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Abstract

Engagement in the immediate community has long been a stated goal of most colleges and universities. Grand university mission statements (including our own) often convey a "commitment to community service." While our rhetoric is lofty, how do we actually commit ourselves to pursuing this objective? How might we truly "engage" a community of scholars with the larger community? Is "true" service-learning sustainable in a college classroom? This paper addresses one method of engagement that exists on our campus: one section of the Core Curriculum "Human Behavior in Perspective," has been transformed into a service-learning course. This course integrates the model of service-learning into the educational curriculum. In practical terms, this course provides interaction between college students and residents of a Rhode Island Women's Shelter.

Keywords

service-learning, campus/community engagement

Introduction

Aristotle insists that the cultivation of moral virtue is at least initially a matter of practical training and habituation: "one becomes courageous and just, much as one comes to be a good builder or musician—in large part through practice" (Carr, 2006, p. 425). This work describes a specific instance in which we have provided an opportunity for students to "practice" moral virtue. If we might all agree that it is virtuous to assist those in situations less favorable than one's own, then these students had an opportunity to engage in a service-learning program that also afforded them the opportunity to do something virtuous. Most of us, in our day-to-day routines, seldom have such a chance (or perhaps we don't take the opportunity) to actually engage in something virtuous. But beyond the issue of service's "virtue," lies the question of how the academy values that service and whether there can be a future for a faculty member who fully engages himself or herself in a mission of service. This paper, then, combines a dual focus: (1) a recognition and discussion of the inherent tension between university support for service and a simultaneous emphasis (at least in the form of reward and tenure structures) on the more prestigious research

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track and (2) a specific description of faculty members' efforts to incorporate service-learning into their teaching curriculum. The tension is ever present in academia, even in instances where service to the community might seem to fulfill an obvious need. After Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, Tulane University administrators faced a series of difficult decisions, and faculty were encouraged to emphasize service-learning. While few could argue with the wisdom and virtue of such a renewed emphasis (especially on a campus and in a city devastated by flooding), there still remained hotly contested debates concerning the effect such an emphasis would have upon more traditional faculty research. Primarily, publications alone have traditionally been the faculty path to success (Mangan, 2010).

Naumann and Terosky (2007) described the dilemma facing faculty members: "service has emerged, paradoxically, as necessary for institutional welfare and as unacknowledged in faculty work lives" (p. 284). The irony of the tenure process is such that our youngest and often our most vibrant faculty members must deemphasize altruistic service initiatives and pursuits while they focus on more traditional avenues of publication and self-interest. Sadly, this does not simply push service to the back burner of academia, but often leaves it off of the stove entirely. By the time faculty members become tenured and promoted as far as they can go, they may be so exhausted by the process that their devotion to service initiatives may prove to be less than it might have been. If only we encouraged them to pursue service with the zeal with which they pursued publishing, we might find ourselves with more worthwhile service initiatives and with a far greater impact on the communities we ostensibly serve.

Teaching, research, and service remain the mission of most universities, but all too often service is lost or consists of efforts left over after our teaching and research is done (and for many, teaching and research leave no time for anything else). Jaeger and Thornton (2006) wrote of the uncertainty that surrounds the concept of service within the university context. Those involved in altruistic public service initiatives are not always rewarded within the university setting. In fact, they may be marginalized: set apart from those more visibly involved in publishing and other "more accepted" forms of scholarly activity. The reality of faculty socialization tells us that those involved in connecting with the public may be seen by their colleagues as less productive or less valued citizens of the academy. In essence, being a good citizen within society is sometimes at odds with being a good citizen within the academy.

Defining "service" is a bit like defining philosophical terms like "goodness" or "virtue." What counts as service in the mind of one person or one administrator in the case of a professor seeking tenure may not count as service in the mind of others similarly situated. Does service require volunteerism? Does service require work that produces tangible benefits? Does service have to engage those viewed as "less fortunate?" These questions illustrate the difficulty with defining a concept like service to the satisfaction of all. Basically, all we can do is to promote the engagement of our faculty, staff, and students with the community in a way that at least arguably benefits the larger community. Whether the actions we take or their visible beneficial results should count toward a faculty member's tenure, or toward a student's graduation requirements, or to improve the image of the university within the community is a question that cannot be answered in this paper. But the lack of a common definition accepted by all should not inhibit our efforts to build further engagement.

