learning among students:

> Specifically, we advance two theses: 1) Deeper learning has great potential to promote civic outcomes and, hence, to strengthen our democracy; and 2) strengthening civic education is an important way to promote deeper learning.
>
> Indeed, we argue that civic education, when implemented effectively, *exemplifies* deeper learning, requiring students to work together with peers and adults to diagnose and define problems, to deliberate and choose solutions, to implement strategies, and to reflect on the results. (T7, p. 2)

In addition, these experiences are transformational at personal and professional levels as well:

> Through our programs, many students have transformational learning experiences that inform their views of themselves and the world, that shape their future trajectories, and that enable them to become ef-

> fective agents of change. Thousands more are inspired by the culture of civic engagement we foster on campus. (T9, p. 11)

Moreover, Report 3 added that those experiences can "fundamentally challenge a person's assumptions and preconceptions, as well as their beliefs and values, affecting how they understand themselves, others, and the world" (p. 21), a process that would take a community of "professors, peers, coaches, advisers, chaplains, counselors, and others who are dedicated to helping students embrace and process transformational experiences" (T3, p. 22). This way, this new institutional discourse of civic learning is endorsed as having a better potential to tackle social issues and significantly advance students' learning.

Michigan State University

One of the first institutions of the Morrill Land-Grant Act was created to facilitate bridges between higher education and surrounding communities. From its beginning, the overall institutional discourse prompted this institution to solve social issues; as one of its presidents pointed out, "a state-assisted institution should serve the people, that departments and colleges should develop and implement plans that are consistent with the institution's mission" (M2, p. 32). Furthermore, this type of university "has always embraced the principle that knowledge gained in one setting should be widely disseminated to advance the public good in other places" (M10, p. 46). Promoting engagement was thus a natural fit for MSU, extending formal and informal programs aligned with that original institutional discourse.

Background Papers (M2) collected the main discussions for groundbreaking ideas that reshaped the global institutional discourse and, consequently, many subsequent reports found online. During the 1990s, those discussions unfolded in a national debate regarding the purpose of higher education in the country.

As the numerous university and community actors matured and evolved the implementation of the initial institutional discourse, MSU expanded to a global approach of the land-grant or world grant ideal thought to be a valuable model for all universities, as they "must be capable of reframing their approaches to knowledge creation, use, and dissemination as changes occur in the environment and as demarcations between nations, cultures, and fields of study become increasingly blurred" (M9, p. 7). Thus, through its products, higher education has the overarching mission of reshaping itself and the world, not just the states as in the land-grant model. "Together, all universities can use and act on knowledge to move the world toward greater good" (p. 2) to "embrace the ideals that make a difference in society and address the tensions inherent in the work we do" (p. 2). This overall institutional discourse provided the bases for several succeeding discourses impacting other aspects of MSU's missions.

Paradigm Shifts

The official MSU website houses a vast number of reports. Several subdiscourses emerged from the ones selected and analyzed for this study as professors, administrators, and community leaders interacted and reflected over the years after the foundational debates and reconstruction of institutional discourses during the early 1990s. At least three major specific discourses appeared as central from the reports.

Outreach as Emerging Transdisciplinary Scholarship. *University Outreach at Michigan State University* (M1, 1993) played a central role in defining outreach as the new dominant form of scholarship that "cuts across teaching, research, and services. It involves generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences in ways that are consistent with university and unit missions" (p. 1). Outreach was proposed as an all-encompassing idea that later became a central piece of the dominant institutional discourse at MSU.

Outreach is "better conceived as a cross-cutting function" (M1, p. 3), and it should be "integral to the intellectual life of the entire University, not isolated and marginalized in special units" (p. 8). This reframing was a revolutionary aspect that enhanced the land-grant values, but at the same time went further, embracing all dimensions of higher education and incorporating communities as cocreators of solutions taking each "individual practitioner not just as the beneficiary of its knowledge but also as a partner in the creation" (M9, p. 13).

This embracing approach intended to comprehend "complex and interrelated situations while focusing on the contributions that individual, family, agency, service system, and community outcomes make toward achieving larger desired community impacts" (M6, p. 2). This idea assumes that "not all knowledge and expertise resides in the academy, and that both expertise and great learning opportunities in teaching and scholarship also reside in non-academic settings" (M11, p. 14). Universities should therefore commit to "draw the separate academic disciplines and institutions outside the silos of their internal conversations, to create a new conversation that speaks with a collective voice to address challenges confronting all nations and cultures" (p. 12) to come all together, including all fields of knowledge and universities, to advance a "financially robust and culturally literate population that can understand what it means to participate in a democracy" (M9, p. 12). This transdisciplinary approach has social-knowledge-driven motives: "We strongly believe that transdisciplinary and participatory approaches to modeling complex problems hold the promise of co-creating new knowledge at the intersections of discipline-based and local knowledge . . . to manage the many complex problems facing communities in the 21st century" (M11, p. 42).

Applying Knowledge Through Outreach. All the core missions of MSU appeared to gravitate around knowledge and its implications in the context of being transformed by outreach, as MSU looks to discover new and "practical uses for theoretical knowledge, and to speed the diffusion of information to residents of the state, the nation, and the world . . . emphasizing the applications of information; and . . . contributing to the understanding and the solution of significant societal problems" (M7, p. 185). This aim puts the university in a "unique position to provide the kinds of outreach activities that will respond to society's needs while maintaining excellence in all knowledge domains" (M1, p. 11).

Outreach is a new approach to knowledge and its purpose in higher education. "If outreach is not fundamental to what a university is and does, then the knowledge associated with outreach will be second-rate and not worthy of connection to an institution of higher learning," and that is why "outreach must be considered a fundamental feature of a university's academic mission" (M2, p. 100). Knowledge creation is redefined through outreach, as professors and students extend the "university's research capacity to non-academic audiences through such activities as applied research and technical assistance, demonstration projects, evaluation of ongoing programs, technology transfer, policy analysis, and consulting undertaken in conjunction with the unit's programs" (M3, p. 3) to involve nontraditional partners to reconfigure knowledge impact. This process brings about "a relationship with partners who may lack academic credentials but possess nuanced cultural or technical knowledge about a particular place or set of circumstances" (M10, p. 45), enriching the final research use process. Success in this endeavor requires a combination of "research and engagement that holds the greatest potential to address local and world challenges" (M9, p. 16).

Wellness of the Whole Society. The cross-cutting scholarship discourse involved a different teaching–research paradigm that pursues personal and social health. The model is people/community oriented. "As we continue to work with people to frame the ultimate impact of their outcomes, a new picture has emerged. We began to realize that a powerful picture could be drawn if we thought of impacts as people-centered" (M6, p. 2). To maximize impact on issues that affect students and society, a far-reaching academic approach is necessary to expand "student development as scholars, researchers, leaders, and citizens; and [advance] opportunities for interdisciplinary research and teaching" (M11, p. 15).

This discourse is inserted in the context of two primary goals. First, according to Report 9, MSU should train students to "become learners for life, capable of adapting to changes in the processes and nature of work in a global economy" (p. 6), which will impact society as they engage in their jobs. Second, MSU ought to "continue to create, disseminate, and apply knowledge that drives economic development and creates jobs locally and globally" (p. 6) because, in a close relationship, both universities and communities improve the conditions of people and, therefore, society. The ultimate goal is to create social betterment through a "combination of both significant job creation and an educated citizenry that will move our nation toward a more sustainable prosperity and, ultimately, lead the world in solving problems of global scale"

(p. 6). Consequently, jobs are expected to transform the world, and not just to continue with existing misbalances for the sake of generating employment: They will "not only employ the world's population but also employ it to the betterment of all citizens and the planet" (p. 6). MSU spells out the terms for accomplishing this task:

> By broadening the conceptual definitions of teaching and research, these terms can quickly embrace most of the knowledge extension and application activities that have traditionally been included under the rubric of public service. In fact, all of what the university does should be defined as public service. (M2, p. 56)

This model provides "experience for students to engage with communities, and . . . a practical element" (M11, p. 5) and an opportunity to "actually take the things we're learning in the classroom and make them applicable to people's lives" (p. 6), a central goal for the official outreach discourse MSU promoted.

Loyola University Chicago

This university was founded during the second part of the 19th century, one of the most intensive periods of U.S. higher education history, when many colleges and universities were created to deliver alternative training as a response to the growing demand for education (Lucas, 1996). Its religious traditions equipped this school with a unique institutional discourse that fosters active service not only as a social or intellectual imperative but as strongly linked with a moral call to bridge academia with society for its betterment. As Pedro Arrupe, an influential leader of the Jesuit Society, put it, "We must help each other to repair this lack in us, and above all make sure that in future the education imparted in Jesuit schools will be equal to the demands of justice in the world" (L9, pp. 2–3). This view constituted the primary fabric for the institutional discourse since LUC cannot "separate action for justice and liberation from oppression from the proclamation of the Word of God" (p. 6).

Moreover, this social justice involvement, representing faith assumptions, has an "emphasis towards education as linked with responsibility for betterment of the world [that] can help students concretize their learning in ways they may have not previously been encouraged to do," as students are learning by practice that they have "a purpose that is bigger than themselves and simple intellectual mastery" (L8, p. 17). Students are expected to mature and contribute to people in need as they engage in their professional fields.

Due to the Jesuit commitment to social justice, "this union of faith and justice . . . has become the integrating factor of all that Jesuits and their institutions undertake" (L5, pp. 7–8). Thus, higher education is understood to transform society since "every Jesuit academic institution of higher learning is called to live in a social reality . . . and to live for that social reality, to shed university intelligence upon it, and to use university influence to transform it" (L13, p. 1).

Paradigm Shifts

The following three institutional discourses emerged in the context of a crossroad of the above global institutional discourse, which characterizes the Jesuit Society and, simultaneously, the national debate to advance and practice community engagement as an encompassing mission for American higher education.

Framing the Pedagogical Model. Understanding teaching in Jesuit higher education requires several assumptions that are not found in a public or private university, because "faith, knowledge, and the promotion of justice are intrinsically related: they are not three independent aspects of education that are merely juxtaposed, but rather they form a triad in which each is dynamically related and incomplete without the others" (L4, p. 4). Based on those elements, the model turns instruction in a transformational approach so as to help "students name their gifts, formulate their convictions, and ultimately take full ownership of their own lives. . . . [it] transforms students in order that they might transform the world" (L5, p. 7). A core and foundational assumption of Jesuit education is to transform the student first and then the society, as it "aims at assisting learners to undergo a series of internal transformations in how they go about understanding themselves vis-à-vis their own inclinations, passions, biases, and spontaneous reactions" (L5, p. 8).

This transformative education is built on *cura personalis* and *cura apostolica*. The first term denotes personal care, "a hallmark of Jesuit education, . . . [which] recognizes that students bring the totality of their lives into the classroom and that reality has a direct effect on the learning process" (L8, p. 6). *Cura personalis* can motivate "students to live out core values that have shaped our University since its founding" (L11, p. 5) and promote "active listening and a practiced effort to understand their world, which may be quite different from our own" (p. 3). In the case of *cura apostolica*, "the same intimate knowledge and compassion found in *cura personalis* is extended, beyond any single person, to encompass our shared personhood and mission" (L10, p. 4), and "as *cura personalis* demands a humanistic and scientific education to create whole persons, *cura apostolica* orients our universities to grapple with today's vital society issues" (p. 9). These two foundational constructs cooperate to enrich a comprehensive and engaging idea of learning practiced at LUC.

Communities as Partners. In addition to the development some neighborhoods may have experienced through LUC's intervention, community engagement was endorsed as a powerful resource to advance transformational learning:

> We believe that students should leave the service-learning experience with a deeper and even changed understanding of themselves, our communities, and their potential to participate in the civic life of our communities, country, and world. Service-learning as pedagogy creates the opportunity for students to try on and live out the core principles and values of Loyola University in the world! (L14, p. 3)

In addition, scholarly engagement aims to offer students class-correlated content in the form of a "chance to volunteer directly in the community at an organization whose mission aligns with the course's academic outcomes" (L14, p. 3). Through such experiences, students can see "their potential in society and want to make a difference" (L3, p. 16).

Loyola University treats partners as social entities that are "co-educators of our students, and in this role, we rely upon them to provide the necessary orientation, training, and supervision required for our students to complete their assigned responsibilities" (L6, p. 1). This dynamic of community involvement facilitates "the development of high-impact learning experiences connecting classroom content with real-world experience" (L3, p. 1), a learning exchange that "integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skill development in a professional setting . . . allowing students to 'learn by doing' and reflect upon that learning" (L3, p. 4). This inclusive model of relationships with communities also facilitates some levels of "interdisciplinary research, a space where faculty and students from different departments or schools can converge and collaborate" (L11, p. 8) toward common issues:

> Experiential pedagogies will help break down the artificial silos between teaching and research as faculty develop interdisciplinary work with community partners to identify research questions that are important to advancing the common good and developing solutions. This integrative and experiential approach will be more effective in moving toward solutions to complex problems and will challenge perceived categories and presuppositions, requiring depth of thought, imagination, and analysis. (L4, p. 16)

In short, the transformational learning view of education is conducted through multiple levels of academic community engagement developed as students mature in their specific knowledge field in real social contexts.

