

Curricular Placement of Academic Service-Learning in Higher Education

Amy Phillips, Steven R. Bolduc, and Michael Gallo

Abstract

The higher education service-learning literature is rich with case studies, guidelines for service-learning course and program development, and demonstrations of the impact of service-learning on students. Minimal discussion, however, focuses on the *strategic placement* of service-learning in disciplinary curricula, and how curricular placement might support and enhance student learning and developmental outcomes. This study offers a summary of curricular placement themes from the service-learning literature and reviews findings from a survey of two national service-learning electronic mailing lists about intentional decision making related to departmental curricular placement of service-learning. Both the literature review and survey data support the need for a curricular placement research agenda, particularly tied to promotion of student learning and developmental outcomes.

Introduction

The higher education service-learning literature contains significant discussion about the impact of service-learning on student learning and its potential for civic and educational transformation through community-university partnerships (Calderon, 2007; Eyster & Giles, 1999; Hancock, Smith, Timpte, & Wunder, 2010; Jacoby & Associates, 2003, 2009; Kelshaw, Lazarus, Minier, & Associates, 2009; Nadel, Majewski, & Sullivan-Cosetti, 2007; Root, Callahan, & Billig, 2005; Spann, 2010; Welch & Billig, 2004). Numerous resources are also available to assist faculty and universities in conceptualizing, implementing, assessing, and institutionalizing service-learning courses and programs (Battistoni, 2002; Bringle, Phillips, & Hudson, 2003; Campus Compact, n.d.; Howard, 2001; Rouse & Sapiro, 2007; Stallwood & Groh, 2011; Stater & Fotheringham, 2009; Westdijk, Koliba, & Hamshaw, 2010; Zlotkowski, 2007). In the midst of this wealth of information, however, the strategic placement of service-learning in disciplinary curricula has received limited attention as a line of inquiry. Does curricular placement play a role in the usefulness and impact of service-learning? How can academic departments best use different types of service-learning activities at different points in the curriculum? How does curricular

placement support student learning and developmental outcomes? Do academic departments make intentional decisions about the placement of service-learning in their curricula, and if so, what information informs those decisions? These are the types of questions Zlotkowski (2000) raised in reference to research directions for “service-learning in the disciplines.” Additional authors, before and since, have discussed service-learning in relation to topics such as first-year adjustment, student developmental phases, and pre-field preparation. Although these discussions, and others, refer to curricular placement, none has featured curricular placement as its central focus. In addition, no evidence-informed framework has emerged to help faculty, and their departments, decide what types of service-learning projects to place at what points in the curriculum to promote selected learning and developmental outcomes.

In an effort to support a new direction for service-learning research, the authors undertook a two-part exploratory study that (1) reviewed service-learning literature for themes related to service-learning curricular placement, and (2) surveyed members of two national service-learning electronic mailing lists to determine whether, and how, academic departments made intentional decisions about the strategic placement of service-learning in their curricula. As this was an exploratory study, it did not exhaustively encompass all service-learning literature, nor does it offer generalizable research findings. The authors, however, hope the study will encourage a line of inquiry that may ultimately provide information to support intentional faculty and departmental decision-making about the curricular placement of service-learning. Such intentionality may then further enhance student, and even community, outcomes.

The following sections outline findings from the literature review, and discuss the results of the service-learning survey.

Curricular Placement in the Service-Learning Literature

To gain some understanding of the extent to which service-learning theorists, researchers, and practitioners have referenced service-learning curricular placement and in what context, Phillips reviewed service-learning journals and books published between 1994 and 2010 (the References reflect a sampling of the journals and texts reviewed). The selection was by no means exhaustive, but the authors believed the chosen texts, particularly the journal

articles, provided a representative sample of service-learning discourse and offered a good starting point for a review of the topic.

Texts were examined for reference to the *curricular placement* of service-learning in higher education curricula. The authors did not focus on the process by which faculty members matched service-learning with a particular course, but rather on examples of service-learning courses placed at particular locations in departmental curricula and the rationale for such placement. The authors conceptualized connections between curricular placement and student learning or developmental outcomes. As articles or chapters were found that fit these criteria, a list of examples was developed.

Findings

In the texts reviewed, little explicit content about service-learning curricular placement and placement rationale emerged as a central focus of discussion. Most content dealt with service-learning impact on students, purpose/paradigms/models, theoretical underpinnings, implementation strategies, case studies, faculty motivation and perceptions, assessment, institutionalization, community partnership research agendas, and technologies (e.g., reflection activities). Material bearing some connection to curricular placement fell into two primary categories: conceptual and applied. The conceptual writings were of a theoretical nature, discussing service continua and developmental models; the applied material consisted of case examples that contained curricular placement components. The following sections discuss each of these broad categories, with the applied category further segmented into specific curricular placement themes.

