CRP Was-Is-Will Be Here:

Sustaining an Academic Service-Learning Approach to Planning Instruction


By


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**Approved by**
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## Dedication

To Allison, for the inspiration to complete this report this semester.

To Jason, for traveling with me to Taiwan, so that I could avoid writing this sooner.

To my brother, Matt, for much-needed "reality checks" and distractions.

To my parents, Richard and Margaret, for making this work possible.

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SUPERVISOR:  Michael Oden

The Community and Regional Planning program of the University of Texas at Austin, School of Architecture (UTSOA-CRP) has made *course-integrated community-based project work (CCPW)* a key - if not a requisite, component of its classroom-based teaching and planning instruction.  Often referred to as *academic service-learning*, the pedagogy of incorporating community-based project work with classroom instruction is recognized to have significant benefits for college students, faculty members, institutions, and communities.  More specifically, this teaching approach is understood to have substantial advantages in planning instruction.  This professional report attempts to offer recommendations towards addressing the question of how a CCPW, or academic service-learning, approach to planning instruction can best be sustained and/or enhanced by the UTSOA-CRP program.  Ideally, this report will add to the growing body of literature and research related to academic service-learning in planning instruction, while offering the CRP program useful tools and resources to consider in program design, implementation, evaluation, and planning.

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**Chapter 1    Introduction**

*Sustaining Academic Service-Learning in Planning*

The Community and Regional Planning program of the University of Texas at Austin, School of Architecture (UTSOA-CRP) has made *course-integrated community-based project work (CCPW)* a key – if not a requisite, component of its classroom-based teaching and planning instruction.[1]  Examples of such project work include CRP students serving as the facilitators of house meetings and neighborhood visioning sessions for communities in the Austin region to students designing new parks and other urban infrastructure for and with communities located along the Mexico-Texas border and beyond. Often referred to as *academic service-learning*, the pedagogy of incorporating community-based project work with classroom instruction is recognized to have significant benefits for college students, faculty, institutions, and the communities that these projects engage.[2]  More specifically, this teaching approach is understood to have substantial advantages in planning instruction, including in teaching planning students about "problem structuring, critical and strategic thinking, and the understanding of . . . political and institutional contexts" and other competencies central to planning practice.[3]

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[1] While at least one recent CRP course offering has made course-integrated community-based project work decisively optional for students – specifically, the Spring Semester 2006 offering of *CRP 381: Planning Processes and Practice,* CRP courses utilizing community-based project work as a teaching method have generally not promoted the idea that students can opt out of the community-based work experience via alternative assignments.

[2] Rouse and Sapiro; Eyler et al.

[3] von Horen et al., p.255

In general, academic service-learning is believed to make planning instruction more effective and "relevant" to students, professors, and society.[4]

Although the UTSOA-CRP program has utilized CCPW as a planning instruction method frequently in recent years – and it has made participation in CCPW an element of some required courses, exactly how CRP students and faculty members perceive the benefits and challenges of this instructional methodology has not been well documented.[5] More critically, it is not clear how CRP professors can best be supported in utilizing this teaching method in the planning curriculum, if the student and other stakeholder benefits deriving from CCPW are valued by the CRP program, and the continued and/or enhanced use of this methodology is desired?

*Intent of the Report*

With this professional report, I attempt to evaluate how CCPW can best be sustained and/or enhanced by the UTSOA-CRP program, based on the assumption that CCPW is a teaching approach that the program intends to continue utilizing and wants to derive the most benefits from.[6] Specifically, with this report, I provide the CRP program a definition of CCPW, or academic service-learning, based on experiential learning and democratic education theory and a review of recent service-learning research related to

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[4] Forsyth et al., p.236

[5] I use the abbreviation "CCPW" throughout this paper to describe "course-integrated community-based project work." I re-introduce this acronym at the first time it is used in every chapter.

[6] In a recent meeting with UTSOA students (February 2006), Dr. Kent Butler, current director of the CRP program and a director of the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), indicated that promoting and supporting "academic service-learning" within the UTSOA would be one of the focus areas of the CSD. Based on this statement and current CRP instructional practices, I assume with this report that CCPW - or

the benefits and challenges of this learning approach for students, faculty members, and other project stakeholders.  I attempt to frame this discussion in the context of the current debate about the "gap" separating planning instruction from planning practice.[7]

With this professional report, I also offer an overview of the CRP program's history of community-based learning, and a more in-depth exploration of recent CRP CCPW efforts through three case studies.  In addition, I provide a unique glimpse at how a cross-section of current CRP students and faculty members with experience with CCPW at UT perceive the benefits and challenges of this teaching approach.

In addition, I present the CRP program with an array of measures for determining an academic program's or institution's level of community engagement and an assortment of "good principles" that can guide experiential education and academic service-learning.  Finally, I offer the CRP program a list of recommendations based on my research for enhancing its use of CCPW as a teaching method.

Ideally, this report will add to the growing body of literature related to academic service-learning as an approach to planning instruction, while offering the CRP program useful tools and topics to consider.[8]  Although the impact of CCPW on community stakeholders is an important consideration (and one that this report addresses indirectly),

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"academic service-learning," will be a teaching methodology that the CRP program will want to continue to employ and reap benefits from.

[7] Harkavy & Benson, p.12

[8] Although, the CRP program's use of CCPW meets *my* definition of "academic service-learning," I hesitate to state decisively in this report that the program utilizes academic service-learning as a teaching approach, primarily because no CRP course has yet to be designated an "academic service-learning course" by UT's Volunteer and Service Learning Center (VSLC). The VSLC is currently accepting course submissions for review and classification as "academic service learning" courses – for details, please visit www.utexas.edu/provost/academicservicelearning/criteria.html.

the emphasis of this report is on exploring the impact that CCPW has had and could have on CRP students and professors.

While not to be read as a comprehensive history of the CRP program's academic-based work with various communities since its founding, this report does offer a brief introduction to the CRP program's tradition of experiential learning in planning instruction, based on available organizational documents and interviews with current and past faculty members and program administrators. As a starting point (and to further suggest the need) for future work related to capturing the scope of the CRP program's community-based work, I offer a draft timeline of the CRP program's history of academic community-based work as Appendix A of this report – with "draft" being the operative word![9] I sincerely apologize for any omissions or misstatements that this document might contain. If anything, the draft timeline can serve as a compendium of information about the CRP program's community-based work that a community member might currently access through web-based searches and email correspondence with various professors and administrators.

The CRP program's utilization of CCPW in the last ten years (1996-2006) is explored in greater depth with this report, primarily, through three case studies that exemplify the scope and range of the program's more recent CCPW efforts. Current CRP students might not be very familiar with these projects, despite their recentness, because of issues related to promoting, and/or relating current community-based work to past CRP program CCPW efforts.

Ultimately, this report offers tools and suggests strategies for strengthening the CRP program's use of CCPW as an approach to planning instruction, including an emphasis upon documentation and better possible coordination and sequencing of CRP CCPW efforts. This report aims to provide the UTSOA-CRP program new insight and inspiration to utilize and provide for (possibly, with greater intentionality) a teaching methodology that has begun to define the UTSOA and the CRP program in the eyes of many students, professors, administrators, and the public.[10]

*Methodology*

This professional report was written during the 2005-2006 academic year, with primary research completed during the Fall 2005 Semester. Primary research conducted for this report includes one focus group session conducted with nine current "second-year+" MSCRP students with experience with CCPW as part of their CRP instruction and nine one-on-one structured interviews with current CRP professors with experience utilizing CCPW as a teaching method at UT.[11] In addition, informal interviews were

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[9] This includes informal interviews and email correspondence with current professors Terry Kahn and Robert Paterson, and with former CRP professors Peter Coltman and Sandi Rosenbloom.

[10] The UTSOA was recently featured in a yet-to-be-aired PBS special, as a result of the School's increasing commitment to architectural and planning instruction via course-integrated community-based "design-build" work. Specifically, the PBS special features UTSOA course-based project work in Obregon, Mexico, in partnership with PROVAY, a self-help housing organization serving the local Yaqui indigenous population. I participated in the Winter Break 2005 "Design-Build Mexico" project as a CRP student, with the option of earning credit for this experience via an independent study with Prof. Steven Moore. For more details about the project, please visit www.hogardelviento.com. In addition, original research conducted for this report suggests how some prospective students have been attracted to the UTSOA-CRP program in recent years because of their perception of the institution as a leader in CCPW or "academic service-learning"– please see Appendixes B & C of this report, for details.

[11]Students are strongly encouraged to complete the 48 credit hour MSCRP program in two years, or four concurrent full-time semesters during the regular academic year. Yet, it frequently takes students longer

conducted with some current and former UTSOA-CRP professors to gain additional information about the CRP program's history of CCWP, and to develop case studies for this report. The focus group session and structured interviews were not recorded beyond field notes, and the responses reported were compiled from these notes. The decision not to record was made primarily in respect to the confidentiality of research participants and the desire for this academic work to be exempt from the federal review process governing human subjects research at UT.[12]

To a large degree, the research tools developed for this report – specifically, the student focus group and faculty structured interview format and basic questions, are based on the work of The UC Berkeley Service-Learning Research & Development and elements of their *Evaluation System for Experiential Education (ESEE).*[13] My research method was shaped primarily by the timeframe in which I had hoped to complete this report (one semester), and my lack of experience with academic service-learning research.

*Report Structure*

Chapter II of this report presents a more thorough introduction to the concept of academic service-learning/course-integrated community-based project work, exploring

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than four semesters to complete the program, often as a result of the professional report / thesis requirement of the program. This is a trend that at least one CRP web page notes. For details, please visit http://web.austin.utexas.edu/architecture/academic/crp/crpcurr.html

[12] For details on UT's Human Subjects Research guidelines, please visit www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humanresearch/aboutIRB/index.php

[13] For more information on The UC-Berkeley Service-Learning Research & Development Center and the ESEE.

the theoretical roots of this innovative teaching approach.  This chapter also provides a review of recent and key literature related to academic service-learning and the documented benefits of this approach for student and professors.  This chapter concludes with an exploration of what is known about planning instruction and planning practice, and how academic service-learning can help connect planning theory and practice.

Chapter III of this report offers a brief overview of the history of the CRP program's utilization of course-integrated community-based work as a teaching method. It explores the impact of this work in the last decade in more depth, via three case studies. Specifically, I look at:

- Prof. Robert Paterson's work with students for the City of San Marcos (Hays Co., TX), via the Summer 2000 offering of *CRP 383: Brownfield Redevelopment Seminar*, an elective course.

- Prof. Anne Beamish's work with students in Mike's Colonia (Starr Co., TX), via the Fall Semester 2002 offering of *CRP 980z: Physical Planning Workshop*, a required course.

- Prof. Michael Oden's work with students assisting CDC's in Texas, via a partnership with the Texas Association of Community Development Corporations (TACDC) and project work incorporated into the 1998, 1999, & 2001 offerings of *CRP 388: Affordable Housing Policy*, an elective course.[14]

These case studies exemplify the "universe" of the CRP program's CCPW offerings over the past decade, and each project demonstrates important and unique institutional lessons learned.

Chapter VI of this professional report reviews the responses gathered from a focus group session with current second-year+ CRP students and structured interviews with

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[14] Dr. Michael Oden was the principle reader of this professional report

CRP faculty members with experience with course-integrated community-based project work, conducted during the Fall 2005 semester. More complete compilations of focus group and structured interview responses are included as Appendixes B and C of this report, respectively.

Finally, Chapter V of this report offers the CRP program an array of civic engagement indicators and experiential education and service-learning "best practices" to draw from when considering the CRP program's future use of CCPW. The report concludes with a list of recommendations of actions that the CRP program could take to sustain and/or enhance the use of CCPW as a teaching approach based on my research and the information presented with this report.

**Chapter II   Academic Service-Learning and Planning Instruction**

*The Roots of Academic Service-learning*

The theoretical roots of academic service-learning can be traced to experiential learning theory, or the idea that "learning is deepest when situated in some meaningful, real-world context."[15]  Experiential learning theory also provides the foundation for more "democratic" approaches to education and schooling that contrast with Plato-inspired and/or "banking" models of formal education, or the idea of "fixed truths . . . [,] advanced education for the few," and emphasis on fact and skill transfer rather than on knowledge creation and application.[16]  As a pedagogy, academic service-learning is based both an experiential and democratic learning theory.

Although many academics have shaped the growth of this teaching approach, the educator and philosopher John Dewey, especially, is considered one of the founders of the democratic education movement and a forefather of academic service-learning.[17] Dewey's theory of education and learning can be described as encompassing four basic premises:

> 1. Knowledge and learning occur from *reflective thought on action.* When people "focus their attention, energies, and abilities on solving genuine dilemmas and perplexities -and when they reflect on their experience," they "increase their capacity for future intelligent thought and action"

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[15] Singh, p.1
[16] Harkavy & Benson, pp.11-12
[17] Forsyth et al, p. 241

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2. Traditional formal education, which emphasizes knowledge transmission rather than shared knowledge creation, establishes passiveness in students that is devastating to learning and "radically antithetical to American democratic ideals"

3. "All individuals can contribute to knowledge." Knowledge is not permanent or fixed nor limited to a '"high priesthood'" of scholars. Students should "help shape their own learning, help form their curriculum, and reflect on its value"

4. Knowledge should be pursued for the benefit of human welfare – and for no other purpose. One's immediate environment or community should be construed as "the focal point and wellspring of action, learning and scholarship." [18]

While not always acknowledged, these propositions together form the framework that differentiates academic service-learning from more authoritarian approaches to classroom based education, and, potentially, from other forms of "learning by doing" employed in planning instruction.

Depending on how they are oriented and structured, experiential learning, or "situational" teaching approaches common of planning and architecture instruction, including apprenticeships, internships, and/or practical studios or workshops, can reinforce Plato-inspired notions of education, learning, and social roles - conceptualizations that Dewey and others consider antithetical to democracy.[19] As one critic of what has been deemed "traditional" understandings of education and approaches to classroom learning has written:

> The emphasis that permeated the traditional school was recitation, memorization, recall, testing, grades, promotion, and failure. And for this kind of education it was necessary that children primarily listen, sit quiet and attentive in seats, try to fix in their minds what the teacher told them, commit to memory the lessons assigned to them, and then, somewhat like a cormorant, be ready at all times to disgorge the intake. . . . This fixed, closed, authoritarian system of education

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[18] Adapted from Harkavy & Benson, p.16
[19] Forsyth et al, p.246

perfectly fitted the needs of a static religion, a static church, a static caste system, a static economic system.[20]

As academic service-learning is broadly understood, this particular experiential learning approach explicitly indicates and supports a more democratic conceptualization of community-member interactions (including teacher-student and professional-client relationships) and orientation to knowledge and scholarship.


