INTRODUCTION

“Besides enrolling for classes, getting involved is the single most important thing one can do as a student...” (Plante, Currie, & Olson, 2014, p. 89). According to Astin (1999), involvement is an investment of energy yielding positive student learning outcomes. Student involvement occurs along a continuum and can be measured quantitatively and qualitatively. Student development and learning gains are associated with the quantity and quality of student involvement with the effectiveness of educational policy being reflected by the capacity of a practice or policy that increases student involvement (Astin, 1999).

In a quantitative study, Preston (2014) at the University of Central Florida’s Office of Student Involvement, using NSSE data, surveyed 370 students who had completed at least 30 credit hours participated in a survey on how involvement may play a role in the linkage between classroom learning and activities for future employment. Preston’s study concluded that involved students outscored uninvolved students in several key areas: socializing on campus (80%), a sense of belonging (78%), supplemental instruction (68%), and career plans (70%). Results established that, among other student engagement activities, utilizing service-learning, provides an enriching educational experience as well as supports academic scholarship (Preston, 2014).

The service-learning principles of instruction, curriculum, and developing community provide lenses through which one can understand the overlap between educational and service experiences that are cross-cultural, while offering an opportunity to build relationships that create a community of support (Keith, 1997).

Service-learning has a longstanding history in American higher education (Burkhardt & Pasque, 2005). College
DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected via the qualitative interviews from the coordinators of the three different institution types: a Private Liberal Arts College (PLAC), a Private Teaching University (PTU), and a Large Public Research University (PRU) within the same metropolitan area. Table 1 reflects the distinct institutional profiles based on US News and World Report 2018.

The Private Liberal Arts College (PLAC) was ranked number two among southern regional universities. Both in-state and out-of-state tuition was $43,880. Undergraduate enrollment was 1,890 with the acceptance rate of 47.22 percent. The average GPA was 3.2 with SAT of 1290 and ACT of 29 in the 75th percentile for prospective students. The Private Teaching University (PTU) was ranked number 6 among southern regional universities. Both in-state and out-of-state tuition was $22,467. Undergraduate enrollment was 51,269 with the acceptance rate of 48.94 percent. The average GPA was 3.8 with SAT of 1270 and ACT of 28 in the 75th percentile for prospective students.

Data collection included qualitative interviews with lead administrators, presidents, and other key administrators at the three institutions. To answer the research question, qualitative analysis of the 2008 and 2015 applications across institution types were conducted to identify emerging themes. The results of the qualitative interviews were compared to the results of the secondary data and other data and institutionalization of service-learning at each of the three institution types. These data provided the researcher the opportunity to review and compare the themes of social structures across institution types. The study was conducted through qualitative interviews because it was determined that the key players in the process would be able to articulate best what service learning and community engagement in their institution is. Further, the most common sources of data collection in qualitative research are interviews, observations, and review of documents (Creswell, 2009b). The use of interview for this study is an effective methodology for service-learning research as it is supported by four constituencies: faculty, students, institutions, and communities, to assess impact and include feedback for continuous improvement (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996).

DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative analysis included data from qualitative interviews at each of the three higher education institutions in the same metropolitan area. Part of the analysis was coding the data. "All qualitative methods employ coding techniques to help organize and analyze the overwhelming amount of data" (Hahn, 2008, para. 1). Data coding process consisted of four levels. The first level, or open coding, took the raw qualitative data and assigned labels. The second, or categorial coding, examined level one data to focus the data, and ascertain a foundation for identifying themes. The third level, called either axial or thematic coding, built upon the previous two levels of coding to develop refined themes. From the first three levels, themes emerged from previous levels’ categories and themes. Lastly, examination of the data through an independent lens provided deep insight into each question answered and the purpose behind the questions (Creswell, 2014).