Conceptual content.

While not providing explicit direction for curricular placement, the literature that conceptualizes connecting student developmental outcomes to service-learning activities is important to the curricular placement issue. The literature provides examples of matching service-learning courses or activities to a desired student learning outcome or to a student developmental outcome or stage. Delve, Mintz, and Stewart (1990) developed a service-learning model that described five phases of student development related to service experience (exploration, clarification, realization, activation, and internalization). The authors suggested that instructors could design service-learning activities to match each of these stages. Introductory through intensive service-learning

projects provide varying depth and breadth of experience but need to be constructed based on students' prior service experience and phases of service development. The model suggests that an intensive service-learning course requiring significant community immersion and student self-directed activity is more appropriate for those students in the activation or internalization phase than for students at the front end of a curriculum who may be in the service exploration phase. Bringle and Hatcher (1996), in referencing the service-learning model, note that "a mature service-learning curriculum will promote this type of student development through coordinated course sequences and assessment of student outcomes" (p. 12).

Giles and Eyler (1994) reinforced the notion of stages of service development by positing the idea of a "continuity of experience" for which they suggested the following research questions:

Is there a developmental continuum of service-learning experiences? What kinds are more likely to be educative in early stages of development? Is there an appropriate sequence of activities? What life histories and developmental biographies can be developed to illuminate this continuum, if there is one? (p. 82)

Interestingly, Morton (1995) challenged Giles & Eyler by suggesting that the continuum idea results in types of placements (service placements in introductory classes to systemic change activities in capstone courses) that promote a rigid notion of service. Morton contended that a "paradigm of placements" (charity, project, social change) better allows students to operate in any choice of service with "ever-increasing integrity and insight" (p. 30).

McEwen (1996) offered an "outcomes first" look at a variety of theories of learning and development. Reviewing models and frameworks about cognitive development, moral development, spiritual development, experiential learning, psychosocial development, identity development, and career development, McEwen detailed the developmental outcomes that service-learning may promote. She suggested that "service-learning educators should consider and be intentional in identifying desired student learning and development outcomes, and then design the course or program so that it promotes specific goals and identified outcomes" (p. 87). Additional authors have discussed the potential for particular outcomes when service-learning is placed in introductory courses

(*McCarthy, 1996*) or capstone courses (*Enos & Troppe, 1996*), or is the focus of an “intensive” or “immersion” experience (*Albert, 1996*).

Zlotkowski (2000), in an article about service-learning research directions, recognized that there had been minimal “attention to the department as a factor in the service-learning equation” (p. 64) and asked the following questions:

- What is the role of service-learning in introductory courses? Can service-learning be used in these courses to excite interest in the major?
- In capstone courses, how might service-learning help students synthesize their learning?
- How can service-learning help prepare students for internships and practica? (p. 64).

Zlotkowski stressed that faculty must “begin to understand better both what service-learning can be expected to deliver at different levels of disciplinary competence and what it can uniquely contribute as part of an overall program” (p. 64). Zlotkowski’s reflections were a clear call for disciplines to think not only about the “value added” role of service-learning but also about what curricular location adds the most value to the curriculum and to student outcomes.

Although service-learning curricular placement was not a central focus of all the texts mentioned above, they certainly point to its importance. Moving students along a continuum of service, supporting their phase of service development, promoting developmental outcomes, or determining the role of service-learning in a department—if the question is how to best accomplish any one of these goals, then examining where to place service-learning courses in the disciplinary curriculum is a necessary part of the inquiry.

Applied content.

In addition to the conceptual discussions mentioned above, the service-learning literature contains numerous case studies, some of which make direct or indirect reference to service-learning course placement in the departmental curriculum. Phillips categorized these “applied” examples according to the placement purpose suggested by the author or implied in the example. Three main purposes emerged for placement in a particular curricular location: to build and strengthen disciplinary knowledge and skills; to support student developmental stages; and to institutionalize

and/or promote service-learning. In the context of these themes, service-learning courses served various functions. Table 1 shows the relationship between curricular purpose and course function. Each purpose is discussed in more depth below.

Table 1. Purpose of Curricular Placement and Course Function

Purpose of Curricular Placement	Build and Strengthen disciplinary knowledge and skills	Support student developmental stages	Institutionalize and/or promote service-learning
Course Function	“Enrich students’ understanding of the discipline”	Sequencing to respond to and build student capacities	Centerpiece of degree program
	Connection and collaboration of students in final year Pre-field placement preparation	Address various stages of service readiness	Encouragement for preprofessionals to use service-learning in their own practices
	Long-term project over several semesters	Complement student maturity level	

Purpose 1: To build and strengthen disciplinary knowledge and skills.