Contextual and Redemptive Engagement. From the beginning, the religious belief system that LUC endorsed to carry higher education in Chicago aimed for the advancement of society through a combination of inclusive interactions between university and community actors working together to facilitate

> a place where a committed community can be formed among people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. This is precisely the kind of community our world needs today: a community that can look beyond the specifics of its own tradition in order to learn, study, celebrate, and pray with all people of goodwill who are ready to rebuild and renew our world together. (L11, p. 6)

This comprehensive view was rooted in a dialogue mode of facilitating a "culture where students do not feel like isolated individuals but rather members of a community that encourages respectful discourse and debate, which celebrates hard work and accomplishments, and that promotes social justice and responsible freedom" (L11, p. 6). Students are stirred to answer questions that have personal, professional, and social repercussions, "'for whom' and 'for what' as they prepare for their careers. . . . How will this work contribute to or impact the communities that it serves? How might it contribute to society and to the struggle for peace and justice?" (L11, p. 7). To address those questions, the university uses "classrooms as well as [working] through encounters across Chicago and the world" (L4, p. 21) to tackle current issues, stating, for example, that "climate change, environmental degradation, aging societies, global security, growing economic disparities, the displacement of peoples, systemic poverty, homelessness, violence, and emerging infectious diseases require sustained effort, interdisciplinary knowledge, and innovative approaches" (L4, p. 16). Consequently, universities become a hub for "healing" social problems. These institutions advance engagement through learning and systematic research to "redeem" their students and, by extension, society.

Discussion

The three universities showed similar ideas regarding the importance of engaging with communities, although each institution used different internal processes with alternative assumptions about motives for engagement. Every institution elaborated its version of engagement, drawing from its traditions and institutional values. The analysis implied a change in basic teaching, research, and service assumptions across the three cases. However, following its institutional values, Tufts University evolved an engagement discourse that prioritized civic ideals for the advancement of society. The central institutional discourse was to promote democracy as an ideal model for higher education. Engagement was conceived as the approach to improve communities through civic values and skills, so this overarching discourse impacted the three primary missions, aligning them to contribute to that purpose. In the case of Michigan State University, the land-grant ideal was a precursor of community engagement. However, the university dialogued with a multitude of contemporary actors. It developed a new and comprehensive discourse of outreach as a cross-cutting function that directed all missions to bridge academia with real social issues. This all-embracing function of higher education became the world grant ideal, which distinguished MSU and set the tone for many other universities in the country and overseas. Finally, in the case of Loyola University Chicago, the institutional discourse to advance engagement was framed within the moral and social responsibility the Jesuit Society assumed as central for its universities. This unique view of reality promoted, first, a transformation of students and, later, enhanced social justice. Moreover, a series of anthropological and biblical beliefs produced a redemptive pedagogy that was the channel to renovate students' lives, which later would translate into bringing social redemption.

Now, why has all this happened? A quick answer can be that isomorphic forces play a decisive role in explaining the diffusion across institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Universities copy each other to compete and position themselves better as new trends emerge, a tendency that shows particular strength when leading institutions take initiatives that others consider attractive. For instance, the creation of Campus Compact in the mid-1980s impacted many higher education institutions, and soon several of them joined the movement, strengthening isomorphic forces.

Moreover, and adding to these efforts, well-known and visible national organizations like the Kellogg Commission and Carnegie Foundation, along with reports from leading scholars, such as Astin (1984), Lynton and Elman (1987), Boyer (1990), and Gibbons et al. (1994), provided multiple dimensions to the discussion of university engagement. The overall content of the reports, among the three cases, exhibited the development of each institution's internal versions of engagement that are well integrated into the national discussion of the trend. The reports showed several quotations and references to the widespread ideas of community engagement that influential actors and organizations disseminated.

Exchanging benefits from exchange theories was another relevant element that facilitated engagement (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Universities envisioned relationships with communities as highly beneficial, since learning and research could be advanced through real "hands-on" scenarios. At the same time, communities accepted universities as resourceful partners in solving complex problems. This transactional element, criticized by some scholars (Bushouse, 2005; Dorado & Giles, 2004; Strier, 2014; Welch, 2016), is somehow present in the explored reports of this study. Some motivational theories (O'Meara, 2008) may serve as a backdrop to understand why universities, professors, and students want to engage with surrounding communities. However, isomorphic forces do not provide enough explanatory power about the mechanisms universities use to develop and morph engagement.

An institution's contextual environment may also play an important role. According to Sloman and Fernbach (2017), people think and act in a social context. Their social theory of cognition may explain some of the forces that propel engagement; as Schön (1995) also pointed out, those dynamics facilitated deep questioning about practices. Multiple examples of collaborative learning, research, and service have demonstrated the relevance of this "thinking and acting together" with the other as a superior and complete model for society in general. This assumption was framed within a large set of studies that indicated the positive impact of engagement, proving more relevance for this theoretical extrapolation. More studies are needed to explore these dimensions.

DA can be seen as an alternative theoretical model to explain the emergence and development of community engagement in these cases. Mainly for this study, the institutionally endorsed online reports available at each website offered multiple texts, written ones, to lay the "bricks" to construct several institutional discourses. Those discourses delivered the needed legitimization of community engagement in the universities. The diffusion and acceptance of those now-institutional discourses across campuses prompted the institutionalization of engagement. This relationship of discourse and social action or institutionalization is an interaction between "the production and consumption of texts," as Phillips et al. (2004, p. 635) stated it. In other words, the visible inclusion of different forms of community engagement in the analyzed cases showed a significant institutionalization of the discourses promoting the trend. Thus, engagement appeared as a by-product of language expressed through texts constituting a coherent and influential discourse. This result seems to confirm a core assumption of discourse analysis.

The cases followed a consistent path of internal revisions of their actions, reflecting deep questioning of previous institutionalized practices and discourses. This questioning was also stimulated by a national revision of actions that generated many "texts" that slowly became macro and micro discourses influencing these three universities.

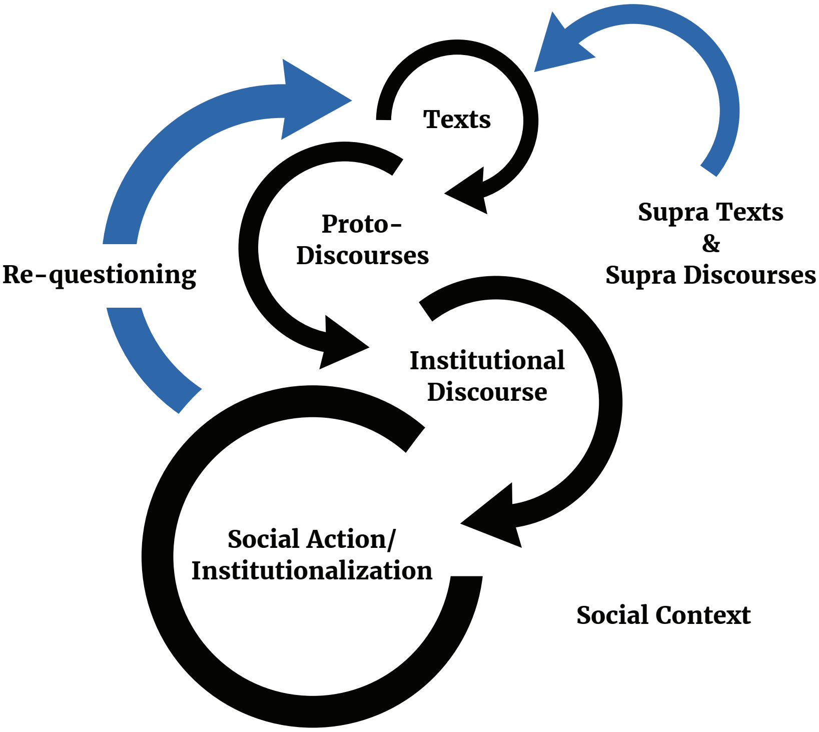
The three institutions dialogued in their texts with the national discussions and emerging discourses that offered the context, as supra texts, to produce texts. At the same time, they navigated the flow of ideas. As they participated in this process, they produced their texts and discourses in a constant relationship with the prevailing macro discourses. Then, slowly, the institutionalization of discourses occurred in the form of centers for community service, strategic planning, service-learning, civic life, new classes, challenging lectures, new funding to promote more engaged research, and academic structures with new jobs, to mention a few examples. Figure 1 shows the iteration that happened in the data.

These manifestations of institutional actions created new texts that contributed to new micro and specialized discourses for specific institutionalizations as engagement became more complex and an overarching feature of higher education. As institutionalization occurred, new cycles of revision and questioning of existing practice emerged in a changing context that generated new texts, as shown in Figure 1.

Another source of texts could be seen through the influential and established "supra" institutional discourses. For instance, the case of MSU and the land-grant institutional discourse functioned as a supra background discourse. Again, a requestioning of the existing actions facilitated a flow of new emerging texts that gave way to a new institutional, more comprehensive discourse called the world grant ideal to extend the land-grant model to all universities across the globe. This discourse, portrayed through several texts, was intended to enhance the original land-grant discourse.

The below data-driven model provides clues to explain some of the whys and hows

Figure 1. Path of Iterations of Texts, Discourses, and Social Action



behind the transformation of institutional discourses to compelling forces that generate social institutions, as well as some evolving processes within institutions to transform themselves into continually "alter" organizations. In short, through these cases, the DA methodology has helped expand the understanding of the institutionalization of community engagement.

Additionally, the theoretical assumption that social organizations are created through language interactions in a context and expressed through multiple forms of texts seemed to fit this study's three cases adequately. In other words, the emergence and evolvement of the varied types of community engagement among the three universities followed a similar pattern that can be explained using a discourse analysis method. Based on officially endorsed online reports, universities communicated their dialogues with supra texts and discourses, creating versions of texts and institutional discourses that yielded many forms of institutions. As community engagement became an overarching institutional discourse, a sort of supra discourse bounded within each university case, it stimulated the generation of complementary texts to address specific dimensions of engagement. Those texts became part of new subdiscourses that produced different social actions to conduct, for instance, teaching, research, and service.

In sum, the multiple community engagement discourses among the three cases could critically influence how universities see themselves and carry out their essential academic missions. In addition, university engagement appeared as a by-product of a complex and deep questioning of the practices under which institutions operated. The revision of purposes with private and public support for redirecting academia toward more valuable and relevant contributions to society, along with redesigning of learning and research in the context of epistemological paradigm shifts, may explain much of this movement reconfiguring higher education.

These findings may now be used to investigate more cases to expand understanding of other institutions that advance engagement with alternative purposes that may enrich the discussion. The U.S. higher education system has many institutions, such as community colleges and four-year colleges, with private and public funding. Extending the study to those leaning-toward-teaching institutions may unfold new elements to explain institutionalization of community engagement with alternative mechanisms.

Further research is needed to quantify the described iterations of texts, discourses, and social actions to find, through them, alternative maps of emerging patterns of institutionalization. In doing so, the related "analytic generalizations" could turn into statistical generalizations, through which the current theoretical assumptions could become a "grand theory." Such a theory can be evaluated as a theoretical framework for predicting factors facilitating community engagement in higher education.

This study relied on what universities published online. At the time of data retrieval, it was unknown to the researcher whether some other sources of information not publicly available existed that could have helped to understand each institution's case better. In addition, discourses may not be fully captured through what was published online, as web content constantly changes. This study recognizes that internal discourses are subject to changes over time, making it even more difficult to extrapolate results. New faculty members and institutional leaders may reshape, in short periods, existing assumptions that have a profound impact on the relationship between community engagement and established missions (LePeau et al., 2018). Further data triangulation should be explored by confirming website information through interviews and observations.

The study shows that universities share extensive information through their websites. The increasing amount of visual, audio, and written reports that are freely available can be utilized to generalize some of the conclusions of this project. Those online contents express relevant perceptions of social issues. Developing strategies for quantifying online text to unveil conceptual constructs, such as institutional discourses, may provide statistical tools for developing and testing theories.

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About the Authors

***Gustavo Gregorutti** is a higher education professor at the School of Leadership, Andrews University in Michigan, USA. He has been a visiting professor at several Latin American universities, teaching and conducting various research projects. He is presently involved with several international teams to advance comparative research and emerging trends that impact universities.*

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Extending a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Approach to Understanding and Addressing Postsecondary Awareness and Access

Austin R. Jenkins and Virginia L. J. Bolshakova

Abstract

Postsecondary education enrollment is declining across the United States. The U.S. Department of Education's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative focuses on increasing the college-going rate of students living in low-income neighborhoods through targeted university–community partnerships (UCPs). Here, we reflect on our program's use of a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to explore family postsecondary perspectives during the pandemic with the goal of developing community-level interventions. We outline the implementation of this approach in defining community, sharing planning power with partners, and responsive sampling. Reflection on the relevance, inclusion, and value of CBPR in education research is included.

