

# The Evaluation of Community Service–Learning Course in terms of Prospective Teachers’ and Instructors’ Opinions

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## Abstract

In this study, development of THU in the world and in Turkey was briefly mentioned and THU was assessed with respect to the views of prospective teachers and instructors about this course, which has been launched in Turkey in the 2008-2009 academic year. The sample in this study consists of five prospective teachers who are students of the College of Education in Ondokuz Mayıs University. Criterion sampling strategy, one of the purposeful sampling methods, is the data collection method for the study. The prospective teachers and instructors participating in the study stated that CSL not only strengthened the tie between society and student but also contributed to professional development, human relations and leadership. Some important problems exist with the implementation of a CSL course. These problems originate with the university, the institutes, and the course instructors.

## Key Words

Community Service Learning, Prospective Teachers, Instructors, Contribution of Community Service Learning, Problems Experienced in Community Service Learning.

What are the possible ways to prevent universities in Turkey from being seen as ivory towers by the society? An answer, easily stated by an average person is: Either universities will open their doors to the society or the individuals within the society will access to universities without any difficulty. At this very moment comes another question: How? Having increasingly attracted interest in the world in the last few decades, Community Service Learning (CSL) may be one possible solution for Turkey as well. Studies showed that CSL plays a key role in opening the door which some believes is closed between the society and universities and in placing universities in the hearts of individuals (Benson & Harkavy, 2000; Bringle & Hatcher 1996; Enos & Morton, 2003).

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Based on several theories, experimental learning, constructivism and learning society, CSL serves as a useful instrument helping prospective teachers practice the theoretical knowledge they have learned in school in real life and see the effects of its operation in social life. CSL also appears to be a valuable pedagogical approach for students to reach co-constructing knowledge, testing knowledge in real situations, learning from and with the society (Mayer, 2003; Mpofu, 2004). Similarly, Eyler and Giles (1999) defined CSL as a pedagogy that enforces students’ academic learning by integrating in-classroom learning and society-based learning. As Wade (1997) argued, CSL offers prospective teachers many opportunities to enhance their teaching strategies, to form a student centered learning atmosphere, and to have a wide range of vision, concerning other roles for prospective teachers. Furthermore, CSL has a positive effect on increasing the students’ awareness of citizenship and serving what they have learned for the benefit of a larger part of the society (Morgan, 2001). THU is considered to undertake an important mission in teacher educa-

tion programs. In this study, development of THU in the world and in Turkey was briefly mentioned and THU was assessed with respect to the views of prospective teachers and instructors about this course, which has been launched in Turkey in the 2008-2009 academic year.

### A Brief Overview of CSL

The first studies for which CSL practices are the bases were the result of the law known as the "Morrill or Land Grant Act" of 1862 (Peterson, 2009). While this law emphasized, exclusively, the service dimension in the agriculture and engineering fields, the John Dewey and William Kilpatrick studies in the early 20th century of the Progressive Education Movement played an important part in associating CSL process with education and learning (Lankard, 1995; Wesheimer & Kahne, 1994; Witmer & Anderson, 1994). In fact, Dewey did not clearly shape the conceptual framework of CSL; however CSL has parallels with the philosophy Dewey highlighted in general (Rocheleau, 2004). Dewey (1997) argued for an "education of, by and for experience" (p. 29). Rocheleau commented on this idea of Dewey's: An education by experience is one in which students learn by having experiences. By an education of experience Dewey is suggesting that students' capacity to understand their world should be increased. For Dewey, experience is an active response to a situation and can therefore be more or less reflective and intelligent. Education seeks to make experience intelligent. Finally, education is for experience in that it should prepare students to deal with future situations.

Despite theoretical background dating back to Dewey and Killpatrick, CSL first appeared in 1967 in the works of Sigmon and William Ramsey at the Southern Regional Education Board (Giles & Eyler, 1994). In 1969, the National Center for Service-Learning, established by the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity (Titlebaum, Williamson, Daprano, Baer, & Braehler, 2004) had an early function of providing technical assistance to secondary and post-secondary institutions that were developing service learning programs (Lewis, 1988). In 1971 the National Student Volunteer Program, which became the National Center for Service-Learning (NCSL) in 1979, was established. In the same year, the NCSL began publishing, *Synergist* a journal pursuing improvement of the tie between community service and learning. In 1997, the three principles of CSL in *Synergist*: "Those being served control the services provided; those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions;

those who serve also are learners and have significant control over what is expected to be learned" (Titlebaum et al.). One of the most important milestones in the progress of CSL is that CSL became a part of the curriculum at universities in the USA in 1990. Following that year, CSL began to be taught at most universities in various countries in addition to the USA (Butcher et al., 2003; Canadian Alliance for Community Service Learning [CACSL], 2009; Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008). Furthermore, an international conference, which discussed problems in CSL, was held in the USA in 2001 (Butcher et al.; CACSL; Hatcher & Erasmus).