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching sought to recognize institutions that are committed to their communities, encouraging collaboration among institutions for a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and research. There were three categories of recognition for the classification in the initial application process of 2006. Curricular Engagement are schools that use teaching, learning, and scholarship to connect faculty, students, and community partners to address needs in the community. This broadens students’ academic and civic learning and enriches institutional scholarship. Outreach and Partnerships are applied to community engagement – “Outreach” being the resource for the community to use and “Partnerships” referencing the collaborative interactions between institution and community for a common purpose, such as capacity building, research, and economic development. In both the 2006 and 2008 classifications, institutions were classified for either or both categories, Outreach and Partnerships. In the 2010 application and 2015 reclassification procedures, however, Carnegie combined the two categories. Data sought by the CCEC applications can serve as a resource for institutions seeking to increase prestige and can also offer guidance to those seeking to institutionalize engagement, and enhance student experience. In 2006, 56 institutions received the community engagement classification and those institutions were classified for either or both categories, allowing for the benchmarking of innovative activities and institutionalization of community engagement using the best practices of service-learning (Sandmann, Thornton, & Jaeger, 2009).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to compare data from qualitative interviews of representatives from three different institution types within the same metropolitan area to better understand the institutionalization of service-learning in the respective institutions.

Method

To answer the research question, qualitative analysis of the 2008 and 2015 applications across institution types were conducted to identify emerging themes. The results of the qualitative interviews were compared to the results of the secondary data and other data and institutionalization of service-learning at each of the three institution types. These data provided the researcher the opportunity to review and compare the themes of social structures across institution types. The study was conducted through qualitative interviews because it was determined that the key players in the process would be able to articulate best what service learning and community engagement in their institution is. Further, the most common sources of data collection in qualitative research are interviews, observations, and review of documents (Creswell, 2009b). The use of interview for this study is an effective methodology for service-learning research as it is supported by four constituencies: faculty, students, institutions, and communities, to assess impact and include feedback for continuous improvement (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996)

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Data Collection

Data were collected via the qualitative interviews from the coordinators of the three different institution types: a
through ‘overall impressions of particular phenomena’ (Schwartz, 2013). The coded results of the interviews (personal communications) can be found in Tables 2-4.

Two main themes were extracted from the data regarding the reasons for why each institution applied and re-applied for the CCEC in 2008 and 2015: ‘institutionalization of community engagement at their campus’ and ‘Carnegie as a premier standard their institution measures itself against.’ Melinda from Private Liberal Arts College reported that the classification is a higher education best practice and the institution and community feel that it is important, and provides PLAC clout for what they are doing with community engagement which ‘lends credibility to institutionalization of service-learning’ (Melinda, personal communication, April 24, 2015). This information can be found in Table 2.

Carnegie is the gold standard to measure effectiveness of community engagement, according to Patrick from the Private Teaching University. PTU has valued community engagement for the past 132 years in its school’s history; as it is embedded in their mission statement, PTU has allocated significant resources over the 20 years to institutionalize community engagement and remain an institution of distinction (Patrick, personal communication, April 27, 2015). This information can be found in Table 3.

Patrick, who co-wrote the 2015 application, reported that PTU had multiple perspectives by individuals from across campuses that were able to bring both qualitative and quantitative information to the application, especially during the 2008 classification. PTU’s center expanded the depth of its relationships across campus and was less dependent on the outside individuals. With the assistance of the Institutional Review Office, Registrar’s Office, and Student Development and Enrollment Services to assist in the application. Rose, who was in charge of putting together the 2015 CCEC application, attempted to include representatives from across campus including Experiential Learning, Faculty Senate, Institutional Research Board, Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and Student Development and Enrollment Services to assist the students in answering questions and creating a plan for success.

