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Meeting NCATE Standards Through Service-Learning: Professional Knowledge & Skills

National Service-Learning in Teacher Education Partnership

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Meeting NCATE Standards Through Service-Learning: Professional Knowledge & Skills

California Lutheran University
Thousand Oaks, California

is this year's winner of AACTE's Best Practice Award for Service-Learning in Teacher Education. Here is their story:

Community service has a long-standing tradition in the mission and purpose of California Lutheran University. Believing that the adoption of academic service-learning as an innovative and effective instructional strategy can enhance and enrich the teaching and learning experiences of both faculty and students, in 1994, the School of Education included service-learning as a required assignment in several courses in the Teacher Preparation Program.

With positive responses to service-learning pedagogy, a model, *The Revolving Cascade*, has evolved at California Lutheran University. This model promotes longevity and sustainability of service-learning by fostering on-going collaborative relationships between the university, K-12 schools, and community agencies. The service-learning project requires that pre-service candidates apply appropriate instructional techniques in an authentic environment. Data analysis demonstrates that many of the candidates feel that this is the most valuable component of the fieldwork requirement in the entire program. Empowered by their successful experience, the university's graduates become "ambassadors of service-learning" and eagerly share their understanding and expertise with their professional colleagues as well as their K-12 students.

One of the methods California Lutheran University uses for assessing service-learning is *portraiture*, a unique blend of ethnography, case study, and narrative. For additional information about California Lutheran University's service-learning in teacher education program and their portraiture method of assessment, please contact Silva Karayan Karayan@clunet.edu or 805.492.9965.

It's time to consider how service-learning can support unit accreditation efforts. It's time...because service-learning is an effective and efficient way for teacher candidates to demonstrate they are prepared to work in schools. It's time...because service-learning is a sound pedagogical practice consistent with INTASC, state, and NCATE standards. It's time...because service-learning is the kind of community-based work that President George W. Bush and Senators Evan Bayh (D-IN) and John McCain (R-AZ) are advocating for Americans. It's time...because AACTE has the resources to help you incorporate service-learning into teacher education.

Our NSLTEP coordinators hope this Issue Brief leads you to further conversation about the place of service-learning in teacher education programs on your campus.

David Imig, CEO and President of AACTE

Meeting Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills Through Service-Learning

Service-learning is a teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. In service-learning, students, "participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity...to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility" (Office of Service Learning, IUPUI, 1994).

In teacher education, service-learning not only contributes to candidate and community development, it can play an important role in assisting teacher education programs to meet NCATE standards. The focus of this Issue Brief is on the links between service-learning and Standard I: Candidate Knowledge and Skills. (A future brief will focus on candidate dispositions.)

According to Standard I, "Candidates know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn (NCATE, 2002)."

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Specifically, when used as a pedagogical strategy in college and university courses, service-learning can:

- provide teacher candidates with knowledge about the culture, community, and families of students different from themselves, thereby expanding their knowledge of diverse learning styles and approaches (Seigel, 1994; Vadeboncouer, et al. 1994; Wade, Boyle-Baise, O'Grady, 2000);

S-L Snapshot: Teacher candidates in a Foundations course are assigned to a community center where they help adults from a variety of cultural backgrounds prepare for the United States citizenship exam.

- expand candidate's conceptions of learning and teaching beyond traditional instruction (Toole, 2000);

S-L Snapshot: Teacher candidates in a Classroom Management course are placed in after-school clubs and assigned to individual teachers who plan and provide activities based on interests of children in the club. They work in collaboration with teachers to assess the interests of the students and to develop activities that will increase student motivation and learning.

- help candidates develop knowledge of connections between school and the community and develop communication and collaboration skills necessary for working with a variety of professionals involved in student learning.

S-L Snapshot: Pairs of teacher candidates in a Home/School Collaboration course are placed in community agencies that support and advocate for families of children with disabilities. The candidates research and provide resource information for individual families. They also develop comprehensive listings of community agency resources to distribute to families.

When taught to teacher candidates as a pedagogical strategy for use with P-12 students, service-learning can assist teaching candidates to:

- connect classroom learning with students' lives;

S-L Snapshot: Teacher candidates in a Social Studies Methods course are placed in a high school American government class where they facilitate a community assessment of youth opportunities in the community. They help students develop an effective presentation to

Continued from Page 2...

the City Council for the creation of a supervised skate-board park at an abandoned warehouse property.