Keywords: university–community partnerships, higher education, postsecondary decline, postsecondary enrollment, community-based participatory research

Over the last several decades, the United States has observed tremendous growth in postsecondary participation and obtainment; however, in the last decade the total college enrollment has declined from a national peak of approximately 21.02 million students in 2010 to an estimated 16.2 million in spring 2022 (Hanson, 2023). Educational disparities persist, with fewer Black, Latino, and low-income students continuing their education at a postsecondary institution (NCES, 2022). Although many promising practices and programs exist at the federal, state, secondary, and community levels, more collaborative efforts are needed throughout the educational pipeline in building college-going dispositions to close equity gaps (Gándara, 2002). Engberg and Wolniak (2010) elevated the need to incorporate diverse stakeholders at all policy levels to collectively design and implement promising educational practices to assess postsecondary enrollment patterns and educational aspirations of students. However, to address this national decline in postsecondary education obtainment, investigative efforts continue to employ more researcher-centered practices, where institutional faculty dominate decision-making in the research process rather than distributing power across the community partners they are seeking to collaborate with and understand.

Indiana has implemented programs at the state level to increase the college-going rate of students of color and students from low-income backgrounds, yet enrollment remains disproportionate across the state. In 2020, 53% of high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education compared to 63% in 2015. While all demographic groups experienced a decline in enrollment, Black, Latino, and low-income students experienced a greater decline than other groups (Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2022). Indiana's 21st Century Scholars Program, for example, is a state-level strategy to alleviate gaps in postsecondary enrollment. The Scholars Program provides students from low-income communities 4 years of tuition at in-state universities if students satisfy income eligibility requirements, maintain a certain grade-point average (GPA), and complete required activities such as filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and completing a career interest inventory. Despite the push for improving equity in educational outcomes, most 21st Century Scholars identify as White or Asian despite students of color being more likely to come from low-income households identifying as Black or Latino (Indiana Commission for Higher Education, 2021). To continue improvement in college-going rates, multiple stakeholders are needed at the table to ensure that students across Indiana, regardless of race or family income status, have access to postsecondary education opportunities.

The U.S. Department of Education's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative, designed to increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education, is positioned to facilitate such collaborative efforts among federal, state, and local contexts. GEAR UP grants 6- or 7-year competitive awards at state and local levels to provide postsecondary preparatory supports and services in partnership with high-poverty middle and high schools. Through local connections with K-12 schools, institutions of higher education, state agencies, and community organizations, GEAR UP programs serve entire cohorts of students beginning no later than seventh grade through the students' first year beyond high school graduation.

During this study, the Indiana GEAR UP state grant was led by Purdue University and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in cooperation with nine school corporations across the state in what is considered a university–community partnership (UCP). Indiana GEAR UP's organizational structure facilitates such UCPs because it spans the entire state and links stakeholders across multiple scales. The leadership team, housed at Purdue University, oversees programming and ensures progress toward key grant objectives. Other key personnel, like the family and community engagement specialist, work across the state and act as boundary spanners between the leadership team at Purdue and individual communities. More locally, school-based educators are employed by Purdue University, but work and live within one to two specific school communities. With GEAR UP staff more easily embedded within schools and communities, the postsecondary planning process enables staff to connect with key stakeholders, such as school counselors, students, and family members, as peers, allies, and professionals. By strategically identifying and positioning staff members, Indiana GEAR UP has the unique opportunity to engage a wide audience around postsecondary planning obstacles and available resources. In a concerted effort with local stakeholders and key GEAR UP staff, we sought to build understanding of Indiana's college enrollment trends and perspectives while also developing focused, culturally responsive educational programs that jointly respond to and build within existing local contexts.

Postsecondary education enrollment data collected since the pandemic points to continued enrollment decline and a growing need to understand how awareness and access to resources further impact equity gaps. Indiana is just one example of declining enrollment postpandemic and provides a unique opportunity to explore postsecondary planning behavior. As more is learned about the impacts of the pandemic and how it has affected all demographics in postsecondary education enrollment, UCPs have the potential to better understand and respond to community priorities surrounding postsecondary education enrollment and obtainment. Given the UCPs that Indiana GEAR UP has developed across the state, this program is exceptionally positioned to explore and promote reconciliation of these priorities and equity issues. In collaboration with community partners, we developed a family-focused survey with the goal of gathering, creating, and disseminating information and tools to strengthen each community's engagement with and obtainment of postsecondary education. By using UCPs, more contextualized data can be collected and more concrete action steps proposed to open postsecondary education opportunities across all student groups.

Families were the target of this survey, given the influence they have on a student's postsecondary decision-making. Building on work by Coleman et al. (1966), Engberg and Wolniak (2010) underscored the significant role family and student access to resources play in a student's postsecondary planning. They found that factors such as socioeconomic status, college-going expectations of parents and peers, and a student's ability to develop college-linking networks were more influential in a student's decision to enroll in postsecondary education than more distant school-based characteristics such as a school's regional association (suburban, rural, and urban), the percentage of minority students enrolled, or the student–guidance counselor ratio (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010, p. 145). The importance of family engagement at the high school level has also been documented to improve a student's academics and engagement (Yull et al., 2014) as well as postsecondary planning (Bosworth et al., 2014). To best engage families in their student's postsecondary planning process, increased attention must be given to what resources families know of and have access to for supporting their student's postsecondary planning.

Goals and Purpose of Study

The purpose of the current study is to outline the development and dissemination of a family postsecondary survey leveraging the voices and power of UCPs. Methodology is described with a focus on tenets of community-based participatory research (CBPR). We conclude by discussing lessons learned alongside implications for future education-related CBPR projects.

CBPR Approach

As federal and state governments alongside higher education institutions continue to grapple with persistent equity gaps in postsecondary enrollment, research approaches centering researchers as experts on the communities they serve continue to dominate. This approach to research limits the amount of community voice included along all stages of the research process by assuming the researcher as sole expert of a community's unique characteristics and the challenges they face. Often with limited inclusion of community voice, findings from these researcher-centered projects fail to clear the way toward sustainable and concrete community-level action steps. However, in recent years, scholars and practitioners have tried to employ a CBPR approach to understand persistent concerns in education such as newcomer integration (Rodriguez & McDaniel, 2019), school-family communication with families of color (Yull et al., 2014), and best practices in early childhood development (Walsh et al., 2021). CBPR, with roots in public health, seeks to empower communities, especially those marginalized by research approaches that limit expertise and knowledge generation to researchers, through UCPs (Rodriguez & McDaniel, 2019). A CBPR approach differs from more researcher-centered approaches in that power is shared between researchers and community partners (Chen et al., 2020; Israel et al., 2005; Ross et al., 2010; Wallerstein & Duran, 2008), community partners are involved in all stages of the research process (Israel et al., 2005; Jacquez et al., 2013; Ross et al., 2010; Tinkler et al., 2014), and the outcome of the research is some type of action developed with the community (Hall, 1975; Israel et al., 2005; Ross et al., 2010; Tinkler et al., 2014; Wallerstein & Duran, 2008). Key differences between more researcher-centered and CBPR approaches are highlighted in Table 1.

Application of CBPR Principles in Our Research Methodology

Define the Community

A central tenet of CBPR is inviting community partners alongside researchers to identify and define the issue to be addressed. In doing so, more relevant concerns are surfaced and planned to solve (Rai, 2003). The Indiana GEAR UP team, in partnership with other Purdue University offices, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, nine school corporations, and families across the state, set out to listen to and define concerns around the decline in postsecondary education enrollment. Each community partner is bound by a desire and commitment to improve postsecondary education enrollment for all students in their communities. For example, Indiana GEAR UP school-based educators are embedded within partner schools and have the power to elevate strengths as well as advocate for concerns unique to each community. By working alongside school counselors, classroom teachers, students, and families, GEAR UP school-based educators are uniquely aware of the resources already present within communities and schools that families could activate during the postsecondary planning process. During GEAR UP staff meetings, school-based educators convene to discuss effective strategies for building college-going dispositions and environments conducive to postsecondary enrollment within their respective communities with a focus on both tapped and untapped sources of support. On the other hand, regional outreach coordinators at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education work across the state in schools within

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Stages Showing How a CBPR Approach Differs From Traditional Approaches

Characteristics	Researcher-centered approach	Community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach
Problem Identification	Problem identified and defined by researchers based on experience and prior literature.	Problem coidentified and defined between community partners and researchers based on expertise of each partner.
Research and instrument design/planning	Research instruments and overall design developed by researchers. Plan and instruments are disseminated to participants.	Research instruments and design cocreated with community partners. Partners have an active role in design of each.
Research process	Research is driven by researcher through participant recruitment and data collection.	Research is done alongside community partners. Power is shared between researcher and partners to recruit participants and collect data.
Data analysis and reporting	Researchers analyze the data and disseminate findings via journals and conferences.	Researchers and community partners analyze data together. Results are disseminated in conventional methods as well as methods determined by community partners.
Creating sustainable action	Researchers may create action from results.	Results guide researchers and community partners to cocreate an action plan for the future.

their defined regions, often covering several counties. Their reach allows them to synthesize and elevate concerns found within and across communities in ways that individual school counselors or classroom teachers may not be able to do. Figure 1 illustrates how power was equally distributed across these key community partners and how we elicited their expertise around key concerns in their community context, accessibility of language used in the survey, and responsive sampling.

Shared Survey Planning Efforts

In using a CBPR approach, we allowed ourselves to be guided by authentic inquiry with community partners to define our areas of focus for the survey rather than relying solely on literature and researcher prior experience. This authentic inquiry required a willingness to move at the pace of our community partners while also continuing to push the project forward. Figure 2 depicts a timeline for this project ranging from defining community partners in summer 2021 to the survey closing in fall 2022. Prior to developing the survey, researchers obtained IRB approval to conduct the study. Once IRB approval was secured, researchers initiated several conversations and meetings between the Indiana GEAR UP team (which included a student and parent specialist representing families), school corporation representatives, and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, where concerns from community partners were elevated and discussed. Since Indiana Commission for Higher Education regional outreach coordinators are tasked with supporting all public school corporations across the state in developing environments and dispositions needed for successful matriculation into postsecondary education, voices from all communities were heard and incorporated into our planning efforts. Major themes from these conversations emerged, such as parent frustration and distrust with the FAFSA process, importance of school-to-family communication, and the influence of available community resources on postsecondary decision-making.

Weaving Voice Into Instrument Development

Given themes identified in conversations with community partners, a literature

Figure 1. Depiction of Shared Decision-Making Power Across Key Partners in Indiana GEAR UP Family Survey Development and Dissemination

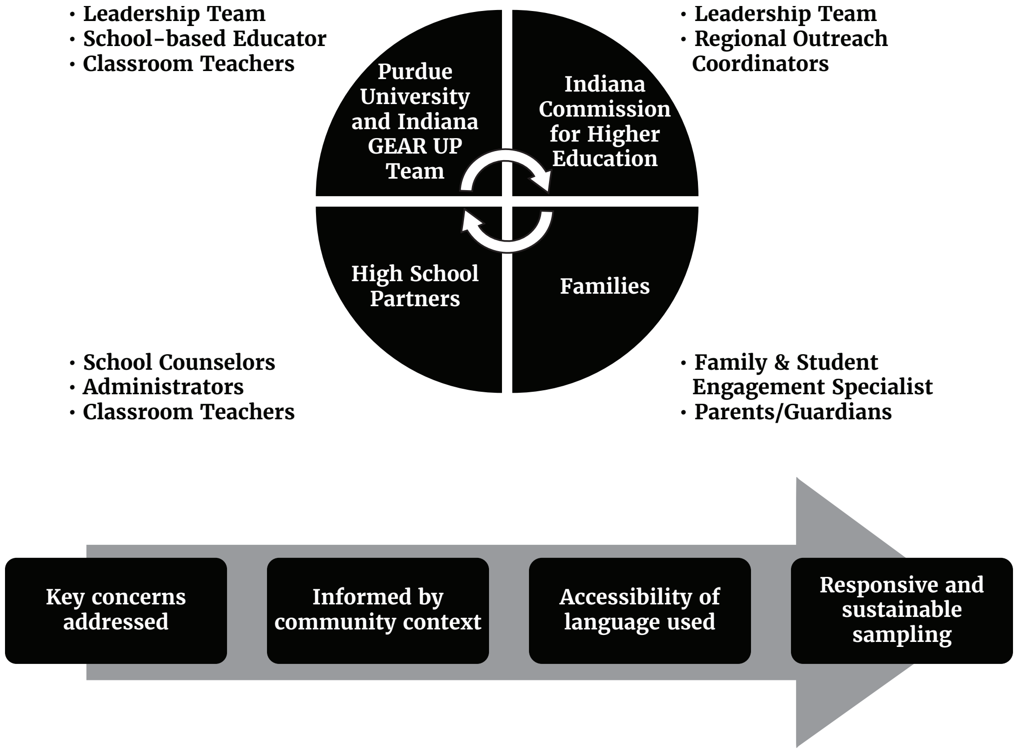
• Leadership Team
• School-based Educator
• Classroom Teachers
• Leadership Team
• Regional Outreach Coordinators
Purdue University and Indiana GEAR UP Team
Indiana Commission for Higher Education
High School Partners
Families
• School Counselors
• Administrators
• Classroom Teachers
• Family & Student Engagement Specialist
• Parents/Guardians
Key concerns addressed
Informed by community context
Accessibility of language used
Responsive and sustainable sampling

Figure 2. Timeline of Key Events in Survey Development and Dissemination

Summer 2021
- Defined community partners
- Conversations around postsecondary planning

Fall 2021 Phase 1
- Obtained IRB approval
- Synthesizing major barriers and themes in postsecondary planning
- Literature review to corroborate concerns elevated by community partners

Fall 2021 Phase 2
- Initial draft of survey developed
- Feedback elicited from community partners and survey modified in an iterative cycle

Spring 2022 Phase 1
- Survey finalized and prepared for dissemination
- Dissemination plan created and shared with community partners for feedback

Spring 2022 Phase 2
- Dissemination plan finalized and survey **launched** across the state (February 2022)
- Anecdotal data collected on effective dissemination methods
- Families connected with resources in real-time to assist with postsecondary planning

Fall 2022
- Survey **closed** (August 2022)
- Initial review of data and preliminary analyses conducted

review was conducted on postsecondary awareness and access. Major sections of the initial survey were developed based on priorities identified in survey planning with community partners and then fleshed out with questions gleaned from the literature review on factors influencing postsecondary education enrollment, such as race and ethnicity (Qian & Blair, 1999), family education level (Finnie et al., 2015; Perna, 2006), cost of postsecondary education (Berbery & O'Brien, 2018), struggles with FAFSA (McKinney & Novak, 2012), and family activities to support postsecondary planning (Cuevas, 2023; Turner et al., 2003). Alongside community partner voices, our initial survey drew on studies conducted in a range of communities to ensure we were moving toward a survey representative of a variety of cultures and backgrounds. Drawing from the literature review and established scales, we chose to include a range of question types on the survey, including multiple choice, Likert scale, "select all that apply," and open-ended questions.

