

# Supporting Student Civic Engagement Beyond the Initial Service Learning Experience: The Intercultural Leadership Program at Poole Gakuin University, Osaka, Japan

Diane Musselwhite

Seki Ayako

Morisada Reiko

June 3, 2009

# Learning Objectives in Service Learning:

- Academic, both course-specific and generic (critical thinking, etc.)
- Community learning
  - Social issues
  - Learning about particular population
- Personal
- Interpersonal
- Learning how to learn

“This experience-based pedagogy  
offers a unique opportunity to  
develop leadership skills”

(Dillon & Van Riper 1993; Althaus 1997; Zlotkowski 2006)

# Core educational content of leadership development:

- Vision
- Learning how to learn from experience
- Judgment in action
- Cognitive initiative
- Enabling others to learn and take action

» (Timothy Stanton, 1990)

## Leadership courses and community service opportunities

- “address some of the knowledge areas needed by leaders but fall short in effectively addressing ‘the cognitive learning-to-learn and judgment in action skill areas or the aspects of leadership that involve the effective enabling and facilitating of action by others.’”  
(Stanton)

# His conclusion

- “Service learning is particularly well suited, maybe uniquely suited, to helping students acquire these last set of skills”.
- Service learning “can be a catalyst for their development”

» Stanton 1990:338-345

# Service-Learning Program at Poole Gakuin

- Overseas Group & Individual Service
  - Nepal, Myanmar, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam & Philippines
  - 3 weeks with group
  - 3 months to 1 year individually
  - Service: teaching Japanese language and culture, baseball coaching, working in NGO

# Service-Learning Program at Poole Gakuin

- Domestic Service-Learning Program
  - School-based program
    - Learning disabilities support
    - Japanese language support for foreign children
    - Translation for children and parents
  - Welfare-related program
    - Retired centers and day service for elderly
    - Children's day care and after-school care
    - Centers for disabled



# 2 credit SL course

- 40 hours of service
- 50 hours of “learning”, including attending an orientation in April, mid-semester presentation, weekly reflection in their activity group, weekly reflection journals and a final report.
- Total of up to 8 credits of SL

# Academic learning objectives

- Intercultural collaboration: 異文化間協働
- Intercultural:
  - Intergenerational
  - Different nationalities
  - Space and context

# Intercultural Leadership Program

- Start: 2006
- Eligibility:
  - Prior participation in SL
  - Letter of recommendation from instructor
  - Good academic standing
- 2 types of leadership roles:
  - Domestic service-learning leaders
  - Overseas service-learning leaders

# Intercultural Leadership Program

- Requirements:
  - Serve one year as a leader in domestic SL program OR serve as a leader in one overseas program
  - Satisfactorily complete the leadership seminar (B grade or above)

# Intercultural Leadership Program

- Rewards:
  - Receive a stipend (about US\$300 per semester)
  - Receive a certificate upon graduation recognizing one's service as a leader

# Learning objectives for the leadership program

1. To gain an extended experience and understanding of the notion of “intercultural”.
2. To experience a collaborative (協働) activity and understand what it means to function effectively as a leader.
3. To have opportunities to improve one’s communication skills and learn new ones.

## Objectives, continued:

4. To have opportunities to improve one's social skills and learn new ones.
5. To have opportunities to develop one's ability to reflect on one's self.

# Assessment of Leadership Program

- SL leaders are interviewed twice a year at the end of each semester.
- The purpose of the interview is to gauge what the students understand about the program and its objectives, their role, the concepts of leader and intercultural collaboration.
- Semi-structured format, recorded.
- SL coordinator carries out and analyzes the interviews.



# The Concept of Leader and Leadership

- Inclusive leadership
- Servant-leader concept
- Transformational leadership
- Leadership Styles approach
- Collaborative or team leadership

## Concepts of leader, continued

- Traits (born as a leader)
- Skill and abilities that could be acquired
- Behaviors that could be emulated
- Relational process centered in communication and collaboration between leader(s) and followers
- Varying styles of leadership

## Results of 1<sup>st</sup> year's assessment

- Lack of consensus among SL instructors about the role of leaders
- Confusion among leaders about their roles
- The roles of overseas and domestic leaders were so different it was difficult to create a group identity
- Leaders could not understand our concept of “leader”
- Seniors do not make good leaders

# Changes introduced 2<sup>nd</sup> year: domestic program

- Leadership seminar became more practical and less theoretical
- Weekly lunch meeting of leaders, teachers and coordinators
- Role of SL coordinator and organization of program was clarified
- We focused on getting 2<sup>nd</sup> year students for the leadership program

# The Center for Creative Leadership

- Leader development
  - Understanding the needs of the target population and designing a training program to meet those needs – learning within the context of a TEAM of leaders
- Leadership development
  - Concerns the institution not the individual

- Leadership development

“The expansion of the organization’s capacity to enact the basic leadership tasks needed for collective work: setting direction, creating alignment and maintaining commitment.”

(The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development, 2004:18)

# Leadership Program: Good Practices

1. The SL program should be set up or maintained in partnership with the students who will serve as SL leaders.
2. Leader development requires relevant leadership challenges. These students are not leaders in the true sense of completely and independently running the service-learning program. They are lower-tiered leaders. Students should know that they are “leaders-in-training”.

# Leadership Program: Good Practices

3. A major part of their leadership education is working on the service-learning team. Structure is important. Although leaders may be functioning autonomously in a variety of roles in the program, a regular meeting helps to build an identity as leader and promote team building in the group. As much as leading a reflection session with their juniors, their education as a leader happens in the meetings, planning sessions, collaborations and exchanges with their fellow leaders, the SL coordinator and the supervising faculty. In addition to these organizing tasks, this group provides the setting for reflection on their role as leaders and feedback from the supervisors.



# Leadership Program: Good Practices

4. Leadership development, not only at the individual level, but in the overall program must be in place. This means having the capacity to carry out the basic leadership tasks necessary for collective work: setting direction, creating alignment and maintaining commitment.

# Leadership Program: Good Practices

5. An assessment method should be in place to solicit participants' perceptions and concerns about the program and to plan for improvements in the program for the next year.