At our university, three distinct forms of service in which our students participate have emerged since 1998. Community service is defined as a co-curricular service experience that addresses the symptoms of social issues, such as hunger. This may take the form of one-time or long-term experiences, including commu-

nity service work study programs. Civic engagement is a process by which students are active in the political process and use their voice, collective and individual, to advocate on behalf of others (Ferrar 2007; Howard 2001). This may take the form of voter registration drives, letters to the editor, and protest. Service-learning is a curricular experience led by a faculty member in which equal emphasis is placed on academic content, meeting community needs, and exploration of the student's civic values (Ferrara, 2007). This last form of service is what is addressed in this paper, in which we will lay the groundwork, both theoretical and practical, for our efforts to engage the academic curriculum by integrating service-learning into actual courses and coursework. We will explain in practical terms how and why we did what we did. We begin by describing the evolving place of service at our university and showing how our efforts, along with other initiatives, provide hope for a future in which service is no longer relegated to "poor step-child" status among the teaching, research, and service siblings.

History of Service at Our University

Community service was formally introduced to our university community in 1990 with the establishment of the Volunteer Center, run by a graduate intern on a part-time basis. The Volunteer Center provided limited community service opportunities for undergraduate students, such as one-time experiences at animal shelters and senior centers, that lacked social context or adequate reflection activities. The program maintained a low profile, involving only students in leadership positions in the Department of Student Life. This humble beginning, like the beginnings on most campuses we presume, provided little direction or potential for integration of service-learning into the more traditional academic aspects of the university. There was little to no consideration of any interrelationship between community service as an extracurricular

activity and service integrated into the curriculum and faculty research.

Between 1994 and 1998, service-learning expanded. As at many universities, the concept of service-learning had become more prominent. Students had also begun to arrive at the university with some background in service acquired in high school. Change began with a grant and a push (at least rhetorically) from the administration. Personnel changes played a part as well. The first widespread and visible "organized" service-learning activity was referred to as the "Day of Service," which took place in November of 1994 and involved fifty students and staff in a day of service to the local area. The first Alternative Spring Break was launched in March of 1996. In September of 1996, the Volunteer Center moved under the Career Center. The rationale for the move included both centers' relationships with the non-profit community and common experiential learning goals of application of academic skills to real-world challenges, career exploration, and values clarification.

Service on our campus became more prominent in 1998 with the establishment of the Feinstein Service-Learning Program (FSL), which replaced the Volunteer Center. The program was created as a result of a gift from a local philanthropist who funded similar programs throughout the state. Through the FSL program, the University instituted a service graduation requirement and established its first service-learning courses. Even though the initial graduation requirements were minimal, they nevertheless established a campus commitment to the idea of greater service to the community as a hallmark of a liberal arts education.

This shift from co-curricular service to curricular service-learning resulted in FSL's move to Academic Affairs, where it was housed in the School of Education and was facilitated by a member of Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), with the assistance of an advisory board. The FSL program included a manda-

tory pre-service orientation for all students and the inclusion of themes of civic responsibility and community in all freshman level writing courses. The first sustainable partnership between the University and local community involved a reading program in which college students interacted with local children in the K-5 school community.

In 2002 the language, "commitment to community service," was added to the University's mission statement/core values, and service-learning is now considered a "core requirement" of the University's academic experience (Roger Williams University, 2010, p. 3). The program was moved again to the College of Arts and Sciences, where all core curriculum courses are taught. Under the direction of a full-time professional coordinator, the program expanded further to develop strategic partnerships with several community-based and non-profit organizations. Particular consideration was given to service opportunities that offered the three necessary criteria for the academic service-learning requirement: relevant and meaningful service; enhanced academic learning; and purposeful civic learning (Howard, 2001, p.12).

