WORKING PAPER

Implementing Service-Learning for a
Marketing Capstone Course

By

John J. Newbold, Ph.D.
Sam Houston State University

Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the service learning pedagogy. Then it traces the development of service learning in the discipline of bvusiness education. Finally, the paper outlines the development of a specific marketing capstone course implementing aspects of service learning.

Service-Learning: Definition & Benefits

Service-Learning is a teaching pedagogy with significant potential for bringing about positive outcomes for students, faculty, educational institutions and communities. Service-Learning is defined as a:

> **Course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (Bringle and Hatcher, 1995, p.112)**

In essence, the activity breaks into two basic parts: The service work, and some form of mandatory reflection. (Prentice and Garcia, 2000, p.20) The process generally involves the student being exposed to the academic material, then exposed to the service opportunity, and finally, reflecting again upon the academic material in light of the service experience. Thus, service-learning is comprised of a cycle of activities which goes beyond the typical academic pedagogy:

> **Service-Learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems, and at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. (Eyler and Giles, 1999)**

Long, et al (2001) depicts the service-learning experience via the Venn diagram below:

Figure 1
Conceptualization of Service-Learning in Higher Education
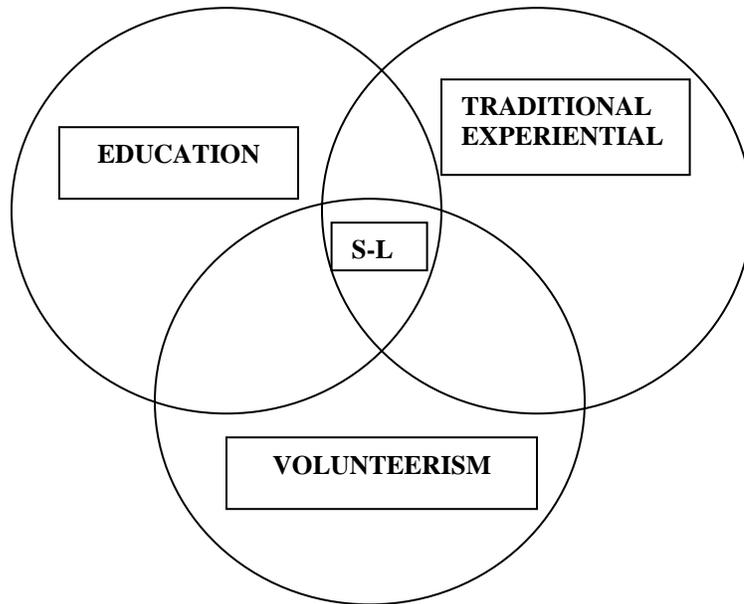
As is shown in Figure 1 above, Service-Learning combines elements of traditional education, volunteerism and traditional experiential pedagogy to provide multiple benefits to the student.

Furco (1996) points to the *balance* of both volunteerism and learning that places Service-Learning at the center of potential experiential learning options, as is shown in Table 1 on the following page:

Table 1
Comparison of Experiential Learning Techniques

Experiential Learning Method	Comment
Internships	Too much work, not enough learning.
Field education	Not enough civic education.
Service-Learning	Proper balance of work and learning.
Voluntary service	Not enough education.

Service-Learning is generally regarded as a self-reinforcing practice that has positive outcomes, not only for students, but for faculty and the community as well. Some of the advantages of service-learning for students are summarized in the table:

Table 2
Positive Outcomes of Service-Learning for Students

Positive Outcomes	Source
They are positive, meaningful and real to the participants. They involve cooperative rather than competitive experiences, and thus promote skills associated with teamwork and community involvement and citizenship. They address complex problems in complex settings rather than simplified problems in isolation. They offer opportunities to engage in problem-solving by requiring participants to gain knowledge of the specific context of their service-learning activity and community challenges, rather than only to draw upon generalized or abstract knowledge, such as might come from a textbook. Thus, it promotes critical thinking. It is more likely to be personally meaningful, and hence to support social, emotional and cognitive learning and development.	Eyler and Giles, 1999
Promotes the cognitive, affective civic and social development of youth.	Waldstein and Reiher, 2001
Access to career exploration opportunities. Enhancement of interpersonal and human relational skills. Enhances students' self-concepts by allowing them to have an impact through their active and meaningful contribution to their communities.	Prentice and Garcia, 2000
Students learn their academic lessons better through reinforcement from real-world activities. Students have an opportunity to exercise problem analysis and critical thinking skills.	Eyler, Giles, Stenson & Gray, 2001

According to Prentice and Garcia (2000), the benefits of Service-Learning to faculty include:
- Having access to another teaching tool with which to meet the academic objectives of a course,
- Providing another method for professional development, and
- Offering another vehicle to address students' learning styles.

The benefits to the educational institution include not only enhanced learning methods, but positive public relations for the school, and an additional program by which to acquire outside funding for school activities.

For the community, service-learning allows organizations to receive what is usually free assistance for work that might not otherwise get accomplished. Often, it is the service-learning opportunities which inspire educational institutions to build strong partnerships with community-based organizations.

Service-Learning in Higher Education: A Brief History

Although the notion of learning while providing volunteer services to the community has existed for centuries, the more formal service-learning movement in the United States is generally considered to have begun in 1984 with the formation of COOL – the Campus Outreach Opportunities League. COOL is a grass-roots organization that encourages student involvement in service and provides peer support for program development. This was followed by the Campus Compact, the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, and Youth Service America, all in 1985. Campus Compact is an association of college presidents committed to promoting student involvement in service.

In 1990, Congress passed the National and Community Service Act that created the Commission on National and Community Service to provide program funds, training and technical assistance in states and communities to develop and expand service opportunities for citizens of all ages.

The National and Community Service Trust Act was established in 1993. This Act establishes the Americorps program to provide opportunities for college-age young people to serve their communities and garner post-service educational benefits in the process. The Act also augments the funds available for higher-education service-learning, and subsumed related programs such as VISTA and the Older American Volunteer Programs, all under the administration of the newly established Corporation for National Service. The Corporation for National Service, in turn, supports the establishment of state commissions on community service to oversee the various programs and fund allotments in each state. (Wade, 1997)

Traditionally, the service projects involved community activities directed at social issues that were not being met sufficiently with current community resources. Some examples might be the cleaning up of a city park, the care of AIDS patients, or the visiting of senior citizens in a nursing home. The real-world exposure to such societal issues raises awareness for these issues, as well as reinforces elements of the curriculum at the schools. Thus, the programs usually revolve around both a community issue and an academic objective.

Service-Learning Business Education

In an article entitled "Service-Learning Outcomes: Guidelines for Educators and Researchers" (2000), Rama, et. al., provide a comprehensive overview of empirical studies of service-learning in higher education. Even casual perusal of their review

highlights the fact that service-learning programs have heretofore been primarily the domain of such academic areas as healthcare (nursing), philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, gerontology, journalism, and political science. Service-Learning does not have a long tradition in business education. This is likely due to a lack of interest on both the part of the business faculty, as well as a lack of need for "charity work" on the part of private business. Indeed, "much of the momentum behind service-learning has been provided by academics tied to social sciences and liberal arts". (Zlotkowski, 1996)

However, interest in service-learning in the business discipline is building, albeit recently. For the most part, these activities have been focused on moral and ethical development. Table 3 summarizes some of the more recent streams of research in the area of business:

Table 3
Recent Service-Learning Activities in the Business Discipline

Project	Topic
Godfrey, P. & Grasso, E. (eds.) (2000). <u>Working For The Common Good: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Management</u>	Presents concepts and models for service-learning in the management discipline.
Lamb, C., Swinth, R., Vincton, K.& Lee, J. (1998) "Integrating Service Learning Into a Business School Curriculum	Presents a model of service-learning for facilitating collaboration with the community and promoting moral and professional development of students.
Kolenko, T., Porter, G., Wheatley, W. & Colby, M. (1996). "A Critique of Service Learning Projects in Management Education: Pedagogical Foundations, Barriers and Guidelines".	Presents a critique of 9 service-learning projects in business ethics and leadership courses.