- expand classroom learning into a community context, making it more meaningful (Billig, 2000; Melchior, 1998);

S-L Snapshot: Teacher candidates in a Math Methods course are placed in a second grade classroom. In preparation for choosing a service-learning project, the candidates take students on a neighborhood walk, asking them to observe things that they think are positive in their community and things they would like to change. When they return to the classroom, they chart their observations and collectively determine which issue or problem they will focus on for the project. They choose a neighborhood recycling project, which will be incorporate computation, graphing, sorting, money, and timelines.

- foster a sense of competency and motivation in pupils that are at risk of failure in school (Weiler, 1998; Melchior, 1998; Shumer, 1994);

S-L Snapshot: A student teacher, placed in a self-contained class of nine and ten-year-old children with severe behavior and learning problems, develops a service-learning project with the children. The students will study and develop presentations about teeth and teeth care. Students read and write about the subject, prepare posters and practice appropriate presentation and social skills. In pairs, they present their work to kindergarten and first grade classrooms.

- better understand students and the way they learn; and acquire an authentic assessment strategy.

S-L Snapshot: Teacher candidates in a Math Methods course are placed in trios in a local urban school. In each classroom, students are asked to work with the teacher candidates to develop a service-learning project that will provide the class with new math materials to support learning. The candidates observe the class and work with students to assess the levels and learning styles of each one. They then develop a set of math games that will be used by students for independent practice and evaluation of computation skills.

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Service-Learning in Teacher Education on the Web...

NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING IN TEACHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

NSLTPE provides technical assistance and consulting support to teacher educators interested in developing, implementing, and evaluating service-learning components of courses, practicums, and student teaching. The web site has information about publications and people involved with service-learning.

<http://www.aacte.org/>

NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING CLEARING- HOUSE

The Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (NSLC) supports the service-learning community in higher education, kindergarten through grade twelve, community-based initiatives and tribal programs, as well as all others interested in strengthening schools and communities using service-learning techniques and methodologies.

<http://www.servicelearning.org/>

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

Contains a useful guide to institutions that serve as models of good practice for service-learning programs.

<http://www.aahc.org/service/>

NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The National Youth Leadership Council's mission is to build vital, just communities with young people through service-learning. As one of America's most prominent advocates of service-learning and national service, NYLC is at the forefront of efforts to reform education and guide youth-oriented public policy.

<http://www.nylc.org/>

CAMPUS COMPACT

Hosts an extensive collection of syllabi and online articles, a program models database containing best practices for campus engagement, and reflection resources guide for educators on how to use structured reflection to enhance service-learning experiences.

<http://www.compact.org>

Ten Principles that Contribute to Successful Service-Learning Outcomes

The integration of any or all of these ten principles will strengthen service-learning in teacher education. They are beneficial for those new to service-learning as well as for fully developed programs of service-learning.

Principle 1. Teacher candidates should prepare to use service-learning as a pedagogy by participating in service-learning experiences as well as in-class study of strategies of good service-learning practice.

Principle 2. Teacher education faculty involved with service-learning should have a clear understanding of service-learning theory and strategies of good practice and model these principles in their use of service-learning as a teaching method.

Principle 3. Teacher education courses that include service-learning should be grounded in theories and practices of teaching and learning that are congruent with service-learning.

Principle 4. The design, implementation, and evaluation of service-learning projects should reflect all stakeholders' needs and interests, including those of teacher candidates, P-12 students, and other community members.

Principle 5. Reciprocity and mutual respect should characterize the collaboration among teacher education programs, P-12 schools, and the community.

Principle 6. Teacher candidates should participate in multiple and varied service-learning experiences that involve working with diverse community members.

Principle 7. Preservice teachers should participate in a variety of frequent and structured reflection activities and prepare to facilitate reflection with their future students.

Principle 8. Teacher candidates should learn how to use formative and summative assessment to enhance student learning and measure service-learning outcomes.

Principle 9. Teacher educators should align service-learning outcomes with program goals and state and national standard for teacher certification and program accreditation.

Principle 10. The teacher education program, institutions, and the community should support service-learning by providing the resources and structural elements necessary for continued success.

Source: "Principles of Good Practice for Service-Learning in Preservice Teacher Education," by Jeffrey B. Anderson and Don Hill, in *Service-Learning in Teacher Education*, by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2001, Washington, DC:
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