Authors from various disciplines discussed how service-learning placement could progressively enhance disciplinary learning outcomes. Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, and Corngold (2007) suggested that sequenced service-learning courses in any discipline could “enrich students’ understanding of the discipline” (p. 295). Reflecting this sequencing approach, Coyle, Jamieson, and Sommers (1997) described a multi-year, team-based service-learning project in engineering designed for increasingly more advanced learning outcomes; similarly, Lenk (1998) reported on a four-semester “strategic alliance model” in accounting.

Service-learning courses could also prepare students for field placements or provide capstone experiences. Social work faculty have used service-learning courses as a “bridge” to field placement (Kropf & Tracey, 2002), and health education programs have incorporated service-learning into “pre-clinical curricula” in order to expose students to community needs (Connors, Seifer, Sebastian, Cora-Bramble, & Hart, 1996). A final course in environmental studies brought students together for an “interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary culminating experience” (Elder, McGrory Klyza, Northup, & Trombulak, 1999, p. 111), and a project-based capstone marketing course used service-learning to strengthen marketing-related

competencies and to prepare “students for a global and diverse workplace” (Metcalf, 2010). Lawrence and Butler (2010) emphasized the importance of “alternative field experiences” and their potential to better prepare teacher education students for student teaching and their own teaching practice. Enos and Troppe (1996) described several disciplinary capstone courses, noting that these courses can help students “make deep connections between service and their discipline,” but that such capstones work best “in combination with other service-learning options that can serve as preliminary stepping-stones for students” (p. 174).

Purpose 2: To support student developmental stages.

In addition to building *disciplinary* knowledge and skills progressively, some departments and universities have used service-learning curricular placement to promote other developmental ends. A management curriculum placed service-learning experiences throughout the curriculum that required, and responded to, increasingly independent levels of learning (Lamb, Lee, Swinth, & Vinton, 2000). DePaul University’s Ladder of Social Engagement initiative worked to ensure levels of curricular and co-curricular service-learning so that students “would take on greater responsibilities for social engagement” (Meister & Strain, 2004, p. 111). The 20/20 Program in a teacher education program offered a progression of service-learning projects over the course of the entire curriculum in order to sequentially develop the skills of recognizing community needs, responding to those needs, and functioning as service-learning leaders (Colby, Bercau, Clark, & Galiardi, 2009).

Maturity levels were also identified as factors in placement consideration, with an accounting instructor (Pringle, 1998) using service-learning in intermediate rather than introductory classes because of student increased comfort level with technical material and discussing financial matters with others. Weis (1998) and Martin & Coles (2000) also note the importance of placing more sophisticated service-learning activities at points in the curriculum that match student maturity level.

Purpose 3: To institutionalize and/or promote service-learning.

Instead of singular locations for service-learning, some departments placed service-learning at several locations in the curriculum

in an effort to move service-learning from the “periphery” to the “center” of a degree program. This effort served to further institutionalize service-learning or to socialize pre-service professionals into the practice of service-learning. Hudson and Trudeau (1995) demonstrated how service-learning became the cornerstone of a degree in public and community service studies. Erickson and Anderson (1997) gave examples of several teacher preparation programs infusing service-learning throughout the curriculum “in order to make it part of the skill-based repertoire possessed by beginning teachers” (p. 203).

Content Analysis Summary

Although the literature did not demonstrate service-learning curricular placement as an area of research or point to guidelines for curricular placement, a handful of authors discussed the topic conceptually, indicating that faculty and departments should consider placement when promoting or responding to developmental stages. Curricular placement themes in case studies also reflected faculty attempts to locate service-learning in ways that would promote disciplinary knowledge, support developmental outcomes, or institutionalize service-learning.

Service-Learning Curricular Placement Survey

In addition to extrapolating curricular placement themes from the literature, this project explored whether academic departments discussed curricular placement when planning curriculum, and if so, what factors influenced their placement decisions. To this end, the authors developed an online survey that they distributed, after receiving IRB (institutional review board) approval, to two professional electronic mailing lists: the HE-SL Email Discussion List sponsored by Learn and Serve America’s National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, and the Community-Based Participatory Research e-mail community operated by the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health through the University of Washington.

The survey comprised three parts: Part 1 gathered basic faculty demographic information and ended with the question, “Does your department discuss and intentionally decide where to place service-learning in the department curriculum?” Part 2 consisted of questions for respondents who replied “yes” to the “intentional decision” question, and Part 3 consisted of questions for respondents who replied “no.” The primary focus of this article is on data collected from Parts 1 and 2. The complete survey may be found in the Appendix.