*Defining "Academic Service-learning"*

Academic service-learning has been defined as a teaching methodology that intentionally combines course-of-study-relevant community-based work, or "service," with academic learning, via specific course goals, objectives, and/or assignments.[21] Although the phrase "service-learning" has been used within the education field since at least the early 1990s to describe more experiential and democratic approaches to formal instruction, the term "academic service-learning" was introduced more recently to delineate course-based service-learning from other non-course-integrated forms of service-learning that might be practiced within an academic institution – including, potentially, via internships and "alternate spring break" programs.[22]

Most essential to the accepted operational definition of academic service-learning is the idea of community-based work (or "service") *integration* with course-based studies.  More than a "community service option or requirement to an academic

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[20] Hirsch

[21] Janke, p.13

course," the community-based, if not off-campus, work completed via academic-service-learning is understood to be "a critical learning complement to the academic goals of a course."[23]   The "service" that students (and sometimes faculty members) perform via academic service learning is meaningfully incorporated into the curriculum and tied to the learning objectives of the course and the program of study.

As Kathleen Maas Weigert describes this approach and practice, academic service-learning involves student community-based work that "flows from and into course objectives, is integrated into the course by means of assignments that require some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives, and . . . is assessed and evaluated accordingly."[24] Distinct from "volunteerism" and/or "community service," academic service-learning requires structured course-based contemplation of community work experiences that are definitively integrated with classroom learning and requirements.[25]

In regards to the community-based work/"service" criterion of academic service-learning, educators have suggested that academic service-learning connotes a desire by an academic institution to "create a positive presence in a community," and that the relationship with the "community" or individual "neighborhood organizations" formed and/or maintained through academic service-learning efforts is "one of *partnership* rather than simply placement" [emphasis added].[26]  This idea complements a

[22] Janke, p.13
[23] Howard, p.21
[24] Weigart, p.5
[25] Weigert p.5; Howard p.21
[26] Forsyth et al, p 239

more robust "community-side" definition of academic service-learning – and it also reinforces the idea of academic service-learning as a democratic learning pedagogy.[27]

From a community perspective, academic service-learning occurs when "the student provides some meaningful service (work), that meets a need or goal, that is defined by a community (or some of its members)."[28] The "meaningfulness" of the community work completed in academic service-learning is determined by course objectives and assignments, student abilities and desires, and community stakeholder needs and wishes. Beyond the role that community members from outside the academic institution play in shaping academic service-learning efforts, this teaching approach also requires a different level of opportunity and responsibility for students than what traditional education prescribes to them.

As Weigert asserts, academic-service learning implies a rather complex learning partnership among professors, students, and communities or community members - with each partner having "some voice" in shaping "the various aspects of the relationship," including in determining student instruction and assignments and work and project assessment.[29] Although the term "academic service-learning" has achieved a fairly common understanding among academics, the semantics of this phrase, as Weigert and others have argued, can obscure the idea of *expanded learning partnership* that truly

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[27] Weigert p.6
[28] Weigert p.6
[29] Weigert p.7

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defines this experiential learning and "democratic education and schooling" teaching approach.[30]

Specifically, the use of the word "service" in describing this pedagogy is considered problematic by some academics, who prefer to refer to academic service-learning as *"community-based learning"* or *"community-learning"*; for them, this terminology allows the " . . . conceptual space needed for developing more reciprocal relationships among [learning] partners."[31]  For other educators, the variation in word choice in describing academic service-learning is the difference between *"change* versus *charity* approaches" to curricular-based community work, or an instructional orientation "emphasizing transforming social conditions versus . . . emphasizing ameliorating individual suffering."[32] Yet, course-based community work can attempt to address needs or desires at both scales, and the work can be motivated by both aspirations, or by other conceptual frameworks - or even *combinations of cognitive orientations,* not identified or implied here.[33]

As Forsyth et al note, students engaged in planning and architecture specific-academic service-learning/*community-based learning* might:

> . . . deal with individuals and the state by giving advice to individual elderly, low-income home owners on resources for home repairs; or they could help individual owners of neighborhood businesses take advantage of facade improvement programs.  A second group could focus on grassroots democracy and work with a neighborhood association in a low-income area using participatory design and planning methods to enable the local residents to take control of their own neighborhood planning.  A third group could work within a

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[30] Weigert p.6; Harkavy & Benson, p.14
[31] Weigert p.6
[32] Forsyth et al, p.240
[33] Forsyth et al, p.240

social justice framework and help a community development corporation to analyze city parks and recreation budgets and designs and propose ways of delivering more equitably distributed open space resources to those in need. Finally, students could design a play area for disabled children and through this realize the rewards of a long-term commitment to serving others . . . .[34]

As the above paragraph suggests, academic service-learning projects can intentionally or inadvertently embrace or be embraced by multiple social perspectives.

Yet, while each of the potential community-based projects listed above could be interpreted as demonstrating a particular worldview and/or social change orientation, in order to qualify as academic service-learning, by definition, each project would have to be structured based on democratic education ideals. It is the organization and actualization of community-based work – or *process,* and not the scope of actual work – or *product,* that defines academic service-learning.

*The CRP Program's "CCPW" Approach*

I avoid calling the CRP program's use of *course-integrated community-based project work* (CCPW) "academic service-learning" in this report in order to draw attention to the idea of learning partnership that this pedagogy entails. This is also in deference to UT's system for designating such courses; UT's official definition of academic service-learning, in keeping with the field and the tenants of democratic education theory, as based on process, including in how the issues addressed or service provided with CCPW is established *(". . . by or developed collaboratively with the*

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[34] Forsyth et al, p.240

*community entity"*) and the other possibilities offered to students and the community by the project and the course (including *"opportunities for students to critically reflect on the community service and synthesize these experiences with academic theories and concepts,"* and course performance evaluation based on *"their success at integrating the academic concepts of the course and the community service experience"*).[35]

Although no CRP courses are currently recognized as "academic service-learning" classes by UT, based on my experiences as a student, I would argue that the CRP program has engaged in work that meets at least the operational definition of academic service learning and the spirit, if not the letter, of the criteria offered by UT for academic-service learning. The intentionality in which CRP professors have striven to meet this criteria or to understand their work as academic service-learning, and/or their success in these endeavors, however, are other questions – and are issues explored in greater detail in the next chapter of this report.

Beyond particular examples and challenges, the general conceptual and operational questions raised by academic service-learning are touched on throughout this report - including the potential issue of obligatory "service" via required academic service-learning, and the difficulty in structuring community-based work so that it meets the needs of all the learning partners involved. Central to this report, there is the question of relevance of the CRP program's institutional orientation in a democratic society - and the ethical commitments of the planning field to serving a "greater public good," in

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[35] Quoted from *Academic Service-Learning at UT Austin*, http://www.utexas.edu/provost/academicservicelearning/criteria.html

decisions about teaching approach, course and curriculum structure, and organizational practice.[36]

My labeling of the CRP program's course-integrated community-based project teaching approach as "CCPW" should not be construed as an effort to further delineate one form of CRP program course-integrated community-based project effort from another; I assume that all the CRP CCPW examples explored with this report strove to promote the basic tenants of academic service-learning, are not merely examples of "traditional" experiential learning in planning (such as practical studios), and that there is no need to further sub-categorize these efforts, based on what could be described as "product" differences. This is counter to the recent trend in service-learning research and literature to attempt to classify, with greater specificity, academic service-learning efforts based on differences in project scope and/or deliverables.

For instance, in the matrix of models of service-learning included in Section II of their "University of Wisconsin-Madison Service-Learning and Community-Based Research Manual for Faculty and Instructional Staff," Rouse and Sapiro describe the *Group Project/Consulting Model* of academic service-learning.[37] This model, which they define as engaging ". . . a small class group or an entire class in a community project . . . where service-learners apply technical expertise to community needs or problems . . . to produce a product or provide technical consultation to a community organization or school" describes fairly accurately the scope of CCPW that CRP students are typically engaged in. Yet, beyond technical problem-solving and/or product development, CRP

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[36] Weigert, p.6

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students engaged in CCPW also often assist with community facilitation and capacity- and critical awareness-building, providing the services and developing the competencies that, some argue, are ultimately most critical for actual planning practice.[38]

In order to evaluate the effectiveness or appropriateness of academic-service learning as an approach to planning instruction, it is important to first examine what research indicates are the positive impact of service-learning for students. Once the documented benefits of this teaching approach are identified, how they relate to planning instruction and/or what makes a good planner can be explored.

*Academic Service-learning Research*

In 2001, Janet S. Eyler and a team of associates at Vanderbilt University attempted to summarize the then-burgeoning field of service-learning research in higher education, specifically, by exploring the research generated from 1993-2000.[39] Their summary explores the results of over 150 individual research projects, and it offers insight into the positive impacts of service-learning on college students, professors, institutions, and communities. Specifically, Dr. Eyler and her team found that service-learning has documentable multi-level positive effects on college students, including:

A. *Effects on Personal Outcomes*

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[37] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II
[38] van Horen, et al., p.257
[39] Eyler et al., p.1; unfortunately, Dr. Eyler and her team have not completed a more recent survey of service-learning research. Personal email correspondence with Dr. Eyler (October, 2005) indicates that she has not had the "resources" to update this volume.

- Service-learning can have a positive effect on student personal development such as sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth, and moral development.
- Service-learning can have a positive effect on interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others, leadership and communication skills.

B. *Effects on Social Outcomes*
- Service-learning can have a positive effect on reducing stereotypes and facilitating cultural & racial understanding.
- Service-learning can have a positive effect on sense of social responsibility and citizenship skills.
- Service-learning can have a positive effect on commitment to service.
- Volunteer service in college is associated with involvement in community service after graduation.

C. *Effects on Learning Outcomes*
- Students or faculty report that service-learning can have a positive impact on students' academic learning.
- Students or faculty report that service-learning can improve students' ability to apply what they have learned in "the real world."
- Service-learning participation can have an impact on such academic outcomes as demonstrated complexity of understanding, problem analysis, critical thinking, and cognitive development.

D. *Effects on Career Development*
- Service-learning can contribute to career development.

E. *Effects on Relationship with Institution*
- Students engaged in service-learning report stronger faculty relationships than those who are not involved in service-learning.
- Service-learning can improve student satisfaction with college.
- Students engaged in service-learning are more likely to graduate.[40]

These research findings support the undocumented "benefits of service-learning" for students that Rouse and Sapiro report.[41]  In their handbook of service-learning, Rouse and Sapiro contend that, for students engaged in CCPW, the "content of course[s] comes to

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[40] Adapted from Eyler et al., pp. 2-8
[41] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II

life through the practical application of learning in the community."[42] They also suggest that, for students, academic service-learning:

1. Strengthens their understanding of course material.

2. Improves critical thinking skills and recognition of the complexity of problems.

3. Requires students to assume more responsibility for their learning.

4. Introduces students to current societal issues.

5. Broadens students' perspectives by connecting them with the larger world.

6. Increases the value placed on public service.

7. Helps them understand the difference between assisting an individual and becoming involved in public policy to foster change.

8. Increases their multicultural fluency and understanding of differences between socio-economic classes.

9. Aids students in making an impact on the community where they live.[43]

Obviously, these are outcomes that support higher learning, and, because of the applied nature and community focus of the field, the study and practice of planning.

While there has been less research related to the benefits of service-learning for professors, Eyler and her team indicate that, based on their review of service-learning research, college professors are increasingly integrating service-learning into courses, and that the faculty members who utilize service-learning in the classroom report overall "satisfaction with [the] quality of student learning" (Eyler et al, p. 9).  Related to these findings (but not documented with research), Rouse and Sapiro suggest that academic

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[42] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II
[43] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II

service-learning is beneficial to professors, in that this teaching approach, among other positive factors:

1. Strengthens and renews teachers because students are more engaged in learning.

2. Serves as a catalyst for faculty to review their teaching methodologies . . . Community agencies and clients will challenge them.

3. Extends the classroom into communities for the development of *mutually-beneficial knowledge* . . . which test current theories and practices [emphasis added].

4. Demonstrates faculty commitment to the community by awarding academic credit for research and service directly related to course content.

5. Increases opportunities for professional recognition and rewards.

6. Provides opportunities for faculty to introduce the latest research to the community.

7. Places faculty in alignment with the institutional mission.[44]

This final assertion, especially, assumes institutional support for a professor's use of academic-service learning.

Yet, there are substantial and documented barriers to student and faculty participation in academic service-learning - caused primarily by institutional structure and/or lack of organizational commitment. These barriers are explored in the final chapter of this report, along with other questions and ideas related to the operationalization of academic service-learning within the UTSOA-CRP program.

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[44] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II; while not exhaustive, my review of more recent service-learning research does not indicate that the paucity of research efforts related to the effects of service-learning on professors has necessarily been addressed. To some degree, the original research completed for this report supports the generalized benefits of service-learning for students and professors, and helps to build the body of knowledge related to the impact of academic service-learning on college students and professors.

Although the focus of this report is not on the impacts of academic service-learning on communities, it is interesting to note that research does indicate that academic service-learning often provides communities useful service, partner communities tend to be satisfied with the student participation in this service provision, and that this approach can enhance "university relations" and/or perceptions of the university or academic institution.[45] From an organizational development standpoint, these findings suggest that academic service-learning might be worth the investment, in terms of possible public relations gains. However, the success of future shared learning endeavors is dependent on the ability of the institution to relate new learning partnerships or agreements with the achievements or failures of past community-based work. Exactly how the university can partner with a "community" – or "communities" is dependent on how the institution defines these terms, and/or how these communities define themselves.

For Rouse and Sapiro, the potential positive impacts of academic service-learning for communities can occur at "community agency" and "community client" levels.[46] This definition is useful when considering the CRP program's CCPW approach, which most often involves work with a community agency (such as a church, a city government office, a school, or a neighborhood association or other non-profit). For community agencies, Rouse and Sapiro report that academic service-learning is beneficial, in that it:

1. Supports the work of agencies, which are often understaffed and under-budgeted by providing resources and time given by students, faculty, and staff.

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[45] Eyler et al., p.9
[46] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II

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2. Creates new alliances and partnerships with the University; demystifies a large and complex institution.

3. Creates opportunities to learn about the latest research in their areas and work to test that research.

4. Creates opportunities to ask for more research on practical questions for staff and clients.

5. Infuses agencies with the excitement, enthusiasm, and energy of young college students, as well as older and more students who can "hit the ground running" based on their previous educational experience and employment history.