Upon completion of the initial survey, we began eliciting feedback from a variety of community partners. We assumed our partners were experts about their communities, and therefore it was important that they had a chance to critique our initial survey, with a focus on inclusion of identified priorities and language used. By bringing our partners alongside us in developing this survey, we aimed to share decision-making power with them, involve them in all stages of the research process, and elevate their voices for change within their communities.

A variety of methods were used to elicit feedback from community partners. We relied heavily on virtual forms of feedback, such as Zoom, Google Docs, Google Forms, and Google Slides, given time and location constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic; however, we did include some in-person feedback sessions. In each iteration of the feedback cycle, information shared by community partners was recorded electronically or in hard copy to review later. Changes to the survey were discussed with community partners to share decision-making power and ensure we were operating from a place of cultural humility with all communities. Incorporating multiple methods for partners to provide feedback ensured many voices were heard in developing this survey.

Several changes were made to the survey throughout the feedback cycle. For example, the initial survey included a question asking families to identify their student's school as urban, suburban, or rural. GEAR UP staff and school counselors shared that many families may not be familiar with that language or know what their student's school is classified as. As a potential barrier, this question was reworded so families would select their student's school from a list and the onus to classify the school was placed on us as the researchers. Also, in early stages of the survey, the term "postsecondary plan" was used throughout. In accord with feedback from the student parent specialist and families, the language was changed to "plan after high school" to ensure the language used was accessible to all families. All changes made during the feedback cycle were to ensure the survey was as inclusive as possible to diverse communities.

Procedures for Sampling

Responsive and flexible sampling is crucial for the success of a CBPR approach and differs from more researcher-centered approaches (Tremblay et al., 2018). Since GEAR UP partners with nine school corporations across the state, our sampling plan had to be responsive to each community's unique context. Community partners shared their ideas at in-person meetings and via Google Forms regarding how to capture as many voices in their communities as possible. Feedback from school-based educators, the family and student engagement specialist, and the leadership team at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education indicated internet access was a major barrier for survey completion. One strategy to address this concern was developing a flexible data collection timeline: The survey would be open for approximately nine months to give our team time to distribute the survey as widely as possible via online and offline methods.

To address access challenges and remain flexible, modes for sharing the survey in communities with and without internet were developed. For communities where internet access was available, approaches such as sharing the survey link via social media (Facebook and Twitter), schools sharing the survey via text message and voice call, and students texting the link to their parents were employed. GEAR UP staff, like school-based educators who are embedded in schools, were instrumental in working with partner schools to encourage sharing this survey with families. In communities where internet may not be as accessible, paper copies of the survey were mailed out with prepaid return envelopes, or teachers provided paper copies of the survey to students to be returned to school. As the project continued, notes about survey distribution and return rate were analyzed to inform next steps. Preliminary data analysis and anecdotal notes indicated that most families heard about the survey through their student's school, which could include word-of-mouth from classroom teachers and school-based educators, or social media, so we continued to push those methods of survey distribution. Using this data to drive decision-making contributed to the sustainability of sampling throughout the duration of the project. The variety of methods employed was beneficial for all members in the UCP by creating multiple avenues for families to engage with the survey.

Incentives were used to create a sustainable sampling plan. Given community partner feedback about how to best compensate families, we included a random raffle for a $20 restaurant gift card. This raffle was conducted every time we received 20 survey responses to continue to build momentum and awareness around the survey. Upon winning, families had the opportunity to select their desired restaurant card from a few options. To encourage community partners to continue to share the survey, data is being shared on an ongoing basis with individual schools and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. As community partners can see the data that is being collected, they are able to make more informed decisions about postsecondary planning in their individual contexts.

Dissemination of Findings

Crucial to CBPR approaches is pairing knowledge generation with concrete action steps for communities involved that builds sustainability over time. Since data collection has concluded but final analysis has not yet been completed, we are able to reflect on our responsiveness to student and family needs throughout the data collection process as well as ongoing efforts to share preliminary data with community partners. During the sampling process, families used paper copies of the survey to voice concerns about access to postsecondary planning resources for their students. These concerns were communicated to members of the GEAR UP team, and families were immediately connected with resources in real time to close information gaps.

In addition to concrete action taken during data collection to support students and families in the postsecondary planning process, we have developed key data points that will be shared with individual community partners. Data relevant to individual schools, such as family perceptions of school-to-family communication and parent activities to support postsecondary planning, will be shared with schools to inform communication plans and filling in planning gaps for all students. Information surrounding perceptions of FAFSA and cost of postsecondary education will be shared with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to connect communities with resources to demystify cost of postsecondary education and the FAFSA process. Disseminating these results from the survey to all community partners enables improved program development across the UCP and tailored intervention in communities where resources may not be equitably distributed. Connecting communities with resources like FAFSA and financial aid workshops creates potential for more evenly distributed access and utilization of postsecondary planning resources for all families. As these interventions are developed based on data collected in our postsecondary survey, we can begin to move from knowledge generation to action steps that can sustain themselves over time alongside community partners.

Measuring Impact and Moving Forward

Now that data collection has concluded, the GEAR UP team will move into data analysis and dissemination of findings. In an initial effort to measure the impact of our project, the number of completed surveys served as a key indicator. Preliminary results show that our team was able to collect 529 survey responses, for an approximately 7% response rate. These 529 responses represent a range of demographic markers such as student high school, race, and family highest education level. Although not a perfect representation of our program, Table 2 highlights the racial demographics of the Indiana GEAR UP student population compared to the percentage of responses on the family postsecondary survey. We believe that our efforts to engage community partners in every stage of the research process on this project contributed to our ability to collect responses from such a wide range of families across the state. Although some groups were underrepresented in our family survey responses, such as Black and Latino families, other races were well represented. Preliminary analysis of these results demonstrates our success in reaching some families even as a continued need to reach others remains. Findings such as these will inform future iterations of the family postsecondary survey and sampling efforts as we continue eliciting feedback from community partners about dissemination strategies.

Proposed analyses will look to build on prior literature to explore how awareness, access, and use of postsecondary planning resources vary by these demographic markers in our unique UCP. As we seek to understand what postsecondary planning resources each community has access to and uses, we can move forward in collaborating with our community partners to develop community- and program-level strategies to fill in existing gaps. At the program level, Indiana GEAR UP serves as a liaison between a range of communities and institutions, like the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, that has the power to implement programming, via their regional outreach coordinators, to address misconceptions and concerns around paying for postsecondary education.

Additionally, another strategy planned to increase relevance of GEAR UP–level programming is the planned creation of a family and community engagement and empowerment specialist alongside parent, student, and community action groups. This position will work alongside key partners to elevate family and community voices across the state. Through these new positions, Indiana GEAR UP seeks to connect families not only with one another, but also with organizations and resources they can access in pursuit of postsecondary planning for their students. The goal is to empower families to advocate for and utilize resources that have previously been untapped within their communities. These resources have the potential to help form college-linking networks among students, families, and communities that might have otherwise lacked access to accurate information. By connecting students, families, and community members with resources and information, the Indiana GEAR UP team engages in a reciprocal relationship with these key stakeholders that aims not only to empower community members but also inform GEAR UP's ongoing work within communities. As we connect communities with resources, families, students, and school-based educa-

Table 2. Indiana GEAR UP Student Population and Survey Respondents by Race and Ethnicity

	Indiana GEAR UP	Indiana GEAR UP respondents on family survey
Race		
American Indian	<1%	3%
Asian	2%	1%
Black	31%	16%
Multiracial	4%	7%
Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%
White	44%	72%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	19%	14%
Not Hispanic or Latino	81%	86%

Note. Race and ethnicity were separate questions on the survey and are thus separated for clarity here. Families could also select "prefer not to share" for both race and ethnicity, giving different sample sizes for race (*n* = 508) and ethnicity (*n* = 498) calculations.

tors can provide feedback about the usefulness of the programming and connections, which can continue to inform the type of programming Indiana GEAR UP provides. The creation of new roles within the Indiana GEAR UP organizational framework, such as parent, student, and community action groups, is a direct result of feedback from partners and demonstrates Indiana GEAR UP's commitment to empowering the communities we partner with.

Research and Action

In order to address inequities in postsecondary education enrollment and obtainment, we advocate for more equitable research approaches that balance knowledge generation with action that is beneficial to and reflective of the communities involved. While not perfect, a CBPR approach seeks to strike that balance between research and practice. This balance falls on a continuum with varying levels of success from project to project (Israel et al., 2018). Throughout this article, we have sought to provide an example of how a CBPR approach, commonly used to address health disparities, can be extended to understand and propose solutions to educational inequities as well. Indiana, as the site of this research study, currently has state- and community-level programs and policies in place, like the 21st Century Scholars Program, that aim to increase equity in postsecondary education enrollment. Ongoing evaluation of this program highlights that even though policies are in place to increase the college-going rates of Black, Latino, and low-income students, other barriers exist to activating the benefits of the program. GEAR UP has the advantage of serving nine school corporations across the state and has developed robust UCPs that can help uncover mechanisms within communities that might be preventing access and utilization of resources like the 21st Century Scholars Program.

In using CBPR principles, we sought to explore what postsecondary planning resources families are aware of and use across the state as well as to what extent the pandemic has shifted this awareness and access. Our instrument development and sampling process was a cyclical and iterative process alongside community partners to identify and address issues of concern in each community. By continually revisiting our purpose and methods with community partners, we sought to include all partners' voices in the project. Although we engaged a range of partners in developing and disseminating the survey, there were missed opportunities to promote colearning and capacity building within the community. Explicit training in how to give critical feedback, through sustained capacity building and workshops, could benefit partners in the UCP and their ability to advocate for their communities. Further, given the lingering impacts of the pandemic, our methods of eliciting feedback from families remained mainly virtual. To increase the reach of feedback from partners, diverse methods such as virtual and in-person focus groups alongside virtual forms could be better incorporated.

Although room for improvement remains in our application of a CBPR approach, our work underscores the fluid and dynamic nature of this research approach to fit the needs of the university and community partners. As universities and communities alike continue to grapple with how to increase postsecondary education enrollment for all demographic groups in a postpandemic United States, those universities that choose to adopt a CBPR approach have the potential to uncover more contextualized and relevant gaps in awareness and access of postsecondary planning resources. Bringing communities alongside researchers in this process not only increases capacity for the community in engaging in the scientific process but increases the researcher's awareness of each community's strengths and needs. Adding the CBPR approach to a researcher's toolkit can help generate a more accurate picture of what communities know and have access to regarding postsecondary education planning resources that can fuel the push forward to close equity gaps in postsecondary education enrollment and obtainment.

About the Authors

__Austin R. Jenkins__ is a graduate research assistant with the Indiana GEAR UP program at Purdue University. In this role, Austin uses community-engaged research methodologies to explore the diverse ways families support their student(s) in the postsecondary planning process. Austin *received his master of arts in teaching from Marian University and is currently a PhD candidate in science education at Purdue University.*

Virginia L. J. Bolshakova *is executive director of Indiana GEAR UP and assistant research professor in the College of Education at Purdue University. Her research interests are transdisciplinary, with cross-cutting themes in ecology, education, and community development. She received her PhD in ecology from Utah State University.*

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Building Bridges: Strengthening University–School Relationships Through Service-Learning

Dissertation Overview

Jason P. Edwards

Abstract

This qualitative dissertation aimed to understand if an after-school kinesiology service-learning program changed the relationship between a large Research I institution and a local public school. Eight 7th- and 8th-grade students, three classroom teachers, and one administrator participated. Data collection methods included semistructured individual interviews, observational field notes, and reflective memos. Findings suggested that school staff perceived a positive relationship between the university and the school district but a complicated one between the university and the city. Participating teachers and school leaders believed the service-learning program positively impacted their students and helped strengthen the relationship between the university and the school. The study also highlighted the importance of effective communication in university–school partnerships and uncovered challenges in communication concerning the service-learning program. The middle school students perceived benefits from receiving academic support, and school participants felt that the relationships formed between the university and middle school students were impactful.