The National and Community Serve Act, signed by President Clinton in 1993, is an indication of the importance of CSL for the country (National Service Learning Clearinghouse [NSLC], 2009). Actually, the fact that the number of member universities of the Campus Compact, an association helping the universities in the USA to realize their objectives of community service, rose from 4 to 45 between 1985 and 2006. In addition, the amount of 735.71 million dollars allocated for the Corporation for National and Community Service in the 2002 budget of 2002 and raised to 970,393 million dollars in the 2009 budget are the indicators of the importance of this issue (Campus Compact, a 2009; National and Community Service [NCS], 2010).

### CSL in Turkey

After spreading rapidly in USA universities, CSL began implementation in countries such as Canada, South Korea, Australia, Egypt, Ireland and Japan (Butcher et al., 2003; CACSL, 2009; Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008). As for Turkey, workshops over three years since 2004, included deans of college of education, and formulated the educational basics of CSL. In 2006, the contributions of CSL to educational institutions, social and campus life were the topics for the final workshop, "Faculties of Education and Community Service Learning" which was held at Ankara University, shaped the outlines of CSL. As a consequence of these efforts, the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) included CSL in the curriculum as a one term course for juniors at universities for the 2006-2007 academic year and defined the course:

Prospective teachers develop projects in order to determine and solve current problems of the society, take part in academic events like panels, conferences, congresses, symposia as audience, a lecturer or the organizer, participate in projects voluntarily,

and with social responsibility to acquire the required skills and basic knowledge about CSL at schools (YÖK, 2006).

Although CSL is a new course in teacher training programs in Turkish universities, arguably, the origins of the practices promoted in this course have their foundation in the tradition of Seljuk and Ottoman charitable endowments (waqf) (Elma, Kesten, Kıroğlu, Uzun, & Dicle, 2010). The waqfs having reached the peak of their growth in Ottoman Era gained importance for in establishing dormitories and providing religious and social services. Some of western diplomats referred to the 16th century society in the Ottoman Empire as the paradise of waqfs (Kozak, 1994). These practices in Village Institutions in the Turkish Republican Era are reflection of previous charitable activities. The laws regarding the Village Institutions in 1940s required the teachers, in addition to teaching, to do the jobs, building and repairing the schools, providing agriculture and healthcare services, associated with the village and the villagers. Teachers also contributed to improving the village and villagers culturally and economically, protected the environment and historical artifacts, and organized events to enable the young of the village to spend their time more efficiently and effectively (Başaran, 2006). Traced to the waqfs in of the Ottoman Empire and the Village Institutions in the Turkish Republican Era, the community service tradition continues today as the CSL course in teacher training programs in universities in Turkey.

Each Turkish university determined their own principles depending on the general CSL outlines of YÖK. In this context, the university where this study was conducted determined its own principles as other universities had. Some of the principles for accomplishing and evaluating the course within these guidelines are (Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi [OMÜ], 2008):

- An assigned academic member of the faculty is as the coordinator for CSL planning and organization of the course.
- The course has an average 15 participants.
- The dean's office manages the process for obtaining permission to engage in students' desired activities. To accomplish this, the course instructor determines the activities in advance and to contacts the relevant institutions or organizations, and then applies to the dean's office by first consulting the head of the department for official permission. Course instructors must initiate all

these official transactions for permission within a reasonable period of time before the activity date to allow the dean's office time to complete these processes via the university administration.

- The projects within CSL are to be original and able to support creative thinking.
- The course instructor in charge of the course and the students determine the total number of activities must be completed during the term. Instead of conducting only one activity in one term, more than one activity at various institutions may be conducted.
- In assessment of the course, the course instructor evaluates the students' accomplishments during the term in accordance with the criteria defined in advance. Student's grades are given as mid-term and final exams.
- Students prepare portfolios documenting accomplishment from throughout the term and submit this portfolio to the course instructor. The portfolio must include activity reports, pictures, brochures, certificates of appreciation, certificates of participation, sample of newspapers (if activity is publicized), the records of TV programs (if activity is broadcast), etc.
- The course instructor report assessment criteria to the head of the department in a written form and announces the students' scores for which activities.