6. Garners wider support for the work that agencies do.

7. Allows agencies to work with students and decide whether there are some future recruits among them.[47]

For community "clients" or members, Rouse and Sapiro suggest that academic service-learning:

1. Provides clients with direct or indirect services which might not otherwise be available to them.

2. Gives clients the opportunity to teach students about the many aspects of their lives.

3. Clients can provide direct feedback about the services and the research being done in the agencies.[48]

Although the positive impacts that academic service-learning can generate *for* community agencies and clients/members can be a prime motivation for college students, professors, and universities to engage in this methodology, it is the shared learning and the intentional balancing of benefits for all the stakeholders involved in the project that

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[47] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II

distinguishes academic service-learning from other experiential learning approaches and other forms of community-based work or service.

The comprehensiveness of the learning contract that must be established between diverse stakeholders in academic service-learning (and the value of witnessing and/or struggling to structure such a shared strategy to achieve a range of potentially complimentary objectives with partners of varying levels of social power and education) seems extraordinarily appropriate for planning instruction - and for the education of citizens in a democratic society. The ultimate desire of this experiential learning methodology to achieve greater societal benefits further strengthens the argument in favor of academic service-learning as an approach to planning instruction, even if the cognitive benefits for students – namely, the "increased relevance of subject matter and linking theory to practice" can potentially be achieved through other less "counternormative" forms of experiential learning.[49]

*Planning Instruction & Planning Practice*

The need for planners and planning students to embed their technical function/knowledge within a greater role of social and reflective practitioner is a theme echoed throughout this report - and an idea supported by democratic education theory, Schön's concept of "reflective practice," and the American Institute of Certified Planners

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[48] Rouse and Sapiro, Section II
[49] Forsyth et al, p.237; Howard, p.24

(AICP) *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.*[50]  While academic service-learning is understood to have definite advantages in the education of planners, it is the potential greater societal benefits of academic service-learning (and the institutional and/or structural reform that utilizing this methodology over time implies) that truly separates academic service-learning from other experiential learning approaches in planning instruction.

Specifically, academic-service learning is believed to be particularly useful in helping planning students develop "operational understanding," or the ability "'to reach certain goals" and facilitate planning in "a wide variety of contexts or situations.'"[51] This is supported by research that indicates the effectiveness of academic service-learning in helping students apply classroom-learned knowledge to "real world" practice – including skills related to "complexity of understanding," "problem analysis," and "critical thinking."[52]  However, other models of experiential learning in planning instruction can potentially have similar cognitive benefits – including internships, practical-based studios, and/or courses utilizing a "problem-based learning" pedagogy.[53] Yet, these teaching approaches, by definition alone, do not suggest the greater social benefit that academic service-learning promises for our democratic society.  More critically, since these teaching approaches are not necessarily rooted in democratic learning theory, use of these teaching approaches can potentially endanger an academic institution's ability to utilize and benefit from community-based learning over time.

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[50] Schøn ; AICP
[51] Roakes & Norris-Tirrellin, p.100
[52] Eyler et al., pp.4 & 5

In the case of problem-based learning (PBL), students collaborate with each other (and, sometimes, the professor) to address a professor-posed, but non-researched and minimally-staged, "authentic task" – with the assignment not necessarily requiring interaction with the community or the provision of an actual community service in order to address the "problem" or complete the requirements of the course.[54] The weakness of this learning approach (especially for a program or institution emphasizing community-outreach or sustainability and a field emphasizing positive community change-making) is that the learning "partnership" or contract does not extend beyond the student-professor relationship. The community is "laboratized" or "colonialized" via this teaching approach, in the sense that classroom instruction is derived from a community's struggles or realities with no attempt to assist or learn from that community or to relate with that community beyond a crude "problem" or resource orientation.[55] This can be especially problematic if independent PBL-related student research extends into the field to gain the knowledge needed to complete a PBL assignment that is based on an actual community problem.

Utilizing finite community resources (including agencies' and members' time and perceptions) to explore community "problems" with little or no reciprocity can endanger an educational institution's future experiential learning attempts; the literature related to community perceptions of academic community-based work is clear on this.[56] Furthermore, framing communities as simply a collection of problems (as PBL

[53] Shepherd & Cosgriff, p.348
[54] Shepherd & Cosgriff, p.351
[55] Leiderman, et al., p.13

necessarily does) - and encouraging a student orientation towards community agencies and members as merely the purveyors of information needed by "experts" to tackle difficult issues, is demeaning, anti-democratic, and counter to the ethical code guiding planning. Although PBL and other more traditional forms of "learning by doing" appear to offer an advancement in formal instruction – including in planning, in isolation, they fail to challenge the educational paradigms that have led many to question the relevancy and value of higher education to our society.

While academic service-learning has been criticized as a "watering down" of the curriculum of higher education, many educators and administrators have embraced this teaching approach as a means to address "perceived shortcomings of the information-dissemination model" and other more authoritarian learning perspectives and approaches that dominate formal education in the U. S. – including the idea of the separation and hierarchical ordering of theory and practice.[57] Since the late 1980's, especially, the quality and purpose of higher education in the U. S. has been questioned – and more traditional orientations to scholarship sharply criticized.[58] Through the work of Boyer, Schön, and other modern educational reformists, educational methodologies that divide "teaching and doing, school and life, research and practice" - and that have been called "insidiously effective at deadening the experience of school at all levels," have been

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[56] Leiderman, et al., p.13
[57] Gray et al., p.1; Harkavy & Benson, p.12
[58] Rice, p.7

challenged by the vision (if not the reality) of more engaging, integrative, and socially relevant approaches to learning utilized within higher education.[59]

In the field of planning, in particular, many academics have noted a "gap between planning education and planning practice" that, some feel, an academic service-learning approach to instruction addresses. While research indicates that the varying *professional contexts* (private or public, planning- or non-planning related, self employed or non-self-employed, or combinations thereof) in which a planner can practice – in addition to changes in the field and job requirements over time – provide a unique challenge to formal planning instruction, research also suggests that there are some proficiencies that are universal to planning practice.[60] Most interestingly, the planning competencies that research indicates are most significant to actual planning practice tend to be related to those cognitive skills that academic service-learning has been documented to reinforce.

Specifically, research indicates that communication, presentation, and socio-political skills rank as the most important competencies for planners across professional contexts and over time.[61] More descriptively, these proficiencies include the ability of planners to understand "institutional arrangements to manage spatial development" and the capacity to "manage uncertainty, build and sustain networks, and manage pressure and reach out to various groups with empathy."[62] In contrast, according to recent research, planners' quantitative analysis abilities rate "uniformly low," in terms of their importance to actual planning practice as determined by actual planning professionals -

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[59] Schon
[60] Guzzetta & Bollens, p.104; van Horen, et al., p 258
[61] Guzzetta & Bollens, p.104

with skills in microeconomic analysis and regression analysis ranking "dead last."[63] While research, to some degree, contradicts itself on this final point, it is agreed that there is a breach "between the supply and demand for planning analysis methods" that planning education does not necessarily address.[64]

This is not to say that there is no place for "rational/analytic" skills development (or "planning methods" instruction), within planning education; indeed, it is this knowledge that, in many ways, delineates planning from other disciplines and defines the field.[65]  However, research about what actual planning practice entails suggests the need to balance "'quantitative argument filter'" development with instructional practices that encourage the growth and nourishment of "a historical filter, an institutional filter, a political-economic filter, and a literate filter" in planning students.[66] While certain planning methods should be included in planning instruction – and, in fact, are required for accreditation, some planning programs have reached the conclusion that these topics do not merit separate stand-alone semester-long courses.[67]  Structuring planning methods instruction in formats more conducive to skill development, such as through five-week one-credit "modules"/intensive workshops (which can also allow more planning practitioners into the teaching process), and reinforcing the knowledge gained through these modules with more practical-based and integrated semester long courses, is one

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[62] van Horen, et al., p.258
[63] Guzzetta & Bollens, pp.104 & 98
[64] Mahayni, p.355
[65] Mahayni et al., p.353
[66] Mahayni et al., p.354
[67] For details, please consult Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) "The Accreditation Document:  Criteria & Guidelines for Accreditation." Available at http://showcase.netins.net/web/pab_fi66/documents.htm

strategy used by planning programs to bridge the "planning education/planning practice" divide.[68]

The value of academic service-learning in helping planning students develop the "substantive" skills of planning, or the ability to contextualize planning-related quantitative and analytic proficiencies - in addition to allowing students the opportunity to practice the type of public service that the discipline requires, indicates the potential strength of this teaching approach in planning instruction.[69] With more "traditional" approaches to planning education apparently failing to model or prepare students for what actual planning practice entails, academic service-learning suggests a way for planning education to increase the intentionality and positive impact of course-based studies and integrate skill development across the curriculum.[70]

*Academic Service-Learning - "The Necessary Criteria"*

To summarize, Rouse and Sapiro identify "three necessary criteria for academic service-learning" that capture, to some degree, the theoretical foundation and main operational components that differentiates "academic-service learning" from other forms of experiential learning:

> 1. Relevant and Meaningful Service With the Community - service provided in the community must be *both relevant and meaningful to all stakeholders* [emphasis added]. There is purposeful collaboration between the University and the community. And the community plays an active role in defining . . .

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[68] Mahayni et al., p.353
[69] van Horen et al., p.258
[70] Shepherd & Cosgriff, p.348; Guzzetta & Bollens, p.98

the students' service activities . . . .

2. <u>Enhanced Academic Learning</u> - the addition of relevant and meaningful service with the community must not only serve the community but also enhance student academic learning in the course. The service and academic goals must inform and transform one another.

3. <u>Purposeful Civic Learning</u> - the addition of relevant and meaningful service in and to[/with] the community not only serves the community and enhances student academic learning in the course, but also prepares students for active civic participation in a diverse democratic society.[71]

The third criteria, especially, suggests the democratic education theory roots and orientation of academic service-learning, though the first criteria could more explicitly indicate the idea of shared partnership – including with students, that this pedagogy requires. These criteria, along with the definition of academic service-learning, research findings, and discussion about the benefits of academic service-learning in higher education and planning instruction presented here, offer the framework for reflecting on and building from the UTSOA-CRP program's history and current approach to course-integrated community-based learning.

## Chapter III    Past CRP Course-Integrated Community-Based Learning

*A Brief Overview*

Formal instruction in planning has been offered at The University of Texas at Austin (UT), since at least the early 1940's, with the addition of Hugo Leipziger-Pearce to the Architecture faculty.  Leipziger-Pearce, a prominent German-born architect with international community development and design experience, was invited to join the faculty by UT President Homer Rainey and San Antonio Mayor Maury Maverick, Sr. in 1939, for the express purpose of launching a program in Community and Regional Planning.[72]  The Master of Science in Community and Regional Planning (MSCRP) program was officially accredited in 1959. Leipziger-Pearce served as director of the CRP program for 19 years from its founding, and he retired from teaching at UT in 1974.

Through his groundbreaking work as program director and a faculty member of the UTSOA in the 1950's and 1960's, Leipziger-Pearce assured that CRP instruction at UT would be based in meaningful community service.[73]  His stewardship of the Urban Planning Assistance Program of the State of Texas and his efforts to engage planning students, as part of their formal schooling, in work with various Austin neighborhoods, surrounding towns, Mexico-Texas border communities, and various local "bio-regions"

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[71] Rouse & Sapiro, Section II, *Adapted from Service-Learning Course Design Workbook, Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning, Summer 2001.*

[72] Acosta, 2001

[73] For more information about Leipziger-Pearce's work and his collection within UT's Alexander Architectural Archive, please visit http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00004/aaa-00004.html Unfortunately, the one copy of his biography, *Portrait of Hugo Leipziger-Pearce, 1992* (oslc 35667917), that the UT Library System owns is currently lost.

(including the Trinity River Watershed) set the tone for the community-based efforts of the CRP program in the last four decades. While record of much of this work has been preserved and is accessible to faculty and students via the Alexander Architectural Archive, not often is Leipziger-Pearce's name mentioned within the CRP program at present, nor these foundational community-based projects referenced by professors or students.[74]

Under Leipziger-Pearce's guidance, the CRP program grew to embrace over 45 new students a year in the mid 1970's; current enrollment is closer to 35 students a year.[75] Leipziger-Pearce's commitment to "interdisciplinary learning" also assured that, for at least the first 20 years of the program, CRP students shared studio courses with architecture students, attended lectures of "the best professors in the other disciplines" related to planning (specifically, engineering and sociology), and met routinely with practicing planners and engaged in work in the field as part of their coursework.[76] As a component of their studies, CRP students also practiced community surveying and developed comprehensive plans for communities and sites that might not have otherwise afforded these resources.[77] While it is not clear whether this early course-integrated community-based work sprung from a "partnership" orientation or not, the project work occurring during Leipziger-Pearce's administration, by and large, has been documented

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[74] For more information about UT's Alexander Architectural Archive, please visit http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00004/aaa-00004.html
[75] Rosenbloom email.
[76] Coltman interview.
[77] Coltman interview.

well enough that at least *where*, *when*, and *what* community-based work took place and *by/with whom* can be surmised.[78]

Sadly, the same cannot be said about the community-based efforts of the CRP program in the last 30-40 years. While the purpose of this report is not to offer a complete history of the CRP program's academic community-based endeavors, a quick survey of the CRP work that has been archived by the School of Architecture indicates that information about the community-based efforts of the CRP program from the mid 1970s to present is sporadic, at best.[79] Through interviews and correspondence with current and past CRP faculty, it is possible to gain a greater sense of the community-based work that was done by the CRP program during this time period than has been archived, but these oral histories often conflict.[80] Although at least a few CRP course-integrated community-based projects have been documented through published or non-published final reports or other academic writing, this work is not in regular circulation – nor have these pieces apparently been added to the Alexander Architectural Archive collection. Such written culminating pieces, discovered through research for this report

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[78] For more information about Leipziger-Pearce's work and his collection within UT's Alexander Architectural Archive, please visit http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00004/aaa-00004.html

[79] For details on the Alexander Architectural Library archives related to the CRP program, please visit: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00081/aaa-00081.html
Other accounts of CRP community-based work from the 1990's can currently still be found on the active (but non-linked) web site of the "Urban Issues Program," a past project of the LBJ School of Public Affairs. For details, please visit: http://www.utexas.edu/academic/uip/

[80] In researching for this report, I conducted informal interviews with CRP professors considered the "institutional memory" of the program, and their statements regarding the history of the program often contradict each other. Especially in regards to the community-based work of past CRP faculty members, their accounts do not reconcile with the "reality" of those times – as expressed directly to me via email by those professors referenced.

and shared at the discretion of various professors, are often the only copies of these documents still in existence.