The survey received responses from 86 individuals. Nineteen surveys were incomplete, leaving 67 (77.9%) respondents who completed Parts 1 and 2 or Parts 1 and 3. Of the 67 respondents who completed surveys, 21 (31.3% of completed surveys) replied that their departments intentionally discuss the curricular placement of service-learning courses, and 46 (68.7% of the completed surveys) replied that their departments do not intentionally discuss curricular placement.

Sample Characteristics

No dramatic demographic differences appeared between respondents whose departments discuss curricular placement and those whose departments do not. Neither the average years in higher education nor the number of years engaged in service-learning varied significantly between the two groups. Moreover, neither the size of department nor the number of faculty within a department using service-learning varied significantly.

Of the 21 respondents who replied that their departments do indeed intentionally discuss curricular placement, 16 (76%) were from public institutions, and 5 (24%) were from private institutions. Fifteen were either assistant, associate, or full professors, with six serving as lecturers, instructors, or “other.” Seven taught only at the undergraduate level, five only at the graduate level, and nine at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Of the 21 respondents, 18 came from just four academic areas: medicine and human services, with six each (28.6%), and education and social services, with three each (14.3%). The remaining three were from humanities (two respondents) and engineering (one respondent). The business disciplines and the natural sciences were not represented.

Geographically, respondents were relatively uniformly dispersed. Four respondents were from east coast states, three were from the west, another three were from southern states, and nine were from the Midwest. Two respondents did not report their location.

The qualitative analysis that follows explores the content and process of department discussions reported by the 21 respondents who indicated that their departments intentionally discuss curricular placement.

Qualitative Results

The 21 respondents who answered yes to the question, “Does your department discuss and intentionally decide where to place

service-learning in the department curriculum?” were asked to respond to four follow-up questions related to the nature of the departmental decision-making process and a fifth general question about curricular placement. Interestingly, several answers to follow-up questions provided no clear response to the questions or indicated that no departmental coordinated effort related to service-learning exists. Either respondents realized via the follow-up questions that their departments did not actually engage in intentional *departmental* service-learning decision making, or for whatever reason the respondents could not describe their decision-making process. Nevertheless, over half of the 21 respondents provided usable data, and these were analyzed, and then organized according to the frequency or category of responses. The paragraphs below summarize findings from the analyzed data for each of the four follow-up questions.

Question 1: Please describe how often and the process by which your department makes decisions about service-learning in the curriculum.

The most frequent response to this question was that decisions were made annually and in the context of a department meeting or some type of departmental curriculum review (course, syllabus, or larger curriculum review). For example, one respondent stated that the department “reviews course syllabi annually to determine SL [service-learning] components and learning objectives, community partners and service objectives.” Another respondent noted, “every year, teacher education faculty review current course syllabi. Service-learning is a part of this discussion.”

A few responses indicated that discussions took place quarterly, bi-weekly, once, or were “ongoing” and that the occasions for these discussions were departmental strategic planning sessions, when new adjuncts were hired, or in conversations with a service-learning coordinator or the campus service-learning center. One respondent wrote, “The school of engineering is new, currently in its fourth year. The decision for service-learning in the curriculum was made during the initial curriculum development.” Another respondent, who had service-learning coordinating responsibilities, responded,

I have been meeting informally with course instructors to see where community requests can fit with curriculum under development. We are about to establish an advisory committee with students, staff and community

organizations giving ideas and input. Individual instructors currently make decisions about service-learning in their particular course curriculum.

Question 2: What factors are considered when your department decides where to place service-learning in the curriculum?

Answers to this question coalesced around several response categories, discussed below.

Best match to course goals.

Most responses ($n = 10$) fell into this category and demonstrated that faculty made service-learning placement decisions simply on the basis of which courses were seen to be best suited in terms of “course goals” or course “learning objectives.” As one respondent put it, “Learning objectives for a particular course would probably be the primary consideration. After that, it is a matter of fit between course content and schedule as well as the community’s expressed needs and situation.” While this category of response is related to curricular placement since the courses selected are located somewhere in the curriculum, the responses do not provide any indication as to whether the locations of these service-learning courses are seen as tied to student developmental processes or a sequence of curricular learning.

Assessment of professional fit or as professional preparation.

In this category, service-learning in both introductory and upper-level courses was viewed as a mechanism to help determine student fit with the profession and to develop skills via professional service activities. One respondent’s comment illustrates.

At this time, our service-learning in this Department is placed as a component in the Teaching in a Democracy course which is offered as the introductory course to our Educational sequence of courses. By engaging in service-learning experiences in the community, they see that being a teacher is a service occupation and that if they do not have a passion for helping others, teaching is not a good career choice. Some determine that this is not a field for them after their experiences, however most become even more excited about their chosen career.

Another response noted that service-learning was used as professional assessment in the capstone year as part of a subject titled “Professional Development and Leadership.” Service-learning was also used by one respondent as a fourth-year clinical rotation project and by another as preparation for senior-level engineering design courses.

