

UNIT 10: PURSUING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE-LEARNING SCHOLARSHIP

COMPETENCIES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- Define scholarship and community-engaged scholarship.
- Identify opportunities for pursuing scholarship through service-learning.
- Identify vehicles for publishing and presenting service-learning scholarship.
- Identify sources of support for service-learning research.
- Identify strategies for documenting service-learning scholarship for review, promotion and tenure.

HANDOUT

- Standards for the Assessment of Community-Engaged Scholarship

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Work done by modern educational theorists such as Glassick and Boyer has brought about a re-conceptualization of scholarship within higher education. The standards for defining and evaluating scholarship have evolved significantly in recent years. As such, the role that service-learning does and should play within the context of scholarship now demands increasing attention. To further validate service-learning as a teaching method as well as a serious scholarly undertaking, service-learning practitioners are challenged to consider the projects they develop against the widely-accepted frameworks of Boyer's multi-part definition of scholarship and Glassick's six standards of assessment.

Boyer sets out a four-pronged definition of scholarship including: *discovery*, *integration*, *teaching*, and *application*. Discovery represents *new knowledge*, such as a new gene or a new treatment, while integration embodies the *new outcomes* created by the synthesis of existing disciplines, professions, and theories. The scholarship of teaching encourages *documentation* among educators and the creation of teaching portfolios, while scholarship of application completes the educational cycle through the application of new knowledge within *practice-based settings*. Picking up where Boyer left off, experts now include *engagement* as a fifth element of scholarship. Engagement examines the new outcomes created when the first four types of scholarship are removed from controlled environments and placed in engaged, *community environments*. It is within all five of these realms that the practice of service-learning finds its home and we now grapple with the effort to effectively translate the knowledge gained from "engaged scholarship" into traditional forms such as standardized principles, processes, and publications. The bar has been raised in regards to the output of service-learning initiatives. There is increasing pressure to move beyond anecdotal process articles and experiential assessments to produce solid outcomes supplemented by empirical data.

Tied to scholarly processes and outcomes are standards for evaluation and rewards, such as promotion, tenure, merit commendations, or funding. Glassick proposes six standards for assessing scholarly endeavors: *clear goals*, *adequate preparation*, *appropriate methods*, *significant results*, *effective presentation*, and *reflective technique*. In looking at service-learning within this context, it becomes clear that a paradigm shift is necessary for proper evaluation. Service-learning is inherently at odds with the "I did it all" standard currently used to judge tenure dossiers or funding proposals. As a reciprocal, engaged endeavor accomplished solely through partnerships and collaboration, the "we" becomes much more important and relevant than the "I." Along with this is the traditional importance placed on "first authorship," which in many instances of service-

learning can be irrelevant or even inappropriate. Thus, service-learning professionals are challenged to not only maximize potential rewards under current evaluation schemes in the short term, but also to engender a paradigm shift that will facilitate more appropriate standards of review for service-learning and hopefully elevate the stature of service-learning within scholarship as a whole.

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The faculty review, promotion and tenure system can pose significant challenges to faculty members who are engaged in service-learning. Some tenure systems place 100% weight on publication with little significance given to teaching or service. Others require faculty to select one area of excellence among teaching, research, and service rather than being allowed to present their experiences in a cross-disciplinary fashion. Faculty members can face tenure committees that do not value service-learning even if service-learning is generally supported by the faculty, department, and administration. Faculty members can also face promotion standards that are at odds with the overall mission of the institution; for example, a “teaching-focused” institution that requires extensive publication for promotion. It is usually necessary to educate faculty, deans, provosts, and presidents about service-learning as tenure dossiers make their way up the ladder. Faculty members often speak of struggles finding appropriate reviewers from top-ranked institutions that are supportive of service-learning. Almost all encounter the question, “Where is the scholarship?” or “How does this constitute scholarly work?”

There are a number of possible approaches to confront these issues, including:

- Think about scholarly outputs early on in the planning process. The online [Community-Engaged Scholarship Toolkit](#) has a unit devoted to this planning process.
- Develop evidence-based guidelines and consider the use of outside evaluators (for example, the [Clearinghouse for the Scholarship of Engagement](#)).
- Plant foundational seeds about service-learning across the institution early on.
- Set accurate expectations as to rewards and plan your strategy accordingly.
- Create detailed teaching portfolios and improve documentation of your efforts.
- Gather the best and the most appropriate reviewers possible (consider contacting Campus Compact or CCPH for referrals or consulting with community-engaged colleagues and mentors on one’s own campus).

Obtaining research support and publishing articles are continuing challenges for service-learning practitioners at many institutions. The combination of partners and publication can inherently be conflict ridden in a reward situation, as so much value is placed on “first authorship.” There is a common realization that the “I” needs to be replaced by “we” in the service-learning review process. There is often an extended period of time to ready a publication or presentation on a service-learning project, as compared to a study in a more traditional area. More often than not, insights gathered from planning, execution, reflection, and re-engagement are longer term in nature and thus not readily apparent. It is wise to look beyond peer review journals and to disseminate service-learning findings through other avenues including journals in related but separate disciplines, presentations at national forums, formal papers, and so on. It can be difficult to secure or sustain funding for service-learning initiatives due to the still-cloudy definition of the field combined with the trend in the funding community to place increasing importance on results-oriented philanthropy. Therefore, it is important to gain an awareness of results-oriented or “friendly” funding sources. In order to find success, those in the service-learning community must continue to crystallize and then champion the language of service-learning outcomes within both the scholarly and funding communities. While opportunities for publishing in the field evolve and change over time, you can find lists of journals and other

publications that focus on engagement and service-learning in higher education, current as of 2014, [here](#) and [here](#). Links to additional publication outlets and opportunities for presenting your scholarship can be found through a resource compiled by [Weber State University's Center for Community Engaged Learning](#).