Unfortunately, documentation of CRP program community-based efforts and/or access to this work has not improved dramatically with technological advancement. Many of the CRP project reports discovered in researching for this report are currently not available in digital format. Although the CRP program has attempted to promote its course-integrated community-based project work (CCPW) electronically in the recent past, the "what's new" and "community outreach" pages of the CRP program's current web area lag behind recent practices and projects by at least three years.[81]  Yet, to a large extent, these superficial and dated web write-ups are the *only* documentation of the community-based project work of the past ten years readily available to CRP students and the public – and even current professors have difficulty recalling or placing, let alone drawing from, these recent projects.[82]

To a great degree, the topic and writing of this report was prompted by my experience as a MSCRP student completing a required CCPW assignment in a neighborhood of Austin where *student research during the course of the project* uncovered CRP student and faculty work in the same area dating back to the 1970's.  Not only was this past CRP community-based project not known about by current faculty and not noted in program documentation or archives, CCPW efforts completed by other CRP

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[81] As of the writing of this report chapter – March 2006.  For details, please visit:
http://web.austin.utexas.edu/architecture/academic/crp/crpnews.html
[82] An email message sent to CRP faculty requesting additional information about the community-based projects currently publicized in the CRP web area yielded very little response.

professors in the same immediate neighborhood (and, potentially, with the same community partners) as recent as two years prior could not be explored in any depth with course instruction because of similar issues of limited documentation and/or collaboration amongst faculty members or across CRP courses and course-based projects.

Beyond divisions within the CRP program, since Leipziger-Pearce's tenure as program director, the gap between programs of the School of Architecture has grown to the point that various architectural courses can be completing community-based work in the same specific geographic area – and/or addressing similar issues, without reference to each other; a good example of this is the competing course-based work currently occurring within East Austin to address issues of affordable housing and gentrification, and the plethora of UTSOA classes and coursework focused to the reconstruction of New Orleans, post-Hurricane Katrina. Although, as interviews with past professors indicates, individual CRP faculty members have demonstrated incredible personal courage in continuing the tradition of CCPW with students on challenging and important topics over the years (including work with residents of the Blacklands neighborhood of Austin on affordable housing during the late 1980's, when UT was attempting to annex the area – and university officials had ordered professors to cease work with this community), the failure to encourage collaboration and/or shared learning in these efforts threatens the future of this teaching approach.

In terms of their immediate (if not long-term) integration, current CRP community-based practices might not be as interwoven as past CRP CCPW efforts; it has been said that, in the past, CRP CCPW efforts intentionally bridged core courses, and

examples of CCPW from the late 1990's – specifically, in concert with the LBJ School of Public Policy at UT, spanned disciplines and semesters.[83]   This is not to say that past instructional practices were "better" - or, more importantly, more democratic.  However, it is important to understand and build from (or reject, based on principle) where the CRP program has "been" in terms of community-based learning, if the CRP program's current commitment to academic service-learning is to thrive and its CCPW to improve with future efforts.

*Three Case Studies*

In order to draw more deeply from the CRP program's recent past experience with CCPW – specifically, efforts that have occurred in the past ten years, I offer the following three case studies.  These projects were chosen, primarily because of their representation of the breadth of the CRP program's CCPW efforts in recent years, the broad questions they raise about academic service learning in planning instruction at UT, and the implicit lessons that they offer.  I also purposefully chose CRP CCPW projects as case studies that current CRP students would most likely have no direct experience with, in order to increase student, faculty, and my own awareness of these recent efforts. Together, these case studies provide a very interesting look at the CCPW that has distinguished the CRP program during the last decade.

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[83] Coltman interview; Paterson interview. For more information about the CRP Student Forum, please visit www.crpstudentforum.org or visit the Alexander Architectural Archives.

*Case Study #1: Prof. Robert Paterson's work with students and the City of San Marcos (Hays Co., TX), via the Summer 2000 offering of CRP 383: Brownfield Redevelopment Seminar, an elective course.*

Through this course-based project, Dr. Paterson and his class of approximately 20 students completed a "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment study" of a 28-acre tract of land owned by the City of San Marcos.[84]   At the time, the City was considering designating the site as park land, and a study of the site had been requested by the San Marcos Open Space and Greenbelt Alliance and the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program in order to establish the park.[85]   UT graduate students of planning, geography, architecture, and environmental engineering participated in the CRP summer course and worked with City officials to investigate the site, discovering, in the process, that the land had previously been used as a municipal landfill and a police firing range.  Based on their research, the class recommended that the City complete a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, apply for Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) Brownfield Site Assessment Program Support, conduct neighborhood well tests and monitoring, complete a new "blue line" survey to determine exact property boundaries, consider a phased-use remediation

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[84] Paterson interview

[85] Phase I, Executive Summary; For more information about the San Marcos Open Space and Greenbelt Alliance, please visit http://www.smgreenbelt.org/BenefitsEconomics.htm
For more information about the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, please visit http://www.nps.gov/rtca/

strategy for the site, and explore the redevelopment efforts of other communities dealing with lead and landfill contamination on a site.[86]

In terms of process, the project clearly demonstrates accepted elements of academic service-learning – including the integration of community-based work with a course's objectives and assignments (in this example, the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment itself formed the framing assignment for the course, completed collaboratively via the work of student groups) and work on a community-defined issue with local agencies.  The case study is also particularly useful in demonstrating the challenge of forming and maintaining the learning partnerships that drive academic service-learning, and the personal risks that professors can experience when engaging in this learning approach.[87]

More specifically, this case study exemplifies a situation in which the community-based work performed by a class in academic service-learning, or product, does not meet community expectations – and how project deliverables can influence current and future project relationships and endeavors.[88]  As a result of the community's negative reaction to class project work in this particular case study, student perspectives of the course were also negatively impacted, and Dr. Paterson was left with unenthusiastic course evaluations and research findings that were difficult to expand upon.[89]    In addition, student discoveries and community partner reaction to those

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[86] Phase I, Executive Summary
[87] Paterson interview
[88] Paterson interview
[89] Phase I, Executive Summary; Paterson interview.

findings posed a considerable ethical dilemma for Dr. Paterson – and for CRP CCPW work, in general.

With their project work, Dr. Paterson and his class presented the City of San Marcos with information that, for all intensive purposes, ended the shared learning relationship.[90] The level of contamination of the site studied by the class was much greater than the City had anticipated, and the potential danger that the site posed to neighboring properties was not an issue that the City wanted to contend with – or, at least not explore with UT students.[91] In response to the research findings and project recommendations, the City distanced itself from the course project, and chose not to participate in the class's final presentation of data, forfeiting their role in evaluating student efforts.[92] The results of the CCPW were, in a sense, "shelved," and students were disheartened to learn that their efforts would not lead to immediate positive action by the community – a valuable planning- and civic education- related lesson in itself.

Yet, the breakdown in learning partnership was reflected in student evaluations of the course, and the project could quite possibly mean the end of UT SOA-CRP program work with the City of San Marcos for the present. Beyond the negative impact on students and the university-community relationship, what could such a "failure" in the field have meant to a non-tenured CRP professor? Would lower course evaluations have affected that professor's ability to advance professionally? Would it have impacted the willingness of that professor to utilize academic service-learning in the future?

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[90] Paterson interview
[91] Paterson interview
[92] Interview with Dr. Paterson

And what of the CCPW findings and the question of the potential health risks posed by the site researched to neighboring residents?   Was it enough for the class to simply report on these dangers to the principle community partner, knowing that their research would most likely not be acted upon?  Should a follow-up study or actions have been planned?   Because of the ethical orientation guiding the planning discipline and practice, did the class or the CRP program have a greater commitment to the community members of an area involved in a project than to the community agencies that might have initiated or agreed to in forming a CCPW effort?

This case study suggests the importance and difficulty of identifying a project that fits the learning objectives and timeframe of a particular course - in this case, an accelerated summer semester class, with the benefit of presumably less competing coursework for students and faculty members to contend with.  The case study also demonstrates the need to document project process with CCPW reporting, as well as to capture and share the more tangible results of project work.  The final report for this particular course project does an excellent job of indicating how the project was identified and in listing student research protocol, results, and recommendation, but it does not discuss the role that students and the community played in project development or evaluation.

In general, the case study alludes to the relationship issues that can frustrate academic service-learning, specifically managing community partner and student expectations, and the importance of emphasizing process with the relationship rather than

product. The case study also, to a limited degree, indirectly suggests some of the immediate operational issues that can also challenge course-integrated community-based project work, including the logistical difficulties of students partnering with a community and/or completing community-based work in some locations, and the role that the academic calendar can play in shaping project expectations and structure.  In addition, the case study also suggests the need to plan, to some degree, for the entire life cycle of a project, including the impact of project work or study results.  Such longer term planning raises questions about institutional support for CCPW, including systems of evaluation and how this feedback is used in program planning.  The issue of adequate institutional support for academic service-learning is explored in greater detail via the following case study.

*Case Study #2: Prof. Anne Beamish's work with students and residents of Mike's Colonia (Starr Co., TX), via the Fall Semester 2002 offering of CRP 980z: Physical Planning Workshop, a required course.*

For the Fall Semester 2002 offering of *CRP 980z*, the CRP program's required *Physical Planning Workshop,* Professor Anne Beamish developed a course-integrated community-based project with Mike's *colonia*, an "unregulated subdivision on private land" located just 14 miles east of Rio Grande City on the Mexico-Texas border.[93]  At the time, Mike's was a settlement of approximately 300 households.[94]  Mike's was chosen as a project site primarily because of the "unusual and extreme conditions" offered by the

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[93] Beamish, p.3; while the 2002 offering of CRP 980z was Dr. Beamish's first experience conducting a course-integrated community-based project with a Texas *colonia,* CRP community-based work has engaged Mexico-Texas border communities since at least the 1960's.  Currently, Prof. Kent Butler is exploring potential CCPW efforts with *colonias* in Webb County.

site and experienced by residents, and because of the presence of an active community-based group in the area, the Community Resource Group (CRG).[95] The willingness of the CRG to partner with Prof. Beamish on a course-integrated project to address an identified community need (in this case, the development of a "common space in the settlement"), the limited scale and scope of the project (a "long, narrow, empty two-acre lot" prone to moderate flooding was identified as the project site by the community), and the high probability that student project work would be implemented by the community (community partners were aware of and comfortable with the inexpert help and/or limited design experience and work that students would provide) were all factors that encouraged the development of this CCPW partnership.[96]

As a required course, the class was comprised of approximately 27 second-year+ CRP students, many of whom spoke no Spanish.[97] Like with the *Brownfield Redevelopment Seminar* course explored in the previous case study, the community-based project formed the primary assignment of this offering of CRP 980z. However, much more of the process of this particular CCPW has been documented, as a result of Dr. Beamish's academic writing about this project - specifically, via her contribution to a yet-to-be-published book about service-learning.

In this particular CCPW effort, CRP students worked in small groups - first as members of specialized site inventory teams and then as participants in six separate

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[94] Beamish, p.3
[95] Beamish, p. 3; For more information about the CRG, please visit http://www.crg.org/
[96] Beamish, pp.3-4
[97] Beamish, p.4

design teams to complete course requirements.[98]  While the majority of the course was conducted on-campus, the entire class participated in a three-day field trip to Mike's *colonia* at the beginning of the semester, and representatives from the six design teams traveled back to the community at the end of the semester to present their work to the community and the County Commissioner.[99] In addition to student travel, "several guest speakers" traveled from Starr County to the campus to brief students on the "conditions, challenges, and issues faced by residents in the valley."[100]

Ultimately, the class offered the community six original design possibilities for a community park, based on their research, exploration of the site, and interactions with community members and representatives.[101]  Specifically, the design scenarios, while each unique, collectively emphasized "self-build" techniques, "low-cost maintenance," phased design, and "water-conserving native plants" in landscaping.[102] Their designs also commonly included a "pavilion" or family gathering and/or performance space, "community gardens" and public art.  Community members evaluated these student proposals and explored the range of design options presented to them to develop their own vision of a community park that included "a stage for community shows . . . , a covered market area, a community garden, a playground . . . , a playing field, a basketball court, a picnic area, shaded seating, and a community center."[103]

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[98] Beamish, p.3
[99] Beamish, p.4&5
[100] Beamish, p.5
[101] Beamish, p.6
[102] Beamish, p.7
[103] Beamish, p.7

Although the CCPW never led CRP students to actually construct a park for or with residents of Mike's *colonia* (nor was this the intent of the project), community partners and residents begin working to raise the funds to realize the project shortly after the conclusion of the semester.[104]   From a community standpoint, there was an understood but not exaggerated benefit to participating in the CCPW, and the project informed and supported their shared goals.  The project work also clearly helped CRP students achieve the learning objectives of the course, including gaining a sound introduction to "design and design practice," via "experience working in a real-world situation, on a scale that they could manage" - and with a design objective that they were at least superficially familiar with.[105]  In addition, because of the efforts of Prof. Beamish and students to document the "success" of the project,, it was recognized by the "Central Texas and Texas state chapters of the American Planning Association (APA)," earning "2003 best project awards" from both organizations.[106]

Although the project clearly demonstrates a major achievement for Prof. Beamish, her students, and the UTSOA-CRP program, it is important to note that Dr. Beamish does not plan to utilize an academic service-learning approach with every offering of *CRP 980z* – nor to conduct projects with Mexico-Texas border communities via this particular course in the future, as a result of her experiences with this project and the "pedagogical and administrative" challenges that it posed.[107]

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[104] Beamish, p.6
[105] Beamish, p.8
[106] Beamish, p.8
[107] Beamish, pp.10&14

As has been suggested, one potential obstacle to the success of this particular CCPW effort – and a concern of academic service-learning practitioners, in general, is the "pre-professional quality" of students' work and abilities. Students participating in CRP 980 typically have no prior physical design experience or training - and preceding course work usually does little to prepare students for the course. To address this challenge and in keeping with academic service-learning tenants, Dr. Beamish made sure that students were not presented to the community (or encouraged to think of themselves) as either design "experts" or project "consultants." Prof. Beamish purposely described the project and students' work as an exercise in "offering a range of ideas to the community . . . and as a means of prompting discussion," rather than giving students or the community partners the impressions that students were there to "answer" the community's "problem."[108] Framing the CCPW as such, Dr. Beamish was able to balance the learning objectives and novice design skills of her students with the desires of the community - and she also freed herself from the need to further edit or expand upon students' final work in order to offer the community a more "professional" end product at the conclusion of the semester.

This is not to say that CRP students did not put forth much effort - and makes some personal sacrifices, in order to complete substantial work for and with the resident's of Mike's *colonia* that the CCPW required. Beyond students' design ability, another major challenge to this particular project is the limited instructional time and/or credit allotted to *CRP 980z* by the CRP program. The uniformity in how the CRP program

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[108] Beamish, p.10

allots credit hours to courses challenges, to some degree, any course with a CCPW component, but particularly courses with CCPW that require physical design.