Sequencing of learning or service.

In several cases, respondents seemed to be placing service-learning at several points in the curriculum to support increasingly complex levels of learning or service. As one noted, “we approach SL [service-learning] developmentally with 100-level classes being closer to reflective volunteering and 200-level classes being more involved in field research or identified community needs.” Another respondent indicated: “We have a curricular stream and have identified core courses where community learning would benefit and truly teach the skills so each semester one course is a SL [service-learning] course.”

Miscellaneous.

Additional factors discussed regarding curricular placement included how much time students had and when the curricular schedule had flexibility to accommodate the most students. One response asserted that lower division students had more time in their schedules for service-learning, and another response indicated that upper division students had more time. One respondent mentioned that faculty willingness was the primary factor determining the placement of service-learning, and another vaguely identified the primary factor as “How to serve the community.”

Question 3: Are any of the following student outcomes or competencies discussed in relation to the curricular placement of service-learning (General education outcomes; Professional/disciplinary competencies; Student developmental outcomes; None of the above)?

In response to this question, which asked specifically about the relationship between student outcomes or competencies and the curricular placement of service-learning, almost all respondents ($n = 20$) answered, either solely or in combination with other answers, that their departments were concerned with Professional

or Disciplinary Competencies in relation to the curricular placement of service-learning. Twelve respondents included General Education outcomes in their answer, and 15 respondents included Student Developmental Outcomes that coalesced around social responsibility, diversity competency, and valuing life-long learning.

Question 4: Does your department intentionally place different types of service-learning projects at different points in the curriculum?

Of the 21 respondents, 9 answered “no” and 12 answered “yes.” “Yes” answers were almost equally divided between service-learning projects that appeared to be found only once in the curriculum for a particular purpose and service-learning projects distributed at various points in a curriculum to encourage knowledge and skill development. Of the first variety, one respondent discussed a second-year community service-learning project for medical students in which students interacted with rural elementary children at a camp related to health careers. Another respondent described a senior-level service-learning project connected to two courses in which students engage in neighborhood scans to identify building code violations by absentee property owners. Two other responses identified freshman- and sophomore-level courses in which students engage in service-learning projects to determine their interest in the major or to gather additional volunteer experience based on their personal interests (such as helping with funding for public television).

The second grouping of answers described a continuum of service-learning projects that appeared to provide progressively more intensive experiences or more independent activity. One respondent noted that second-year projects take place in a “well-contained” setting, while final year projects take place in the community and involve “real life preparation for the profession.” Another respondent described one-time service experiences (such as serving food in a homeless shelter) for first-year students and more advanced projects for upper-level students (such as conducting a community needs assessment or developing a plan for opening a thrift store). Additional respondents merely noted that service-learning project intensity grew and service-related reflection became more extensive as students moved through the curriculum.

Question 5: Do you think curricular placement matters?

A majority of respondents clearly answered yes, and went on to explain why placement mattered. These responses were grouped around developmental issues and curricular sequencing as the primary reasons for the importance of curricular placement. Respondents who mentioned developmental outcomes indicated that service-learning activities should be matched to student developmental stages. As one participant noted, “placement matters as the skills involved in becoming civically engaged develop over time. If we are to ‘create’ involved students we should [provide] varied activities and opportunities to meet students where they are at.” Another respondent indicated that

for service-learning to be effective as both a teaching tool and as a genuine contribution to the community, the students’ developmental level as well as the skills and experiences must be considered. First year students may be doing service for the first time in their lives and therefore need the proper support or guidance; likewise more advanced students should be contributing a more sophisticated level of service.

A third respondent stressed that placement “definitely matters and must be considered to avoid community service-learning project disasters,” explaining that “students have to be conceptually ready, with peer group relationships established and have adequate time . . . to do the project.”

Survey participants also saw curricular placement as important to departmental course sequencing or curricular design. Strategic placement of service-learning could help students conceptualize curricular content, better prepare students for internships, and “normalize” service, which may occur frequently throughout the curriculum. One respondent noted that curricular placement was “important for several reasons: students report better preparation for practicum, better understanding of community issues [and] better understanding of prior courses (they see how the courses build on each other).” A second participant from the field of engineering made the following statement:

the placement before senior design was critical. Our service-learning is very specific to engineering service and not just civic service. That also led to a requirement that the course be in the junior year to ensure that students have some exposure to engineering topics.

An additional participant stated that

We do not want to confuse the students' placement in service-learning with field placements. We are very intentional in using the service-learning experience as a foundational community based experience with reflection and analysis as part of the process but at a beginning level in comparison to field placements the following year.

