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Engaging and Supporting Faculty in Service Learning

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C hange is not new to higher education in America. However, much like the change that occurred at the turn of the century and following World War II, higher education may be on the edge of change that is qualitatively distinct from previous trends (Kennedy 1996). One component defining this transformation is the widespread availability of technological resources for education. During the past decade, changes in technology have challenged educators to reconceptualize and reconfigure both teaching and learning. Simultaneously, calls to reformulate the nature of scholarship (Boyer 1994) and the work of the scholar (Rice 1996; Plater 1996) have challenged institutions of higher education to reach beyond their traditional roles and responsibilities. Embedded within this latter challenge is a re-examination of the role that service and outreach play in the application of knowledge, epistemology, faculty work, and the structural nature of institutions of higher education.

Service learning is associated with this current wave of change in higher education. Although the role of service in instruction has historical roots (Harkavey and Puckett 1994; Lui 1996), service learning is currently demonstrating a surge of growth that can be regarded as a qualitatively distinct stage of curricular reform. Both Campus Compact (e.g., Integrating Service with Academic Study) and the Corporation for National Service (e.g., *Learn and Serve America:*

Higher Education) have stimulated rapid growth in the number of campuses offering service-learning courses, the number of service-learning classes being offered, and the number of faculty and students involved in service learning (Kobrin and Mareth 1996). For example, the *Learn and Serve America* program created more than 1,000 new service-learning courses in 1995.

Service Learning

Service learning is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in organized service that meets community needs, and reflect on the service to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (Bringle and Hatcher 1996). The primary value of service learning resides in its capacity to enrich student learning in the broadest sense through carefully selected community-service activities that are integrated with course material. Service learning has students critically evaluate course material as they apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. Students receive credit for learning that results from their participation in community service, not for the community-service activity itself (Howard 1993). Thus, good service-learning courses, first and foremost, enhance learning of course content as assessed through traditional measures (Markus, Howard, and King 1993).

In addition, service learning provides a means of teaching civic education and fostering social responsibility (Barber 1991; Barber and Battistoni 1994) among a generation of learners that is increasingly discontent with traditional forms of democratic participation (Astin 1996a). Astin's research found that involving students in community service had powerful and widespread effects on 12 indices of civic responsibility (e.g., future plans to volunteer, efficacy to change society, commitment to influence social values), 10 indices of academic development (e.g., contact with faculty, aspiration for advanced degree), and 13 indices of life skills (e.g., leadership skills, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution skills) (Astin, 1996b).

Designing effective service-learning courses requires attention to numerous stakeholders, including faculty, students, community-based agencies, and service recipients (Bringle and Hatcher 1996). However, because service learning represents curricular reform, it lives and dies with faculty, who play a key role in developing, implementing, and sustaining service learning within the academy.

Engaging faculty in service learning represents, then, a serious decision for faculty to change aspects of their work. As a pedagogy that expands the opportunities for learning beyond the walls of the classroom, service learning requires time and a new repertoire of teaching skills that may be unfamiliar to many faculty. What are the motives and obstacles for recruiting faculty to engage in service learning? What forms of institutional support are necessary and appropriate for faculty who engage in curricular reform that is significantly different from traditional assumptions concerning their

work within the academy? What types of professional-development activities are necessary to sustain their innovations? What types of institutional changes (e.g., roles and rewards, promotion and tenure, support for community partnerships) must accompany changing the work of faculty when they engage in nontraditional scholarship, including service learning, within their communities?

Faculty Recruitment

Hammond (1994) surveyed 163 instructors teaching service-learning courses in order to identify motives and sources of satisfaction. A large majority of service-learning instructors (82.9 percent) reported that teaching was their most important professional responsibility. Curricular innovations (e.g., student learning, relevance, self-directed learning) were reported to be more compelling reasons for designing service-learning courses than either personal or co-curricular motivations. Thus, faculty considered service learning to be an effective pedagogy and they viewed service learning as a means to fulfill their most valued area of scholarly work.

Juxtaposed to this commitment to and satisfaction with service learning, faculty in Hammond's study also identified barriers that reduced motivation for involvement in service learning and interfered with sustaining their efforts. Only 20 percent of the faculty assumed service learning would be an asset in the promotion and tenure process. Two obstacles most frequently cited were lack of time and lack of institutional recognition for service learning as a scholarly activity (Hammond 1994). Zlotkowski contends that if internal barriers such as these are not addressed within the academy, then the current wave of enthusiasm for service learning will subside. He notes,

> Without these adjustments, the movement will either quietly exhaust its natural constituency (faculty already ideologically sympathetic) or lose many of its best practitioners through the failure of the academy as a whole to recognize and reward their work. In either case, the movement will not succeed in achieving the critical mass it needs to survive as a respected and influential voice for educational reform (Zlotkowski 1996, p. 24).