Keywords: university–school partnerships, service-learning, town and gown relationships

Universities and colleges are institutions of higher learning nestled in larger community contexts with diverse needs. When universities and communities establish long-term partnerships, the benefits for both parties are numerous. Innovative teaching and learning, increased community awareness, career enhancement, and greater opportunities for university student employment after graduation are more likely to occur when universities effectively engage with their communities (Buys & Bursnall, 2007).

Communities benefit from university partnerships, as students often fill needed volunteer roles to enhance operations within organizations (Edwards et al., 2001; Miron & Moely, 2006). In addition, community leaders value the ideas, perspectives, and skills that university students bring to their organizations (Blouin & Perry, 2009). Despite these benefits, implementing and sustaining mutually beneficial community partnerships has proven challenging for universities (Martin et al., 2005; Mayfield, 2001).

There are many ways universities can become more involved in their communities. Bringle and Hatcher (2002) suggested that service-learning is one of the most meaningful ways to develop mutually beneficial relationships.

> Service-learning is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain

> further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility. (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, p. 112)

Service-learning differs from volunteering and community service because it is curriculum-based and combines classroom instruction with practical applications and hands-on service activities. This formalized service includes an organized curriculum and measurable learning objectives, addresses genuine community needs, and allows students to reflect critically on the service activities (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000).

Service-learning is becoming an increasingly popular pedagogy universities use to help improve community relations (Bamber & Hankin, 2011; Karasik, 2019). Although significant research evidence supports the claim that university students experience positive outcomes when participating in service-learning projects (Bamber & Hankin, 2011; Bushouse, 2005; Iverson & James, 2013; Jones & Abes, 2004; Wilson, 2011), less has been studied regarding the impact on the populations they claim to serve (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Geller et al., 2016). Therefore, this study focused on the recipients' perspectives on university service-learning and how it influenced the relationship between one large Research I university and one public middle school.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this qualitative action research study:

1. How does a service-learning partnership influence the relationship between a large Research I institution and a school and school district sharing the same city?
2. What was the perceived impact of the service-learning program in the experience of the middle school students, teachers, and leaders?

Literature Review

University–School Relations

Partnerships between universities and K-12 schools have existed for over a century and are increasing (Greene & Tichenor, 1999); the push for public school reform and increased accountability for K-12 student achievement has sparked additional university–school collaborations. Christensen et al. (1996) noted that educators live in an era where K-12 schools are experiencing increasing violence, high dropout rates, lower graduation rates, and high teacher turnover. Schools are being asked to do more with fewer and fewer resources.

Partnerships with higher education institutions can help K-12 schools in their improvement efforts (Burton & Greher, 2007). When K-12 schools partner with universities, it can increase instructional capacity, better prepare aspiring teachers, recruit more volunteers and tutors, and provide more resources and opportunities for student learning. At the same time, such collaborations allow universities to offer meaningful, real-world experiences for college students and provide valuable opportunities for university faculty members to conduct and publish research (Dallavis & Johnstone, 2009; Smith & Trexler, 2006).

Despite the potential benefits of university–school collaborations, such partnerships often fail. Many K-12 teachers and administrators do not trust university faculty and researchers (Bullough & Kauchak, 1997; Shkedi, 1998). At the same time, university faculty and researchers often perceive K-12 administrators and teachers as uncooperative with their programs and interventions (Clayton et al., 2013). Holen and Yunk (2014) identified student teaching internships and opportunities to publish research on youth as motivational factors for universities seeking partnerships with K-12 schools. When K-12 stakeholders perceive partnerships as transactional and not as true partners, they are less likely to want to participate (Henry & Breyfogle, 2006; Zetlin & Macleod, 1995). Lewison and Holliday (1997) found that K-12 teachers perceive university faculty members as "users and abusers" of their time and students (pp. 109–110). Bracey (1990) suggested that some K-12 school stakeholders do not believe that university faculty understand what it means to be in a classroom and perceive the work of universities as "irrelevant" (p. 65). Yet K-12 teachers are often forced to participate in university–school partnerships without having any say or voice in the planning and facilitation of the intervention (Barnett et al., 2010; Fisler & Firestone, 2006).

Even when successful university–school partnerships are established, they are often short-lived due to a lack of funding and resources (Armstrong & Cairnduff, 2012; Walsh & Backe, 2013). After analyzing 57 university–school partnerships, Kirschenbaum and Reagan (2001) identified the characteristics of failed partnerships as poor organization, ineffective communication, minimal rapport, and a lack of shared decision-making in programs.

Interpersonal Trust as a Theoretical Framework

Trust is a central tenet for successful university–school partnerships but is not easily formed among university and K-12 school stakeholders (Borthwick et al., 2003; Essex, 2001); lack of trust and reciprocity in university–school partnerships have been identified as contributing factors to the dissolution of such partnerships (Carlone & Webb, 2006; Peel et al., 2002).

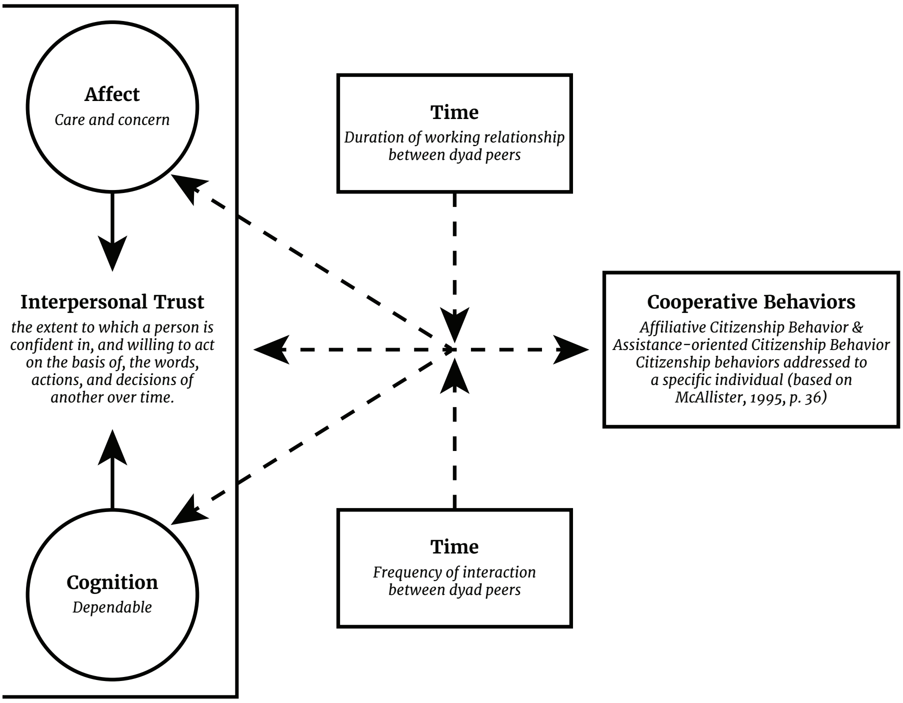
McAllister's (1995) theory of interpersonal trust (Figure 1) was used as a theoretical framework to help understand the development of trusting relationships between the university and middle school stakeholders involved in this study. McAllister suggested that interpersonal trust consists of cognitive and affective domains. The cognitive domain of interpersonal trust seeks to find the rational bases and evidence for determining why individuals trust one another.

The affective domain of interpersonal trust relates to the emotional bonds between individuals. McAllister (1995) suggested that when individuals interact with one another, emotional investments in trust are made. These trusting relationships can lead individuals to care for one another and can be of significant intrinsic value. The amount of time individuals spend together and the frequency of their interactions can help strengthen trust. Interpersonal trust and cooperation are achieved when both parties have opportunities to witness repeated acts of care, honesty, concern, dependability, and openness toward one another. Specifically, this action research study utilized the affect and time components of McAllister's theory of interpersonal trust. (See Edwards, 2023 for more in-depth reviews of these concepts.)

Developing the Service-Learning Action Research Project

In summer 2020, a task force at a large,

Figure 1. Theory of Interpersonal Trust


Affect
Care and concern
Time
Duration of working relationship between dyad peers
Interpersonal Trust
the extent to which a person is confident in, and willing to act on the basis of, the words, actions, and decisions of another over time.
Cooperative Behaviors
Affiliative Citizenship Behavior & Assistance-oriented Citizenship Behavior
Citizenship behaviors addressed to a specific individual (based on McAllister, 1995, p. 36)
Time
Frequency of interaction between dyad peers
Cognition
Dependable

Note. Adapted from "Affect- and Cognition-Based Trust as Foundations for Interpersonal Cooperation in Organizations," by D. J. McAllister, 1995, *The Academy of Management Journal, 38*(1), p. 24–59 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/256727). Copyright 1995 by the Academy of Management.

research-intensive public university in the Southeast United States began exploring ways to expand its diversity efforts through its curriculum, service, and outreach opportunities. The university believed that a partnership with the local public school district could provide an opportunity for university students to engage with diverse populations while positively impacting the community.

The school district serves nearly 14,000 students in PreK–12th grade. A plurality of students (48%) in the district identify as African American, 25% identify as Hispanic or Latinx, 21% as White, 4.6% as multiracial, and 1.3% as Asian/Pacific Islander (Clarke County School District, 2021). The school district has Title I status and receives federal funds to provide additional support, given the high rate of students living in poverty.

After conversations within the university, the researcher initiated a meeting with the school district's director of partnerships and presented the idea of an after-school physical activity program that incorporated academic work with services provided by university students enrolled in a service-learning course. The director identified recent concerns about 9th grade student-athletes falling behind academically and suggested the program be designed for middle school student-athletes. The researcher agreed and then was introduced to stakeholders at the partnering middle school (one of four in the district).

Glanz (2014) defined action research as a form of applied research that is usually qualitative and conducted by practitioners to improve educational settings. Action research is team-oriented; the primary investigator assembles an action research team (ART) to help identify and address problems within organizations with individuals closest to it. The team consisted of the primary researcher, the middle school athletic director, and a science teacher who also served as the head track coach. Incorporating stakeholders from the middle school brought a critical perspective to the study, as they understood the context of the community and were aware of the support the middle school students needed. The ART met monthly to discuss the format, logistics, and design of the service-learning study. McKay and Marshall (2001) suggested that action research is more than just a problem-solving approach; the researcher takes organized action within a conceptual framework (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). The plan, do, check, and act (PDCA) model served as a conceptual framework for this research study; see the full dissertation for more details (Edwards, 2023).

Plan

The ART was assembled during the "plan" phase. The team met and reflected on previous partnerships between the university and the school. Identifying the features of previous unsuccessful partnerships was paramount for designing this service-learning program. The administration and operations of this program were intended to be designed on best practices in university–school partnerships, such as developing a shared mission, establishing roles, open communication, joint decision-making, and reciprocity (Smith & Trexler, 2006; Thorkildsen & Stein, 1996; White et al., 1997).

Do

The "do" phase consisted of the 15-week service-learning experience. The university service-learning course occurred in two settings, first in an academic classroom on the university's campus and then at the middle school. The researcher designed and taught the course the first semester it was offered. After the researcher accepted a different position at the university, another faculty member assumed the teaching responsibilities and administration of the program. During the first 7 weeks of the course, the university students learned about diversity, equity, and inclusion issues that affect the cognitive and physical development of marginalized youth and strategies to help support their academic and athletic skills. The service-learning portion of the course consisted of the university students applying and reflecting on the tutoring, mentoring, and athletic coaching skills they learned to help support middle school students in the community for the final 8 weeks of the course.

Check

The "check" phase consisted of the data collection process. The researcher used semi-structured interviews, observational field notes, and reflective memos to measure the service-learning program's impact from the perspectives of the middle school students, their teachers, and school administrators.

Act

The "act" phase involved analyzing the data collected throughout the action research cycles. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the researchers conducted coding and thematic analysis to analyze the data to determine what the middle school students gained from participating and if the program impacted the relationship between the university and middle school. The researcher shared the results with the ART to member-check the findings and allow the team to use the study for further program modification and improvement.

Data Collection Methods

To understand how the service-learning program impacted the middle school students being served and the relationship between the university and middle school, the researcher collected data from the following sources: (a) semistructured interviews, (b) observational field notes, and (c) reflective memos.

The study consisted of two participant groups. The middle school teachers and administrators participated in semistructured interviews to understand their perceptions of the relationship between the middle school and the university. Additionally, the interviews captured their beliefs on how the service-learning program impacted their students. The second participant group consisted of the middle school students participating in the program. They also engaged in semistructured interviews, which provided insight into how recipients of service-learning perceived the experience. Nine rounds of observational field notes complemented the interviews. These field notes captured the dynamics and interactions between the middle school and university students. They also helped determine whether the program adhered to best practices in university–school partnerships, as identified in the scholarly literature.

Reflective memos were written after each data collection session. Twenty-one data collection memos were written after the 12 semistructured interviews and nine observations of the service-learning program. These memos allowed the researcher to reflect on what was learned during each data collection session and what still needed to be understood. All responses were transcribed verbatim and were coded, producing six overarching themes that served as rubrics to organize findings. See the full dissertation for additional details on the methodology (Edwards, 2023).