The Community Connections Program piloted in 2005 is now in its sixth year and involves over thirteen hundred participants. The program, a collaboration between FSL and the Division of Student Affairs, involves all incoming students in a day of service alongside returning students, faculty and staff. The mission of the Community Connections Program is to continue the orientation process for new students by providing a common service experience that actualizes commitment to service and meets the real needs of organizations and individuals in the local community. Co-curricular departments such as Athletics and Student Programs & Leadership began to incorporate service into existing programs and established new service initiatives. The addition of a VISTA volunteer to the FSL program in 2005 enabled the University

to evaluate current partnerships, explore new partnerships, and participate in programs such as AmeriCorps Scholarships for Service.

Quantitative data on service activities of full-time undergraduate students shows immense growth–149 hours in 1998/99 vs. 50,406 in 2008/09 (Roger Willians University, 2009). Currently, more efforts are being directed toward long-term service, which is regarded as having more impact on the student and the community partner. These initiatives include non-profit internships, community service work-study positions and curricular projects that last at least 12 weeks. A new general education program, which will replace our current Core Curriculum, will emphasize social responsibility through academic content, service-learning courses, and opportunities for faculty development.

A qualitative review of campus-wide service activities shows the emergence of three distinct categories of service: community service, service-learning, and civic engagement (Ferrara, 2007). The University has begun a conversation to define how each of these areas manifests itself on our campus and how each can contribute to our students' development as future citizens. Service-learning is of particular interest because of the potential for fusing the academic with the civic, regardless of major. "Studies have shown that service-learning is an effective pedagogy for helping students explore their values around diversity and civic responsibility; develop leadership skills; and, ultimately, enhance their engagement in the classroom and at college in general" (Strage, 2000, p.5). Engagement in the classroom might best be accomplished at our university through the integration of service-learning into our interdisciplinary core curriculum.

Our Project: An Interdisciplinary Service-Learning Course

Our project grew out of the experience of one of the authors of this paper, Professor A, an anthropologist

who teaches a Core Curriculum course called Human Behavior in Perspective. At our university, all students, regardless of major, take five interdisciplinary Core courses: Discoveries in Context; Events in Context: History and the Modern World; Human Behavior in Perspective; Ideas in Context: Literature, Philosophy and the Ascent of Ideas; and Aesthetics in Context: The Artistic Impulse. All the Core courses are guided by the following three questions: Who am I? What can I know? With what I know, how should I act?

Human Behavior in Perspective is taught by anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists with the common thread of social science methodologies woven throughout the courses. Every course has its own theme, exploring issues pertinent to children; the death penalty; identity; and so on. For the past five years, Professor A.'s Core course has focused on some aspect of homelessness. One book used in the course, Elliot Liebow's (1993) *Tell Them Who I Am*, an ethnography of homeless women in Washington, D.C. resonated strongly with the students, some of whom have indicated that they remembered it years after taking the course. Service providers who work with the homeless were invited to speak to the class about homelessness. Through this course, we hoped that students would learn to see people in a different light—and the stories of real homeless women provided the lens through which that happened. In the discipline of anthropology social issues are routinely addressed in the course readings, but the Core course allowed Professor A to share this perspective with students from architecture, business, sciences, social sciences, engineering and construction management. This course provided an opportunity to educate students from all majors on a critical social issue, by putting real faces onto the abstract discussion of homelessness.

Professor A had always been a proponent of service-learning; she invited the Coordinator of the FSL Program (another author of this paper) to her classroom to discuss service-learning opportunities available at the university, and she and the Coordinator served together on several committees. When Professor A was granted a course release, we seized the opportunity to redesign the Core course together. As all of us in academia understand, a course release or other administrative concession is almost always necessary to allow a faculty member the time to properly develop a new program. We learned that having a positive relationship with a collaborator is also critical in making the end result a success.