Table 2: PLAC Institutionalization Questions, Codes, and Quotes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization</td>
<td>1. Why did the institution apply for the CCEC application in 2008 and then reapplication in 2015?</td>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>“lends credibility to the institutionalization of service-learning”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What areas of focus, data collection procedures, and resources made the most difference when applying and receiving the elective designation?</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>“People were excited and willing to come to the table because they recognized the importance to the mission of the institution.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Identify the internal and external funding as well as the fundraising partnerships that pertain to service-learning</td>
<td>Guarantee</td>
<td>“Internal and external would probably be more than half…and fundraising, close to 100% goes to support SL efforts.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integrating Interview Methodology to Analyze Inter-Institutional Comparisons of Service-Learning...

Jarrad D. Plante & Thomas D. Cox

Utilizing of AmeriCorps members to support service-learning at all three institutions was reported as the considerable amount of funding for CE activities. Rose, at PRU, was unable to provide any insight and only one person at each institution; which may have contributed to the success of the interview. The interviewees for this study represented different institutional administrative levels. This may have influenced the type of information discriminated in the qualitative interview. Future researchers may consider conducting focus groups to gain broader perspectives of the institutionalization of service-learning.

Traditionally, the researchers of the Carnegie Commuity Engagement Classification have focused exclusively on institutions that received the CCEC, overlooking those institutions that did not receive the classification. One final recommendation would be to develop a comparative analysis between like institutions, comparing those that did receive the classification and/or reclassification to those institutions that did not receive the CCEC designation. The research could examine application documents from similar institutions that did not classify for the CCEC to those who did receive the designation to examine emerging concepts of those who classified and compared their unique approach to others who did not receive the classification. Additionally, researchers could interview CCEC committee members to elucidate the findings from the aforementioned secondary data analysis. A comparative analysis in this arena would be great value to the field to aid practitioners seeking to understand why some institutions did not receive the classification while others did.

CONCLUSION

In order for institutions to have impactful community engagement and service-learning, colleges and universities must surround these initiatives, programs, and re-systems with resources (Weers & Hudson, 2009). Each institution adapted, modified, and enhanced their approach, policies and ethos with the institutionalization of service-learning. This was evident with the emphasis on quality over quantity when reporting for example, their drop in the number and percentage of service-learning courses, faculty members, departments, and student participants due to recalibrating the depth of students' service-learning experience, moving from “surface level volunteering to deeper, more sustainable service-learning” (Melinda, personal communication, April 24, 2015).

The findings regarding PTU implied the institution experienced a more pervasive experience between the 2008 and 2015 CCEC applications. PTU improved their approach, including specific from their offices, colleges, departments, and programs involved in community engagement and service-learning on campus. “Service-learning is more broadly incorporated into the university, instead of just being put into a course. In other words, our students are so much more involved in service-learning and community service; we don’t need to make a special thing sticking it into a course” (Rose, personal communication, April 16, 2015).

Research on PTU suggested the largest transformational change over the 2008 to 2015 timeframe. This change can be attributed to change in infrastructure and name change from Center for Service-Learning to Center for Community Engagement, the adoption of “community engaged learning” for service-learning as the development of a unified campus-wide definition, and the implementation of a community engagement minor. Since the changes within community engaged learning and its implementation throughout campus, the numbers and percentages for service-learning course, faculty teaching SL, departments housing SL, and student participants has steadily increased from the original classification cycle to the 2015 designation, while other two higher education institutions in the same geographical area steadily decreased. PTU was the only institution to increase in all four categories. Additionally, curricular engagement activities increased, and community engagement present on student co-curricular transcripts in 2015, both were absent from campus in 2008. It is evident in “how deep our infrastructural and institutionalization had become and how we had become responsible for doing this across the entire campus” (Patrick, personal communication, April 27, 2015).

This study considered the institutionalization of service-learning as a best practice in higher education using inter-institutional comparisons utilizing the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification framework. This study advances our understanding of the broad adoption of service-learning at higher education institutions and how our best practices may be disseminated. This study hopes that these qualitative findings will be of benefit to institutional and community. “It is one thing to study our institutional and community. “It is one thing to study our institution as academics, but we must also participate in serving our communities and achieve participatory excellence” (Plante, 2015).

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Engagement and institutional advancement. In L.R.