Findings

The first research question sought to understand how a service-learning partnership influenced the relationship between a large Research I institution and a middle school sharing the same city. All four middle school teachers and leaders who participated perceived the relationship between the school and the university as “positive.” The teachers and leaders described how they enjoyed being a part of previous university collaborations. They described how the middle school students “loved” working with the university students. All four teacher and leader participants voiced how they hoped that interactions between the university and school would increase as the safety threats of the COVID-19 global pandemic decreased.

However, their responses also revealed historical and ongoing tension between the university and the city (Theme 1: *University: So close, but so far*). The middle school teachers and leaders described the university and city as “separate.” They believed that the city had become oversaturated with student housing, which made it difficult for schools to acquire and retain teachers. Multiple teachers and leaders described how students grew up with the university in their backyards but did not feel connected to it. Some teachers and leaders believed that their students could not see themselves attending the university as college students; as one teacher said,

> Depending on who the students are and their economic background, you have a lot of African American students who wouldn’t dream of going to that university, haven’t thought about it. Not attainable to attend that college.

Although not directly related to the original research question, every participating teacher and leader also expressed concerns about student achievement, which led to Theme 2: *Middle school students and teachers face challenges*. This finding helps contextualize the need for, and potential importance of, university–school partnerships, as well as the importance of effectively preparing university service-learning students for the educational and cultural context of the programming. The teachers and leaders spoke at length about how many of their students were below grade level in critical subjects such as reading and math and how the COVID-19 pandemic only led to further complications. A language arts teacher said,

> We have a lot of gaps. Before Covid, it was the same way . . . most of my kids were about two to three levels below grade level. I don't have many students that are at grade level, maybe like 10%. But after Covid, it's been 100% of my kids are below. Even students in my advanced class are maybe fifth, or fourth-grade reading level. It's sad.

Another teacher said,

> Motivation is so low right now. It's so low . . . they don't want to do anything. It's probably because half of them can't access the texts that we're asking them to read at sixth grade, because they are below grade level . . . it's just learned helplessness, just where they think they can't do it so they just shut down and won't do it . . . this has probably been the worst year for that . . . we're just struggling trying to get them to want to try to do anything. And it's been hard.

The teachers and leaders believed that factors outside the school building affected academic achievement and motivation. These challenges included the middle school students being exposed to crime and violence in their neighborhoods, some even being exposed to drugs, weapons, and gang activity. The increased pressure to improve academic performance and the inability to address student trauma caused significant stress for the middle school teachers and leaders.

The participating teachers and leaders articulated how more partnership opportunities with the university thus had the potential to be "life-changing" for students. When asked to define the characteristics of a successful university–school partnership, each teacher and leader described the need for effective communication. Multiple teachers and administrators described how the best university partnerships they had been previously involved with were ones in which they perceived strong communication.

Concerning the service-learning program, however, observational field notes revealed struggles in communication throughout the semester. The university faculty member teaching the service-learning course voiced frustration with the lack of communication from the middle school officials. Communication issues disrupted the program several times, including on the first day of the program when the university students were sent home after 15 minutes due to a scheduling error. On several occasions, changes in the practice schedule were not communicated to the university stakeholders, which led to confusion in programming. Participant comments and field notes, then, led to Theme 3: *Communication is key* to success in university–school partnerships.

The second research question addressed a gap in the scholarly literature regarding community partner/client perspectives of university service-learning programs. Although the middle school teachers and leaders described numerous challenges their students faced (Theme 2, above), they were adamant that their students could overcome them with a supportive and rigorous education. Theme 4, *Mentoring matters*, emerged from data showing that every teacher and leader participant believed the service-learning program positively impacted the students being served by the program. They described the university students as positive role models who provided encouragement and support. The teachers and leaders believed that relationships with university students made goals like attending college more attainable. For example, a teacher said,

> They get to see different faces, and they get a different perception of what they would normally get in their neighborhoods. There's so many benefits of a college kid coming over and mentoring young kids. . . . you get a different perspective when you get a different face, a different color, just a different person telling you about the importance of education. It becomes more believable to kids for some reason.

In addition, the teachers and leaders believed that their students obtained a better understanding of what they needed to do to attend college and learned the importance of performing well in both the classroom and in athletics due to the program. Finally, the teachers and leaders believed that the service-learning program helped strengthen the relationship between the university and the school. When asked what he believed about the service-learning program, an administrator responded,

> I think it's a great program. I commend the University for coming over and pouring into our kids. Depending on who the kid is, and I don't think you can save every kid, but I know you're going to save one kid. I do know that for a fact. It's going to make a difference in one kid's life.

Theme 5, *Academic support makes a difference*, suggests that the middle school students perceived value, particularly in the academic support they received from the university students. Every participating middle school student used the word "help" or "helpful" when describing the university students. Multiple students discussed how the university students were skilled at explaining challenging content. When reflecting on his favorite part of the program, a student said, "What I like the most about it is when they help you with your work, and they can explain it to a level so it can be easier." Others indicated that their grades and homework completion improved due to the services they received from university students. One middle school student said, "It helps your grades go up high. It helps your grades. It helps your grades go up like a lot. Like I realized, I realized the boost in my, uh, Spanish grade . . . it helps a lot." Echoing the teachers' perceptions, students agreed that interacting with university students allowed middle school students to better understand college life and culture. The middle school students described how they learned strategies for what they needed to do to attend and maintain success in college, such as organization and time management.

The sixth and final theme, *Relationships are impactful*, captures the value of university service-learning in yielding positive outcomes. In addition to the words "help" or "helpful," the middle school students used "caring" and "fun" when describing the university students. Every middle school student who participated in this study described how they appreciated the relationships they formed with the university students. Many articulated that the university students did an excellent job of making them feel comfortable. Several middle school students described how having a role model to look up to and talk to was important. Multiple students described how the university students helped encourage them as they navigated challenging circumstances. One 8th-grade student said,

> A lot of people have anxiety and it's like this whole thing where they don't even want to communicate. And I feel like it's big like with this program. Because . . . I feel like y'all trying to build relationships with, with us.

Observational field notes revealed an initial resistance from the middle school students when the program started. On the first day of the program, half of the boys pulled their homework out and began working with the university students without being redirected. The other half resisted when asked to engage in academic work. During the 4th week of the program, a shift in attitude was observed, and the boys were more willing to cooperate. One university student worked with a middle school student who refused to do any homework during the first week. A month later, the same student entered the classroom, enthusiastically greeted his mentor, and began working without being instructed. By the final week of the program, the body language and conversations between the middle school and university students vastly differed from their initial apprehension in Week 1. High-fives, smiles, encouragement, and friendly camaraderie were exchanged between the groups during a basketball game.

Two of the middle school students were in their second semester of program participation at the time of the study. When they were asked to describe the university students, one said,

> I like the relationships that y'all make between us . . . like on the first day, we had so many connections, and we didn't even never met each other before. So I feel like that was cool. And that was like a really good way to get the other girls comfortable and trust. I feel like y'all are trustworthy, and it is a big thing.

The other said,

> They're kind of like older siblings basically . . . usually most people they think they're just so above you just because they're older than you or whatever. But I feel like they're really cool people, and they can

> really connect and we talk to them because they don't . . . they don't judge basically. They just laugh with us, and that's fun. It's like a good bonding type thing.

Words like "bonding," "trust," and "older siblings" suggest a more intimate relationship than describing the UGA students as "fun" or "fun to be around," which was used by all eight of the middle school student participants.

Discussion and Significance of the Study

McAllister's (1995) theory of interpersonal trust suggests that trusting relationships are formed when individuals demonstrate repeated acts of care and concern over time. The findings of this study support McAllister's theory. Relationships and trust take time and intentionality. The bond between the middle school and university students grew stronger as they spent more time together. The middle school teachers and leaders noted that the program gave their students relatable role models who helped encourage positive academic, social-emotional, and well-being habits, helping address some of the perceived challenges experienced by the middle school students and teachers. In addition, the teachers and leaders believed that having mentoring relationships with university students made future goals like college seem more attainable for their students. The middle school students who participated valued the academic support received and the relationships they formed with the university students.

Athletics have been considered an effective way for adults to build relationships with youth (Choi et al., 2015; Quarmby et al., 2018). It is noteworthy that the middle school students made little mention of the athletic portion of the program during the semistructured interviews and focused more on the mentorship and academic support. This study's findings also demonstrate that service-learning community partners do perceive benefits from their participation in university service-learning programs. Although this service-learning program had some identified challenges related to communication, the continued engagement over time and stakeholder willingness to overcome obstacles reflected the ongoing development of trust (McAllister, 1995).

Lastly, the study demonstrates the capability of a service-learning program to improve the connection between the university and local stakeholders. The program was perceived as positive by the middle school students and was appreciated by their teachers and leaders. It provided a publicly successful counterpoint to some of the perceptions of negative relations between the university and the community. In an interview about the service-learning program with a local news source, one middle school teacher said, "This partnership between [the school and the university] is a perfect collaboration" (Linthicum, 2022, para. 8). Consequently, early signs of success and positive feedback from the middle school led the president of this university to commit university resources to help the program expand; a second section of the service-learning course was offered, expanding to serve 75 children on the school's basketball and track teams. This study supports the idea that university service-learning courses and programs can create new pathways of relationship and understanding with benefits for both university students and recipients involved in service-learning. At a time when large public universities are being asked to be more accountable for funding used to support programs that provide public service and outreach, findings from this action research study make a compelling case for why these service-learning endeavors are worthwhile. Both sides win.

About the Author

***Jason P. Edwards** is a public service faculty member at the J. W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development at the University of Georgia. His research interests focus on university–community engagement, specifically the impact of leadership development programs on individuals, communities, and organizations. He received his EdD in educational leadership from the University of Georgia.*

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Isn't Global Thinking Relevant—Even Essential—for Any Civic Education?

Aboagye, E., & Dlamini, S. N. (Eds.). (2021). ***Global citizenship education: Challenges and successes.*** **University of Toronto Press. 344 pp.**

Review by Eric Hartman

> ***The difficult part of teaching social justice and global citizenship education is not when you ask students to learn new things about social inequities, but when you call on students to unlearn what they already know and even privilege as "normal" and normative.***
>
> —Adjei, 2021, p. 231

After a brief meditation on her father's stalwart commitment to flying the flag of the United States of America, Nikole Hannah-Jones fixes the moment that the enslavement of Black Africans—and structural racial violence—began in North America: August 1619. This moment is also especially international, involving English colonists, pirates almost certainly of various origins (Jeffries, 2023), and a Portuguese ship whose crew had enslaved Black human beings from their homelands in present-day Angola (Hannah-Jones, 2019), then trafficked them to a region with many millions of Indigenous persons composing scores of disparate nations (Blackhawk, 2023).

The year 1619, notably, is 29 years before the Treaty of Westphalia, generally understood as the foundation for the contemporary international state system. It precedes the United States Declaration of Independence by 157 years. At the time, the French Empire claimed an enormous swath of land stretching between and beyond present-day New Orleans and Quebec City. The Spanish declared control of contemporary Florida, Central and South America, and the western portion of what would become the United States. The peoples of what is now Alaska had yet to see Russian colonizers, but would before the United States was founded. Hawaii was unknown to the European imagination.

We—humans and other species—have always migrated. We have always exchanged things and ideas; we have always conflicted and connected bodily: warring, lusting, and loving across real and perceived borders. And we have always shared a single, known, viable ecosystem—this planet Earth.

The truths of interconnection and interdependence are held in tension with the reality of our contemporary, state-based international system—and Western higher education institutions that reassert it—in *Global Citizenship Education: Challenges and Successes*, a collection edited by Eva Aboagye and S. Nombuso Dlamini.

The volume makes several distinct contributions. Any shortcomings relate to the ways in which contributors reflect broader confusion contained within global and civic education in the contemporary era. Reviewing this book is therefore an occasion to both celebrate the strengths within the volume and discuss some of the field's challenges with respect to clarity of terminology, focus, and established literature. Engaging discrete chapters throughout the book, I proceed in five sections:

1. Is This Truth Self-Evident: That All People Are Created Equal?
2. Is Global Citizenship Necessary to Address Contemporary Crises?
3. How Can Educators Responsibly Steward Global Citizenship Programming That Includes Travel?
4. Where Is This Literature and Community of Practice?
5. Which Way Forward?

Is This Truth Self-Evident: That All People Are Created Equal?

The global citizenship literature of the late 1990s and early 2000s (Appiah, 2006; Carter, 2001; Falk, 2000; Nussbaum, 1992, 1997) collectively clarified that "the goal of global citizenship is to extend that courtesy of equal recognition throughout the human community, though without minimizing meaningful and important differences (Andreotti & de Souza, 2008; Bennett, 1993)" (Hartman et al., 2018, p. 40). This book is anchored within that literature and references to the United Nations and its bodies, though it advances vital updates in respect to embracing environmental sustainability education (especially in Chapter 4) and interrogating intersections with coloniality and Whiteness (particularly in Chapter 9).

One of the book's strengths is its appeals for updated civic education in Western institutions.