The FSL Coordinator agreed to this collaboration for two reasons: she viewed Professor A as an ally in promoting service-learning, and she sensed an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of how service-learning impacts the professor as well as the students. The hope would be that the professor would be even more engaged long-term in promoting service-learning in the classroom. While the tenure status of the professor would not necessarily be the primary concern of the FSL Coordinator, nevertheless there is the reality that those professors with greater university status may be more comfortable with using service as a key component of their individual course requirements, as they would be less concerned with tenure implications.

After brainstorming about the new course, we came up with the idea of connecting the course with its service-learning component to citizenship and social change: participation in service-learning would help foster students' realization that they could be active advocates for social change. At this point we started to investigate matching students in the class with a homeless shelter for women and children.

Several factors influenced the selection of a community partner for this service-learning course. We were committed to choosing a site that offered students the opportunity to interact with people, but there were logistical constraints and limited sites available, as our university is located in a suburban area with few soup

kitchens or shelters nearby. We needed to find a site that offered a variety of volunteer shifts compatible with students' curricular and co-curricular schedules. Finally, we needed a site that could accommodate 450 volunteer hours over 12 weeks.

Ultimately, we found a match in a transitional shelter for women and children located seven miles from campus and accessible by public transportation. The instructors and shelter director signed a "Community Partner Agreement" that outlined expectations of each stakeholder: the University, the shelter, the faculty member, and the student volunteer. The expectations of the University would be to enhance the overall learning experience of the student by giving him or her the opportunity to integrate real-world experience with his or her academic base; the University would also benefit from the free positive publicity and community interaction. The expectations of the shelter were both to get more volunteers for their programs, as well as to expose the women at the shelter to wider perspectives beyond their own experiences. The expectations of the students ranged from a simple desire to pass the course to the more altruistic notion of helping their community.

Achieving the expectations described in the paragraph above played an important role in the development and instruction within the course. The course in which it all came together, Human Behavior in Perspective, was collaboratively taught twice. Both the Coordinator and Professor A learned a tremendous amount in the process of developing and planning a course together. We developed new team-teaching approaches and shared our different perspectives.

This course continued as we learned what worked and what we could improve. It was never only we, the instructors and students in the classroom, who shaped the course. We learned from the community partners and collaborated with them in a relationship of true reciprocity. "Reciprocity suggests that every individual, organization, and entity involved in the service-learning functions as both a teacher and a learner. Participants are perceived as colleagues, not as servers or clients" (Jacoby 1996, p. 36).

Course Sustainability

This writing assumes that even though the rhetoric surrounding service-learning continues to be much stronger than the reality, university administrators are generally in agreement that service-learning is a necessary and valuable piece of a student's experience. We follow that up with the notion that while it is difficult, faculty members can be persuaded to incorporate aspects of service-learning into their own courses. Only then can we assess the follow-up question: whether service-learning is sustainable in a college classroom. As we taught this course, we learned that there were several clashes of cultures at any given time: academic vs. co-curricular, student vs. instructors, mandatory service vs. voluntary service, university vs. community partner, students vs. homeless shelter women, to name a few. As our title suggests, incorporating service-learning in a course entailed adding even more components to a course, many of which, such as logistics and culture clashes, were beyond our control. This made it hard to maintain consistency within the curriculum. Most instructors view all courses as works in progress, but can adding so many variables to a course like this become a permanent part of the fabric of a university and larger community?

While the complexity of the project posed certain problems, it was the infrastructure of both the university and the community partner that challenged the sustainability of this course. Our community partner experienced several staffing changes during our twelve-month partnership, including two complete changes of administrative leadership. Despite what we characterize as good communication throughout the semester, we were not notified of any staff departures and were most often told of these changes by students when they

arrived in class. The new leadership was not notified of our involvement, leading to chaos at the site. Students who had become comfortable in their volunteer roles were met with, "Who are you?" when they arrived for their shifts. At one point, we e-mailed a request for art supplies for a project to our site contact; the reply was, "She no longer works here – who are you?" The result was that we spent a significant amount of time re-introducing ourselves, explaining the program, re-establishing expectations, and re-structuring volunteer schedules, once in the middle of the semester. Though each new administration was interested in continuing the partnership, the constant turnover caused anxiety for instructors and students, as well as for their community partner and the residents of the shelter. On several occasions our students arrived and found that there was no work for them to do. Most importantly, the goal of the partnership was never communicated to the mothers at the shelters. Once we were made aware of this mistake during the first semester, we scheduled an on-site orientation with the mothers. When we arrived, even the staff was unclear as to why we were there, because communication at the partner agency was so bad.