Survey Summary

For the 21 respondents who said that their departments engage in intentional decision making about curricular placement of service-learning, most felt that curricular placement was important and indicated that service-learning courses were placed at certain points in the curriculum to help assess professional fit and preparation and to respond to stages of service readiness. Disciplinary competency was the primary student outcome that respondents said their departments hoped to promote through curricular placement, and some respondents noted that their departments used different types of service-learning activities for different learning, assessment, or service outcomes.

Limitations of the Study

There were limitations to both the literature review and survey portions of the study. As mentioned earlier, a relatively small sample of service-learning literature was reviewed. Additional examination of the literature could reveal a more substantive discussion of curricular placement. The number of survey respondents was small (86 respondents, with only 21 responding "yes" to the departmental decision-making question), and Part 2 survey questions could have more clearly indicated that the inquiry was related to the placement of service-learning *courses* and not service-learning *activities*. Some responses reflected this understanding, and others did not. In addition, six respondents indicated that they were currently administrators, coordinators, graduate students, or some other functionary. It was not clear whether these individuals were also faculty members. Future studies about service-learning curricular placement would benefit from additional examination of the service-learning literature (and of experiential education literature as well), and additional surveying of faculty member perceptions.

Discussion

In both the service-learning literature and the survey data, the authors identified common practices regarding service-learning curricular placement. For example, service-learning courses can be placed along a continuum in which departments match increasingly advanced and complex service-learning courses to student levels of maturity and to personal developmental stages. Service-learning placement can be strategic for building disciplinary competencies; preparing students for internships or other types of professional service; or discerning “goodness of fit” with a profession. Curricular placement can be used to support other student developmental purposes, such as cultivating social engagement, diversity awareness, or commitment to learning.

The literature that the authors reviewed offered some conceptual questions and models for thinking about curricular placement in relation to learning and developmental outcomes. However, this review failed to locate a more fully developed framework for considering the most appropriate location of service-learning courses and experiences.

Conclusion

From this exploratory study, the authors conclude that any intentional departmental decision-making about curricular placement of service-learning courses is guided primarily by whatever criteria a department may choose. This is not problematic, but does suggest an area of potential research that could guide the development of a framework for assisting academic departments in deciding where to place service-learning courses that feature particular types of activities to promote selected learning and developmental outcomes.

In the absence of such a framework, the authors suggest that departments hold intentional discussions about the strategic placement of service-learning courses. These discussions could be guided by questions such as

- What disciplinary learning outcomes or competencies is our department pursuing?
- What additional student developmental outcomes do we want our curriculum to support?
- How does the sequencing of our courses support these learning and developmental outcomes?

- How do we not only match service-learning with particular courses, but also match service-learning courses to course sequencing?
- How do service-learning models and paradigms from the literature inform our placement decision making?
- How can we measure the effectiveness of service-learning curricular placement?

In the face of nearly nationwide budget cuts, hiring freezes, and generally declining federal and state financial support, colleges and universities must improve the evidence they can offer for the success of their academic programs. Thus, pedagogical strategies become increasingly important. Giving more intentional consideration to service-learning curricular placement, and demonstrating its positive outcomes, will offer a measure of academic program success.

References

- Albert, G. (1996). Intensive service-learning experiences. In B. Jacoby and Associates, *Service-learning in higher education: Concepts and practices* (pp. 182–207). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Battistoni, R. M. (2002). *Civic engagement across the curriculum: A resource book for service-learning faculty in all disciplines*. Providence, RI: Campus Compact.
- Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (1996). Implementing service-learning in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education*, 67, 67-73.
- Bringle, R. G., Phillips, M. A., & Hudson, M. (2003). *The measure of service learning: Research scales to assess student experiences*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Calderon, J. Z. (2007). *Race, poverty, and social justice: Multidisciplinary perspectives through service learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Campus Compact. (n.d.). *Resources for faculty*. Retrieved March 16, 2010, from <http://www.campuscompact.org/resources-for-faculty/>
- Colby, S., Bercaw, L., Clark, A. M., & Galiardi, S. (2009). From community service to service-learning leadership: A program perspective. *New Horizons in Education*, 57, 1–12.
- Colby, A., Beaumont, E., Ehrlich, T., & Corngold, J. (2007). *Educating for democracy: Preparing undergraduates for responsible political engagement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Connors, K., Seifer, S., Sebastian, J., Cora-Bramble, D., & Hart, R. (1996). Interdisciplinary collaboration in service-learning: Lessons from the health professions. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 3, 113–127.
- Coyle, E. J., Jamieson, L. H., & Sommers, L. S. (1997). EPICS: A model for integrating service-learning into the engineering curriculum. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 4, 81–89.

