The Quest for Learning in Service-Learning: Approaches and Variations in the Asia Pacific

Betty Cernol-McCann, Ph.D.
Vice President for Programs
United Board
Academic Service-Learning: Features

- a teaching methodology
- utilizes a community involvement component
- a means for students to gain a deeper understanding of disciplinary course objectives
- a way to gain deeper understanding of civic life and participation
- use of structured reflection
Academic Service-Learning: Its place in the College/University

- Provides a way to unite the three-pronged mission of the institution:
  - Teaching
  - Research
  - Public service
Service-Learning: Assumptions

- a pedagogy grounded in the belief that students learn by doing
- as a teaching strategy, it builds on experiential learning theories
- shaped by education reform principles that encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning
- inspired by the belief that the academy has a fundamental responsibility to prepare students for lives of active citizenship
Experiential Learning Cycle: conceptualize, experiment, reflect, revise

A critical matrix of learning and teaching

Concrete experience

Testing implications of concepts in new situation

Observations and reflections

Formation of abstract concepts and generalizations
Learning gaps

Recall
Understanding
Ability
Wanting to
Doing
Changing
Service-Learning: Approaches/Variations in Asia Pacific

- An institutional course offering, designed to introduce students to the theories and principles of SL – may be required or elective
- As a departmental program integrated into courses required for graduation (practicum, internship, national service and training, etc.)
- As a methodology in the teaching of courses
- As utilized in the conduct of special programs such as educational tours, field trips, student exchange, etc.
Service-Learning: Modes of delivery

- Teacher-initiated
- Staff-mediated
- Agency-driven
Where is the Learning in Service-Learning?

S-L as a meaning-making learning activity
- Independent but integrated learning
- Critical thinking

S-L as a communal learning enterprise
- Community of learners
- Formation of networks
- Dissemination and publication
Bringing S-L to a higher level

- Organize S-L around community issues or pressing problems such as those related to:
  - environment (water, forest, farms, coastal resources, pollution)
  - health (maternal and child health, epidemic)
  - interreligious understanding
  - basic education
Bringing S-L to a higher level

- Compare lessons learned across communities to highlight similarities and respect differences
- Disseminate results, recognize achievements and publish outcomes to a wider audience
  - use web-based modes of communication
Bringing S-L to a higher level

- Address issues of reciprocity in learning
- Evaluate SL programs and learning outcomes, to include ethical considerations
- Establish mechanisms for institutionalization, to ensure program sustainability
Sources of information

- [http://www.ipsl.org](http://www.ipsl.org)
- [http://www.iue.indiana.edu](http://www.iue.indiana.edu)
- [http://www.compact.org](http://www.compact.org)