Although many studies have been conducted on CSL, globally, especially in the USA, in recent years, the number of studies completed in Turkey is few since the concept is new. The study has importance from both filling a gap in CSL studies in Turkey and its contribution to the literature from a different country.

The current study aims to determine how the CSL course, included in the curriculum of the 2006-2007 academic year and initiated in the 2008-2009 academic year, is perceived by prospective teachers. For this purpose, the examination of prospective teachers' opinions included the categories:

1. Contribution of CSL
  - To professional development
  - To human relations
  - To leadership
2. Problems experienced in CSL course
  - Problems originating from the university
  - Problems originating from institutes
  - Problems concerning assessment

### Method

The sample in this study consists of five prospective teachers who are students in a college of education in a university in North of Turkey. Criterion sampling strategy, one of the purposeful sampling methods, is the data collection method for the study (Patton, 2002). In this method, researchers choose all cases that meet the some criteria (Patton). In this sampling method, one or more subsections of universe are adopted as a sample on purpose rather sampling randomly from the universe's totality. In other words, the most suitable section of the universe for the problem and theoretically important cases provide observations (Kalof, Dan, & Dietz, 2008). Being a prospective teacher and attending a CSL course are two criteria for this study. Five prospective teachers, each from different divisions (Mathematics, Science, Early Childhood, Elementary, Social Studies) in the Primary Education Department of the College of Education, were selected for sampling.

### Data Collection

A semi-structured interview technique determines prospective teachers' opinions of CSL for study. In accordance with the semi-structured interview technique, additional questions were occasionally asked at the end. Instructors were asked questions such as "How do you think this course contributes to the education of prospective teachers?", "Which measures did you use in the assessment of studies?" whereas prospective teachers were asked questions such as "How do you think this course contributes to your education?", "What method did your supervisor follow in the assessment of your studies?" Interviews with prospective teachers took place in Spring Semester of 2009, just 2-3 weeks before the closure of university whereas interviews of supervisor instructors were conducted in the first week following the closure. The reason for interviewing prospective teachers before the end of semester is the anticipation that it will be difficult to find prospective teachers to participate in the study after the end of semester. Interviews were conducted in the researcher's office and tape-recorded. Sessions took approximately 30-35 minutes and the researcher transcribed the records. The prospective teachers were coded as Ö1, Ö2, Ö3, Ö4, and Ö5; and the instructors were coded as A1, A2, A3, A4, and A5.

### Data Analysis

Examinations of prospective teachers' opinions of CLS used the descriptive analysis technique. (Patton, 2002). To accomplish descriptive analysis, first, interviews were carefully transcribed and a reading of the transcription while listening to the original recordings ensured accuracy; coding data followed. After examining, separating meaningful parts, and transforming data units (sentences), to identify conceptual meanings of each part of the data and organizing data into draft themes and categories, relationships between themes and categories were established. Organization and interpretation of both themes and categories followed, to coincide with the purpose of the study. QSR NVivo 7.0 was the software used for analyzing qualitative data.

Data sources triangulation was aimed by including both prospective teachers from different departments who were registered to the THU course and supervisor instructor who taught this course. Moreover, themes and categories were consulted to three expert academicians from the education faculty and it was determined that their themes and categories matched the themes and categories suggested by the researcher. Finally, direct quotations, which are frequently used for assuring validity in qualitative research studies, are recurrently included in the findings section. To avoid repetition in the findings section, only one quotation was presented when there was more than one participant with the same view.

### Findings

In this study, contribution of THU to prospective teachers and the problems arisen in the THU process were analyzed in line with the views of instructors and prospective teachers.

#### The Contribution of CSL

The contribution of THU to prospective teachers was analyzed as following subtitles: Professional development, human relations, leadership.

#### The Contribution to Professional Development:

Prospective teachers indicated that THU would positively affect their professional development. Within this context, prospective teachers stated that THU would help them in building better communication with both their students and their environment. Moreover, prospective teachers noted that teachership was not a profession that was restricted to the four walls of the school and with the help of this

course they had the opportunity to recognize other institutions and various sections of the society; this, in turn, would provide great contributions to them when performing their profession.

Within the context of THU's contribution to professional development, it was observed that instructors shared similar views with prospective teachers on acknowledging other institutions and becoming aware of various sections of the society. Moreover, like the prospective teachers, instructors as well thought that teachership was not a profession to be performed just at school; therefore, THU was also important in terms of providing prospective teachers with the opportunity of observing real life circumstances at the first hand.