Students enrolled in design courses offered by other programs of the UTSOA typically earn six credit hours for each course, and are allotted instructional time proportional to this credit hour allotment[109] For students participating in the Fall Semester 2002 offering of *980z,* the course was worth only three credit hours, and students received a proportional amount of instructional time. In order to "produce fairly professional proposals in a fraction of the time allotted to [other UTSOA] design students," CRP students engaged in the project with Mike's *colonia* CCPW completed, in the instructor's words, an "extraordinary amount of extra work," in addition to meeting the demands of other course and program requirements.[110]  To remain on track with the two-year and 48-credit hour CRP program, students enrolled in *980z* and participating in the time-intensive CCPW, had to balance their involvement in this course and project with at least three additional courses, including other CRP core courses with potential CCPW requirements.[111]

Beyond the extra time students devoted to the course in order to develop the design skills needed to complete primary course assignments, the "sheer distance" of the course-integrated project site from the university – approximately 600 miles round trip– created an extra burden for both students and the course instructor.[112]  The logistics of

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[109] Beamish, p.12
[110] Beamish, p.12
[111] To review the most recent information about the core UTSOA-CRP program , please visit http://web.austin.utexas.edu/architecture/academic/crp/crpcurr.html
[112] Beamish, p.13

structuring the two student field trips to the *colonia* required by the project took "an inordinate amount" of the instructor's and the teaching assistant's time.[113]  Although the project itself might have been further simplified to lighten the burden on students and instructors, such a reduction to an already limited-scope project had the risk of making the CCPW "unrealistic, uninteresting to the students" – and, ultimately, "not very useful" to community partners.[114]

Another burden of this particular CCPW example for students was the financial costs of the project.  The additional cost of student field trips required of the Mike's Colonia project were "shouldered" primarily by the students themselves; the project received no funding from the university or the CRP program (although individual faculty members contributed to the project), despite official endorsement of the educational and social importance of the work and the positive attention for the university and program that the CCPW eventually generated.[115]

While it is not unusual for students to pay additional costs for off-campus experiences related to elective courses, "having to pay for field trips for a required class" was viewed by the students participating in this CCPW effort as an unfair burden.  In addition, the students perceived paucity of support that they received from the program, School, and University to complete this project as a demonstration of "a lack of interest in their work and effort" by the institution – and, quite likely, these feelings impacted

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[113]Beamish, p.13; From personal experience, I can attest that a course-integrated community-based project can add an inordinate amount of work to a teaching assistant's load.
[114] Beamish, p.13
[115] Beamish, p.13

student course assessment responses. Beyond student perceptions of institutional indifference to CCPW, the minimal support that Prof. Beamish received from the institution has colored her perception of this teaching approach. In general, the Mike's Colonia project did not receive the "practical or financial support" from the CRP program, the UTSOA, or UT that Dr. Beamish had hoped for – and, ultimately, this has influenced her willingness to utilize this teaching approach with future classes.

As Dr. Beamish has noted, academic service-learning has the potential to create "an educational experience that is far more vivid and memorable" than what a traditional approach to classroom-based formal planning instruction can offer, and, for better or worse, involvement in CCPW can motivate students to "go to extraordinary lengths to succeed."[116] This desire for success can be problematic if students are not supported through CCPW structure that stresses student learning over product delivery, if expected community service is beyond the capacity of students, and if students are not reimbursed fairly for their efforts - including in terms of the expected or implied time and other personal resource investment that project participation requires.

Challenges to students potentially posed by CCPW effort are compounded by insufficient programmatic and/or institutional support for faculty member use of academic service-learning approaches. Organizational policies and/or structures that frustrate (as opposed to encourage and support) faculty members' ability to establish and maintain "meaningful" community-student-professor learning partnerships should be avoided. This includes off-campus learning procedures and process that discourage

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[116]Beamish, p.14

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community-based learning (including vehicle rental and field trip protocol), professional advancement reward systems that undervalue the multiple benefits of CCPW, and lack of adequate reimbursement of professors for CCPW efforts (including for hours spent in project cultivation, planning, evaluation, and documentation).

As Dr. Beamish suggests, one way to compensate for a lack of institutional investment in academic service-learning is to limit the use of this teaching methodology to elective courses.[117] Yet, as Beamish also contends, if CCPW offers a "a valuable educational experience, and teaching the skills needed to work in communities is an important goal," should participation in this approach to planning instruction be limited to just those CRP students who "actively seek" this type of learning – and/or who can afford to pay the extra costs associated with it?[118]  Given adequate funding and logistical support, should participation in academic-service learning be optional?

Dr. Beamish also suggests that another way to reduce the administrative and financial burden of CCPW is to reduce the geographic range in which community-based work can occur, and/or build CCPW relationships so they can be revisited by a particular course over time.[119]  Drawing from the CRP program's reported past CCPW experience, another idea is to design CCPW opportunities so that multiple courses can contribute to work on a single project and/or with a particular community or community entity. While the question of required service-learning is not addressed by the next case study, the following case study does demonstrate a multi-year (if not a cross-program, cross-school,

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[117]Beamish, p.15
[118]Beamish, p.15
[119]Beamish, p.15

or cross-university) CCPW effort, the benefits of this work, and also the challenges that it posed.

*Case Study #3:  Prof. Michael Oden's work with students assisting CDC's in Texas, via a partnership with the Texas Association of Community Development Corporations (TACDC) and project work incorporated into the 1998, 1999, and 2001 offerings of CRP 388: Affordable Housing Policy, an elective course.*

Through the elective course *CRP 388: Affordable Housing Policy*, Dr. Michael Oden established a CCPW partnership with the Texas Association of Community Development Corporations (TACDC), an Austin-based organization, to help them "map the universe" of CDC work state-wide.[120]  Prior to this partnership, very little was known about the nature and extent of CDC efforts in Texas – their effectiveness and/or ability to sustain themselves. Through two offerings of *CRP 388*, Dr. Oden and his students surveyed existing CDCs in Texas, helping the TADC to collect data about how these organizations are financed and the scope and impact of their work.  While this elective course is no longer offered by the CRP program, similar content is explored in *Affordable Housing Development and Design* – an elective course cross-listed with Architecture.[121]

Specifically, through the course-based partnership with the TACDC, graduate students in the Spring Semester 1998 offering of *CRP 388* designed a paper-based survey to collect information from existing Texas CDCs about their financing and the quantity and type of housing that they produce each year.[122] Students worked to implement this survey, based on the information about CDCs in Texas that the Texas Department of

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[120] Oden interview; For more information about the TACDC, please visit http://www.tacdc.org/
[121] I participated in the Fall Semester 2005 offering of this course.
[122] Oden interview

Housing & Community Affairs (TDHCA) had collected.[123]  From the TDHCA, students had a list of approximately 400 organizations from across the state that had been identified as possibly being engaged in CDC-type work. When only 20 organizations of the list of 400 responded to the students' survey, the community-based project work of the course shifted to increasing the survey response rate through telephone interviews with identified organizations.

With the Spring Semester 1999 offering of *CRP 388*, students again worked to gather more information about CDC "activities and outcomes" in Texas, first through a paper-based survey.[124] As part of the class, students explored ways to improve the survey response rate to changes in the survey format.  They attempted a number of strategies, including by printing the surveys on bright paper colors, sending a dollar bill with each survey, and creating a prize for completed surveys.

As with the Spring Semester 1998 offering of *CRP 388*, the Spring 1999 course supplemented paper-based surveying with follow-up phone conversations with the organizations targeted.[125]  Students spent five-to-six hours a week conducting phone interviews, "talking" organization representatives through the paper survey (interview). Through the calling, students helped increase the response rate and learned much about the issues faced by these organizations - and more about Texas affordable housing policy, in general.

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[123] For more information about the TDHCA, please visit http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/
[124] Oden interview
[125] Oden interview

As with the other two CRP courses utilizing a CCPW approach presented as case studies in this chapter, collaboratively completed project work - in this case, the CDC survey and surveying, comprised the primary requirement of both offerings of *CRP 388*. In both course offerings, the "class research project" was supplemented with various individual assignments, including readings and a take-home exam.[126]  In terms of a final product for the community partner, Dr. Oden compiled the survey data collected by students with their coursework, presenting this data to the TACDC and at several housing and community development conferences.[127]

From a project standpoint, the financial costs of this particular CCPW effort were quite low - and the community partner, TACDC, supported the project financially, helping to cover the costs of survey duplication, mailing, and phone calling.[128] In addition, logistical concerns were not a critical issue, as students were not required to travel away from the campus to complete the "community-based" project.  Meaningful student interaction with the "community" - in this case, the entire state as represented by various CDCs, was assured through the telephone surveying component of project work. The CDC staff members interviewed also helped to shape the survey process and the structure and direction of the course and project - through their written feedback, and the comments and ideas shared with students during phone interviews.

As an immediate result of the work of the 1998 class with the project, the TACDC established a summer internship position focused to increasing the response rate of the

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[126] For the course syllabus, please visit
http://web.austin.utexas.edu/architecture/people/faculty/oden/crp388.html
[127] Oden interview

first CDC survey attempt - and to "boiling down" the original list of potential CDCs offered by the State to just those organizations engaged in "core CDC work."[129]  The work of the student intern, hired from the CRP program and a participant in the 1998 offering of *CRP 388*, increased the response rate of the first survey attempt to 103 responses.  The work of the student intern helped to further "build up" the TACDC as an organization and "add validity to the problem" of affordable housing in Texas.[130]

Along with additional CRP CCPW directed to statewide CDC surveying, 1999 saw the emergence of new leadership within the TACDC – and a strong organizational commitment to institutionalizing the CDC survey work that Dr. Oden's class had initiated.  New leadership of the TACDC made it an organizational goal to "perfect" the survey that CRP students had established, and to conduct statewide CDC surveying every two years.  Although CRP students no longer have the opportunity to engage in CDC surveying as part of their course work, CRP students continue to have the opportunity to complete paid internships with the TACDC to address affordable housing issues across Texas, as a result of the CCPW partnership established by *CRP 388*.[131]

Ultimately, the work of Dr. Oden and his students via *CRP 388* helped the TACDC increase its capacity to serve as a clearinghouse, technical assistance provider, and political advocate for CDCs across the state.  It also helped students learn more about affordable housing policy in an engaging and constructive format, and it has increased the

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[128] Oden interview
[129] Oden interview
[130] Oden interview
[131] For information on the "Lonestar Internship Program," please visit http://www.tacdc.org/capacitybldg.html

opportunity for all CRP students to participate in meaningful work related to addressing affordable housing needs in Texas with their course of study. It has also increased the ability of numerous communities across Texas to advocate and work for more affordable housing.

To some extent, Dr. Oden attributes the success of the project and learning partnership with the TACDC as the result of approaching the organization with a "soft deliverable."[132]  By not exaggerating the importance or potential of students' survey work – or establishing more of a "contractual research" relationship with the TACDC, in terms of what the actual survey would include or produce, Dr. Oden allowed the space for student work and course assignments to grow from survey attempts, community input, and reflection on this feedback and experience.  By minimizing community partner expectations and recognizing programmatic constraints and the limits of student work, Dr. Oden was able to offer CRP students and community members a valuable academic service-learning experience.

This is not to say that CCPW represented with this case study was not without its challenge.  Despite the lack of major logistical issues presented with this project, this case study does suggest the increased workload that CCPW can generate for a professor, in terms of presenting project results to various audiences and documenting this work for future generations.  Dr. Oden volunteered considerable personal time producing the final survey reports shared with the TACDC at the conclusion of each offering of *CRP 388*, in order to strengthen the benefits of the CCPW for community partners - and to assure that

future collaboration will be welcome. If Dr. Oden had not been able to make these sacrifices, it is not certain that the CRP program's relationship with the TACDC would continue to flourish. Fortunately, this extra volunteer effort was received positively by the partner organization, and the work did not endanger either his tenure track.

While Dr. Oden has publicized this CCPW effort, to some degree, through academic writing, and his *sui generis* approach to teaching students issues of affordable housing policy helped him earn teaching honors at UT in 1998, more recent CRP students and faculty members - and the planning and affordable housing fields, in general, might have limited knowledge of this past project work beyond what is captured in this report, because of lack of more systematic institutional documentation and promotion of this work.[133] Without easy access to past CCPW achievements or struggles, the lessons of this work (and the resources devoted to this teaching effort) can be lost. Despite the fact that this project work occurred in the last ten years, an internet-based search for details about this project yields little more than a link to Dr. Oden's CV. As research for this report has demonstrated, individual faculty members cannot be burdened with the responsibility of being the sole source of institutional memory. Indeed, the challenges of developing and maintaining current work and CCPW efforts are great enough, and it is easy for individual recollections of CCPW to fade or disappear with time.

Without greater institutional commitment to capturing and sharing the lessons learned from CCPW attempts - and to supporting and promoting new CCPW efforts, it is

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[132] Oden interview
[133] While not mentioned directly, this project work is suggested within Dr. Oden's vitae. For details, please visit http://www.ar.utexas.edu/Faculty/oden/odenvita.html

easy for current students to assert that affordable housing issues are no longer a focus of the UTSOA-CRP program, even as new faculty-driven CCPW efforts directly related to affordable housing issues are emerging.[134]  If it is solely the responsibility professors to create and sustain a CCPW approach to planning instruction, what resources are available to the professor in achieving this end and/or how is this work reflected in the faculty reward structure?

While not identified as an issue by Dr. Oden, this particular case study also raises questions about UT's current requirements for "human studies research," and/or for semi-structured academic-based student interaction with the community – in this case, through written and telephone surveys.  Based on new University standards, any "systematic investigation that is designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge, and which involves living humans about whom an investigator obtains information through intervention or interaction or obtains identifiable private information about living humans," such as what this CCPW effort entailed, would require special University approval.  All students involved in the CCPW would have to be listed as investigators and each sub-project would have to be reviewed and approved by a UT Internal Review Board (IRB), based on a *monthly review process*.[135]  While the need for guidelines to govern human subject research – and to protect all partners in a CCPW effort, is understood and appreciated, is UT's current human subjects research policy and

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[134] A recent recorded CRP Student Forum session discussion (March 31, 2006) captures this assertion For more information about the CRP Student Forum, please visit www.crpstudentforum.org or visit the Alexander Architectural Archives

[135] Coltman interview

procedure conducive to more participatory and action-oriented forms of scholarship? Does it support or hinder attempts at academic service-learning?

*Back to the Future*

Over time, the MSCRP program at UT has transitioned from a four-year, 60-credit hour interdisciplinary course of study to a more specialized and streamlined 48-credit hour professional program, mirroring national trends in planning instruction.[136] Recent CRP course work and CCPW examples indicate that CRP faculty members are striving to make their individual three credit-hour core and elective courses more community-based and integrative, within the current institutional structure and planning instruction context.

