Assessing the Role of Service-Learning in Teaching Diversity

Original Proposal Summary

In five offerings of HPER-R282: Leadership Strategies and Diversity Applications (R282), the learning outcomes have been raising students' awareness on the matter of understanding diverse populations while preparing them to be able to work and lead in environments that are supportive of diverse groups by developing practical structures for existing institutions. To make diversity an applied practice, service-learning has been integrated into this course. However, it remains un-assessed.

Through the careful and specific use of pre-, during, and post-tests using the Civic Attitudes and Service Questionnaire (CASQ), as well as an analysis of reflective writings, the principle focus of this study is to assess the impact and relevance of the service learning experience on the teaching and learning of diversity. Based on this focus, the following are the two research questions for this study:

1. What and how do students learn about diversity through participation in service-learning?

2. How do students change their attitudes on diversity by the end of a course as indicated by decreases or increases in awareness of privilege, institutional discrimination, (homo)phobia, sexism, and racism?
Project:
Assessing the Role of Service-Learning in Teaching Diversity

A Proposal for Consideration to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grants

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Phase II Funding (Phase I Funded through Indiana Campus Compact)
Funding/Project Period Summer 2012-Spring 2013
Project Introduction
Teaching diversity is a difficult assignment and topic for any faculty member. Yet the importance of diversity is clear in its ramifications on policy matters as well as affect on attitudes and behaviors. As the current Presidential Administration and the rapidly rising racial and cultural demographics in the United States reflects a clear diverse background shift, the need for understanding and applying diversity is ever more apparent. Equally apparent is the increase of women outside of the home and inside a wider variety of workplaces. Additionally, the presence of the U.S. military in three global conflicts also dramatically presents the likelihood of services and programs that need to be rendered to returning veterans. However, this in no way ignores the heightened awareness of the issues associated with disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, and economic class that graduating college seniors may face in their new careers. As a research problem, it is an unfounded assumption that students' awareness of the nine Federally-protected groups based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, economic class, age, political affiliation, and veteran status is more than ever due to the rapid availability of information via the internet, however, there are no indications that students are indeed more aware or ethically grounded in dealing with these diverse populations.

Further, it is difficult to find clear curricular structures that result in achieved learning outcomes that link diversity to civic engagement, and thus prepare students to work as agents for diversity. In five offerings of HPER-R282: Leadership Strategies and Diversity Applications (R282), the learning outcomes have been the raising of awareness of the students on the matter of understanding diverse populations while preparing them to be able to work and lead in environments that are supportive of diverse groups by developing practical structures for existing institutions. To make diversity an applied practice, service-learning has been integrated into this course however it remains un-assessed. Through the careful and specific use of pre-, during, and post-tests using the Civic Attitudes and Service Questionnaire (CASQ), as well as an analysis of reflective writings, the principle focus of this study is to assess the impact and relevance of the service-learning experience on the teaching and learning of diversity. Based on this focus the following are the two research questions for this study:

1. What and how do students learn about diversity through participation in service-learning?
2. How do students change their attitudes on diversity by the end of a course as indicated by decreases or increases in awareness of privilege, institutional discrimination, (homo)phobia, sexism, and racism?

Project Description
The principle focus of this proposal is the assessment of service-learning with the teaching and learning of diversity within R282 with the use of a standing pool of community partners. For the purposes of this study, having a pool of supportive community partners enables the course to tightly link student experiences at the community sites with course content in order to provide an accurate assessment of the service-learnings impact on diversity education. Phase I of this study was funded by the Indiana Campus Compact during the Summer and Fall semesters in 2011. Phase I initiated relationships with four community agencies, and then conducted an assessment of service-learning on three (the student tasks at one site did coincide with the aims of the course). However, the results of Phase I are still under analysis and early interpretation of results have yielded the need to conduct a follow-up study, Phase II, in order to refine the use of the CASQ and reflective paper assignment.