One relatively current article, by Gutjarathi and McQuade (2002) provides an excellent example of service-learning being implemented in the accounting discipline.

It is evident that there is a paucity of service-learning activity in the field of marketing. In a Campus Compact report on 2003 Service Statistics, they list the Top 15 areas addressed by service projects. The leading activities are tutoring (94%), mentoring (89%) healthcare (84%) and the environment (84%). "Economic development" is listed 14th at 59%. It is not likely this involved hands-on marketing activities.

Measuring Outcomes of Service-Learning

Learn and Serve America, higher Education (LSAHE) is the primary funding arm of the Corporation for National and Community Service. From 1995-1997, LSAHE funded roughly $30M in service-learning research, granting funds to over 500 higher education institutions.

LSAHE engaged the RAND Education to assess the impacts of these programs. Two primary findings of the RAND report, issued in 1999 are:

1)   There is a strong correlation between student participation in a service-learning course and increased civic responsibility., and

2)   There appeared to be no association between participation in a service-learning course and improvement in a student's academic abilities or career preparation.

In particular, the second finding is troublesome for educators. RAND does qualify this finding by stating that correlation did emerge when RAND analyzed a subset of programs where "good practices" were employed, such as establishing strong links between the service experience and the course content, having student volunteers serve more than 20 hours per semester, and providing for reflection of the experience as a part of the class program. Hence, there is a general, intuitional feeling that, service-learning programs, when administered well, lead to positive learning outcomes.

At about the same time (1999), Eyler and Giles published their book, "Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?", again calling the question of learning outcomes. Eyler and Giles characterize the service-learning discipline as follows:

"…there is some considerable doubt as to the value of service-learning as an approach to academic learning….Skeptics asks whether service-learning, while popular with students, has an impact on what students learn. As we looked at the research, it was clear that little had been directed at academic learning. The few studies that had tried to measure academic learning directly were narrowly focused and used grades to assess the impact of service-learning. These studies had yielded mixed results: service-learning had not hurt achievement, but did not always contribute to higher student grades."

Eyler and Giles' book then goes on to describe appropriate research methods and methods to employ in order to help ensure an effective learning outcome for students.

Among the various outcome measures discussed in the literature, the most often used are summarized below:

1)   Course grades or GPA
2)   Student or faculty surveys
3)   Content analysis of student writing
4)   Student interviews

Rama, et. al., (2000) provides an excellent assessment of these basic outcome measures. Their analysis points out the shortcomings of simply using grades or GPA as the outcome measure for the impacts of service learning. It reinforces the notion that service-learning is itself a rather complex undertaking, and that the appropriate measurement of its effects likely requires multiple measures of multiple traits, and likely will entail multiple data collection methods.

The Proposed Marketing Strategy Course Program

           For the past 3 years, the Management and Marketing Department at Sam Houston State University has been engaging local small businesses in a program whereby undergraduate marketing students prepare a marketing plan for a local business (Newbold and Mehta, 2003).

           Having student teams develop marketing plans for local businesses provides benefits on a number of levels:

1)   Exposure to real-world professionals,
2)   Exposure to real-world problems,
3)   A heightened sense of urgency that one might not get from simply working cases from a book, and
4)   A real-life example of a marketing project to be discussed in class and in job interviews.

           Perhaps most importantly, the creation of a marketing plan from scratch, for a real-world company with real-world problems, affords students a comprehensive learning experience in the development of marketing strategy and marketing programs.

