We're in This Together: Exploring Challenges Related to Service-Learning

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Abstract: Teaching service-learning courses in higher education poses a set of challenges that are at odds with institutional mission and prevailing institutional discourses touting the benefits of service-learning and community engagement for students. As inter-disciplinary faculty members and professional staff, we sought to explore the ways that service-learning and community-engagement was conceptualized in our home institution. Survey results show confusion about the definition and differences between the various forms of student engagement and community-engagement. This sentiment was echoed during a faculty focus group where six faculty members discussed the challenges, the trepidation, but also value associated with teaching service-learning courses. Drawing on critical theory, this paper discusses how despite a lack of clarity and at times uncertainty, faculty members at one institution continue to teach-service-learning courses with the support of each other enabling them to navigate the power dynamics within a traditional higher education atmosphere.

Key words: service-learning, critical pedagogy, student engagement, community-engagement, faculty learning communities

1. Introduction

Service-learning is a pedagogical term originating in 1985 with a small group of influential university presidents who founded Campus Compact with the expressed purpose of returning colleges to their original mission of educating and training students to be civically engaged citizens (Campus Compact, 2009; Harkins, 2013). Often described as a pedagogical process of reflection of community service and academic knowledge within an academic course, service-learning grew rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s with more than 1,100 campuses nationwide requiring a service-learning course for graduation. This quick rise in service-learning requirement and interest began to stall with few new college campuses adding this requirement to their curriculum (Brukardt, Holland, Percey & Simpher, 2004; Butin, 2006). The level at which service-learning has been embraced on college campuses has been widely varied (Hartley, Harkavy, & Benson, 2005). As the now famous Wingspread Statement released at the Wingspread Conference in 2004 revealed there were deep questions regarding higher education commitment to community engagement. Since this pivotal question was posed, interest in why this pedagogical tool is so difficult to implement across the academy has sparked much research and theory (Butin, 2006, 2010).

Some issues that have been identified include: lack of departmental or institutional support or funding (Bland,

Center, Finstad, Risbey & Staples, 2006; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Clark, 1987; Holland, 1999; O'Meara, 2005; Ward, 2003), as well as confusion regarding the meaning (Colbeck & Michael, 2006), purpose (Aguirre, 2000; Antonio, Astin & Cress, 2000; Baez, 2000; Neumann & Peterson, 1997) , and logistics (Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002; Bland et al., 2006; Zlotowski, 2000) of how and what service-learning is conceptualized. O'Meara (2007) discusses how the discourse differs between college administration and faculty. For example, college presidents often describe service-learning as a type of experiential learning that increases student civic engagement through town-gown collaborations; whereas, faculty involved in service-learning often engage in this work from more political and or spiritual commitments. This disconnect between the purpose of service-learning across university administration and faculty as Butin (2010) suggests may represent one of the root reasons service-learning has stalled its growth and value. Although colleges and universities have demonstrated growing interest in the inclusion of civic engagement, more work needs to be done to make this a more sustained reality. Research has consistently shown that across varying work contexts, identities, and cultures faculty members have differing preparation and socialization for the professoriate, career opportunities and work experiences according to discipline, institutional type, individual demographics and identity, and appointment type (Aguirre, 2000; Antonio et al., 2000; Becher 1989; Clark 1987; Shuester & Finklestein, 2006).

2. Fostering a Critical and Supportive Space

We are a group of diverse faculty and staff (college access programs, education studies, sociology and psychology) who are committed to the value of service-learning courses, even in the face of low departmental or institutional support. Given our commitment to social justice, we sought to re-imagine our roles as faculty and staff — by centering service-learning as a vehicle for deconstructing systems of power and oppression (Mitchell, 2008). We came together to learn about each other's disciplines and practices, and to intentionally find ways to support one another as we engage in this rewarding, but sometimes emotionally draining work. We took comfort in knowing we are not in it alone and that a supportive structure is available. The space we crafted allowed for a critique from various standpoints emanating from the self, the collective, and the communities we interact with Our gatherings functioned as a space for us to explore our perception of service-learning and to discuss our pedagogical approaches, as well as lessons learned from our practice and lived experiences. For us this meant purposefully crafting a space where we could openly discuss our frustrations and constraining circumstances. This was instrumental in providing us with a sense of agency to critique, contest and bring about change.