Background of Course—Although it is difficult to identify a clear and agreed upon definition of diversity, R282 operates from a perspective that diversity extends the effort of affirmative action to bring equality and equity to historically discriminated against groups (Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 1978). Whereas affirmative action recognized these groups as legally configured categories of citizens, diversity recognizes the deeper differences of those groups and the reality that most U.S. citizenry can be represented by the classification of “protected groups” (Peterson, 1999). These protected groups are then given protection by either federal law or presidential executive order (sexual orientation is the only protected group not protected by federal legislation).
Assessing Service-Learning for Diversity

With this perspective, a service-learning component was integrated into R282 for the Fall 2010 semester; however, service-learning in enhancing the course, strengthening students’ understanding of the course content, providing relevant experiences, and/or assisting in the achievement of the learning objectives remains unclear. Service-learning, with a civic engagement orientation, was chosen as a pedagogy in order to provide an experience with direct contact with service populations that represent some of the nine protected groups (Bowen, 2010; Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich & Corngold, 2007; Prentice, 2007).

The proceeding sections of the project narrative contain the following: 1) the project design (with a summary of the course learning outcomes, description and rationale of the service activities that students will be involved, and the assessment methods and activities); 2) the impact of the project (in regards to student learning, the advancement of service-learning as a pedagogy of engagement at Indiana University and within the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies (RPTS), and community issues); 3) the institutionalization of research within the classroom and service-learning (by way of strategies to increase visibility during grant term); and 4) the community-university classroom-focused research partnerships (with the establishment of designated community partner representation, the co-development of course service-learning activities, and sustainability of partnerships through assessment). Following the eight-page project narrative, the proposal concludes with the project timeline, budget, and letters of support.

Project Design
R282 is an eight week 3-credit course offered within the department of RPTS of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER). R282 fulfills selected electives in the Parks and Recreation Management and Recreational Sports Management options within RPTS as well as one of three requirements that comprise the RPTS/HPER minor in Leadership. However, as reflected in unpublished enrollment documents, the course attracts far more non-majors than majors as the enrollment has averaged 50 students per offering with only 5% majors among those enrolled. The course is structured in two parts with readings, lecture points, and course assessment techniques (reflection papers and final project) used to guide students through understanding the various protected groups (part one) and then developing a practical diversity plan (part two).

Course Learning Outcomes – R282 consists of two sets of learning outcomes, Global and Unit Specific:

Global Learning Outcomes
- To develop an understanding of the variety of definitions and theories of both diversity and leadership, and the benefits and issues that are associated with both terms.
- To develop an understanding of how social interaction and the existence of “difference” impacts the relationship between a student and others, and the role that this understanding can play in the development of ethical leadership.

Unit Specific Outcomes
- To delineate the definitions used in describing each of the nine protected groups that efforts in diversity should seek to empower or support.
- To develop a model diversity plan (policy, procedure, or curricula).

During the Fall 2010 and Fall 2011 offerings, all learning outcomes were achieved or exceeded based on previously established artifacts of evidence (reflection papers, final project, and BEST student evaluations) except those tied to the service-learning experience that are under the Unit Specific Outcomes, which were:
- To develop a concrete understanding of how an effective leader can foster and nurture an environment of diversity for the ideal purpose of achieving individual and group potential.
- To develop an ability to examine and evaluate the extent of diversity in an agency, and the issues that impact the extent of diversity in an agency.

It was unclear if the reasons that these learning outcomes were not met was due to complications in coordinating students fulfilling their hours of service by the community agency, the types of agencies selected for partnership, or if it was due to the inconsistency in the types of tasks/activities that the students were engaged in during their service experience.
**Description and Rationale of Proposed Service Activities** – With this in mind, this project intends on further assessing the service-learning activities that can support the instruction and understanding of diversity. Unlike Simons et al. (2011), this study will not focus solely on a binary of race (White and Black models of identity development) but will examine students perception and attitudes of a range of identities based on all nine protected groups. As Patterson, Dunston, & Daniels (2011) noted at historical black colleges and universities, there is a need to utilize service-learning to even acclimate students of color to the need for civic responsibility and social change within communities of color. According to Banks (2004) “when we teach students how to critique the injustice in the world, we should help them to possibilities for action to change the world to make it more democratic and just” (p. 298). Connecting diversity discussions with service-learning experiences can become an “important way to create such experiences [of negotiating dialogue across difference], since it asks participants to forge communicative and collaborative relationships in pursuit of shared goals” (Jay, 2008, p. 257).