Service-learning *practitioners can encounter resistance when attempting to classify contributions from community partners as “scholarly work.” There are several approaches to addressing these critical issues, including:*

- Grant adjunct professor titles to community faculty.
- Document community contribution as formal academic collaboration.
- Encourage the mention of strategic partnership in the community partner’s future grant proposals. (This should further strengthen the proposal as well as raise awareness of the institution’s service-learning initiatives, possibly galvanizing additional financial support for the institution, as well.)

Key Takeaways

A summary of certain factors to consider in promoting service-learning within higher educational institutions:

1. **Institutional Mission** – Evaluate the fit within the over-arching goals and tenor of the institution.
2. **Define the Reward System** – What are the expectations for tenure, promotion, or merit? How should the service-learning component be positioned into a teaching portfolio or tenure/promotion strategy? How will you effectively transition assessment into scholarly output?
3. **Faculty Development** – Develop methods to attract, engage, educate, support, reward, and retain campus and community faculty. Are there opportunities to engage or integrate efforts of entire departments?
4. **Community Engagement** – Establish reciprocal, strategic partnerships in the community where the role of the expert is shared and the focus is on processes and outcomes.
5. **Resources** – Properly assess and allocate available resources and continually develop new and existing resource means.

RESOURCES

[Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health](#): CES4Health.info is a free, online mechanism for peer-reviewing, publishing and disseminating products of health-related community-engaged scholarship that are in forms other than journal articles.

[Community-Engaged Scholarship Toolkit](#): A toolkit designed by Community Campus Partnerships for Health to guide faculty in planning and documenting their community-engaged scholarship and producing strong portfolios for tenure and promotion.

[Clearinghouse for the Scholarship of Engagement](#): The Clearinghouse for the Scholarship of Engagement provides external peer review and evaluation of faculty’s scholarship of engagement as well as consultation, training, and technical assistance to campuses who are seeking to develop or strengthen systems in support of the scholarship of engagement. In addition, it conducts forums, programs, and regional conferences on topics related to the scholarship of engagement. Finally, it administers a faculty mentoring program with opportunities for less experienced faculty to learn from the outreach experiences of more seasoned outreach scholars.

[Engaged Scholarship Publication Outlets](#): A list maintained by Campus Compact of the Mountain West of journals that accept community-engaged work.

HANDOUT: STANDARDS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP (MAURANA ET AL., 2000)

This handout provides an overview of questions that can be used to guide the documentation needed for a faculty portfolio or dossier for review, promotion and tenure decisions. They can also be used by faculty review committees as a tool to assess community-based scholarship. These questions draw upon Boyer's model of scholarship redefined and Glassick's standards of assessment.

Clear Goals

1. Are the goals clearly stated, and jointly defined by community and academics?
2. Has the partnership developed its goals and objectives based upon community needs?
3. How do we identify the community issues? Are these needs and issues truly recognized by the scholar and institution?
4. Do both community and academia think the issue is significant and/or important?
5. Have the partners developed a definition of what the "common good" is?
6. Have the partners worked toward an agreed upon "common good"?
7. Is there a vision for the future of the partnership?

Adequate Preparation

1. Does the scholar have the knowledge and skills to conduct the assessment and implement the program?
2. Has the scholar laid the groundwork for the program based on most recent work in the field?
3. Were the needs and strengths of the community identified and assessed using appropriate method?
4. Have individual needs taken a back seat to group goals and needs?
5. Do the scholar and the community consider all the important economic, social, cultural and political factors that affect the issue?
6. Does the scholar recognize and respect community expertise?
7. Have the community-academic partners become a community of scholars?
8. Does the scholar recognize that the community can "teach," and that the community has expertise?
9. Does the scholar stay current in the field?

Appropriate Methods

1. Have all partners been actively involved at all levels of the partnership process – assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation?
2. Has the development of the partnership's work followed a planned process that has been tested in multiple environments, and proven to be effective?
3. Have partnerships been developed according to a nationally acceptable framework for building partnerships?

Approach

1. Are the methods used appropriately matched to the need?
2. Do the methods build in community involvement sustainability?
3. What outcomes have occurred in program development and implementation?
4. Do the scholar and community select, adapt and modify the method with attention to local circumstances and continuous feedback from the community?
5. Do programs reflect the culture of the community?

6. Does the scholar use innovative and original approaches?
7. Does the approach emphasize sustainability?

Significant Results

1. Has the program resulted in positive outcomes in the community?
2. Has the partnership effected positive change in the community and the academic institution?
3. Have models been developed that can be used by others?
4. What has been the impact on the community?
5. What has been the impact on the academic institution?
6. Have external resources (e.g. grant and fund raising) been affected by the program?
7. Are the results effective as judged by both the community and academia?
8. Do the scholar and community commit to a long-term partnership?

Effective Presentation

1. Has the work (outcomes and process) of the partnership been reviewed and disseminated in the community and academic institutions?
2. Have there been presentations/publications on community-based efforts at both the community and academic levels?
3. Are the results disseminated in a wide variety of formats to the appropriate community and academic audiences?

Ongoing Reflective Critique

1. What evaluation has occurred?
2. Does the scholar constantly think and reflect about the activity?
3. Would the community work with the scholar again?
4. Would the scholar work with the community again?

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KEY CONTACTS

For a comprehensive listing of state and regional Campus Compact affiliates, along with contact information for each organization, please click [here](#).

To learn more about membership with Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, as an individual or as an institution/organization, please visit their [website](#). To contact CCPH staff directly, visit their online staff directory [here](#).