Thus, asking faculty to consider curricular reform by integrating community service in their courses requires concomitant institutional change, an issue we will turn to shortly.

Enos (1996) has suggested that the early adopters of service learning may be analogous to early adopters of technological innovation in education, in that the early adopters of service learning were predominately visionary instructors with strong teaching and service orientations. As such, they were risk-takers and experimenters who were able to get the job done with limited resources and minimal support. However, those faculty who constitute the first generation of faculty to adopt service learning in this era may differ

in significant ways from the next generation of faculty who can be recruited to consider integrating community service into their teaching.

The second generation of faculty who are motivated to try service learning bring a slightly different agenda along with their curiosity. According to Enos (1996), they are less idealistic and visionary and, as such, are more interested in the concrete outcomes that will occur for them and their students. Because they are less adventuresome and more pragmatic, they will also be more concerned about the potential risks and costs that might be incurred. The second generation of faculty is more focused on service learning as pedagogy (e.g., learning outcomes), whereas the first generation of faculty was more focused on community impact and development. Furthermore, the second generation of faculty may need more institutional support before attempting the innovation and different kinds of support in order to sustain their involvement.

Based on this analysis, the balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations will be different for first- and second-generation faculty who adopt service learning, with extrinsic motives being relatively more important to the second generation. This suggests the process of faculty recruitment and development will require somewhat different strategies for first and second generation cohorts of faculty.

One of the primary issues in the field of service learning is expanding the number of faculty who offer service-learning classes. Kendall et al. (1990) provide numerous suggestions for engaging faculty in service learning. The *Learn and Service America: Higher Education* program of the Corporation for National Service and the programs of Campus Compact and its state affiliates (e.g., training institutes, faculty course-development stipends) reflect the belief that external support and incentives can play an important role in recruiting second-generation faculty to experiment with service learning. Bringle and Hatcher (1996) suggest that prior to these efforts, an institution should engage in planning institutional strategies for recruitment, acquiring resources, developing an institutional definition of service learning, and disseminating information widely so that faculty become familiar with service learning. Only then can such strategies as general workshops on service learning, one-on-one work with faculty, and faculty stipend programs play an effective role in recruiting faculty.

Faculty Development

The task of persuading faculty to become engaged in developing and implementing a service-learning course is distinct from working with those faculty to further their development as instructors and professionals. As such, a different set of interventions is required in order to sustain and improve curricular reform. For this reason, we differentiate between faculty recruitment and faculty development. Faculty development includes working with faculty so that they not only implement service-learning classes but also become engaged in scholarship associated with the pedagogy, they provide leadership to

other faculty, they become faculty role models for effective campus/community collaboration, they advocate for the commitment of resources to service learning, and they help create an atmosphere that encourages curricular innovation and values its success.

In order to facilitate faculty development, a curriculum has been developed to inform faculty about different aspects of service learning (e.g., reflection, community partnerships, assessment and research) so that the quality of their work can be enhanced (Bringle and Hatcher 1995). This didactic form of faculty development needs to be complemented with opportunities for faculty to actively experiment (e.g., grant proposals), engage in concrete experiences (e.g., being rewarded for teaching service-learning classes), and engage in reflective observation and evaluation of their work (e.g., course evaluation, teaching portfolios, research). In short, the academy needs to provide the opportunities and climate for faculty to explore Kolb's model of experiential education in their own professional development (see Bringle and Hatcher 1995) so that they become reflective practitioners and model those attributes for their students (Schon 1982).

Recruitment strategies were not needed for the early adopters of service learning. However, they do warrant faculty development. As part of their development, they should play an active role in recruiting the second generation of faculty. Participating in faculty-development activities, providing technical assistance through the Corporation for National Service, contributing to a disciplinary monograph or journal, and producing scholarship on service learning are all means through which first generation faculty have an influence on colleagues. Most important, though, these types of activities foster the professional development of the first-generation faculty, advance their careers, and give them recognition for their innovative work.

There are two important caveats to these conclusions. First, Enos (1996) notes that there may be significant limitations in the degree to which the early innovators are appropriate agents for appealing to the second-generation faculty. Often, the language, motives, and perspectives of these pioneers differ from what the next generation needs and wants to hear. For example, the first generation of faculty approached developing and implementing a service-learning course differently than the next cohort of faculty. In addition, many place greater emphasis on community development as the primary reason for service learning whereas the second generation of faculty are more interested in course-based outcomes. Therefore, agents of faculty recruitment in addition to the first-generation faculty may become necessary for recruiting and developing the second generation.