The desired service-learning activity will require students to fulfill 10 hours over the course of the eight week course. During the 10 hours, direct contact with service populations is vital to have cross-class (with protected classes) interaction with adults different than the background of the students enrolled in the course. Interaction with adults rather than children will challenge students to engage in dialogue that inhibits the apparent superiority with a younger and less knowledgeable or experienced individual and offer learning situations rather than problem solving (Jay, 2008).

**Data Collection and Assessment Methods** – Service learning program evaluation has continually evolved throughout the years with researchers using a variety of collection techniques such as journal entries, interviews, focus groups, observations, and/or questionnaires. There are numerous evaluation tools and guides available to researchers that offer ways to assess service-learning outcomes of programs. In addition, there are a range of outcomes from service learning programs that may be examined. While a comprehensive overview of these is not the aim of this proposal, a further exploration of the different types of tools available can be found through publications from the International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE), as well as from the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.

Most important to the proposed study are the changes in attitudes of students who are participating in the course offering, particularly related to their attitudes towards issues of diversity, civic engagement, and social justice. Therefore this study will utilize an instrument that identifies change in these particular areas as well as other areas of professional and academic development that are impacted by service learning. The Civic Attitudes and Service Questionnaire (CASQ) is a tool that was developed in 2002 by Moeley, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, and McFarland based on the service learning outcomes identified through the work of Astin and Sax (1998), Eyler and Giles (1999), and Markus, Howard, and King (1993). Six scales were developed specifically for the CASQ that include Civic Action, Interpersonal and Problem-Solving Skills, Political Awareness, Leadership Skills, Social Justice Attitudes, and Diversity Attitudes (Moeley, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre, 2002). “Social Justice Attitudes” represents agreement concerning causes of poverty and misfortune, and how social issues may be solved, while “diversity attitudes” represents appreciation and valuing of relationships with people of diverse backgrounds and characteristics (Moeley et al., 2002). Also included on the CASQ were 12 items measuring Social Desirability from the work of Crandall, Crandall, and Katkovsky (1965) and Crowne and Marlowe (1960), the Modern Racism Scale (McConahay & Hough, 1976) in order to assess racist attitudes, and other items related to how much the student enjoys the course, their motivations for succeeding in the course, and demographic information. The CASQ has been validated and tested for reliability and has been used in relationship to service-learning and racial identity development (Simons et al., 2011).

In addition to using the CASQ questionnaire for pre-, during (prior to service learning experience), and post-assessments, the researchers in this study will analyze pre-existing course assignments that include a
service learning project, seven diversity reaction writing assignments, a diversity plan, and a final exam (essay-based). Following Ash, Clayton & Atkinson (2005) for Phase II, the project team will improve the integration of reflection with the assessment. This will be done with the revision of the pre-existing course assignments as data sources. Finally, Shumar’s (2000) Self Assessment for Service Learning will also be used as a guide for to evaluate and improve service-learning initiatives from an administrative and course management perspective.

Project Impact
To Student Learning – The course raises the awareness of the student by introducing relevant background information on each protected class and the issues that the class encounters. With an emphasis on how policy is developed and implemented or the nature of the organizational practices, R282 seeks to push an awareness that organizational responses to diversity should move away from celebratory festivities such as “ethnic potlucks,” t-shirts with slogans, or calendar days devoted to learning about another culture or group, to impactful solutions. More importantly in keeping the needs of the field and the students in mind, service-learning offers a pedagogical approach that could assist the field of leisure studies/recreation in being more reflective in working with diverse populations with practically-based activities of direct contact as opposed to theoretically discussed case studies (Allison, 2000; Gladwell & Stone, 2005; Glancy, Henderson, & Love, 1999). Working with an agency can assist students in realizing the complexities of issues that diverse groups encounter and the process of negotiating in seeking employment and advancement, requesting services and access, or having some semblance of quality of life (Cené et al., 2009; Daniels, Patterson & Dunston, 2010; Fine, Roberts & Torre, 2004; Prentice, 2007).