Brief Overview of the Current Program

           While the project is introduced on the first day of class, students do not commence work with local firms until about one quarter of the way through the semester. This gives the instructor several class periods to:

1)   Establish the concept of marketing strategy development,
2)   Instruct students in the various analytic methods utilized for situation analysis and strategy development, and
3)   Provide some instruction on the proper protocols when dealing with small business professionals on a consulting project (this is normally not in the textbook).

           The best method for identifying small businesses in the local area is through the local Small Business Association, Small Business Development Center, or local Chamber of Commerce. The instructor identifies a single point of contact with one of these organizations, in order to minimize the administrative burden of balancing multiple teams and multiple businesses.

           Once teams are assigned to firms, the initial meeting is brokered between the firms and the teams. Subsequent to the initial meeting, students work independently with their client firms. As the student teams begin to progress with their clients, related material from the text is covered in class, beginning with Situation Analysis through Evaluation and Control. In this manner, just-in-time instruction accompanies the project schedules.

           Prior to the end of the semester, each student team will make a presentation of the key findings of their projects. The presentation covers the highlights of their Marketing Plan. It is an opportunity for the team to share their strategic thinking with the class, and to solicit input on their plans prior to finalizing them.

           Subsequent to their presentations, the teams then finalize their marketing plans. The plans are then turned in to the professor for a grade. The professor will give input to improve the plans. Finally, the finished plans are delivered to the clients, with highlights of the plans presented at the time of delivery.

The aforementioned program for acquiring real-world experience in marketing meets most of the requirements for service-learning programs. It is an innovative way to expose students to real-world contexts for marketing strategy development. It provides a significant service to the local community, at no cost to its clients. Its major shortfalls lie in the following areas:

1) The experience itself does not provide enough instruction in moral, civic, and ethical areas to properly develop the students' appreciation of these important concepts in the marketing context.
2) The experience does not provide for a periods of reflection and self-examination – a critical component of service-learning.
3) The process does not currently involve any data collection, whereby specific service-learning outcomes can be measured.

Proposed Improvements to the Current Program

The current program has been re-examined in light of the service-learning literature, as well as through discussions with students and teaching colleagues at SHSU. Several key changes are intended for the current curriculum for the marketing strategy course to better meet the objectives of providing for moral, civic and ethic development, to better provide for activities of reflection, and to accommodate more measurement of outcomes for the various stakeholders. Table 4, below, summarizes the key changes to the course content and administration as relates to these changes.

Table 4
Overview of Modifications to the Marketing Strategy Capstone Course
To Better Facilitate Service-Learning

Modification	Rationale
Add modules on: 1) Citizenship 2) Moral Development, and 3) Ethics	To create greater awareness of the virtues of doing pro-bono work for small businesses
Develop and incorporate pre and post measurement systems for evaluation of service-learning objectives, as well as group dynamics. These measures will be collected for all stakeholders.	To begin to formally measure the impact of the service-learning curriculum on key outcome measures.
The following reflection techniques will be incorporated into the class: 1) Pre-project: Letter to oneself 2) During project: journal 3) Post project: Reflection paper as Take-Home final Exam	These three reflection techniques provide for adequate opportunity for reflection, which is critical to the overall learning process.
Modifications to the course schedule to accommodate the aforementioned activities. Hand-outs will be deployed in place of typical lecture. Lectures will be more focused on key strategic decisions, and less on imparting basic knowledge.	Key marketing information that is normally covered in class lecture will be summarized in hand-outs that will be highly correlated with the requirements of the assignment.

At least 2 class meetings out of a typical 30 will be utilized for lectures on citizenship, moral development and ethics. This amounts to roughly 10% of class time devoted to these new activities. A copy of a proposed syllabus can be found in Appendix A. As has been highlighted in previous studies of Service-Learning, not spending enough time lecturing on key content may be an issue.