There were also significant infrastructure problems at the University that interfered with the course. Collaborating on the creation and teaching of the course allowed for the strengthening of the course and the partnership, which enabled us to develop further programming ideas such as hosting the mothers from the shelter for a day on campus. The hope was that this would build not only a stronger connection for this particular Core course but stronger commitment to the course on the part of the University and of faculty. We also believed it would be a fitting addition to the university's outreach programs, and would honor the mothers who graciously allowed our students into their home (shelter) every day. A campus visit would allow these women a window into higher education and give them a sense of the environment in which our students live. However, funding and support for this initiative could not be secured. This reality again reflects the disconnect between the altruistic rhetoric and the bottom-line reality.

At the time this initiative was conceived, Professor A was one of only two anthropologists in her department and had obligations to her major, specifically to teach two sections of a new required course. This meant that she would not be teaching the Human Behavior in Perspective course, and since this course was still in its infancy it was dropped. Similarly, the FSL Coordinator is the only full-time professional in that program, and her involvement in this service-learning course was purely voluntary. It would not have been possible to continue this type of hands-on commitment to the professor, the students, and the community partner without adding staff to the FSL program.

Many universities have woven service into the school curriculum. For example, Providence College offered the country's first major in Public Service with the establishment of the Feinstein Institute of Public Service. Several other institutions, including Quinnipiac University and Butler University, have established service-learning course criteria, which our university lacks. Absence of clear criteria can lead to various interpretations of service-learning and an uneven delivery of service to the community. It can also create disparate experiences for students.

Finally, our university does not identify service-learning courses in registration materials. Unfortunately it has not been possible for us to reach students who seek service and experiential learning opportunities during the registration process: either they hear which courses include a service component, or they don't. This shortcoming prevents students from intentionally selecting service-learning courses. At the same time, it means that students may enroll in classes without knowing that there is a service-learning component

and may be unpleasantly surprised when they find out that they have signed up for a class which requires them to invest significant time working at an off-campus site. The first time the course was taught, for example, none of the students were aware of the service component and subsequent travel and time commitments. This led to some dissatisfaction among the students that may have been passed onto the community partner. The second time around, each student was notified by e-mail that the course was service-based; the time and travel commitments were clearly outlined. Students were given ample time to withdraw from the course and find another section. Universities that seek to incorporate service-learning into the curriculum should create methods by which students are informed and given the ability to incorporate service-learning intentionally into their courses of study.

Our goal was that this course establish an ongoing relationship between our students and the homeless women and their children. However, infrastructure problems negatively impacted the students and the shelter families. We had hoped further that the experience could foster a viable partnership between our university and the homeless shelter. While a genuine partnership was not forged immediately, what did emerge is the importance of choosing a community partner which views itself as a partner in the education process rather than merely a recipient of services. This process often includes several attempts at relationship building. The University has abandoned relationships in the past that have not been true partnerships in favor of new relationships with facilities and organizations who engage as true partners, participating in developing syllabi, facilitating pre- and post- reflection, and evaluation.

Social Justice through Service

Perry (1984, p. 344) spoke of "useful intellectuals" and the need for these educated people to employ their expertise for social benefit. University administrations and faculty have long struggled with the need for achieving practical results for students and community while remaining true to their intellectual foundations. The theory of the beneficial nature of the university and community partnership has achieved widespread acceptance, yet the practice is much more challenging to achieve. Talking about social responsibility is a great classroom exercise, but actually implementing social responsibility, as was the function of this core course, proved difficult. Students are sometimes prone to lament "theory" without practice; professors sometimes disdain the impatience of students who want "practical" and "useful" tips for the "real world," without dedicating themselves to the theories that inform the practice. Our hope here is to merge these two desires into both a theoretical and practical application of a genuine university-community partnership. In essence, this presents a chicken-and-egg phenomenon: do we need to change student perceptions before we embark on a service-learning course, or will the course change student perceptions? Our position is that while there are unresolved problems with making the course as effective as it might possibly be, it is nevertheless a valuable exercise for students and faculty alike to engage themselves in more curricular-related service experiences.