The participants indicated that THU's contribution to personal development also contributed to professional development. On the other hand, one of the instructors separated personal development from professional development and suggested that THU did not contribute to the professional development of prospective teachers, but it only contributed to their personal relations and assertiveness.

After the evaluation of prospective teachers' opinions, apparently, CSL will make a significant contribution to their expressing themselves better in professional life and development of a better relationship with their students and society. Similarly, Butcher et al. (2003) revealed, with respect to teaching, prospective teachers who feel efficacious may be more likely to engage with their schools and local communities. The participants stated that CSL had enlightened them as to how they could perform their professions effectively in the future and encouraged them to create new ideas and foresight. The studies clarified clear that CSL contributes to educational and professional success and mapping profession performance (Gökçe, 2011; Luchs, 1980; Warburton & Oppenheimer, 2000).

**The Contribution of CSL to Human Relations:** From the viewpoint of human relations, prospective teachers participated in the research stated that THU contributed to socialization and within the project group they found opportunities to have good time, coalesce, share and get to know each other better.

On the contribution of THU to human relations, instructors expressed similar views with prospective teachers. Instructors indicated that this course contributed to prospective teachers on subjects such as enjoying one's profession and socialization. Moreover, instructors noted that THU contributed

to prospective teachers' skills of assessing the events and phenomena with different viewpoints and to the development of their self-confidence.

**The Contribution of CSL to Leadership:** In terms of leadership, they have emphasized that THU developed leadership and entrepreneurship characteristics and it contributed to them in terms of developing organization skills.

Instructors indicated that those prospective teachers who were not active in other courses or acted timorously had a chance to reveal their leadership skills with this course. Moreover, instructors added that each prospective teacher found an opportunity to undertake leadership within the group in accordance with the type of study or activity and they affected the dynamics of the group they are in.

Behind all the previously mentioned opinions lies the idea that CSL makes prospective teachers meet the society and develop human relations. Another reason behind the students' opinions is that CSL is a practice that improves prospective teachers' self-confidence for settling social problems and creates awareness aware of their leadership skills. The conducted studies show that CSL makes a contribution to the development of such features as self-confidence, maturity, self-efficacy, social adaptation, responsibility, and sensitivity (Luchs, 1980; Williams, 1991). Quezada and Christopherson (2005) argued that university students acquire leadership skills, patience, tolerance and life skills with CSL application. Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, and McFarland (2002) revealed that the students taking the CSL course scored higher in civic action, social justice attitudes, leadership skills, and problem-solving skills than those who did not.

### **The Problems throughout the CSL Course**

This section examines the problems occurring throughout the CSL course. Three subsections categorize the problems: Problems originating from the university, problems originating from institutes, and problems concerning assessment.

**Problems originating from the University:** It was observed that prospective teachers complained about the university especially on transportation, bureaucracy, and financial support issues. Prospective teachers expressed that they were not able to get sufficient support from the society, university, and their supervisors for the solutions of these problems.

Two basic factors are thought to have resulted in the

problems originating from the university. One is the students' unfavorable financial conditions. The fact that most of the students at university, where this study conducted, had financial problems as in other universities in Turkey. Perhaps this is the main reason why the participants had problems with transportation. This problem seems to be solved to a large extent by means of the financial support which universities should provide. The conducted studies show that insufficient budget resources are significant barriers that might cause CSL to fail (AACC, 1995; Burr, 1997).

The other factor is bureaucratic obstacles the participants encountered, especially, in governmental organizations and institutes. For bureaucratic reasons in Turkey, the institutes have to establish a connection directly with the university, instead of with students. The students are not allowed to contact with the institutes by themselves in accordance with the general principles of the CSL guidelines of the university. Universities cannot complete the paperwork efficiently enough due to bureaucratic clumsiness. Naturally, these bureaucratic reasons cause the students to have difficulties. As Cranston (2003) stated, on the one hand schools, students, teachers, and programs always change; on the other hand, bureaucracy remains basically the same. And this is an important reason for the problems originating from the university.

**Problems Originating from Institutes:** Prospective teachers indicated that in the THU process they had some problems originated from the institutions and these were especially concentrated on issues such as bureaucratic operations and negative attitude of people working in these institutions. Moreover, they noted that institution employees had insufficient knowledge of the course content and there were also problems based on the time mismatch between prospective teachers and institutions.