- Delve, C. I., Mintz, S. D., & Stewart, G. M. (1990). Promoting values development through community service: A design. In C. I. Delve, S. D. Mintz, & G. M. Stewart (Eds.), *Community service as values education* (New Directions in Student Services No. 50, 7-29). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Elder, J., McGrory Klyza, C., Northup, J., & Trombulak, S. (1999). Connecting with human and natural communities at Middlebury College. In H. Ward (Ed.), *Acting locally: Concepts and models for service-learning in environmental studies* (pp. 111-119). Washington, DC: AAHE.
- Enos, S. L., & Troppe, M. L. (1996). Service-learning in the curriculum. In B. Jacoby and Associates, *Service-learning in higher education: Concepts and practices* (pp. 156-181). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Erickson, J. A., & Anderson, J. B. (Eds.). (1997). *Learning with the community: Concepts and models for service-learning in teacher education*. Washington, DC: AAHE.
- Eyler, J., & Giles, D. E. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning?* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Giles, D. E., & Eyler, J. (1994). The theoretical roots of service-learning in John Dewey: Toward a theory of service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 1, 77-85.
- Hancock, T., Smith, S., Timppte, C., & Wunder, J. (2010). PALs: Fostering student engagement and interactive learning. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 14(4), 37-60.
- Howard, J. (2001, Summer). Service-learning course design workbook [Companion volume]. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*.
- Hudson, W. E., & Trudeau, R. H. (1995). An essay on the institutionalization of service-learning: The genesis of the Feinstein Institute for Public Service. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 2, 150-158.
- Jacoby, B., and Associates. (2003). *Building partnerships for service learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Jacoby, B., and Associates. (2009). *Civic engagement in higher education: Concepts and practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kelshaw, T., Lazarus, F., Minier, J., and Associates. (2009). *Partnerships for service-learning: Impacts on communities and students*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kropf, N., & Tracey, M. (2002). Service learning as a transition into foundation field. *Advances in Social Work*, 3(1), 60-71.
- Lamb, C. H., Lee, J. B., Swinth, R. L., & Vinton, K. L. (2000). Learning well by doing: Service-learning in management education. In P. C. Godfrey & E. T. Grasso (Eds.), *Working for the common good: Concepts and models for service-learning in management*. (pp. 149-166). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Lawrence, M. N., & Butler, M. B. (2010). Becoming aware of the challenges of helping students learn: An examination of the nature of learning during a service-learning experience. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 37, 155-175.
- Lenk, M. M. (1998). Reaching our goals together in service-learning: A multi-semester accounting information systems course implementation. In D. V. Rama (Ed.), *Learning by doing: Concepts and models for service-learning in accounting* (pp. 147-153). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

- Martin, P. T., & Coles, J. (2000). How to institutionalize service-learning into the curriculum of an engineering department: Designing a workable plan. In E. Tsang (Ed.), *Projects that matter: Concepts and models for service-learning in engineering* (pp. 41-52). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- McCarthy, M. D. (1996). One-time and short-term service-learning experiences. In B. Jacoby and Associates, *Service-learning in higher education: Concepts and practices* (pp. 113-134). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- McEwen, M. K. (1996). Enhancing student learning and development through service-learning. In B. Jacoby and Associates, *Service-learning in higher education: Concepts and practices* (pp. 53-91). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Meister, R. J., & Strain, C. R. (2004). DePaul University: Strategic planning and service-learning. In M. Langseth & W. M. Plater (Eds.), *Public work and the academy: An academic administrator's guide to civic engagement and service-learning* (pp. 101-123). Bolton, MA: Anker.
- Metcalfe, L. E. (2010). Creating international community service learning experience in a capstone marketing-projects course. *Journal of Marketing Education, 32*, 155-171.
- Morton, K. (1995). The irony of service: Charity, project and social change in service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning 2*, 19-32.
- Nadel, M., Majewski, V., & Sullivan-Cosetti, M. (2007). *Social work and service learning: Partnerships for social justice*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pringle, L. M. (1998). Expanding the boundaries of accounting education through service-learning. In D. V. Rama (Ed.), *Learning by doing: Concepts and models for service-learning in accounting* (pp. 85-100).. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Root, S., Callahan, J., & Billig, S. H. (Eds.). (2005). *Improving service-learning practice: Research on models to enhance impact*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Rouse, M. K., & Sapiro, V. (2007). *Institutional support for advancing undergraduate service-learning: A case example from a large public research-intensive university*. Madison, WI: WISCAPE.
- Spann, S. J. (2010). *Examining the impact of service-learning on college students in an inclusive camp setting*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (ISBN 978-1-1096-2324-6)
- Stallwood, L. G., & Groh, C. J. (2011). Service-learning in the nursing curriculum: Are we at the level of evidence-based practice? *Nursing Education Perspectives, 32*, 297-301.
- Stater, K. J., & Fotheringham, E. (2009). Mechanisms for institutionalizing service-learning and community partner outcomes. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement, 13*(2), 7-30.
- Weis, W. L. (1998). "What I do, I understand": Service-learning in accounting curricula. In D. V. Rama (Ed.), *Learning by doing: Concepts and models for service-learning in accounting* (pp. 37-52). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Welch, M., & Billig, S. H. (2004). *New perspectives in service-learning: Research to advance the field*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