The push for greater assessment of the programs on college campuses is increasing. What are students actually learning? What are professors actually teaching? What added value actually occurs over the course of a students' time on campus? Many new efforts to evaluate teaching and research have been and continue to be debated, and how effective they are or are not continues to be a source of friction between administrators and faculty members. While assessment of how we do what we do is controversial, the benefits are not. Our students' work in the community enhances the place of the University in the public eye. Non-measurable outcomes (at least at this point) as seen in some of the

intangible benefits that accrue to the participants make the experience valuable, even if that value is not easily described or quantified.

We began this paper with a discussion of the disconnect between the sometimes grand rhetoric of service to the community that many universities are beginning to tout in their catalogs, and the reality of a meaningful and practical implementation of that service. While the disconnect between the rhetoric and the reality of implementation surely exists, there is little dispute as to the value of student service. Simons and Clear (2006) found that students showed improvements in diversity, political awareness, and interest in a better-functioning community and civic engagement through involvement in service-learning. Simply put, what's not to like about service-learning? If it genuinely improves students' awareness and self-efficacy, isn't that among the primary goals of the educational process at any level, including the university level?

Engagement in the life of the community has long been a stated goal of most colleges and universities. Grand mission statements (such as our own) often focus on a "commitment to community service" (Roger Williams University, 2010, p.3). While the rhetoric is lofty, how can an actual commitment be made to community service? How might a community of scholars be engaged with the larger community? Keckes (2006) perhaps put it best: "How can my discipline contribute to the common good, and how does that look in my department?" (p. 2). A larger debate over the value of "forced" service versus entirely voluntary service centers on the value of student interaction with those less fortunate. Reality tells us that in today's colleges and universities, many students would not have that interaction were it not encouraged. In essence, the need to pursue social justice at the university is no different from the need to pursue it everywhere. That requires addressing the enemy of social justice, namely social distance. Lessening the distance between college students, many

of whom are relatively privileged, and those they might serve, may go some distance toward an overall improvement in society's perceptions of the need for greater work toward social justice. How can any one-term focus on service actually create a sustained sense of social justice in the student? Lessening social distance and allowing students to recognize that differences among us are less important than the similarities we share may be the best way to change hearts and minds. The Human Behavior in Perspective course attempted to integrate students with a less privileged population -- one with which they otherwise likely would have no contact. This integration provided for the type of interactions that lessen the social, economic, and political distance between different groups of people, thereby benefitting both the students and the community members.

Social justice through service is not a new concept. In fact, books such as Coles (1993) *Call to Serve* or the "Bellah" books, *Habits of the Heart* (1985) and *The Good Society* (1995), center on reaching the soul of our citizens and seeking in everyone, those contributions that actually create a "good society," or at least the best society that can be mustered.

Moving Forward

Transforming a "typical" college course into an on- and off-campus experience with people outside of the campus community has many benefits. Students benefit from such "real world" interaction away from the rather "artificial" environment of some college campuses. The residents of the homeless center benefit from the positive interaction with students who sometimes must seem to be a planet away from them, given what can be some truly arduous life circumstances. Expanding the program to include shelter residents through a common discussion of readings and participation in course projects would truly integrate students with the non-student participants and would effectively

link our university with an off-campus service agency. Such linkage would provide genuine engagement in the life of the community far beyond any mission statement.