Critical theorists argue that despite the pervasive oppressive power operating in institutional structures, people can emancipate themselves through new discourses and practices (O'Meara & Stromquist, 2015). We began by sharing stories from our practice in an effort to better understanding what we each meant when we used terms such as: social justice, social transformation, and critical pedagogy. Quickly we uncovered that we all believed in the development of critical consciousness as crucial development step to any service-learning project that is focused on social transformation. Cipolle (2010) outlines the development of critical consciousness as developing the following:

- a deeper awareness of self
- a deeper awareness and broader perspective of others
- a deeper awareness and broader perspective of social issues
- seeing one's potential to make change

In discussing our teaching we outlined our critical pedagogical strategies which are guided by our passion for our respective disciplines, and an unapologetic intent on dismantling structures of injustice (Mitchell, 2008). Our goal is to help students develop critical consciousness, empower the imagination, connect knowledge and truth to power, and learn to read both the word and the world as part of a broader struggle for agency, justice, and democracy (Giroux, 2001)

Mitchell (2008) posits that service-learning as a pedagogical project varies greatly across educators, discipline and institution, thus making it difficult to institutionalize. Due to our critical approach to service-learning we had a hunch that most of our colleagues were not approaching service-learning the same way. We questioned if they even knew the difference between service-learning and other forms of civic engagement. As such, we wondered: how is service-learning and civic-engagement conceptualized at our home institution? Who is engaging in these pedagogical practices? How are they engaging in these practices? Why do we continue to teach these courses despite limited support and understanding in the academy? Why is this practice they important to us?

Given the lack of clarity around how the institution defined service-learning and community-engagement, we sought to investigate faculty understanding, interest, and pedagogical experience with various forms of student engagement such as: experiential learning projects; field placements; internships; practicum; service-learning and volunteer work.

We decided to survey the rest of the faculty and conduct a focus group to further understand how others engaged in this work were making sense of their practice. In what follows, we report on salient themes from both a faculty survey and focus group and discuss ways that faculty can partner up to support one another in their desire to teach their passion.

3. Institutional Context, Faculty Survey and Focus Group Methodology

Our institution is a small private university, with three schools (Arts and Sciences; Business; and a Law School) and approximately 10,400 undergraduates and 2,000 graduate students. The institution was founded on the concept of educational opportunity for people of diverse cultural and economic backgrounds and is an urban school. The university has articulated a commitment to community engagement and service-learning through the strategic plan, which states: "We engage with our students, alumni, and the broader community in collaborative relationships that promote local and global connections enhancing learning and scholarship" (p. 10).

We developed and conducted a survey of full-time faculty to explore the role and function of service-learning and other forms of student engagement with external communities. In March 2015, the survey was distributed electronically by the university's Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence to all full-time faulty (approximately 414) across all three schools of the university. The survey asks about faculty inclusion of various forms of student engagement with external communities, including experiential learning projects, field placements, internships, practicum, service-learning and volunteer work. We purposely avoided defining the specific terms related to various forms of student engagement in an attempt to understand how faculty members themselves describe the types of student engagement in which they engage. We wanted to understand how faculty members viewed the time commitment required of students and the establishment of community connections required to conduct community engagement projects within their classes. Additionally, we were interested in why some faculty chose not to engage in student engagement activities. We did not ask demographic questions, in an effort

to insure anonymity of respondents. As the institution is small, we decided that asking questions about gender, race, and academic department might inadvertently lead to the identity of some respondents. Eighty-two (approximately 20%) faculty members responded to the survey.