- Westdijk, K., Koliba, C., & Hamshaw, K. (2010). Collecting data to inform decision making and action: The University of Vermont's Faculty Community Engagement Tool. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 14(2), 5–33.
- Zlotkowski, E. (2007). The case for service-learning. In L. McIlrath, I. MacLabhrainn (Eds.), *Higher education and civic engagement: International perspectives* (pp. 37-52). Aldershot, England: Ashgate.
- Zlotkowski, E. (2000). Service-learning in the disciplines. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, Special Issue*, 61–67.

About the Authors

Amy Phillips is an assistant professor in the Department of Social Work at the University of North Dakota. Her research interests focus on experiential education, rural social work workforce issues, and multicultural/anti-oppressive organizational development. Phillips earned an M.S.S.W. at Columbia University, an M.Div. at Union Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. at the University of North Dakota.

Steven R. Bolduc is a professor in the Department of Economics at Minnesota State University Moorhead. His research interests focus on ecological economics and public participation in the policy process. Bolduc earned a bachelor's degree in resource economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and a master's degree and Ph.D. degree in economics at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Michael Gallo is an assistant professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at the University of North Dakota. His research interests focus on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and teacher pedagogy, experiential education, and storytelling and personal narrative in the development of emerging literacy. Gallo earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Minnesota State University Mankato, a master's degree in elementary education from Minnesota State University Moorhead, and a Ph.D. in teaching and learning/early childhood education at the University of North Dakota.

Appendix

SERVICE-LEARNING CURRICULAR PLACEMENT Faculty Survey

Part 1. Faculty Information

1. The state in which you teach
2. Your discipline
3. Your academic department
4. Your rank
5. Number of years you have taught in higher education
6. The type of institution in which you teach (check all that apply.)
 - Community/Technical College
 - Liberal Arts College
 - Public University
 - Private University
 - Other:
7. The level(s) at which you teach
 - Undergraduate
 - Graduate
 - Both undergraduate and graduate
8. Number of faculty in your department (including yourself)
9. Number of faculty in your department who use service-learning (including yourself)
10. Number of years you have been using service-learning in your courses
11. Is there an Academic Service Learning Center on your campus? yes no
12. Does your department discuss and intentionally decide where to place service-learning in the department curriculum?
 - Yes (Go to Part 2.)
 - No (Go to Part 3.)

Part 2. Service-Learning in Your Department

1. Please describe how often and the process by which your department makes decisions about the placement of service-learning in the curriculum.
2. What factors are considered when your department decides where to place service-learning in the curriculum? Please give an example of a curricular placement decision and the reason for the decision.
3. Are any of the following student outcomes or competencies discussed in relation to the curricular placement of service learning? You may check more than one.
 - None of the following is discussed
 - General education student learning outcomes
 - Professional/disciplinary competencies
 - Student developmental outcomes (e.g., moral, intellectual, affective, civic engagement, spiritual). Please list the outcomes you are trying to promote.
4. Does your department intentionally place different types of service-learning projects at different points in the curriculum? (i.e., more intensive service-learning in the semester before internship)?
 - No
 - Yes (please give at least one example and discuss the rationale for its placement.)

5. What general thoughts do you have about the placement of service learning in a department's curriculum? Do you think curricular placement matters?
6. Prior to taking this survey, had you given much thought to the curricular placement of service-learning?

Yes
 No

Part 3. Service-Learning in Your Courses

1. What prompted you to include service-learning in your course(s)? Check all that apply.
 - To promote general education student learning outcomes
 - To promote professional/disciplinary competencies
 - To promote student developmental outcomes (e.g., moral, intellectual, affective, civic engagement, spiritual)
 - Other (please specify.)
2. Do you intentionally place less advanced projects in lower level courses and more advanced projects in upper level courses?
 - No
 - Yes (please give the course levels and provide an example of a less advanced project and an example of a more advanced project.)
3. In the service-learning courses you teach, do the student outcomes or competencies you are trying to promote through service-learning differ according to the course level? (i.e., you may be more interested in promoting general education outcomes in a freshman level course)
 - No
 - Yes (please explain.)
4. What general thoughts do you have about the placement of service learning in a department's curriculum? Do you think curricular placement matters?
5. Prior to taking this survey, had you given much thought to the curricular placement of service-learning?
 - Yes
 - No