> In the present world of transnational communication, cross-border travel, and migration, the Westphalian model of citizenship as imagined sovereignty (Anderson 1983) can no longer account for the cross-national movement of ideas, people, goods, and services, and for the formation of large political bodies such as the European Union. . . . Bhabha (1994) refers to the naturalized nation-centered views of citizenship as having an ontological flaw. (Aboagye & Dlamini, 2021c, p. 9)

There are two important moves in the selection quoted above. The first is a pragmatic observation: Sovereign nations may have had their day, but that time has passed, and we must move on to conceptual frameworks that allow us to see the world as it is. The second, drawing on Bhabha, is much bolder: *Nation-centered views of citizenship have an ontological flaw*. That is, states are only ever narrative constructions. We—humans—make them through our collective insistence. To educate or suggest a kind of permanence in relation to nationhood is to invest in a fallacy. There is no naturally or perpetually American—nor Ghanaian, nor Cambodian, nor Swiss—soil. There are only historically contingent claims made upon varied tracts across this shared earth. Those claims have, for the most part, been mapped into existence by colonizers.

Two realities must be addressed when engaging this observation of states as narrative constructions. One, states still matter; they are the jurisdictions with monopolies of power within certain clearly defined boundaries. Second, the aspirations of global citizenship and peaceful global communities are also emergent narrative constructions. That doesn't make them any less real; it should just remind us of the extensive power—for good and for ill—of community organizing and social construction. But first, states: Global citizenship education does not ignore them. Yet lurking in the background of Aboagye and Dlamini's introduction and first chapter is a critical question: To what extent is much contemporary civic education a continuous reproduction of the unnecessarily divisive identity marker that is national citizenship?

Answering that question will depend on how national civic education is delivered, and whether and to what extent young people are encouraged to think beyond contemporary institutional arrangements. Westheimer and Kahne's (2004a, 2004b) landmark study of civic education identified three dominant approaches to citizenship. The *personally responsible citizen* works hard, pays taxes, lends a hand when needed, and prioritizes rule-following. The *participatory citizen* organizes community efforts to address challenges, understands the role and function of government agencies, and prioritizes participation within established systems and structures. The *justice-oriented citizen* critically assesses root causes of social challenges, aims to address injustice, and prioritizes systems change to move toward greater justice.

Though Westheimer and Kahne do not specifically consider global citizenship, one could infer through the literature that educating and acting for global citizenship requires all of these strengths, but especially important is the justice-oriented citizen's capacity to "question and change established systems and structures when they reproduce patterns of injustice over time" (2004b, p. 242). National citizenship is regularly and repeatedly used as justification for othering, excluding, and invading, whether the action involved is Russia's brutal attempted takeover of Ukraine (Mankoff, 2022); the Greek coast guard's nonchalant witness to the drowning of several hundred migrants from

Egypt, Syria, and Pakistan (Horowitz et al., 2023); or the United States' "barbaric" and "negligent" treatment of individuals held by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Dreisbach, 2023). In Chapter 9, Adjei (2021) clarifies the demanding, values-centered push of global citizenship, citing and building upon scholars and professional standards (Adjei is a social work educator):

> Global citizenship education helps students realize that "no local loyalty can ever justify forgetting that each human being has responsibilities to every other" (Appiah 2006, xvi). Myers (2006) suggests "three curricular topics that need to be considered for a global-oriented citizenship education: (1) international human rights as the foundation of global citizenship, (2) the reconciliation of the universal and the local, and (3) political action beyond the nation state. . . ." (p. 226)
>
> Social work educators cannot take a neutral position in social justice and global citizenship education classrooms. The teaching of social justice and global citizenship education is a political act. (p. 231)

Adjei and the authors and intergovernmental agencies he cites are trying to replace the smaller, frequently divisive notion of national citizenships with a broader, more inclusive, polyvocal narrative of shared human dignity and common community.

After conducting a strong review of the considerable global citizenship education literature, in Chapter 1 volume coeditors Eva Aboagye and S. Nombuso Dlamini (2021b) propose that institutions of higher learning advancing understanding of global citizenship should address the following topics in core courses:

- Learning what global citizenship means in the current context;
- Understanding the historical context of society and social development and globalization;
- Learning about one's identity and appreciating diversity;
- Developing a critical democratic perspective on global issues; and
- Developing skills to take action to address global issues/activism/or learning to be an activist (p. 33).

Though the coeditors work from higher education institutions in Canada, it is worth noting that at this particular moment in United States history, politicians and organizers in Florida and Texas lead national networks determined to ban justice-oriented curricula and diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (Diaz, 2023; Hernandez, 2023). Nonetheless, this book's message is clear: If we wish to support ourselves and the next generation's opportunities to live in a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world, we have no choice but to advance robust global citizenship education.

Is Global Citizenship Necessary to Address Contemporary Crises?

It is worth hovering over this assertion of global citizenship as a need, considering the rationale for global citizenship education beyond the moral imperative of recognizing human dignity among humans we do not know and may not find familiar. Put simply: Cooperative global health, global sustainability, and global community keep all of us safer and healthier. The COVID pandemic was not a surprise, in the sense that global health experts know that pandemics recur, and they always defy comparatively inane human attempts to block them at our constructed borders. By April 2020, it was global cooperation and coordination that helped us make headway against this deadly new threat, as hundreds of laboratories and hospitals coordinated data sharing and analysis worldwide. From a news article at that time:

> "I never hear scientists—true scientists, good quality scientists—speak in terms of nationality," said Dr. Francesco Perrone, who is leading a coronavirus clinical trial in Italy. "My nation, your nation. My language, your language. My geographic location, your geographic location. This is something that is really distant from true top-level scientists."
>
> On a recent morning, for example, scientists at the University of Pittsburgh discovered that a ferret exposed to Covid-19 particles had developed a high fever—a potential advance toward animal vaccine

> testing. Under ordinary circumstances, they would have started work on an academic journal article.
>
> "But you know what? There is going to be plenty of time to get papers published," said Paul Duprex, a virologist leading the university's vaccine research. Within two hours, he said, he had shared the findings with scientists around the world on a World Health Organization conference call. "It is pretty cool, right? You cut the crap, for lack of a better word, and you get to be part of a global enterprise." (Apuzzo & Kirkpatrick, 2020, paras. 7–9)

There will be another pandemic, and global cooperation—like the cooperation that led to the COVID vaccine, and the cooperation on public health mandates that some countries exhibited with particular aplomb—is always our best hope for mitigating harm.

In Chapters 4 and 5 (Beckford, 2021; Gray-Beerman, 2021), the authors elaborate on two other contemporary crises that span the world and will be addressed only through vast networks of localized action: the climate crisis and human trafficking. Observing that "global citizenship applies the principles of citizenship to contemporary global issues based on a recognition of the connectedness of humanity and the interdependence of the Earth's physical systems and human and environmental, economic and social interactions" (p. 96), Beckford makes the case for sustainability education infused throughout global citizenship. This is consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the "gravity of global environmental concerns make this a critical imperative" (p. 114).

One of the challenges often ascribed to global citizenship is the question of knowing where and how to act to advance global civic ideals. Although some efforts have been made to articulate the ways in which global civil society offers diverse points of entry to leverage systems change (Hartman et al., 2018), Beckford articulates a complementary understanding of change through an ecocentric learning paradigm. That approach offers parallels for aspirationally decolonizing global civic work, in which diversities of ontologies and epistemologies are accepted as a condition of collaborative change (Andreotti & de Souza, 2008). An ecological and relational view of the world, writes Beckford (2021), would contribute to

> the development of global citizens who make sustainability a natural part of their lives. Learners are engaged in an integrated way where humans are positioned not as superior beings, but as participants within the Earth's interconnected and interdependent ecological community (Winter-Simat, Wright, and Choi 2017). This is important as "awareness of the world as a web of connected complex adaptive systems in which they participate rather than manipulate or dominate, develops an ecological intelligence that can lead students to a broader worldview and more sustainable lifestyles." (p. 114)

Chapter 5's parallel with Chapter 4 is that it employs global citizenship education as something of a hopeful, instrumental tool for helping address a contemporary crisis: human trafficking. In 2023, the U.S. Department of State declared, "Human trafficking is a crime that deprives millions of people of their dignity and freedom. An estimated 27.6 million are currently victims of trafficking worldwide, and, sadly, many of them are often hidden right in front of us" (Blinken, 2023).

Gray-Beerman (2021) indicates that there is a lack of public awareness of human trafficking in Canada, and notes that 90% of people who are trafficked in Canada are from within the country's borders; more than 50% of those individuals are Indigenous. Fighting the injustices involved in human trafficking requires "an understanding of the human rights violations that are prevalent at all three levels of global citizenship (local, national, and global)" (p. 127). Gray-Beerman articulates numerous opportunities for engaged courses to combat trafficking, including through developing critical understanding of gender, respect for human dignity across all persons, knowledge mobilization, public scholarship, and assessing the relationships among trafficking and social and structural factors.

The kinds of programming envisioned here do happen—and not only from the authors of the respective chapters. Readers interested in models of community-campus partnerships to combat human trafficking should review the partnership between Abolition Ohio and the University of Dayton (n.d.). Individuals looking for inspiration regarding robustly integrated ecological understanding, experiential learning, and global systems change should consider the models provided by Prescott College in Arizona (https://prescott.edu/). Despite these and many other strong, place-based global learning and citizenship programs, the dominant understanding of global citizenship still seems to include assumptions of international mobility.

Before discussing the chapters exploring that intersection of travel and global citizenship, I will briefly touch upon Chapters 3 and 11. In Chapter 3, Kevin Kester (2021) details contributions from the field of peace education (PE) and their intersection with education for global citizenship. Here and elsewhere throughout the volume, intercultural understanding is understood as an extraordinarily pragmatic, absolutely needed skill. Reviewing Nevo and Brem's 2002 summary of research on PE programs, Kester writes that they "found that programs that attempt to reduce violence are less effective than PE programs that emphasize intercultural understanding" (p. 82), and most programs "appeal to rationality, not emotions, which could be perceived as problematic when emotions and psychology are so central to conflict resolution" (p. 82). In this chapter more than others throughout the volume, the reader is left reflecting on the elemental building blocks of peaceful global community as they relate to interpersonal capacities to process and negotiate conflict in small groups and communities.

Chapter 11 takes a different turn, considering "the NGO career arc for students, faculty mentors, and global citizenship educators" (Robinson, 2021, p. 275). Building from insights based on a 2010 survey of Ontario-based NGOs advancing human rights, the chapter outlines several trends that are useful for any person interested in that sector or in counseling students toward it. And I want to be clear that the contribution in that manner is strong. The question I have is why a chapter relating to pathways for students interested in justice, inclusion, and sustainability would be limited to consideration of NGO sector careers? If we take the challenge of recognizing interdependence seriously, global civic education becomes a must for everyone. To be a professional, to be a community leader, to steward a Fortune 500 company, one must understand the reality of interdependence—and the global community-building, activism, and governance efforts that are forwarding justice, inclusion, and sustainability worldwide.

Like civic education, global civic education should be encouraged among all students—not just those predisposed individuals who self-select. The best careful detailing of global civic competencies required for professional service across fields that I have seen emanated from the global health sector (Jogerst et al., 2015). There and with Oxfam UK's work across primary, secondary, and tertiary education, we see frameworks that help us consider how to educate robustly and well, across multiple sectors and disciplines (Oxfam UK, 2023). Despite the availability and excellence of those models, it seems to remain the case that in U.S. higher education most global citizenship programming is associated with international travel.

How Can Educators Responsibly Steward Global Citizenship Programming That Includes Travel?

Two of the chapters in the volume consider international programming between Canadian educational institutions and communities in the Majority World. Conducting a case study of programming involving high school students traveling to Kenya or Nicaragua, Broom and Bai (2021) wonder, "Is experience-based learning an effective method of nurturing students' sense of community consciousness (and thus their humanity)?" (p. 153). Unfortunately, the literature reviewed for this and the following chapter is dominated by articles published before 2010. There is a rich legacy to draw on there, but some of the questions the authors struggle through have received robust consideration near and since that time. Considerable helpful framing literature from the United States and Canada was not engaged in the review process in either of the two chapters (Alonso García & Longo, 2013, 2015; Balusubramaniam et al., 2018; Battistoni et al., 2009; Bringle et al., 2011; Camacho, 2004; Crabtree, 2008; Green & Johnson, 2014; Kiely, 2004, 2005; Larsen, 2015; McMillan & Stanton, 2014; Oberhauser & Daniels, 2017; Piacitelli et al., 2013; Reynolds, 2014; Sumka et al., 2015; Tiessen & Huish, 2014).

Engaging that literature—which is only

partially listed above—would have yielded three insights that could have improved both Chapters 6 and 7. First, numerous and diverse scholars have considered the high financial and community costs of international experiential learning, and initiated localized, experiential, global engagement as an alternative. These kinds of approaches, which Gisolo and Stanlick (2021) expand upon in Chapter 8 (citing some of the literature mentioned above and offering a robust approach themselves), bridge the local with the global, develop relationships across perceived differences, and prompt students to consider their global interconnections and responsibilities in their home communities (Alonso García & Longo, 2013, 2015; Battistoni et al., 2009; Hartman et al., 2018; Sobania, 2015). Second, the landscape of best practices in international community engagement is much more robust than is reflected in Chapters 6 and 7, having developed over the last decade to include sector standards in education abroad (Forum on Education Abroad, 2023) and gap year programming (Gap Year Association, 2023). Third, and vitally, the 2010s witnessed significant movements to ensure that vulnerable populations are not exploited through well-intentioned international volunteering and/or service-learning.