<u>Outcome Measures</u>

Bringle, Phillips and Hudson (2004) have recently published a comprehensive volume delineating most of the scales in use in Service-learning assessment to date. Table 5, below, summarizes the constructs and scales that are under consideration for use in the pre- and post-measurements.

Table 5
Constructs and Scales to Be Utilized

Constuct	**Scale**	**Items/Time**
Civic Development	Civic Attitude Scale (Maby, 1998)	5 items/5 minutes
	Community Service Self-Efficacy Scale (Reeb, et al., 1998)	10 items/5 minutes
Volunteerism	Motivation to Volunteer Scale (Cnaan and Goldberg, 1991)	22 items/10 minutes
Learning	Learning For Self-Understanding Scale (Springer, et al. 1995)	5 items/5 minutes
	TOTAL	**42 items/25 minutes**

<u>Data Collection</u>

All survey instruments will be implemented via the Internet utilizing the webSurveyor software. Students will complete the surveys outside of class by logging into the host site from their homes or from the multiple computer labs around the SHSU campus. Student participation grades will be tied to their successful completion of the survey instruments online.

In addition, students will be required to participate in the following reflection activities:
1) Pre-project "Letter to Myself"
2) Post-project Reflection Paper (as a take-home final exam)
3) During the project: A Project Journal, detailing activities, feelings and learning.

References

(Note, since project is still a work in progress, references are currently categorized)

Books

Bringle, R., Phillips, M. & Hudson, M.(2004).The Measure of Service Learning: Research Scales to Assess Student Experiences. American Psychological Association.

Billig, S. & Waterman, A. (eds.) (2003). Studying Service-Learning: Innovations in Education Research Methodology. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., & Stephens, J. (2003). Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility. Jossey-Bass.

Eyler. J., & Giles, D. (1999). Where's The Learning in Service Learning?. Jossey-Bass.

Godfrey, P. & Grasso, E. (eds.) (2000). Working For The Common Good: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Management. Washington D.C.: American Association for Higher Education.

Wade, R. (ed). (1997). Community Service-Learning: A Guide to Including Service in the Public School Curriculum. State University of New York Press.

Zlotkowski, E. (1998) Successful Service-Learning Programs: New Models of Excellence in Higher Education, Bolton, Mass., Anchor, 1998

Articles

General/Overview

_____. "2003 Service Statistics: Highlights of Campus Compact's Annual Membership Survey". Campus Compact. November 2003.

Bell R., Furco A., Ammon M Muller P and Sorgen V., (2000) "Institutionalizing Service Learning in Higher Education: Findings From a Study of the Western Region Campus Compact Consortium" Berkeley, University of California, 2000

Bringle, R & Hatcher, J (1995). "A Service-Learning Curriculum for Faculty". Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 2, pp. 112=122.

Eyler, J., Giles, D., Stenson, C. & Gray, C. (2001) At a Glance: What We Know About The Effects of Service-Learning on College Students, Faculty, Institutions and Communities, 1993 – 2000: Third Edition. Corporation for National Service.

Ferrari N. and Cather, A.(2002) "Community Service, Learning, and the Medical Student"; Education and Health. Vol. 15, No. 2, 2002, 222-227

Gray, M. (2000) "Making the Commitment to Community Service: What It Takes". About Campus. May/June 2000. pp. 19-24.

Gray, M., Ondaajte, E. & Zakaras, L. (1999). Combining Service and Learning in Higher Education: Summary Report. RAND.

Jacoby, B. (1999) "Partnerships for Service Learning"; New Directions for Student Services; no. 87, Fall, 1999

Prentice. M. & Garcia, R. (2000). "Service Learning: The Next Generation in Education". Community College Journal of Research and Practice. 2000. pp.19-26.

Zlotkowski, E.(2001) "Mapping New Terrain: Service-Learning Across the Disciplines"; Change, January/February, 2001

Assessment

Astin A.W., and Sax, L.J., (1998) "How Undergraduates are Affected by Service Participation" Journal of College Student Development, Vol. 39, pp. 251-263, 1998

Eyler J., Giles D. and Braxton J., (1997) "The Impact of Service-Learning on College Students", Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, Vol. 4, pp. 5-15, 1997.