As a follow-up to the survey, we conducted a focus group to learn more about how faculty define student engagement, specifically service-learning, as well as the benefits and challenges for faculty inclusion of service-learning within their courses. Participants were recruited from all full-time faculties using the snowball method of sampling, as well as advertising through email and various university offices. Six faculty members participated in the focus group session, which was held for one-hour during April 2016. Unfortunately there were no participants from the business school; all were faculty members in social science departments. Five of the participants are tenured, with one being a full professor. Only one participant was un-tenured, but tenure track.

Participants reviewed and signed the informed consent forms and reviewed the service-learning definition that was recently approved by the university faculty. Participants also completed a three-question demographic survey to help us identify the gender, college, and faculty rank of each participant. We decided to only ask these questions to lessen the possibility of identification of participants. The focus group session was audiotaped and transcribed and written notes were taken by members of the research team. The transcribed data was uploaded to HyperRESEARCH qualitative research software and was checked for accuracy. Coding of the data was completed in three stages, with the lead authors progressively refining the identified codes into major themes that emerged.

Both the survey and focus group research were approved by the university's institutional research board.[1]

4. Survey Findings and Discussion

At the start of the survey, faculty members were asked how often they required forms of student engagement with external communities in their courses during the time period between the 2012–2013 academic year and the spring 2015 semester (a six-semester period). The faculty could select from any of the following forms of community engagement: experiential learning projects; field placements; internships; practice; service-learning projects; and volunteer work. However, for the purposes of this article we will focus primarily on responses about service-learning, with comparisons to the form with the highest response rates: experiential learning projects.

Respondents reported requiring experiential learning projects in their courses at higher percentages than the other forms of student engagement with external communities (Table 1). Sixty-one percent (60.98%) of respondents reported including experiential learning projects in their courses, with 60% reporting having done so one–four times and 40% reporting having done so five or more times. Respondents did not report inclusion of other listed forms of student engagement as highly. For example, less than 20% of respondents required service-learning (15.85%-13 of 82) during the six semesters.

Faculty members were asked to indicate the level of importance they placed on engaging students in various activities within the context of each listed form of student engagement. The activity categories listed were personal reflective journaling, group reflection, associated readings, or other. Most respondents indicated that the activities were important or very important for each form of student engagement. However, with the exception of experiential learning projects, the n for all other forms of student engagement was very low (Table 2). In terms of service-learning, only 6 out of 8 faculties who engaged in service-learning considered reflective journaling important or very important, and only 5 out of 8 considered group reflection important or very important.

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[1] Protocol #s: 727660-1 (survey) & 875319-1 (focus group).

Considering the importance of critical reflection to service-learning, this finding deserves further study.

Table 1 Between the 2012–2013 Academic Year and Spring 2015, How Often Have….Been Requirement in Any of Your Courses? (valid percent)

	Experiential Learning Projects (n = 50)	Field Placements (n = 35)	Internship (n = 27)	Practicum (n = 25)	Service-learning (n = 25)	Volunteer Work (n = 22)
Never	0	.571	.778	.84	.48	.864
1–2 times	.34	.143	0	.08	.44	.091
3–4 times	.26	.086	.037	.04	.04	0
5–9 times	.18	.114	.148	0	0	0
10+ times	.22	.086	.037	.04	.04	.045

Table 2 How Important *(Very Important and Important)* is it for Students to be Engaged in the following Activities in the Context of Each Type of Service? (valid percent) and How Many Hours per Semester Students Engage in the Following Activities in the Context of Each Type of Service (The Two Highest Times Listed – valid percent)