Instructors stated that there were problems related to permission of absence especially in governmental institutions; moreover, some activities performed by the prospective teachers did not comply with the aims of the institutions; and the fact that the course was exercised in all departments in the same period led to accretions in institutions and these accretions emerged as problems in the relations with institutions.

On the other hand, some instructors mentioned that prospective teachers were approached with suspicion not in non-governmental organizations but especially in governmental organizations and the reason underlying this suspicion was based on

the feeling of "being controlled". Moreover, instructors noted that officials in some institutions regarded this application as grunt work.

**Problems Concerning Assessment:** When the views of prospective teachers were analyzed, it was determined that there was a serious confusion in terms of assessment. Prospective teachers tied this problem to the lack of predetermined measures for the assessment of the course. Moreover, prospective teachers stated differences among the supervisors lecturing this course in terms of assessment criteria.

When the views of instructors were analyzed, it was observed that there was no standard practice on how to perform the assessment. During the assessment process, instructors considered many different criteria such as participation of the prospective teacher to the one-hour-long theoretical part of the course, regular participation to the studies in the institution, preparation of the activity portfolio, documentation of the activities, and societal return of the developed activity. Moreover, instructors indicated that it was not possible to assess a course like THU by marking and the course could not have an objective criterion.

Having some difficulty is natural when assessing a course like CSL, which does not occur in the classroom context but in real life, unlike most courses in the teacher training program. The discussions of alternative evaluating methods which have been occurring for a long time justify this idea (Quezada & Christopherson, 2005). According to Gelmon et al. (2001), one of the major issues in the service-learning field is the difficulty of rigorous and authentic assessment of service learning. Also, Cruz and Giles (2000) emphasized that while assessing the CSL course, the ones who assess must focus on the contribution of CSL to society and university rather than to the individual.

## Discussion

Obviously, the approaches that isolate teachers from society and insulate them at schools are not compatible with modern teaching approaches. Being a teacher should be seen as a specialized field which overcomes any obstacle to meeting the society by circumventing the school's boundaries, even destroying them. Within this context, CSL is thought to be a practice able to make teachers meet society. The opinions of the prospective teachers show how this course may be important for filling the gap between society and university. As Zeichner and Melnick (1995) said, CSL has very important functions to

help prospective teachers be aware of the conflicts and tensions between the values of the society and those of schools, the differences between rural life and urban life, and the lives of their own students and their families. The National and Community Service Law of 1990 in the USA aimed to enable students' to engaging society, to develop a sense of caring for others, and to practice helping by using what students have learned in life (NCS, 2010).

THU course was included in the teacher education curriculum in 2006 and the actual delivery of the course started in 2009. In this study, the aim was to evaluate the THU course from different angles in the eyes of prospective teachers and instructors. For this reason, the study analyzed the contribution of THU to prospective teachers and the problems encountered in the THU process.

The prospective teachers and instructors participating in the study stated that CSL not only strengthened the tie between society and student but also contributed to professional development, human relations and leadership. CSL is one of the rare lessons which meets teachers with society. Because of this characteristic, CSL has the important function of causing prospective teachers to practice their competencies. CSL causes students to meet different parts of society and then have opportunities to implement projects. CSL helps prospective teachers acquire the ability to manage the project process from the beginning to the end and to improve managerial abilities. CSL is an approach which not only produces solutions to social problems, but also helps prospective teachers develop their personal abilities such as knowing themselves better, empathizing, testing their leadership skills, working as a team, and solving problems. Besides, CSL provides opportunities for prospective teachers form closer relationships with their friends and have an enjoyable experience through the project group. The contribution of CSL to personal development also contributes to professional development directly and indirectly, by means of acquiring human relation skills and sensitivity for social issues, all of which are necessary for professional life. Apparently, current literature seems to focus on CSL's contribution to professional and personal development. Elma et al. (2010) and Tuncel, Kop and Katılmış (2011) found in their studies that THU had positive impact on personal development of prospective teachers in issues such as human relations, contribution to professional life, self-confidence, gaining different perspectives, and empathy. Simons and Cleary (2006) argued that CSL makes a contribution to