Although the aforementioned standards, which are annually updated, reflect publication through last summer, their development and implementation stretch back several years, and conversations about them emerged from within the community, global, and civic engagement literatures (and beyond), frequently propelled by concerns about working with vulnerable populations such as children and medical patients (Hartman, 2016a; Hartman & Kiely, 2014; Lasker, 2016; Punaks & Feit, 2014; van Doore, 2016). This literature is absent from Chapters 6 and 7, even as Chapter 6 specifically mentions working with vulnerable children and orphans. Other scholars and community organizers have continued to apply and develop standards in this vein, frequently under the mantle of Fair Trade Learning (Amerson et al., 2021; Eichbaum et al., 2021; Gendle et al., 2023; Reynolds et al., 2022). Aligning these conversations and insisting upon robust literature reviews is not merely an academic matter. For the past decade, global child rights advocates have been campaigning to stop short-term international volunteering in orphanages in favor of more systematic, long-term, holistic, and community-based approaches to care, as significant harms and unnecessarily high risks to children are documented in relation to short-term international volunteering (Hartman, 2016a; United Nations, 2023; van Doore, 2016).

Where Is This Literature and Community of Practice?

One of the subtexts of Chapter 7 suggests why these many important conversations, research findings, scholarly frameworks, and applied insights are often not linking up with one another to build a comprehensive, improved, and shared understanding. Naidoo and Benjamin (2021) utilize the pseudonym "The Lock" to refer to the nonprofit organization they worked with, "a registered Canadian charitable organization" in which the "founding members, first generation Canadian people of Caribbean heritage, based their mandate on strengthening the capacity of youth in Ontario and in the Caribbean through education and empowerment" (p. 179). Throughout the chapter, the Lock is positioned as a particularly insightful and effective group of individuals—who struggle to effectively claim pedagogical space and leadership in the context of partnering with higher education institutions.

> The shift from working independently to having institutional partnerships can be identified as the juncture that altered the ability of the Lock to execute its service-learning programs as originally designed. . . . The Lock had little or no influence over how student-volunteers were selected or prepared for an international service-learning program. The lack of involvement with the student-volunteers prior to departure was noted especially to student-volunteers' reactions to service learning in the host community. (pp. 182–183)
>
> Based on our experiences, when The Lock had a more active role in providing a service-learning curriculum (from 2014 to 2018), the student-volunteers were better equipped to understand small nuances that explained the "whys" of certain things about the host communities. (p. 184)

The coauthors see great quality and integrity in the Lock's work. They suggest that Lock program facilitators have deeper knowledge of the nuances involved with connecting Canadian students to specific Caribbean communities than is the case for faculty and staff members who work more permanently at those Canadian institutions (as opposed to being based continuously in the Caribbean, or occupying a continuous "third culture," liminal location between the two worlds). I have written about this dynamic elsewhere:

> Writing from personal experience and perception, the assumption at academic conferences on International Service Learning (ISL)/Global Service Learning (GSL) seems to be that universities have a special position for ethical and informed decision-making. I have never understood what leads to this presumption, aside from unreflective privilege. . . . In my own experience, the farther I have moved away from the regular and continuous practice of engaged community development partnership, the more qualified I have appeared as a person permitted to stand in front of students and suggest what global development is. This mismatch, of course, is one of many ways in which the university commitment to peer-reviewed knowledge development strains its capacity to accept and appreciate practitioner and community wisdom. (Hartman, 2016b, pp. 215–216)

Looking back at this passage, I see degrees of truth and overstatement. Community-based organizations bring extraordinarily high levels of practice-based wisdom and insight to partnerships and practice. Universities frequently fail to recognize that. Even as community-engaged and civic learning offices demonstrate the field's continuously deepened commitment to decentering conventional forms of Western academic knowledge, other parts of the institution, from departments to provostial offices to centers for global engagement, may not be as familiar with the rationales for and commitments to such decentering (Andreotti & de Souza, 2008; Hartman et al., 2018; Mitchell, 2008).

Readers of the *JHEOE* are familiar with this dynamic, and doubtless spend much of their time attempting to navigate higher education institutions in such a way as to increase recognition of practice-based wisdom. And yet conventional higher education practices—distanced, critical observation, considering multiple program types and approaches, broader political economies and histories—are also important to our shared learning and field development. But to the extent that that occurs, it continues to develop across fairly separate literatures in civic and community engagement, international and global engagement, global citizenship and global governance, and global development and critical theory. This is a nonexhaustive list. Contributions also regularly appear from discrete disciplines, from education to social work, anthropology to engineering, and much in between. And many insights emerge off-campus, through practice, among professionals and community organizers.

To make progress on systematizing this multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral landscape, Lough and Toms (2018); employed an empowering evaluation process to organize 36 focus groups during an international summit on global service-learning, to map strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. The focus groups generated more than 100 summary statements, which were developed into common themes. Those themes included

- A need for a coordinating body in global engaged learning
- Enhanced reciprocity throughout global engagement partnerships
- An integrated, evidence-based model for global engagement curriculum
- Stronger shared evaluation frameworks
- Enhanced clarity of partnership with intermediary organizations (like "The Lock," mentioned above)

I attended the summit that led to that article, and have had a role in cofounding and codirecting the Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative, which aspires to be a coordinating body and welcoming community of practice for anyone interested in advancing "community-based global learning and research for more just, inclusive, and sustainable communities" (Community-

Based Global Learning Collaborative, n.d.). For more than a decade, we have worked to connect the strengths and insights across several of these areas of literature and practice, convene practitioners and scholars aiming to improve engaged global education practices, and amplify and celebrate insights coming from among various allied associations and networks, particularly those community and civic engagement networks doing some global work, as well as those international and global education associations engaging in some community efforts (Campus Compact, 2019).

Which Way Forward?

As this review demonstrates, the sum total of work at this intersection is well beyond the Collaborative alone *and simultaneously*, the need identified by Lough and Toms (2018)—for a coordinating body in global engaged learning—remains important. I would extend that observation, however, to suggest that a coordinating body is needed for a community of inquiry and strong practice identification supporting individual, programmatic, and institutional development and change toward higher education systems collaborating carefully with local and global partners to support global citizenship development and global civil society.

Broadening this mandate is necessary because there are several discrete questions that emerge *through* global engaged learning. "What is global citizenship education and what are its tenets?" was one of the core questions at the heart of the book reviewed here, and it is answered well, drawing on the established global citizenship theoretical literature, and bringing it into dialogue with the global citizenship education aspirations advanced by major global governance bodies. Adjei (2021) and Beckford (2021) provide the volume with some robust updates beyond 20th-century global citizenship approaches, making progress on antiracism and decolonial thinking, as well as ecological approaches, respectively. These chapters foreshadow the currently emerging, increasingly robust literatures on decolonizing, diversifying, and ecologizing global civic thought. For readers unfamiliar with what I am implying here, I would recommend works by Vanessa Andreotti (Academia, n.d.) as a starting point in these spaces, from which we will all continue to be challenged and grow. Thought, of course, can occur anywhere, and global civic inquiry can certainly happen on campuses. Aboagye and Dlamini, and many writers preceding them, have made moral and pragmatic cases for broad education in global citizenship. Additionally, experiential learning is often "considered important in enabling students to learn and understand other cultures and people and to provide a better understanding of global issues" (Aboagye & Dlamini, 2021b, pp. 35–36).

From these three preceding sentences emerge three very large institutional change queries:

- First, are faculty, across fields, generally prepared to support transdisciplinary education for global citizenship, particularly in a manner consistent with the emergent full integration of critical theory, antiracist, and ecological thinking?
- Second, and more pragmatic to our current institutional designs, are international education programs designed with global civic development as a learning goal?
- Third, are local civic education and engagement programs; on-campus diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives; and sustainability programming in the curriculum and cocurriculum, designed within an awareness of encouraging global citizenship development and related progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

I sense that the answers to these questions are no, largely not, and nope. There are also many more challenging questions that emerge from the three above, such as those that relate to the robust inclusion of international students, or the environmental sustainability of international education as a field. And yet there is also considerable progress under way.

The Aboagye and Dlamini book is a contribution. Additionally, one of the major journals in the international education field, *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, recently featured a special issue on listening to and learning from partners and host communities (Brandauer et al., 2022); likewise, one of the leading journals in the civic engagement field simultaneously published a similar special issue (Macdonald & Vorstermans, 2022); and at the Fall 2023

Engagement Scholarship Conference, plenaries included two topics that push beyond national imaginaries, "Context and Prospects for Community-Engaged Scholarship With Indigenous Communities" and "Community–University Engagement: Perspectives From the Global Majority" (Engagement Scholarship Consortium, 2023).

Sarah Stanlick, whose contributions in the Aboagye and Dlamini volume (Chapter 2 and, with Gisella Gisolo, Chapter 8) reflect highly systematic approaches to grounding aspirational ideals in methodical approaches to pedagogy and partnership, recently coedited a new volume on these themes, *Perspectives on Lifelong Learning and Global Citizenship* (Stanlick & Szmodis, 2022). *Perspectives* is another contribution in this vein, profiling place-based global learning, online and flipped classroom approaches to understanding global citizenship, a feminist socioecological framework for transforming early learning programs in low- and middle-income countries, and much more.

Both books take on broad and diverse challenges related to global and civic education in the contemporary era, and it is clear why. Not only as professional participants in academic and applied fields but as humans living on this shared Earth, we have significant questions to struggle with and major changes we must achieve—changes in the way we think and act and changes that could determine our shared survival.

As I was putting finishing touches on this essay, and swirling with a sense of urgency and indignation in relation to our collective, willful ignorance of our own interdependence, coverage of the Little League World Series popped onto the radio, and reminded me of the beauty of this extraordinary interdependence as well. We are already connecting, in complex ways, all around this world, all the time.

In South Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where the annual tournament has taken place since 1947, the Mexican team bested the Canadians. Many fans interviewed lived in the United States, but were born in Mexico, and celebrated not only the Mexican team, but also reconnecting with family members (McDevitt, 2023). Listening to the narratives of community and family connection across Pennsylvania and New Jersey, stretching to various states in Mexico, I was reminded that Spanish is familiar in many of the communities near Williamsport. Although speakers' diversities reflect numerous countries as well as migration within the United States, two thirds of Pennsylvania's population growth between 1970 and 2010 was due to people holding Latinx identities, and much of that growth occurred in the rural areas and small cities between Lancaster, Scranton, and Williamsport (Hinshaw, 2016).

As the intro to this essay highlighted, interdependence and interconnectedness long predate the national imaginations and militarized borders that dominate our world today. As scholars and community organizers work to amplify marginalized histories, we develop better understandings of ourselves, choices made in the past, and the power of the choices we must make today, tomorrow, and into the future.

A bit farther south and east in Pennsylvania, here at Haverford, we hosted a panel discussion, featuring the Christiana Resistance of September 11, 1851. This resistance, which took place in rural Lancaster County, about 40 miles to our west, was a critical act of rebellion against the institution of slavery, led by a group of free Black individuals who were part of the rural county's population of some 3,000 free Black persons in the mid-nineteenth century. As some of the leaders of the resistance fled to Upper Canada (then part of the British Empire), they were helped across the border by Frederick Douglass (Beadenkopf, 2003).

This history, as well as Douglass's own history as a transnational activist against oppression and empire, partnering with Irish freedom fighters after journeying across the Atlantic and allying with suffragists in Seneca Falls when called to there, is vital to understanding two global civic education insights. First, when peeling back the layers, one will frequently find international, intercultural, intersex/transgender, and/or interracial collaboration across geographies all around the world. Second, the world we experience—whether patriarchal White supremacy reigns or we make progress toward a more just, inclusive, diverse, polyvocal, and sustainable experience for all—is the product of choices and movements, and human arrangements that are never fully settled.

The arrangements and outcomes we have—from the question of whether we will experience democratic institutions or a full-blown climate crisis—are all a product of our stewardship of local, national, and transnational relationships, cultural imaginations, policies, and institutions. Writing in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, Aboagye and Dlamini (2021a) state plainly on the first page of acknowledgments, "The international responses to the public lynching in the US bring hope to a possibility of reimagining a future that, through global citizenship education, we had already started to re-envision" (p. vii).

In the foreword to the Stanlick and Szmodis volume, theologian Sharon D. Welch (2022) writes,

> To counter authoritarianism in all its forms, we need alternative forms of belonging, a self-critical and expansive form of global citizenship that genuinely recognizes and embraces the challenge of seeking the flourishing of all, forthrightly acknowledges the damage of extractive and exploitative economic and political systems of the past and present, and wholeheartedly welcomes the challenge of learning how to live in reciprocity and responsibility with each other and with the natural world that sustains us. (p. vi)

This is pedagogy; this is partnerships; this is institutional reimagination; this is world-building. This is not a new project. Yet the rationale for robust global citizenship is more essential, and the crises stemming from ignoring the need to connect and co-operate are more imminent, every single day.

> Curriculum reform should emphasize knowledge, understanding and respect for the culture of others at the national and global level, and should link the global interdependence of problems to local action. (UNESCO, 1995, pp. 10–11)

We have no choice but to educate in ways that reflect the truth of interdependence.

About the Reviewer

Eric Hartman *is executive director of the Haverford College Center for Peace and Global Citizenship and codirector of the Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative. His research interests include global citizenship and human rights education, as well as ethical community–campus partnerships. He earned his PhD in public and international affairs from the University of Pittsburgh.*

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