	Importance of Activity			Hours Required of Activity	
	Experiential Learning Projects	Service-learning		Experiential Learning Projects	Service-learning
Personal Reflective Journaling	.302 important .419 very important n = 43	.125 important .625 very important n = 8	Personal Reflective Journaling	.558 (1–9 hours) .209 (10–19 hours) n = 43	.375 1–9 hours) .25 (each 10–19 & 20–29 hours) n = 8
Group Reflection	.378 important .467 very important n = 45	.375 important .25 very important n = 8	Group Reflection	.419 (1–9 hours) .326 (10–19 hours) n = 43	.625 (1–9 hours) n = 8
Associated Readings	.565 important .304 very important n = 46	.25 important .375 very important n = 8	Off-Site Work	.372 (1–9 hours) .163 (20–29 hours) n = 43	.375 (10–19 hours) .25 (each 1–9 & 20–29 hours) n = 8
"Other"	.231 important .538 very important n = 13	.667 very important n = 3	Associated Readings	.302 (1–9 hours) .349 (10–19 hours) n = 43	.50 (10–19 hours) .375 (1–9 hours) n = 8
			"Other"	.308 (10–19 hours) .231 (40–49 hours) n = 13	.667 (1–9 hours) n = 3

We also wanted to find out the number of hours faculty members required for the same activities. The majority of faculty members who included personal reflective journaling, group reflection and off-site work as part of the experiential learning projects in their courses, required less than 20 hours per semester of participation in these activities. Faculty offering service-learning courses required few hours for these activities as well, with less than 20 hours per semester required for each activity.

Table 3 Are Students Required to Be in the Community to Participate in the Following Activities? How Student Are Graded for the Following Activities

	% Yes	% No	
Experiential Learning (n = 44)	.591	.409	
Service-learning (n = 10)	.60	.40	
	% Letter Grade	% Pass/Fail	% No Grade
Experiential Learning (n = 46)	.826	.152	.022
Service-learning (n = 11)	.909	.091	--

In most cases, faculty members required students to be in the community to participate in the various forms of student engagement (Table 3). Although the sample size is quite small for all forms of community engagement with the exception of experiential learning, it is interesting to note that some faculty members are not requiring students to be in the community to perform their service projects. In fact, only 6 of 10 service-learning faculties require students to be in the community. Most faculty members indicated using letter grades to rate the various forms of student engagement, with the majority of service-learning respondents (10 of 11) doing so as well. Assignment of letter grades for service-learning activities denotes a level of importance for these activities within the course (Table 3).

Table 4   How Initially Developed a Relationship with Community Partners for the Following Activities & Who Feels Should Initiate Relationships between Community Partners and Faculty (Choose All That Apply)?

	freq./ %Through Univ. Center	freq./ %Student Initiated	freq./ %Outside Relationship	freq./ %Other*
Experiential Learning (n = 33)	.182	.121	.606	.091
Service-learning (n = 9)	.444	.222	.333	--

*Many of the "other" indicated was some combination of the above.

	Frequency of Selection (N = 82)	Percent Selected (N = 82)
University Center	23	.28
Students	14	.171
Faculty	30	.366
Community Partner	26	.317
Other*	4	.049

*Other includes: Administration; Alumni; Dean's office (a dedicated partnership relationship manager); Depends on nature of the project whether faculty or CCE should initiate; Don't know-these are not my interest.

Relationships with community partners were most often established through outside relationships the faculty members held in all types of student engagement with the exception of service-learning (Table 4). Although the sample size is small (9), four (44.4%) service-learning faculty members developed their relationship with community partners through the university center that provides assistance and services to faculty engaging various forms of community engagement, while five (55.5%) had relationships that were student-initiated or developed through an outside relationship.

When asked who should establish relationships between community partners and faculty members, just over two-thirds (30) of all faculty respondents felt the relationship should be initiated by the faculty member and 31.7% (26) felt it should be initiated by the community partner. Twenty-eight percent (23) of faculty felt it should be initiated through the university center.

5. Focus Group Findings and Discussion

The literature has identified many challenges to faculty engagement in academic service-learning pedagogy. One of the biggest concerns is the perceived support of the institution and colleagues, particularly in terms of promotion and tenure (Cooper, 2014; Forbes, Wasburn, Crispo & Vandeveer 2008; Darby & Newman, 2014). College and universities that are more research-oriented have been shown to view service-learning more negatively when it comes to promotion and tenure decisions (Lambright & Alden, 2012). When service-learning initiatives are devalued, under-, or un-incentivized, the professional stakes are higher for faculty, particularly

untenured faculty, who wish to engage in service-learning pedagogy. Studies have shown an increased level of faculty engagement when mentorship and support is available (Darby & Newman, 2014; Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002).