It is difficult to know, gauge, or determine the extent of the students’ attitudes and perceptions of the nature and the content of any course as they sit in front of an instructor in a classroom. Sending them out from the classroom to an agency for service-learning may increase that difficulty. Thus it is important to assess the erected structure of service-learning in R282 that allows for constant feedback (informal and formal feedback with service-learning reflection discussions at the mid-point and conclusion of the course), reflection (papers, group discussions, Oncourse chat room discussions), and monitoring (instructor site visits). At least one required one-on-one meeting between the instructor and student during the course would also be instituted within the course requirements specific to service-learning on their progress but also their cognitive processing and attitudinal adjustment in their experiences. The project team is open to meeting with Campus Instructional Consultants to the use of other scales on attitudes, perceptions, and cognitive abilities in relationship with using service-learning to teach diversity (Steinke & Fitch, 2007).

Advancement of Service-Learning as a Pedagogy of Engagement – Although there are a variety of ways that service-learning is applied, this project seeks to support the civic mission of Indiana University and higher education across the country (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2003; Education Commission of States, 2001) and specifically address at least six of the 10 principles of service-learning proposed by Howard (2001):
• (#1) Making academic credit for learning, not for service;
• (#3) Setting learning goals for students;
• (#6) Preparing students for learning from the community;
• (#7) Minimizing distinctions between the students’ community learning role and classroom learning role;
• (#8) Rethinking the faculty instructional role; and,
• (#10) Maximizing the community responsibility orientation of the course.

Community Issues (of Homelessness, Subsistence, and Incarceration) – According to the Campus Connect Annual Statistics from 2008-2009, “Housing/homelessness” and “multiculturism/diversity” are among the top 20 issues addressed through student service on member campuses. With this in mind, service-learning enables learning “about the social forces that produce and sustain poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, and injustice” with the action of civic engagement (Herzberg, 1994, p. 30).
Sharing Results of Research in the Classroom and on Service-Learning

Strategies for Increased Visibility – There are four identified Indiana University-specific opportunities to increase the visibility of service-learning as a strong pedagogy of engagement:

- RPTS R645: Graduate Seminar weekly presentation series;
- HPER Friday monthly research seminars;
- The Office of Service-Learning coffee-hour informal discussions; and,
- The Office the Scholarship of Teaching Learning teaching workshops and presentations.

Each provides the opportunity to present and discuss the findings of this study either in the exploratory, preliminary results, and/or conclusion stage. In addition, the study will be submitted as a manuscript for publication in the *International Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (the full assessment), *Scholé* (the use of the CASQ in student learning), the field of Leisure Studies sole publication on pedagogy, and as a workshop at the 2013 Leisure, Recreation, Sport, and Tourism Educators Teaching Institute (the reflections of activities occurring at Indiana University. Preliminary findings of the CASQ will also be presented at the 2013 Leisure, Recreation, Sport, and Tourism Educators Teaching Institute as a discussion on the importance of domestic social justice, community-based research, and civic engagement representing service-learning activities at Indiana University (Galmon & Billig, 2007; see *Budget Narrative*).