Gray, M., Ondaatje, E., Fricker, R. & Geschwind, S. (2000). "Assessing Service-Learning: Results From a Survey of 'Learn and Serve America, Higher Education". Change. March/April. Pp.30-39.

Kezar, A. (2002). "Assessing Community Service Learning: Are We Identifying the Right Outcomes?" About Campus. May/June 2002. pp.14-20.

Morgan W and Streb M (2001) "Building Citizenship: How Student Voice in Service-Learning Develops Civic Values", Social Science Quarterly, Volume 82 Number 1, March 2001

Rama, D., Ravenscroft, S, Wolcott, S. & Zlotkowski, E.(2000). "Service-Learning Outcomes: Guidelines For Educators and Researchers". Issues in Accounting Education. November 2000. pp. 657-692.

Sax L. J. and Astin, A. W. (1997), "The Benefits of Service: Evidence from Undergraduates" Educational Record, Vol. 78, pp. 25 – 33, 1997.

Sedlack C., Doheny, N., Panthofer, N. and Anaya A (2000) "Critical Thinking in Students' Service-Learning Experiences", College Teaching, Vol. 51, no. 3 p. 99 – 103, 2000

Shinnamon A, Gelmon S and Holland B., (1999) "Methods and Strategies for Assessing Service-Learning in Health Professions", Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, San Francisco, CA 1999

Smith, E. (2000). "The Assessment of Civic Leadership". About Campus. July/August 2000. pp. 26-28.

Strage, A (2004) "Long-Term Academic Benefits of Service-Learning: When and Where Do They Manifest Themselves?", College Student Journal, June, 2004

Waldstein, F. & Reiher, T. (2001). "Service-Learning and Students' Personal and Civic Development". The Journal of Experiential Education. Spring 2001. pp.7-13.

Application

Bringle R. G., and Hatcher, J. A. (1996) "Implementing Service-Learning in Higher Education", Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 67, pp. 221 – 239, 1996

Elam C., Musick D., Sauer J., Skelton, J. (2002) "How We Implemented a Service-Learning Elective" Medical Teacher Vol. 24, No. 3, 2002, pp. 249 -253

Gujarathi, M. & McQuade, R.(2002). "Service-Learning in Business Schools: A Case Study in an Intermediate Accounting Course". Journal of Education for Business. January/February 2002. pp. 144-150.

Klink R and Athaide G (2004) "Implementing Service-Learning in the Principles of Marketing Course", Journal of Marketing Education, Volume 26, No. 2, August, 2004, pp. 145 – 153.

Kolenko, T., Porter, G., Wheatley, W. & Colby, M. (1996). " A Critique of Service Learning Projects in Management Education: Pedagogical Foundations, Barriers and Guidelines". Journal of Business Ethics. 15, 133-142.

Lamb, C., Swinth, R., Vincton, K.& Lee, J. (1998) "Integrating Service Learning Into a Business School Curriculum". Journal of Management Education. 22(5), 637-654.

Long, A., Larsen, P. & Hussey, L. (2001). "Organizing, Managing and Evaluating Service-Learning Projects". Educational Gerontology. March 2001 pp. 3-21.

Melchior, A. (2000). "Service Learning At Your Service". The School Administrator. August 2000. pp. 26-31.

Newbold, J., & Mehta, S. (2004) "The University Hotel: Developing a Marketing Strategy". Retail Management, 9th ed. Prentice-Hall.

Newbold, J. (2003). "Marketing Plan Project: Working With Local Small Businesses". Conference Proceedings, Marketing Management Association Fall Educators Conference, September 11-12, 2003

Zlotkowski, E. (1996) "Opportunity for All: Linking Service-Learning and Business Education". Journal of Business Ethics, 15, 5-19