However, strong encouragement and support from university administration including funding, release time or sabbaticals, recognition of successful projects, and centralized support services to assist in identifying community partners and managing logistics can also promote sustainability in service-learning pedagogy (Darby & Newman, 2014; Abes et al., 2002; Hinck & Brandell, 2000; Lambert & Alden, 2012; Cooper, 2014; Forbes et al., 2008; Campus Compact, 2012). Not surprising, focus group participants identified challenges that are consistent with those found in the prevailing service-learning literature. Specifically, they spoke about challenges related to course structure (type, size, course load, time and logistics), the need to balance faculty responsibilities and institutional barriers. However, despite challenges, participants spoke quite passionately about the value of service-learning courses for students (Table 5).

Table 5　Major Themes of Focus Group Discussion

Theme	Frequency
Challenges: logistics of course structure & balancing faculty responsibilities/ requirements	15
Challenges: institutional barriers	13
Value for students	12

5.1 Course Structure

The time commitment for both faculty and student participation in service-learning projects can also be a challenge (Cooper, 2014; Abes et al., 2002). It can be difficult for faculty to devote class time in addition to the traditional academic material, as well as managing the logistics necessary for students' interactions with community partners. Students have other course requirements, work, and other obligations and may struggle with the amount of time needed to participate in service-learning projects. Like students, faculty have other courses to teach, committee work and other work-related obligations which lead to a limit in the amount of time that can realistically be committed to service-learning projects.

When this topic came up, Shirley, an untenured, assistant professor commented:

> For me a challenge is the timing of the classes and how to figure, how to fit service-learning in an hour and fifteen-minute space … I know there are alternative ways of setting it up so that students can do it on their own time. But it would be nice if perhaps there were an alternative schedule for service-learning classes so if you were doing a service-learning class, it could be scheduled in a different way, as opposed to fitting into the time slots we have now.

Shirley's challenge goes beyond course structure. It speaks to the inflexibility of college schedules as well as to the demands of 'fitting' in service-learning. Pedagogically this requires the following components: curricula and projects that are sustainable and developed in partnership with the community; activities that are meaningful to student learning and community needs; a clear and relevant connection of community activities to course learning objectives: and purposeful challenges for participants to grapple with diversity and social justice issues (Eyler & Giles, 1999). This is tall order given time constraints. Thus constructing a pedagogically sound "course structure" requires a great deal of time and effort. The notion that there might be "alternative ways of setting it up" brings up another critical issue: "alternative ways" does not always lead to doing service-learning in a way

enhance student reflection and promotes learning.

In addition to the challenge of the timing of courses, class structure also addresses issues of the type of course for consideration of service-learning. Alex, a tenured associate professor indicated a lack of instruction around designing service-learning courses that are not automatically thought of as a "natural fit". He states

> I was going to add too, the "how to" component that Bobby is talking about… should be sort of tailored to the class, classes vary so differently. Ah and it kind of stretches some faculty members, myself included, to figure out, um, how you might integrate a service component in your course. Some courses are a natural fit for it…

The size of a service-learning course, as well as the overall faculty course load requirements were also seen as a challenge for those teaching service-learning courses. The following exchange illustrates the need for lower course sizes for service-learning courses, while also acknowledging the conflict with university requirements for minimal annual course load levels. Tony, Beyonce and Boston are all tenured, associate professors. Bobby is a tenured, full professor.

> Tony Now can I ask how many people do you have in the course each time you teach it?
>
> Beyonce Uh, 17.
>
> Boston   25 plus.
>
> Bobby   Uh… ranges from 7 to 15.
>
> Tony ……That's a problem…because we now have this 125 student [required course load] that we are supposed to meet every year.