Project Community-University Classroom Research-focused Partnership

**Designated Community Partners** – The following are the designated agencies for Phase II:

- The Bloomington Housing Authority, offers housing opportunities and services to Federally qualified individuals and families that reside in Bloomington. ([http://www.bhaindiana.net/](http://www.bhaindiana.net/))
- Midwest Pages to Prisoners Project, strives to encourage self-education among those incarcerated with an all volunteer effort geared towards rehabilitation rather than punishment. ([http://www.pagestoprisoners.org/](http://www.pagestoprisoners.org/))
- Monroe County United Ministries, Inc., provides affordable childcare and basic needs assistance. ([http://www.mcum.org/](http://www.mcum.org/))
  The Shalom Community Center, seeks to relieve the experience that homelessness brings to people of all backgrounds. ([http://shalomcommunitycenter.org/](http://shalomcommunitycenter.org/))

**Co-Development of Service-Learning Activities** – To handle a course with an average enrollment of 50 students, partnership with four agencies will be important to ensure that the activities can be completed during the course period with varying scheduled opportunities throughout a given week. For assessment purposes, we will have set activities for all students to engage within their selected agency (i.e. Soup Kitchen duty, food pantry stocking, prisoner correspondence; Paoletti, Segal & Totino, 2007). Summer 2012 will be used to assess the co-developed a set of activities from Phase I and fine tune the set of activities for Phase II with the agencies through scheduled meetings to explore possible activities that relate to the course goals of R282 (see *Project Plan and Timeline*).

**Sustainability of Partnerships and Assessment** – The sustainability of the project is ensured by the linking of investigators research related to community based-participatory research methodologies with the pedagogical practice of service-learning. The establishment of a cohesive research line is imperative for faculty and graduate student alike. Further, there have already been initial talks about the research and its impacts related to course involvement with the designated agencies during the Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 semesters (Phase I). Phase II will allow for these meetings to be revisited and the involvement of the course within each agency. Lastly, the structures of the potential service-learning activities and assessment fit the existing level of course administration and delivery as R282 seeks to consider the implementation of diversity related policies, procedures, or curriculum in existing organizations. This proposal seeks to not only impact the communities surrounding the Bloomington campus, but also the students that choose to enroll in R282 in very tangible and relevant ways. As one of the Fall 2010 students reflected,

“The experience…helped me understand some of the concepts in class by giving me first-hand experience with some of them. Shalom Center created an environment that was aware of all different cultures, ethnic identities, race, religion and behaviors. It was the epitome of how businesses should incorporate diversity…After speaking to “Dan” at Shalom I was able to gain a better understanding of some of the social causes that maybe brought him to [homelessness and] Shalom”
McKeachie (2000) stated, “when service learning becomes an important part of the curriculum, reaching across several disciplines, institutions can have an important impact on their communities” (p. 249). As a potential Phase III study, an assessment of the impact of a course on diversity on to community agencies/partners would be the principle aim of this continued research on teaching and learning diversity.

**Project Plan and Timeline**

The following timeline describes the implementation of Phase II of the pedagogical research study assessing service-learning impact on teaching diversity. Course instruction and community partner coordination will be the primary responsibilities of the principal investigator. The delivery of the pre- and post-tests as well as the recording the end of course reflection will be the primary responsibilities of the project collaborator. The principal investigator and project collaborator will thematically analyze the course reflection session and reflection paper assignment. Analysis of results and drafting of reports will also be a joint venture between principal investigator and project collaborator.

- **May-August 2012**
  Two scheduled meetings with each of the four designated agencies to identify agency contact in addition to Office of Service-Learning Advocates for Community Engagement (ACE) student-liaison) over the summer. In addition, the meetings will identify suitable activities for a course on diversity with trial participation by project director and graduate student co-investigator. A pilot of selected service-learning activities will be implemented with summer Intensive Freshman Seminar 2012 students on topics that are similar to the course goals of R282.

- **September-October 2012**
  Work with the Office of Service-Learning on newly assigned ACE. Schedule presentations under the strategies for visibility. Monitor course enrollment as this will prepare agencies on the amount of student engagement.

- **October-December 2012**
  Course Instruction and service-learning implementation. Data collection through the previously mentioned assessment methods.

- **January-February 2012**
  Compile results. Draft manuscript for *Schole* and the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Present at scheduled presentations on- and off- campus. Draft report for the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, Campus Compact, RPTS, the Office of Service-Learning, and community partners.