Second, recall that Hammond's (1994) survey indicated that the mechanisms for institutional support and recognition for service learning were perceived by the early innovators to be inadequate. Thus, some institutional change is warranted for widespread faculty recruitment and development to occur, even if the first generation of

faculty were able to develop service-learning courses without it.

Institutional Change

Service learning represents a means to an end not only for faculty and students, but also for institutions of higher education. In addition to developing the careers of faculty who are the pioneers, recruiting curious faculty, nurturing interest among indifferent faculty, and supporting the development of all faculty who engage in service learning, it is also necessary that higher education consider the manner in which it can effect institutional change to support service learning and generally enhance university/community relationships. Most, if not all mission statements of post-secondary institutions include service. Presidential support for service and service learning has been obtained from more than 550 presidents who have joined Campus Compact. In addition, there is unprecedented growth in faculty involvement in service learning and outreach to the community.

As significant as these changes are, they are somewhat tenuous. Sustaining these increments of growth in each of these segments requires additional interventions at the institutional level. To date, the integration of service with either teaching (e.g., service learning) or research (e.g., applied research in the community) has had a limited effect on the culture of higher education. In part, this is because service remains the element of the tripartite spectrum of faculty work — research, teaching, service — that receives the least respect and credibility. Lack of parity for service is evident in virtually all areas of academic life (e.g., institutional reputation, hiring, promotion and tenure, distribution of resources, institutional planning). It is for this reason Boyer (1994) challenged higher education to bring new dignity to the scholarship of service and advocated its integration with teaching and research. Therefore, if the preliminary efforts in service learning of the past decade are to produce the noteworthy change that some envision, it is necessary to consider the means for institutional change as well as faculty recruitment and development (Zlotkowski 1996).

Institutional Recruitment and Development

In addition to faculty, interventions can be aimed at institutional recruitment and development. Soliciting participation of presidents to join Campus Compact represents institutional recruitment and commitment to explore the role of service in the academy. Institutional development activities include Campus Compact's regional institutes in which campus teams develop an institutional plan for further integrating service into academic study. The administration can also create a centralized office through which faculty recruitment and development for service learning takes place (Bringle and Hatcher 1996). This represents an important source of support to faculty and students as well as important evidence of institutional commitment to the value of service learning and service within that institution's mission and work. Interventions can also be directed at

chairs, deans, and academic units (Lynton 1995; Sandmann 1995).

These types of institutional interventions eventually enhance faculty recruitment and development. However they must also go further to engage the institution in Kolb's model of learning and change (i.e., concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, active experimentation). This type of institutional development is imperative to the vision that service learning becomes a significant part of teaching and learning in higher education and to developing complete scholars who integrate teaching, research, and service.

Conclusion

By examining the assumptive nature of work in the academy, Rice suggests there are major shifts in the fundamental assumptions of faculty work (a) from a focus on knowledge to a focus on learning, (b) from an emphasis on professional autonomy of faculty to involvement of faculty in institutional building, (c) from highly individualistic ways of working to greater collaboration, and (d) from a separation between university and community to greater faculty responsibility for public life. The rapid growth of service learning within higher education during the past decade has been nurtured by its compatibility with these broader changes. The pedagogy of service learning reflects these changes and is helping promote these transitions because it values collaboration, alternative forms of knowing, connected learning, and civic involvement.

Faculty are concerned about optimizing student learning. They are also concerned about the degree to which they invest their most important resource, time, across the spectrum of activities that constitute their professional work (Plater 1996). Service learning holds the promise of enriching instruction for faculty as well as students. However, in order to interest and sustain faculty involvement, changes are needed at all levels of the institution to support their efforts. In particular, deans, chairs, and promotion and tenure committees need to develop the capacity to evaluate and reward high quality work by faculty in the community, including service learning. In addition, there needs to be a shift from developing service-learning courses to more substantial curricular reform (e.g., sequences of service-learning courses, general education).

Equally important in this equation for the success of service learning is the role of the community. Recruiting and developing communities partners is more than a matter of finding placements for service-learning students. Effective service learning engages the community as partners in the instructional process. Only then will community placements become partnerships that, in turn, can evolve into collaborative arrangements that produce meaningful results for all. This level of community impact will only occur when faculty recruitment is supplemented with faculty development, and when developing service-learning courses is extended to curricular reform that changes the climate of learning.

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