As the case studies of CRP CCPW efforts presented in this chapter suggest, current CRP faculty members face formidable challenges in the attempt to utilize academic-service learning approaches to planning instruction. Obstacles range from unrealistic community expectations to under-skilled student work to minimal institutional support for CCPW attempts. The lack of organizational and field-based commitment to academic service-learning, specifically, threatens the already tenuous ability of faculty members to balance community desires with student learning needs and expectations and with the additional requirements of their work.

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[136] To review the most recent information about the core UTSOA-CRP program, please visit http://web.austin.utexas.edu/architecture/academic/crp/crpcurr.html

Minimal organizational support pushes professors into the roles of CCPW project screeners, planners, administrators, evaluators, promoters, and, often, funders – positions that many faculty members chose to assume infrequently or with hesitation, or to reject outright.

This is highly unfortunate, considering the research-supported benefits of an academic service-learning approach to planning instruction, and the potential benefits of this work for students, communities, and faculty members.  In order to offer the CRP program more specific suggestions for how future CCPW efforts can be improved and sustained, the next chapter of this report explores the results of a focus group session with current second-year+ CRP students and structured interviews with CRP faculty members, conducted to gain a greater sense of how these groups perceive the benefits and challenges of academic service-learning in planning instruction at UT.

**Chapter IV   The Benefits and Challenges for Current CRP Students and Professors**

*Researching the CRP Program's Recent CCPW Efforts*

While the field of service-learning research and the historic use of experiential education methodologies by the UTSOA-CRP program suggests the multiple advantages of a course-integrated community-based project work (CCPW) approach to planning instruction, this information alone does not provide a very detailed view of how current CRP students and faculty members benefit from this instructional practice.  Similarly, it is not known how future CRP CCPW efforts can be improved or supplemented based on current experiences.  In general, there is a need for the CRP program to reflect more critically on its current community-based work, and to modify its practices based on this shared learning.  This report chapter offers a glimpse at how recent CCPW has impacted students and faculty, and suggests a possible model for assessing and learning from future academic service-learning attempts.

In order to gain a greater sense of how current CRP students perceive the benefits and challenges of CCPW in planning instruction, I completed a focus group session with ten second-year+ MSCRP students who have experienced this teaching approach first-hand during their course of study; the results of this focus group are included as Appendix B of this report.  To learn more about how current CRP professors perceive this teaching practice, I completed structured interviews with nine faculty members who have utilized a CCPW approach to planning instruction in their teaching at UT; the responses from these interviews are included as Appendix C of this report.  This chapter

offers a summary of this research, highlighting the ideas and themes that could guide future CRP CCPW efforts and organizational practices.

*Student Perspectives*

On October 28, 2005, I conducted a focus group session with a total of nine current MSCRP second-year+ students.  Students were invited to participate in this focus group based on their participation in a diversity of known CRP courses utilizing a CCPW approach occurring during the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 academic years, respectively; at the time, I was able to identify five such projects. Students participating in the focus group were screened to make sure that they had participated in at least one CRP CCPW effort during this time period and based on the CCPW opportunities that they indicated that they had been involved with.  With student recruiting, I also attempted to invite an equal number of male and female students and students of varying ages and backgrounds. In addition, I purposely excluded students who had served as teaching assistants (TAs) for CRP CCPW efforts from participation in this focus group, in hopes of gathering more of a general students' perspective of current CRP CCPW practices.

During the one-hour focus group session, participants were given the option to respond orally to a series of questions related to their motivations and aspirations for becoming involved with a CCPW effort, the benefits of this work, and reflections on the project process and accomplishments.[137] Participants' responses were not recorded

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[137] Please see appendix B

beyond field notes. The student responses listed in Appendix B of this report and included in this chapter summarize, to the best of my ability and recollection, the actual statements made by focus group participants. In some cases, language was altered to obscure students' identities and to remove reference to specific projects or professors.

In terms of student motivations for participating in a CRP course utilizing a CCPW approach, student responses ranged from a desire to build resumes and develop more marketable skills, to a desire to learn from clients in real-world situations, and to enhance classroom learning with assignments requiring greater complexity and creativity. More than one student indicated that they assumed that the CRP program would frequently utilize CCPW as a teaching method – and that the perceived use of this teaching approach by the program had attracted them to the UTSOA.

When asked about the personal benefits of the CCPW experiences that they had participated in as CRP students, student responses suggested that they had gained the real world experience that they had sought from participation and that they had developed "the confidence to do more of this type of work."[138] They also indicated that they had achieved a greater sense of the type of planning work that they would like to do in the future as a result of CCPW efforts, including in what cultural and organizational contexts it might be difficult for them to practice. In general, students suggested, that, as a result of CCPW, they had developed a truer sense of their work and learning preferences.

Exploring CRP student perceptions of the benefits of CCPW efforts for community partners, student responses were more mixed. While a few students

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[138] Please see appendix B

participating in the focus group noted that CCPW attempts had produced new learning for community partners and had inspired community action, other students indicated a general lack of knowledge about what elements of their project work had been implemented and/or what the actual results of the project were.  Still other students noted that, to their knowledge, the results of CCPW efforts had been just "filed away" by the community partner.

When asked about the challenges of a CCPW approach to planning instruction, students expressed an understanding of the "varying levels" of skill that students possess as a possible challenge to CCPW efforts.  One student indicated that some project work had not been "challenging enough" - that student assignments had been simplified to the level that it was not useful to community partners. Another student expressed concern about CCPW efforts "sacrificing learning" in order to develop more useful tools for community clients. In general, students expressed an awareness of the difficulty of achieving a true learning partnership with a community – and/or developing CCPW efforts appropriate to different courses.

Responding to a question about how their CCPW efforts were evaluated, students indicated that they would like for professors to spend more time considering where students "start off" when establishing learning objectives for a course and/or developing a CCPW effort.  Beyond comments related to a perceived lack of attention paid to student abilities in course and project design, at least one student indicated that professors can be biased towards community deliverables in CCPW efforts and evaluation.  In general,

students expressed considerable empathy with professors and their approach to evaluating student CCPW efforts.

Finally, when asked how the CRP program's CCPW efforts could be improved, students indicated that there is a need to increase collaboration and the "synergy" between CRP courses and projects - and to improve how project work is promoted and documented; one possible way to help accomplish this, suggested by one student, is to focus project work to a specific geographic area over time. Students also offered that more collaboration / continuity is necessary to address CCPW limitations related more to "the semester length" than to student abilities or learning needs or expectations or community desires. Students also urged professors to avoid more contractual arrangements in CCPW, and to address client expectations "head on" and make sure that students are not perceived as a mere "free pool of labor" by community partners.

It should be noted that, while at least one student indicated that students have the potential to take CRP CCPW efforts "too seriously," no student indicated directly that the extra time or other resources that students might devote to CCPW attempts is a major challenge. This could indicate that the time and other resource demands of CCPW efforts are more acutely experienced by the faculty members and teaching assistants who organize these projects.

Focus group participants also contended that program and course learning objectives could be more clearly "spelt out" to students, and that CCPW and other course assignments need to be more closely related to achieving these learning objectives. Students also indicated that CRP professors should work more collaboratively to

reinforce learning objectives across the curriculum.   Students also asserted that they would like for future CCPW effort to draw more intentionally from the program's "large alumni network," and in other ways connect future community-based project work to that of past students and professors.

In general, student focus group results indicate that CRP students benefit from and appreciate the opportunity to participate in CCPW efforts – and they recognize, to some extent, the challenges that faculty members face in utilizing this teaching methodology.  CRP students participating in the focus group were also quick to indicate that perceptions of program commitment to this teaching approach influenced their decision to study planning at UT.   Institutional struggles to sustain CCPW were also perceived by students, including in terms of limited collaboration across the program to support and promote the use of this teaching approach. It is interesting to compare these viewpoints with current faculty member perceptions of CCPW efforts.

*Professor Perceptions*

From October 14 to November 23, 2005, I conducted one-on-one structured interviews with nine current CRP faculty members, to gain a greater sense of how CRP professors with experience utilizing a CCPW approach in planning instruction at UT perceive this methodology.  Interviews were completely voluntary, and I invited all CRP faculty members with experience utilizing a CCPW approach in their classroom teaching at UT to participate.

Combined, the professors interviewed represent over 100 years of UTSOA-CRP teaching experience. Structured interviews were not recorded beyond what was written in field notes. During the structured interview, professors were asked a series of questions related to the benefits and challenges of this teaching approach, their motivations for utilizing this teaching methodology, and how they thought the work could be improved or better supported.

The faculty member interview responses presented in Appendix C of this report and included in this chapter, summarize, to the best of my ability and recollection, the actual statements made by faculty members during one-on-one structured interviews. In some cases, language has been altered to obscure the professor's identity and/or to remove reference to specific projects, students, or other faculty members. As is the case with the responses reported from the student focus group conducted for this report, who said what is not as important as what, in general, was offered in response to common interview questions.

When asked about the benefits of CCPW for community partners, CRP professors' responses ranged from the motivational "boost" that outside interest and student involvement can offer a community or organization, to the presentation of a broader range of ideas and issues to a community, to the provision of specific desired technical work. In general, faculty responses focused to the idea of assisting the community with "foundational work" - or the provision of tools or information "needed to move forward on their own plans" or to consider other strategies or options. As at least one professor noted, CCPW had provided communities with resources that they

could otherwise "not afford" or obtain on their own.  Yet another faculty member noted the potential of project work to establish an "ongoing relationship" with the program and University as a benefit for communities - and the institution.

Responding to a question about the benefits for students, CRP faculty members indicated that the benefits can be "huge."   Benefits for students that faculty members perceive include learning more about "the social reality" and/or "pace and cadence" of actual planning practice, including the "challenges faced trying to make . . . change." Other benefits for students noted by professors included the strength of a CCPW approach in teaching students the "human dimension" and/or "humility" of planning, including providing students a sense of how planners are judged by society and the "actual complexities" of working with a community, compared with a more "idealized" view of this work and these populations.

Interviewees also asserted that CCPW has had a positive impact on students' job prospects and professional development, in terms of their experience with "team and project management" and growth in "technical, verbal, and written communication skills."  In addition, interviewees viewed CCPW as "incredibly . . . motivating" to student learning and academic performance, including in terms of the "empowerment component" and contributive nature of this teaching approach, and how this methodology supports students' "do-gooder" intentions.  As at least one faculty member suggested, it is the desire to make meaningful change – including during their course of study, that draws students to study planning, and to the UTSOA-CRP planning program, specifically.

When asked about the challenges or possible dangers posed by a CCPW approach to planning instruction, current CRP faculty members indicated a range of concerns, including issues of undue pressure on students, community partner expectations, workload increases, and/or conflicts with institutional (programmatic, departmental, university-wide, and discipline-based) structure and policy.

In terms of concerns about students, at least one faculty member interviewed noted that students have the potential to take project work too "seriously – to the point that it can inhibit their learning and exploration." At least one faculty member noted a problem of students becoming overly competitive when approaching assignments related to CCPW. Interviewees also mentioned the problem of "free-rider" students in CCPW-related group work, and the issue of students "taking over" the group learning process and assignment work in CCPW experiences, in order to produce a more desirable deliverable.

It should be noted that these potential challenges to student learning are not unique to a CCPW approach to planning instruction. However, concerns about student "inexpert help" are indicative of academic service-learning teaching approaches, and it is an issue that interviewed professors identified as an obstacle to both student learning and project success in CRP CCPW efforts. As at least one faculty member suggested that students might not "be allowed" to do the work required by certain CCPW efforts or requirements in "the outside world," if they were not participating in certain CRP courses. Specifically, faculty members interviewed cited the lack of student "time and skill in evaluating data" as a critical barrier to the potential value of student CCPW

efforts for a community. As these interview responses suggest, concerns about students' perceived lack of expertise are intensified by project design decisions and community expectations, if not by faculty orientation to CCPW itself.

In addition to concerns related to student abilities, faculty members interviewed reported that use of a CCPW teaching approach could be challenged by "clients," or community partners, "not being able to articulate what they want" and/or "changing direction mid-course." These and other responses gathered from one-on-one faculty member interviews suggest a more "hard deliverables" and/or traditional expert-client relationship orientation to CCPW that might challenge the effectiveness of this teaching approach, especially in terms of broadening the scope of scholarship and helping students prepare themselves for reflective practice in a democratic society. As one faculty member indicated, "some clients don't understand that the priority must be educational." Based on interview responses, it could be argued that the process emphasis that academic service-learning necessitates might elude some current CRP professors, as well.

Yet, in general, professor responses to interview questions indicate that institutional structure and policy issues – and not student abilities or client expectations, are the primary factors challenging their CCPW efforts. Specifically, faculty members interviewed indicated that the three-credit hour per semester-long class format, the lack of administrative assistance with CCPW, and the limited reward associated with this work challenges their use of this teaching approach.

As one interviewee noted, "it is hard to find a project that can start and end in a typical semester format." A second interview subject indicated that "communities tend to

think that they were blown off - or used" by a CCPW effort, when "work halts at the end of the semester." As yet another faculty member asserted, attempting to extend a CCPW partnership beyond the semester usually requires a professor to "spend their break working" on project- or partnership-building related tasks. The fact that faculty members interviewed for this report perceive CCPW efforts as incredibly "time consuming" has led some professors to conclude that it is a teaching approach that they cannot afford to utilize "all the time," if ever again.

Beyond the issue of CRP faculty members not being supported administratively in their CCPW efforts, there is the question of this work being undervalued by the faculty reward structure, as determined by the program, department, University, and the field. As one faculty member interviewed for this report concluded, "the time it takes to do these projects is not worth the value in the tenure process." More than one faculty member indicated that professors "don't get extra points" in the tenure process for utilizing a CCPW approach, despite its potential multiple benefits for the planning field. As one respondent phrased it, "it is more like 'let's see your book.'" There is a sense among some CRP faculty members that CCPW - or even above-average teaching, is not valued enough by the institution to be worth the extra investment.

However, not all faculty members feel similarly. As at least two faculty member interviewed contended, there are ways that professors can "blur" the lines between "teaching, community-based work, and . . . tenure work" and make "teaching feed into scholarship, research, and community service." However, as at least one faculty member asserted, CCPW can be "a high-stakes gamble" for faculty members – especially, those

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seeking tenure.  A "bad project experience" for a professor can mean "course evaluations will stink," potential loss of a "publishing opportunity," and "the community is upset." The perceived risks and limited reward of this work have led some professors to conclude that utilizing a CCPW approach can not be a priority of their teaching.