- **March 2012**
  Submit report to the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, Campus Compact, RPTS, the Office of Service-Learning, and community partners.
Assessing Service-Learning for Diversity

The following budget outline provides the use of funds from the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, and the RPTS. The two principle costs for the study are for summer personnel (principal investigator and project collaborator), fall personnel (project collaborator), and Leisure, Recreation, Sport, and Tourism Educators Teaching Institute conference expenses.

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References


Rasul A. Mowatt

Education
- Ph.D.: Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism formally Leisure Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign. August of 2006.
- M.S.: Department of Leisure Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. May of 2002.
- B.S.: History (with a minor in African American Studies), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. May of 1995.

Research Interests

Selected Articles

Selected Technical Reports
Selected Books


Selected Presentations/Competitive Papers


Research Experience and interests

- Examining the impact of tourism and sport event instigated gentrification on communities in five cities: Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, and New York. First phase completed (Summer, 2008): identifying participating community organization. Second phase: developing web-based tool for cross municipal communication and visual information sharing. Third phase: analysis of information posted and the activity in each of the five cities. (current)

- Increasing intercultural understanding between park managers and African-American and Latino users of urban parks (study funded by National Recreation & Park Association): Responsibilities included monitoring data collection of onsite user surveys at two Chicago Parks (one African American and one Latino/a). Responsibilities also included data collection of surveys from managers and fulltime staff of various Illinois park districts (Aurora, Chicago, & Elgin, IL, 2005-2007).

- The effect of sport facilities and trail systems on the use of green spaces for physical activity among Latino(a) Americans (study funded by Active Living Research Program-The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation): Responsibilities included monitoring data collection at three parks areas and two trail systems in suburban Chicagoland. Responsibilities also included collecting and downloading activity data received from actigraph devices (Chicago, 2005-2006).
• Perceived and realized health benefits of urban proximate and distant recreation lands (study funded by the USDA Forest Service): On-site observations were conducted in trails and parks to assess the level and manner of use those participants engaged in on the trail and in the park (Chicago, 2005-2006).

• A place of our own: An analysis of self-empowerment in a leisure setting and its implications for Providers and Society: Utilized close-ended structured interviews and focus group discussions that focused on the involvement of Black participants and volunteerism (Champaign, IL, 2000-2002).

• An investigation into an African American community center: Responsibilities included administering surveys to adult participants in conjunction with a research study on community centers (Champaign, IL, 2000-2002).

**Related Professional Experience**
Community Program Manager- Champaign Park District, Champaign, Illinois. Responsibilities included supervising 25 full and part-time staff and up to 75 volunteer staff, overseeing 30 youth, senior and adult programs, and organizing 12 special events each year that reached over 10,000 attendees. Responsibilities also included extensive community collaborations with governmental entities, social service agencies, grass-root organizations and other institutions. (January 1996 – December 2000).
Jill R. Sturts

Education
- Ph.D.: Leisure Behavior Specialization: Recreational Sport Administration, Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. Expected Completion - May 2013.
- M.E.: Department of Recreational Sports, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio. August of 2004.

Research Interests
- Recreational Sports, Pedagogy, Youth Sports, Physical Education, Community Recreation.

Selected Articles

Selected Presentations/Competitive Papers
February 14, 2012

Review Committee
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grants

Dear Colleagues,

I have reviewed the proposal by Dr. Rasul Mowatt, Assistant Professor, Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies entitled "Making Diversity Tangible: Assessing the Role of Service-Learning in Teaching Diversity". It is my pleasure to support Rasul's continued effort to assess the impact and relevance of the service-learning experience in the delivery of diversity competencies for undergraduate students. Dr. Mowatt has developed a reputation within our department as a leader in implementing service learning in our curriculum. Funding for this project will support Dr. Mowatt's continued leadership and dissemination of his previous work in service-learning to our broader curriculum.

I enthusiastically endorse his proposal and believe that if funded, this project will impact significantly more of our over 400 majors.

Regards,

[Signature]

Bryan P. McCormick, Ph.D., CTRS
Professor and Chair