5.2 Balance Faculty Responsibilities/Requirements

Many of the focus group participants expressed the need to balance the teaching of service-learning courses in the backdrop of ever increasing faculty responsibilities such as advising, committee work and scholarly pursuits. This is compounded by a perception that teaching service-learning courses entails "much more work". For example, in the context of what is required to structure a course, Shirley recited a litany of things: "I mean there is more responsibility, there's setting, there's the relationships, there's scheduling, there's paperwork."

What surprised us, however, was the degree to which more experienced, established and seasoned faculty members chimed in to counter Shirley's argument with an "energy" rationale. Bobby said:

> At the same time, it's the younger faculty members that have the energy and that's who you (the institution) what to get [in the midst of laughter] … because they have energy. They don't have their pajamas on at eight of o'clock [louder laughter ensued].

This prompted another faculty member to reflect on amount of energy required to structure and balance service-learning courses by commenting on yet another critical factor: younger faculty and their need to balance teaching, service and scholarship as it relates to promotion and tenure. Yet, they also bring new approaches, fresh perspectives that benefit all. Alex said:

> Can I go back to something that Shirley mentioned that has been in the back of my mind? That is that younger faculty members enhances what you have to do teaching, stretches the faculty member quite a bit and yet there's also the demand for publications. It just seems like this creates major conflict that's difficult for younger faculty members to resolve.

This discussion prompted Boston to comment on the perception of unbalanced departmental/institutional

support along rank lines. She commented that "communication" needs to take place from the top down: "from administrators, to chairs of departments, not just faculty. Because if you don't have the support of your immediate supervisor, it's not going to work."

5.3 Institutional Barriers

As a sub-theme of challenges, institutional barriers can mean many things. It was clear that the strongest barrier participants experienced was mistrust of the institution. This includes a perceived difficulty working with the institutional support office and staff as well as feelings of lack of support. This perception stems from experiences with confusion of procedures, mistrust and varied support levels.

…I've thought about it [work with the institutional office] but I'd rather do it myself… rather than trying to go through the institution, it seems easier, wiser, safer… I always have control over the situation [when I don't go through the institution].

Bobby

I agree with Boston that the institutional support varies enormously and that has an effect on the students… as the person at the institutional level gets busier and busier because they're going 99 ways from... you know that's their job, um they, they find the placements that are easiest for them… and so it' like we're caught in a, a situation that we'd maybe like to use them because they have some money, but we wouldn't want to use the institutional structure for much because they're into limits. You have four sites, you gotta go to those four [only].

Tony

Permission slips, I mean that's another level of work on top of what faculty are already doing.

Shirley

…[there are] situations where you have to have permission forms from the institutions and then there's situations where it's waived and I've always gotten confused about that. I don't have a lot of clarity of when we're supposed to have them and when we're not.

Alex

…they sent a faculty member member's daughter [a student in my class] to one of the worst [dangerous] sites… and I was horrified… the information wasn't relayed to me! And when I talked to the office, they were mad at me that I was questioning…

Tony

I think what one of the things that sort of would enter my mind is what Tony mentioned, horror stories, the potential horror stories…. I run into something like Tony was saying about, you know, gee, a student is sent to a place that is inappropriate and then you start thinking, or I start thinking liability, harm, risk to the student…the whole thing… no, that's okay. I'm not going there [to use the institutional support office].

Bobby

There is a clear need for an institutional support office that works collaboratively with faculty members in establishing, managing and evaluating service sites. There must be clear procedures and operational standards, as well as communication with the faculty member involved. However, the institutional role should be one of support rather than control. The faculty member still maintains the academic freedom to structure the class in the way he/she sees fit.

5.4 Value for Students

Despite the aforementioned challenges, there was a complete agreement among participants that service-learning courses held great value for students. As Boston mentioned, evidence of this value can be derived from student feedback and reflections about their experiences with service-learning.

> I get satisfaction when [I read] student reports… they say it was the best experience of [their] life. And those reports are really my treasures. I have never shredded them for the last 10 years.