To address the faculty member perceived challenges presented by CCPW effort, CRP professors interviewed suggested a number of strategies.   Ideas offered included structuring a more formal arrangement with communities at the beginning of a project to clarify "what will be delivered . . . and what kind of support the community can expect in the future," emphasizing a "soft" but meaningful community "deliverable" with project/student work, and prioritizing student learning in the project partnership.   To relieve the "pressure" of CCPW on students, at least one faculty member emphasized, "making sure that the course requirements reflect the hours that are allotted to the course."  In order to reduce the strain on faculty members, another professor's response suggests that "collaboration with other CRP courses" in CCPW efforts "could help."

In terms of project evaluation, at least one CRP professor interviewed indicated that "students must understand that their project work must meet the learning objectives of a class - as demonstrated in community-based project work and assignments." Another faculty member interview response asserts that students' group work "must be structured so that individual work and effort is evaluated." Recognizing the role that community members should play in evaluating CCPW efforts, at least one professor concluded "the community can and should offer feedback on the work, but students must understand that they are not being graded on how the client perceives their work."  Faculty members also

felt strongly that, at a minimum, the quality of student work offered to a community should be "critiqued – and the community made aware of that critique," if the student work itself is not "refined" by the professor.

In general, faculty members interviewed for this report indicated an awareness of the need for professors engaged in CCPW efforts to be "good at managing client expectations and selecting projects that fit the learning objectives and timeframe of the course," along with providing communities a meaningful service. Because of the increased demand of CCPW approaches to planning instruction on faculty members and students, at least one professor interviewed suggested that use of CCPW approaches be made optional - through alternative assignments, if not limited as a teaching approach to just elective courses. In addition, professors interviewed indicated that the extra faculty time devoted to CCPW should be supported with "funding, paid assistance, leave time, and other resources." Ultimately, professors interviewed concluded that CCPW accomplishments need to be better "showcased" and students involved in the showcasing process - along with making "project results" more "accessible to the community and the public."

*Evaluating the Research Method*

I developed my research method based on the time perimeters of a professional report and out of respect to students' and professors' busy schedules and desire for anonymity. As my first attempt at structuring and conducting a service-learning research

project, the basic research method that I offer with this professional report will, ideally, prompt improved methodologies in future research related to this subject, including in terms of better ways to quantify focus group and interview responses.

Ultimately, the results of this research offer the CRP program a greater sense of how recent use of CCPW as a teaching approach has impacted CRP students and professors. The challenges and ideas that students and faculty members report, similar to those identified by case studies presented earlier in this report, suggest how this teaching method can be better utilized and supported by the CRP program and how future CCPW efforts might be structured and assessed.

The final chapter of this report focuses to presenting an array of additional identified service-learning and experiential education "best practices" from the field, in order to offer the CRP program more ideas to consider when planning future academic service-learning efforts. While I attempt to avoid being overly prescriptive with this final chapter, I conclude this report with some specific recommendations, based on my research, for actions that the CRP can take to sustain the use of CCPW as an approach to planning instruction.

**Chapter V   Sustaining a CCPW Approach to Planning Instruction**

*Community-Building - A New Understanding of Planning*

To a large degree, the concept of "community-building" has replaced the paradigm of communities as "merely collections of pathologies, deficits, and problems to be solved" - and planners as the "problem-solvers," that has dominated traditional planning instruction and practice.[139]   National community-building organizations and projects, such as HUD's Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) program, have helped planning evolve from a professional orientation biased towards technical service provision and a pedagogical view of communities as simply "laboratories for urban research" to an understanding of planning as a complex political, social, and reflective practice and discipline.[140]

More specifically, the planning field has grown to understand and embrace the multifaceted role of planners as "experts and teachers but also as *learners* constantly engaged in dialogue with citizens, organizations, and communities" [emphasis added].[141] It is this continuous and mutual learning dialogue with multiple social actors and institutions that allows planners to not only help individual groups achieve greater "efficiency and effectiveness" in identifying and reaching targeted objectives, but to foresee and guide "more fundamental change."[142]

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[139] Rubin, p. 302
[140] Dewar & Isaac, p 334;
[141] Ebrahim & Ortolano, p. 460
[142] Ebrahim & Ortolano, p. 460

Based on this expanded understanding of planning, the rationale for academic-service learning in planning instruction is clear. If our profession is truly geared towards relationship-building, shared decision-making and learning, and expertise embedded in social practice, what more appropriate model for the education of planners is there than academic service-learning?[143]

As the Austin MSA context has taught UTSOA-CRP students, "principled opportunism" or "incrementalism" more closely describes how development actually occurs in communities in the U. S. – compared with the expert-centered "rational planning model" that dominates traditional planning instruction[144] Involvement in academic service-learning can both demonstrate and engage students in a more democratic and realistic approach to planning, helping students to develop "operational understanding" of planning in ways that "cannot be duplicated in the traditional classroom-oriented education."[145] Academic service-learning not only helps expand the "acceptable ways of understanding" the planning field and practice, it allows planning knowledge to be mutually constructed and instruction to be contributive.[146] It does not replace planning theory, but it does "create tensions that have the potential to transform" planning education - ideally, in ways that energizes and enriches both the discipline and the practice and narrows the gap between what planners are expected do and what and how they are taught.[147]

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[143] Wiewel & Lieber, p. 291
[144] Wiewel & Lieber, p. 292
[145] Roakes & Norris-Tirrell, p 101.
[146] Roakes & Norris-Tirrell, pp. 101-102.
[147] Dewar & Isaac, p. 334

The ultimate purpose of academic service-learning in planning education is to move the discipline - and specific planning instruction programs, towards "deeper" or more democratic relationships with communities.[148]   Campus Compact, a "national coalition of nearly 700 college and university presidents committed to the civic purposes of higher education," has developed a set of ten indicators that they feel suggest "wider institutional engagement" with communities.[149]   The questions these indicators pose relate to:

> 1. *Pedagogy and epistemology* – "is gaining knowledge through experience accepted as an academically credible method of creating meaning and understanding?"
>
> 2. *Faculty development* – "are there opportunities for faculty to retool their teaching methods to employ . . . methodology that maximizes the value of integrating community-based experiences with the academic aims of a course?"
>
> 3.  *Enabling mechanisms* – "are there visible and easily accessible structures on campus that function both to assist faculty with community-based teaching and learning and to broker the relationships between community-based organizations (community partners) . . . ?"
>
> 4. *Internal resource allocation* – "is there adequate funding available for establishing, enhancing, and deepening community-based work on campus-for faculty, students, and programs that involve community partners?"
>
> 5. *External resource allocation* – "is there funding available for community partners to create a richer learning environment for students working in the community and to assist those partners to access human and intellectual resources on campus?"

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[148] Hollander, et al, p. 30
[149] Hollander, et al, p. 30

6. *Faculty roles and rewards* – "do the tenure and promotion guidelines used at the institution reflect the kind of reconsideration of scholarly activity . . . whereby a scholarship of teaching and a scholarship of engagement are viewed on a par with the scholarship of discovery?"

7. *Disciplines, departments, interdisciplinarity* – "to what extent does [community-based education] exist only on the margins of the curriculum, or has it been allowed to penetrate the institution's academic core?"

8. *Community voice* – "how deeply are community partners involved in determining their role in and contributions to community-based education, and to what degree can they shape institutional involvement. . . ?"

9. *Administrative and Academic Leadership* – "to what degree have the president and academic leadership been in the forefront of institutional transformation that supports civic engagement? To what degree is the campus known as a positive partner in local community development efforts?"

10. *Mission and purpose* – "does the . . . mission explicitly articulate its commitment to the public purposes of higher education and higher education's civic responsibility to educate for democratic participation? Are these aspects of the mission openly valued and identified to reinforce the public activities of the campus?"[150]

While many of the indicators listed here have been suggested by this report, the Campus Contact indicators pose additional questions that can help the UTSOA-CRP program strengthen its course-integrated community-based project work (CCPW) efforts – including questions about program mission and faculty reward systems. With UT recently joining the Campus Compact, these indicators are increasingly pertinent to the CRP program's operations.

Yet another series of "indicators" drafted by Campus Compact, in this case in partnership with the American Council on Education, suggest the role that certain "campus constituencies" not mentioned directly in the previous set of indicators can play

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[150] adapted from Hollander, et al., pp. 30-31

in promoting (or hindering) community engagement.[151]   This "Campus Assessment of

Civic Responsibility," includes:

> 1. *Students* - "does . . .curriculum help students develop civic competencies and civic habits . . . [including] the arts of civil public argument, . . . the ability to critically evaluate arguments and information, the capacities and curiosity to listen, interest in and knowledge of public affairs, and the ability to work with others different from themselves . . ."

> 2. *Administrators and staff* - "how well do . . . [they] create and improve structures that sustain civic engagement and public contributions in many forms? To what extent does our staff receive recognition for the often extensive ties that many have with the local community?  To what extent do . . . administration and faculty view the staff as an integral part of the process to educate students for democracy?  To what extent is  . . . staff encouraged to work with faculty to examine and change the campus culture to support engagement?"

> 3. *Trustees and alumni* -  "are trustees engaged in discussing the importance of the civic responsibility of the institution in all its dimensions?  Are alumni educated about the institutions' civic engagement and encouraged to support those activities?"[152]

The "Campus Assessment of Civic Responsibility" also urges educational institutions to consider:

> 1. *Democratic Practices on Campus*  - "does the campus model democratic behavior?  Does the campus engage all constituencies in governance,  . . . promotion of robust debate, in the ways in which we use tensions and controversies as teachable moments?

> 2. *Campus/Community Partnerships* – how well does  . . . [the] institution create and sustain long-term partnerships with communities and civic bodies?  [Does the institution] . . . share resources with . . . partners?  . . . allocate resources . . .?  Can civic partners point to long-term, positive experiences with . . .[the] campus?"

> 3. *Communications with the Community* – "how well does  . . . [the] campus promote awareness . . . ?  How well does  . . .[the] campus create structures that generate a more porous and interactive flow of knowledge . . .?"

> 4. *Community Improvement* – "to what extent [has the institution]  . . .improved

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[151] Ehrlich, et al, p. 52
[152] Adapted from Ehrlich, et al, pp.52-56

the condition of the communities surrounding [the campus] . . . ?  How well . . . [does the institution] think about procurement and employment practice and use of physical plant as opportunities to enhance . . . local communities?"

5. *Campus Engagement* –  "how well . . . [does the institution] make sustained efforts to track civic engagement activity by students, staff, or faculty and make an effort to deploy these activities in strategic ways that make maximum impact on the community's improvement agenda?"[153]

Insert "planning program" where "campus" or "institution" is mentioned in these two sets of indicators, and a fairly comprehensive understanding of how the UTSOA-CRP program might begin to assess and increase support for its CCPW efforts emerges.

While these indicators should not be viewed as a "checklist" or recipe for community engagement, they do imply ways that an academic institution's policies and practices can support or challenge community-based/service-learning.[154] These indicators can help inform the "next steps" that the CRP program takes immediately and over time.

*Experiential Learning "Principles of Good Practice"*

Beyond general indicators of academic institutional "engagement," academics have also attempted to identify standards of "good practice" for experiential learning, in general.  The National Society of Experiential Education (NSEE) offers the following "Eight Principles of Good Practice for All Experiential Learning Activities":

1. *Intention* - "all parties must be clear from the outset why experience is the chosen approach to the learning that is to take place and to the knowledge that will be demonstrated, applied or result from it."

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[153] adapted from Ehrlich, et al, pp. 52-56
[154] Hollander, et al, p. 30

2. *Preparedness and Planning* - "participants must ensure that they enter the experience with sufficient foundation to support a successful experience. They must also focus from the earliest stages of the experience/program on the identified intentions, adhering to them as goals . . . The resulting plan should . . . be flexible enough to allow for adaptations as the experience unfolds."

3. *Authenticity* - "the experience must have a real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation. This means that is should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation."

4. *Reflection* - "reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. . . . .Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes."

5. *Orientation and Training* - "for the full value of the experience to be accessible to both the learner and the learning facilitator(s), and to any involved organizational partners, it is essential that they be prepared with important background information about each other and about the context and environment in which the experience will operate. . . . "

6. *Monitoring and Continuous Improvement* - "any learning activity will be dynamic and changing. . . . It is important that there be a feedback loop related to learning intentions and quality objectives and that the structure of the experience be sufficiently flexible to permit change in response to what that feedback suggests."

7. *Assessment and Evaluation* - "outcomes and processes should be systematically documented with regard to initial intentions and quality outcomes."

8. *Acknowledgment* - "all parties to the experience should be included in the recognition of progress and accomplishment. Culminating documentation and celebration of learning and impact help provide closure and sustainability . . . ."[155]

These standards re-enforce the ideas captured by the indicators of engaged academics presented earlier in this chapter, and they also support the more general tenants of academic service-learning presented previously in this report.   These guidelines also

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[155] Adapted from National Society for Experiential Education, http://www.nsee.org/about_us.htm

relate to the "standards of good practice" for academic service-learning that have been identified by the field.[156]

*Academic-Service Learning "Principles of Good Practice"*

While earlier chapters of this report have discussed the definition and criteria for "academic service-learning," Jeffrey Howard has identified the following ten "principles of good practice" to further help guide academic service-learning efforts:

1. Academic credit is for learning, not for service.
2. Do not compromise academic vigor.
3. Set learning goals for students.
4. Establish criteria for the selection of community service placements.
5. Provide educationally-sound mechanisms to harvest the community. learning
6. Provide supports for students to learn how to harvest the community learning.
7. Minimize the distinction between the student's community learning role and the classroom learning role.
8. Re-think the faculty instructional role.
9. Be prepared for uncertainty and variation in student learning outcomes.
10. Maximize the community responsibility orientation of the course.[157]

Similar to the engagement indicators presented earlier in this chapter, these principles suggest important points for educators to consider, but they are not necessarily prescriptive of academic service-learning. To some extent, these particular criterions oversimplify the challenges that use of this teaching approach poses. However, as with

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[156] Howard, N. D., p 3.
[157] Howard, N. D. 3-6

the other indicators and principles presented in this chapter, they can help guide the CRP program's future CCPW efforts.