students' understanding of social diversity, self sufficiency, academic learning, personal and interpersonal development, and contact with the society. Likewise, Niemi, Hepburn, and Chapman (2000) and Eylar and Giles (1999) confirmed in their study that CSL contributes students' personal development by reinforcing their ability to be self-sufficient and to know themselves. Groundwater (1999) determined that students improve themselves in terms of planning and organizing, self esteem, patience, empathy and increase their ability to communicate, and self-confidence (especially students who are shy and timid). In another study, Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, and Ilustre (2002) determined that CSL has positive effects on the development of interpersonal relations. Wright, Aron, and Tropp (2002) considered CSL to be a practice that offers students an opportunity to associate with social groups not previously engaged. In addition to this, the same authors argued that such interaction enables students to internalize the characteristics of various social groups and thereby enter an unfamiliar world. According to these authors, such type of an interaction helps the students to internalize characteristics of different societal sections and hence enter into a world that they did not know before. Moreover, there are studies suggesting that university students develop their leadership skills by the help of THU (Elma et al., 2010; Quezada & Christopherson, 2005; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000).

Although CSL makes a significant contribution to teacher training, some important problems exist with the implementation of a CSL course, similar to every new practice. These problems originate with the university, the institutes, and the course instructors because all these sources may not have a clear idea of what this course should entail. YÖK defined the course and allowed the universities implement out the course according to their own dictates. Although no study indicates some problems originating from bureaucratic procedures and evaluations of implementation of CSL, these are apparent problems in Turkey. For example, in a study by Kesten et al. (2011), it was determined that lower-than-desired level of university-institution cooperation had caused already too bureaucratic operations to become inextricable. Within the context of THU, managerial support means that the university handles the bureaucratic operations required for this course and allocates a budget for it. The bureaucracy in Turkey is so clumsy that its producing some problems in CSL is no surprise. For example, when a student wants to perform an activity in an institute, the first requirement is application to the

department, then to the dean's office, and finally to the university administration and the response for the application is received in reverse order. This too long process negatively affects the student whose enthusiasm for CSL dampens.

As also mentioned by Burr (1997), the success of THU course depends on the managerial support provided for this course. Accepted as a general principal is that a certain budget must be allocated for CSL in the university where this study has been conducted as in the other universities (OMÜ, 2008). Clearly however, this has not been a practice and causes problems like those of transportation. For example, the students, who chose rural areas for the practice, had to take 2-3 public transportation vehicles. While this may not be an issue for a developed country, it is an important problem for a student who lives in a developing country with a limited budget. Another aspect that the university could not arrange is appropriate scheduling, which caused additional problems. The large number of students (about 1500) taking this course and the tight schedules of junior students may be two of the reasons for difficult scheduling. Similarly, Gray, Ondaatje, and Zakaras (1999) suggested that 19 % of participants need improved scheduling and transportation.

Even though the evaluation process is controversial in the countries where CSL has been implemented for years, inevitably some problems with the evaluation process in Turkey arose from the first attempt. For example, Establishing the "Learn and Serve America Initiative" in the USA in 1992, involved the question of "How CSL should be implemented" among educators. As a result, from 1996 to 1999 rich discussions on CSL ensued, especially with regard to assessment tools and techniques (National Study Group [NSG], 1999). Agreement from these discussions is that no values is to be found in preparing checklists and rubrics without considering students' products and performances and that the evaluation process is a complicated issue (NSG). Various reasons may explain why the students think the evaluation process is a problem. The first is that a required regulation for conducting authentic CSL assessment involves a special knowledge and competence that universities may not have. Most universities in Turkey, including the university where this study occurred, require mid-term and final examinations before assigning students' grades. A significant handicap to evaluation is classical assessment tools for a course which requires innovative evaluation techniques.

The results of this study show that CSL may assume an important mission to coordinate society and universities. On the other hand, some improvements need to be made to improve the usefulness of CSL. These are:

- Informative meetings, involving all the CSL stakeholders: instructors, students, authorities in departments, and faculties.
- Necessary precautions to minimize bureaucratic procedure.
- University CSL regulations "to allocate a budget for this activity"
- Training for course instructor, who commonly use mid-term and final exams to evaluate their students, in different assessment techniques like Performance-Based Assessment and Authentic Assessment
- Rewards for students, who developed the most creative projects, and for instructors to encourage other student to participate in the CSL activities.
- Expanded time allocation in the university's CSL curriculum in Turkey beyond the current 2 hours which are insufficient for such a time consuming course, replace by a period of time either from morning till noon or from noon till the evening.

Since CSL is a practice that opens realistic opportunities for students, CSL is reformatory for Turkey in terms of teacher training policies. But in order for this practice to be more effective, the recommendations must be considered along with the successful practices all over the world.

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