This statement not only acknowledges the value of the experience for the students, but also indicates a level of pride on the part of the faculty member, who keeps these reports. Shirley also gave examples of how student reflections generally speak to the value of the service-learning experience, while Beyonce describes a specific student's experience. This student's major and career goals were not in the area of the service-learning class, however his experience indicates increased confidence.

> I'm actually looking at reflection papers…and they say across the board that their [experience] was the most learning that they've had out of their college experience…
>
> Shirley

> I had a boy come talk to me who was in… his ambition is to, um start his own tax company… He said he was a wreck going to the [service-learning site on the] first day, butterflies in his stomach. He told me he just happened on this course and he really liked it. Yeah, he said it was so great he offered to come and speak to my students for the first day next semester to tell them, you know, don't be thrown off.
>
> Beyonce

Participation in service-learning has also resulted in some additional benefits for students, such as bonding with fellow students in a service-learning site finding the right path for them. Bobby mentioned "I think they also form a group. You know, so that those that are going to one particular agency, they form a cohort", while Boston recalled comments from students such as "…I never knew people like that… changed my life. I'm not going down this path; I'm going down that path." In addition, participants indicated the value of students making connections between what they learn in the classroom and what they learn in a service-learning experience.

> … they really have the chance to put the things that they've learned into practice and understand why they were learning what they were learning.
>
> Shirley

> And when they get into service-learning, they realize how much they know. And it's like, the lights go on. And they become much more active in class; they are much more interested in the course.
>
> Tony

6. Limitations

Additional research needs to be done to answer questions this study was unable to answer. For example, this study's lack of demographic information about faculty members who responded to the survey restricts our knowledge of which parts of the institution responded to the survey. We also cannot make comparisons in terms of gender or tenure status and do not have a clear sense of how each respondent was defining the various forms of student engagement. In terms of the focus group, our recruitment efforts only yielded participants who are faculty members in the social sciences. It may be the case that these faculty members are more likely to be engaged in

service-learning pedagogy than faculty members from the natural sciences, humanities, and business.

7. Discussion & Pedagogical Implications

Our results reveal that service-learning as defined by these faculties is not a course requirement for most faculty and faculty who do engage in service-learning, 11 of the 13 have required service-learning only 1–2 times. Only two faculty of 82 made service-learning a course requirement more than two times and faculty are incorporating experiential learning projects in greater numbers than other forms of student engagement — like service-learning that tend to be more labor and time intensive. In response to a question about reasons they did not require civic engagement in general; faculty indicated the following top reasons:

(1) There's no room in the current curriculum for any of these activities (10/12.2%)

(2) I don't have time to do any of these activities (7/8.5%)

(3) My college does not provide adequate support for these activities to be done (7/8.5%)

As previously indicated, these are common reasons given by faculty as obstacles for engaging in service-learning pedagogy. Without an institutional commitment to the inclusion of service-learning pedagogy within the curriculum of the university, faculty will continue to encounter inflexibility in terms of the curriculum. By institutionalizing this pedagogy, the curriculum would then need to be adjusted to reflect it. This would also mean allotting time to plan and facilitate service-learning courses, as well as adequate institutional support to do so. Institutional commitment is essential to both the philosophy and the practice of service-learning (Kupiec, 1993). Studies have shown that effective service-learning programs ensure flexible and appropriate time commitment (Fisher, 1993; Kupiec, 1993). They should also provide support and guidance to increase faculty involvement in the development and teaching of service-learning courses. This might include offering time release, sabbaticals or other incentives, grants, faculty development and support, as well as re-vamping the reward system to legitimize faculty involvement in service-learning.

Our data also reveals that faculty who have taught service-learning courses did not all believe in the importance of reflection and did not consistently require reflection in these courses. Reflection is essential in service-learning courses so that students can process the work being done and make linkages between academic learning and service. It is also important to have students reflect on the multicultural and interpersonal experiences gained in the community. This reflection builds cultural skills, respect for differences and bridges gaps between groups and involves making meaning out of experiences in the field. As Kupiec (1993) mentions, "traditionally, service-learning is differentiated from volunteerism by its attention to reflection" (p. 23).