There are, of course, logistical constraints that must be acknowledged. These constraints require that university administrators recognize the time and commitment that faculty who engage in these interactive experiences must devote to ensure the success of the program. A committed faculty must be backed by an administration willing to deal with the stresses that might be placed on a given discipline or a program when faculty members are allowed to engage fully in the community off campus. Staffing and funding issues must be addressed in order that the commitment might be as genuinely strong as it is rhetorically inspired. From a larger University standpoint, there may be a need to actually "teach to the concept" in order that the value of community interaction and service becomes a core value of the University.

Students must be taught to appreciate the linkage between personal and social responsibility. Partnerships like this one have not been given university priority, and therefore words stated in the classroom may ring as hollow (and be given as little attention) as a typical university mission statement. Hersh and Schneider (2005) seemed to speak to this linkage:

> The very same characteristics typically associated with "personal responsibility" are inextricably linked to the development of social responsibility as well. Personal responsibility and social responsibility involve the moral obligation to both self and community, and both forms of responsibility rely upon such virtues as honesty, self-discipline, respect, loyalty, and compassion. (p. 8)

Not all of the students involved in this course found comfort or satisfaction in the effort to forge relationships with women at the shelter. Some were downright frustrated at what they perceived to be inadequacies on the part of some of the women. In some cases, they felt the women weren't doing enough to extricate themselves from their difficult situations. Perhaps the students might someday understand the irony involved in that many of those who resent the women's inability to support themselves at a time of crisis see themselves as models of "personal responsibility" even though they are being supported by and having their educations paid for by their parents. While that may perhaps sound a bit convoluted, it all boils down to the simple premise: "To whom much is given, much is expected." That statement may be truly an exercise in taking personal responsibility for doing all that can be done to serve our fellow citizens.

> Reweaving social webs will depend in part on the efforts of dedicated local leaders who choose to pursue their goals through the sometimes slow, frequently fractious, and profoundly transformative route of social-capital building. But reweaving will also depend on our ability to create new spaces for recognition, reconnection, conversation, and debate. Creating these spaces will require innovative uses of technology, creative urban and regional planning, and political will. (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 294)

Perhaps there are no better "leaders" than professors and university staff committed to making community service part and parcel of their professional existence.

> Colleges and universities cannot unilaterally provide the resources required to remedy all the problems in their neighborhoods, but they can seek to minimize the disruptions they bring to the communities in which they are located and they can (through both institutional policies and the voluntary activities of their personnel) help to catalyze the efforts of other groups to remedy community problems. (Long, 1992, p. 185)

Acting as a catalyst in bringing agencies together seems like a particularly natural role for those of us involved in higher education. The concept of civic engagement, as well as "civil discourse," is a topic of discussion at many universities. These concepts are gaining traction with university administrators and are beginning to resonate with parents, community leaders, faculty, and students who recognize the value of full engagement with the community. Strengthening one's commitment to volunteerism is becoming a core value of this university and others); it is even entering the all-important discussions surrounding strategic planning. As universities continue to compete for students, how they market their focus on civic engagement will affect how they are perceived and how successful their programs can be. Service-learning has already become a part of secondary schools' curriculum, and students want to pursue such engagement opportunities in college as well.

Whether a greater focus on civic engagement and service stems from a desire to "do good" or whether it lies at least partly in a desire to market university programs, the end result is a greater commitment to service and more fully engaged students, so perhaps the motives matter far less than the results. Despite the facts that university professors' careers do not focus on service and that tenure is not often awarded when service overshadows publication, there is still room for service within the context of a broad research agenda. Whether altruism remains viable as the primary inspiration for faculty work outside the walls of academia, one thing remains paramount: "ideally, service should reflect gain in both parties" (Neumann & Terosky, 2007, p. 305).

This experience was the first fully integrated service-learning course facilitated according to best practices that relied on the academic expertise of the faculty member and the service-learning/civic engagement expertise of the FSL director. The course served as a "what not to do" as much as a "what to do" in service-

learning at our university, pointing out organizational issues that were not in the control of either instructor (i.e. service-learning's weight in tenure review, lack of an SL course classification in the course catalog), and allowing us to learn from mistakes and unexpected issues that arose during both semesters. ■■

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