Service-learning gives an opportunity for the academy and the community to collaborate and build linkages that can serve to address the social needs of the community, while educating and preparing students to become more civically and socially minded about the community in which the campus is likely located. One problematic finding of the study was that there were some faculties who offered service-learning but were not requiring student engagement in the community. This may be the result of the likely unfamiliarity with the definition and purposes of service-learning and points once again to the need for a more institutionalized definition and commitment of service-learning.

According to the University's Strategic Plan (2012), community engagement and social responsibility are both core values of the University. Community engagement defined as the promotion of "relationships with the community to exchange knowledge and provide pathways for internships, career development, and job placement"

(p.9). Social responsibility defined as the "integration of civic engagement and service-learning through the curriculum to foster the development of responsible global citizens" (p. 10). These two core values speak to the need to incorporate community engagement into our curricula and to assess our student engagement efforts. From an institutional standpoint, clear definitions of each form of engagement with the community must be articulated, understood, and used. Recently, the undergraduate schools have adopted the following institutional definition of and shared learning goal for service-learning:

Institutional Definition: Service-Learning is a pedagogy integrating academically relevant service activities that address human and community needs into a course. Students connect knowledge and theory to practice by combining service with reflection in a structured learning environment.

Shared Learning Goal: Collaborating with a community partner, students will understand a community need and work to address that need through mutual learning, critical analysis, and reflection.* (*Adapted from the University of Georgia.) Course-specific learning objectives should be added to explain how this goal will be met by particular courses.

From a faculty standpoint, the work of engagement in the community can be isolating and seem relegated to a marginalized status by being considered not as rigorous (Heffernan, 2012), work done by female faculty members (*women's work*) or non-white faculty members (*the work of people of color*) or only relevant in specific disciplines, such as the social sciences. Some service-learning faculty may suffer the isolation of non- or low support and too little peer support (Hartley, Harkavy & Benson, 2005). This marginalization of the work of engagement is an unacceptable dynamic in a true learning community and should be rejected. The incorporation of student engagement in academic courses should be valued by the University as part of its core mission and included in all academic areas.

While the university has adopted service-learning and other civic engagement endeavors as part of our mission and strategic plan, we are not consistently exhibiting the behaviors and have low levels of institutionalization. The creation of the institutional definition and shared learning goals is only the first step in the process of ensuring service-learning is an integral part of the university. Institutionalization of service-learning pedagogy can alleviate many of the challenges found in our results. Goodman and Dean (1982) present a framework of five components of institutionalization: socialization; commitment; reward allocation; diffusion; as well as sensing and recalibration.

Socialization involves transmitting the service-learning definition and learning goal to all faculty and staff within the institution. In addition, it is crucial to stress the importance of this information as it relates to the institution's mission and strategic plan. Socialization can occur through goal-setting and planning for service-learning courses, including structured assistance and education for faculty developing and teaching service-learning courses. Through this structured assistance and education, support for and commitment to service-learning can grow within the faculty. This commitment, though, is tied to the reward allocation that the institution commits to; including faculty support, funding and time release for course design and pursuit of service-learning research and scholarship. In addition, developing and teaching service-learning courses must be a valued part of the tenure and promotion system within the institution. Diffusion would entail the adoption of new service-learning courses into the curriculum. It might also include whether these new courses are part of a required section of the curriculum. Sensing and Recalibration are the "processes by which the organization can measure the degree of institutionalization, feedback information, and take corrective action" (Goodman & Dean 1982, p. 236). The institution would need a mechanism to assess the extent to which service-learning pedagogy

has become an integral part of the institution and curriculum. This would include not only the number of service-learning courses being offered, but also measurement of the effectiveness of those courses from the standpoint of faculty, students and community partners.

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