*Recommendations for the CRP program*

From the case studies and research conducted for this work, it is clear that there are major challenges that the CRP program faces in sustaining an academic service-learning approach to planning instruction.  Based on the CCPW efforts that they have been involved in, a sampling of current CRP students indicate that inadequate project structuring could jeopardize the success of future academic service-learning attempts; specifically, they refer to issues related to managing community partner expectations and making meaningful student learning the priority of the project as potential barriers. Students also report that lack of coordination amongst projects and/or courses, could negatively impact the ability of students to benefit from use of this teaching approach.[158]

Drawing from the faculty member interviews and case studies completed for this report, limited organizational support of professors for CCPW could be a major challenge to the use or benefits of an academic service-learning approach to planning instruction. Professors cite a lack of logistical assistance and/or limited financial support and professional reward as obstacles to the use of academic service-learning approaches to their teaching. Related to this concern is the question of disciplinary recognition of academic service-learning as a valuable component of planning scholarship, and how

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[158] Please see Appendix B.

these views are interpreted at a university level, in terms of tenure and promotion decisions and evaluation practices.

Based on the ideas presented throughout this report, my knowledge of the UTSOA-CRP program gained through my involvement in the program as a student and researcher, and my desire to help the CRP program achieve the goal of making academic service-learning central to its work, I offer the following recommendations to the UTSOA-CRP program.

At an instructional level, I recommend that:

1. *Faculty members should determine mutually agreed-to deadlines for establishing upcoming course syllabi, and they should share in course and project planning* - advanced and shared planning of courses and CCPW efforts will allow for greater coordination of academic service-learning attempts, greater general knowledge of each other's work, more insight into how to structure course-based projects in the UT context, and, ideally, more effective use of limited programmatic and individual resources.

2. *Syllabi for courses utilizing an academic service-learning approach should stress process* - this includes in terms of how student <u>learning</u> will be evaluated and the opportunities for students and community partners to influence course and project design that are built into the course and project.

3. *Student input into course and project design prior to the course start date should also be encouraged* - early student involvement in course and project planning can encourage greater coordination with student research and internship choices, and potentially increase the benefit of academic service-learning for community partners.

4. *Faculty members should share strategies for managing and evaluating group work-based assignments* - this could benefit all CRP courses, including courses utilizing an academic service-learning approach.

5. *Faculty members should conduct informal mid-term course and project evaluations with students and community partners.* - again, this could benefit all CRP courses.

6. *Experiment with "Community Benefits Agreements" and/or more formalized ways to structure course-level learning partnerships with communities and community entities. Factor agreed to community benefits into course and project design* - benefits for community partners should be mutually understood as "soft," and secondary to student learning. These "contracts" with community partners should also stress process, including expectations and/or opportunities for community partner participation in course and project design and evaluation.

7. *Revisit past CRP community-based work with course instruction* – encourage students to consider how current coursework relates to past CRP community-based work. Encourage course alumni and/or past community partners to speak in class about their academic service-learning

8. *Document academic service-learning projects, and make levels of this documentation readily accessible to other faculty, students, community partners, and the public.* Not all project documentation must be shared with all partners or stakeholders, but there should be a general awareness of the universe of CRP community-based work.

9. *Consider utilizing breaks as opportunities for academic service-learning projects requiring more intensive off-campus experiences and/or learning partnerships with communities located greater distances from the campus* – this includes through summer course offerings, and/or CCPW efforts that precede or immediately follow the on-campus course component, similar to how Prof. Ming Zhang has structured his CCPW efforts in China. This might not always be feasible.

10. *Design projects and project assignments so that they require minimal filtering or refining in order to be beneficial to community partners.* In general, academic service-learning could benefit from planning with the end of the semester or the immediate project in mind. Develop projects and project work that can be immediately beneficial to community partners. Consider ways to take the partnership further with future or related engaged scholarship efforts.

11. *Celebrate project successes, including launches and completion, with students and community partners* - a strong paradigm for planning a project with stakeholders and/or to encourage greater project buy-in at the start is to host a party and envision together what the end-of-the-project party will be like. Who will be there? What will be celebrated?

12. *Keep former students updated on CCPW developments post course completion* – this includes through email updates. Encourage students to

update you and the group about individual work that participation in this project has inspired, including research and internships.

At a programmatic level and in order to support both the tenants and practice of academic service-learning, I suggest that administers of the CRP program:

1. *Establish student positions dedicated to supporting engaged scholarship and/or academic service-learning program wide* - capitalize on the fact that students are being drawn to the CRP program by a desire to "do good" and be engaged in community-based work while completing their studies. Could the CRP program partner with AmeriCorps, UT's Department of Instructional Innovation and Assessment (DIIA), UT's Volunteer and Service-Learning Center (VSLC) and/or community partners (including internship providers) to offer students financial incentive for completing program level engaged scholarship and/or service-learning support while they are completing their course of study? Could these students be employed over the breaks, in order to assist professors with CCPW documentation, promotion and planning? Could these students assist in sustaining alumni and community partner relations? Mapping the program's past and current community-based work? Could students be awarded with out-of-state tuition waivers, travel scholarships, and/or positions as TAs for academic service learning projects abroad, in exchange for their efforts?

2. *Encourage scholarship that builds from past CRP community-based efforts - including internships and student research* - this involves documenting, promoting, and/or increasing access to and awareness of the universe of past CRP community-based efforts, including internships and research.

3. *Encourage greater cross-program and interdisciplinary collaboration in academic service-learning* - sharing resources and strategies for documenting, promoting, sharing, structuring, and evaluating CCPW efforts with other UTSOA programs, Schools and Colleges at UT, and other planning programs can promote this collaboration.

4. *Connect academic service-learning with program-level strategic and annual planning and decision-making - including student recruiting.* At a program level, determine academic service-learning topics and partnerships based on student-learning goals and community objectives, in that priority. Consider past commitments and/or unexplored topics or regions with engaged scholarship and/or academic service-learning goal setting. Recruit students from these areas and/or with experience or interest in work with these topics

or areas. Budget for academic-service learning, including in terms of funding out-of-class work completed by professors and/or other staff to build and sustain academic service-learning processes and relationships.

5. *Tie staff hiring and job descriptions to supporting engaged scholarship and/or academic service-learning at program and School levels* - this includes in hiring and/or existing job descriptions for a career services position, a course scheduling position, and web development / communications positions. Related to previous recommendations, organizational positions should be mapped and this outline made public, in order to indicate who is responsible for what and how different program entities currently interact with each other formally.

6. *Evaluate and reward professors for their ability to achieve multiple program level goals with academic service-learning efforts* – this includes in terms of the weighing of academic service-learning approaches to planning instruction in decisions about tenure and promotion.

7. *Transform university or discipline-wide policy or procedures that frustrate engaged scholarship and/or academic service-learning or other more community-based learning approaches to planning* - determine the university policies and procedures that complicate engaged scholarship and/or academic service-learning attempts for faculty members, and try to streamline them. Potential problem-areas include policies and procedures for field trips, vehicle rental, reimbursement, and "human subjects research." Apply this philosophy to promoting change at a discipline-wide level, including in how the discipline perceives and promotes scholarship, if this is an obstacle.

8. *Connect academic service-learning and engaged scholarship with program- and school-level commitments to "sustainability"* - while not synonymous, academic-service learning and engaged scholarship promote sustainability, including in regards to equity concerns and by modeling the more effective use of finite resources – in this case, student, faculty member, community partner, institutional, and other resources. Capitalize on the current excitement about – and funding related to, sustainable development to promote and support community-based learning.

9. *Consider ways that the physical plant can support academic service-learning and engaged scholarship* - this includes in program-level purchasing decisions. Is a "community sabbatical" the only means by which community partners can benefit from program and/or University resources? How can program-level decisions secure benefits for course-level community partners?

10. *Make programmatic planning and planning processes (strategic and annual) more public - and, potentially, more participatory* - access to information about annual and strategic planning, including budgetary information and considerations, is critical to increasing understanding of the possibilities and limitations of program decision-making, and is the first step to potentially opening these processes, at some level, to students, staff, community partners, and other stakeholders.  Greater participation in programmatic decision-making - and/or the documentation of these processes, can model the democratic relationships and relationship-building that academic service-learning promotes at a course level and that planning practice stresses.  In general, the CRP program web area and digital technology could be better utilized to this end.

11. *Establish and/or support the establishment of a complexity of learning loops within the program* - this includes encouraging more opportunity for stakeholders to assess or reflect on the CRP program as a whole, and its role within the UTSOA and the university.  Currently, formal opportunities for student and community partner assessment of the program focus to the course level and to *what has happened* in these courses or as the immediate result of individual projects.  These course-based end-of-the-term assessments ultimately impact individual professors - but they do not necessarily inform the CRP program as a whole, nor do they necessarily encourage long-term assessment of the impacts of individual projects.

12. *Allow for principled opportunism* - program-level utilization of academic service-learning does not have to be rigid.   It is not necessary for the program to commit solely to long-term academic service-learning with one particular community or region or to utilize this teaching approach with specific courses - required or elective.  Yet, decisions about academic service-learning should be principled, and should be understood, if not agreed, by the entire CRP program / community.

13. *Experiment with a modules approach to teaching core planning competencies* – this includes through four- or five-week / one credit intensive courses focused to GIS use, participatory planning methods, census data analysis, survey methods, etc.   The planned non-credit bearing intensive GIS workshops planned for this summer (2006) can be viewed as a step towards this approach. The use of a modules approach could allow the CRP program to structure 3-credit hour courses and CCPW efforts that are more integrative across the program.

I sincerely hope that this professional report will assist the UTSOA-CRP program

in advancing its academic service-learning efforts.  As a starting point, I hope that this

report will promote an ongoing, nuanced and public dialogue about the CRP program's work with community partners in preparing students for planning practice in our democratic society.

**Appendix A   Draft Timeline of the CRP Program's Community-based Work**

Compiled by Mark Tirpak in March 2006, based on information about the program gained from web searches and correspondence and conversations with current and past CRP faculty members.

NOTE: Grey indicates important event or trend in the program's history

| Year | Semester | Professor(s) | Description | Course | Community Partner(s) | Geographic Area |
|------|----------|--------------|-------------|--------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1910 | The School of Architecture (SOA) is established within UT's Engineering Dept. | | | | | |
| 1920 | The SOA becomes the "Department of Architecture" within the College of Engineering." | | | | | |
| 1925 | The Department is granted membership in the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture | | | | | |
| 1927 | The Department moves from the Engineering Building to B Hall (now destroyed), because of its growth. | | | | | |
| 1928 | The **Association of Student Architects** is established - the group hosts an annual "Wind-Up Ball," a major year-end event (through at least the 1950's).  **Ptah**, the ancient Egyptian architect of the Nile, serves as the Department's mascot/"patron saint."  A student dressed as Ptah would address the Ball each year - and a wooden sculpture of Ptah is created. | | | | | |
| 1929 | Student Enrollment in the Architecture Program is 115. | | | | | |
| 1930 | $300,000 is budgeted for a new Architecture Building - Goldsmith Hall | | | | | |
| 1930 | Student enrollment in the Architecture Program is 200. | | | | | |
| 1930 -33 | Paul Phillip Crete develops a master plan for the UT campus, including Goldsmith Hall. | | | | | |
| 1935 | The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards accredits the Architecture Program. | | | | | |
| 1939 | **Hugo Leipziger-Pearce** is invited from New York to develop a curriculum/program in city and regional planning (possible funding from the Rockefellers?).  He directs the CRP program for the next 19 years.  He remains at UT until 1974. | | | | | |
| 1940 | The National Architecture Accrediting Board accredits the Architecture Department. | | | | | |
| 1948 | Student enrollment in the Architecture Program (including CRP) is 600. | | | | | |
| 1951 | The Department is granted full autonomy as a separate School of Architecture (SOA). | | | | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1957 - early 70's | The "baby boom" generation goes to college.  The UT campus grows from 20,000 students to 40,000.  The focus of study at UT shifts from liberal arts to professional programs & research.  During this same time period, the **Student Architects' Wives Association (SAWA)** conducts events, such as the graduation banquet.  There is also an active **Women's Architectural League** during this same time period. | | | | |
| 1958 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | San Benito, Texas |
| 1958 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | Laredo, Texas |
| 1958 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | Mercedes, Texas |
| 1959 | The Master of Science in Community and Regional Planning Program (MSCRP) is formally approved. | | | | |
| 1960 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | |
| 1960 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | Irving, Texas |
| Early 1960's | CRP is a **4-year, 60 hour interdiscplinary program of approx 9 -15 students.**  CRP hstudents complete studios with architectural students (arch students meet more often / earn more credit - 6 vs. 3 hrs credit per combined course).  CRP students attend lectures of "the best professors in the other disciplines" - specifically, engineering and sociology.   CRP students work with sociology faculty to learn survey methods, and are engaged in community surveying.  English professors serve as guest lecturers to teach principles of technical writing. In addition, students are taken to visit professional offices and are engaged in professional work.  A professional office is maintained in the basement of an architecture building for professors to engage in private practice (and to employ arch and CRP students in professional tasks). | | | | |
| 1962 | | Student project | | | East Texas & Rio Grande Valley, Texas |
| 1960's | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | Bastrop, Texas |
| 1960's | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | Trinity Watershed, Texas |
| 1960's | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | Amistad Lake, Mexico |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1966 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | | Mexico-US Border |
| 1967 | | Leipziger-Pearce | | | | Georgetown, Texas |
| late-1960's / early 1970's | **Ian McHarg** develops Lake Austin Growth Management Plan for Austin, based on his "design with nature" concepts; he guest lectures within the UTSOA . | | | | | |
| Fall 1969 | Dean of School of Architecture **Alan Taniguchi** joins students and community members in protesting the destruction of pecan and elm trees on Waller Creek to expand UT's football stadium. He is forced to resign under pressure from Chairmen of the Board of Regents Frank Erwin - Taniguchi leaves the School in 1972. The School faces budget cuts, etc. | | | | | |
| 1970 | | Student project | | | | St. John's Neighborhood - Austin, TX |
| 1970 | The SOA Advisory Council is formed. | | | | | |
| 1971 | New **perimeter walls** are built along Guadalupe St. from 24th to 21st St. and along 21st St - to "facilitate traffic flow," and/or "prevent soil erosion," but there is a sense that the walls have been placed to curb student and non-student interaction on campus (the west campus was formally much more open to the public - similar to Harvard's campus) and in response to growing protests on campus. | | | | | |
| 1970's | The core CRP curriculum sequence is established. | | | | | |
| 1974 | SOA Dean's Council is formed. | | | | | |
| late 1970's | CRP enrollment peaks at approx. **45 entering students each year**. Subsequently falls back down to 25-30 students a year. | | | | | |
| 1979 | | Butler | Area-Wide Environmental Impact Statement | | | |

| 1980 | Fall & Spring (1981) | Prof. Patricia Wilson & Prof. Robert Wilson | Community Economic Development with East Austin Chicano Development Corporation | CRP-LBJ Year-long Policy Research Project | East Town Lake Citizens' Association (ETLCA) - East Austin Chicano Development Corporation | East Austin, TX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| late 1980's | SOA professors reject a UT directive to desist course-based work in East Austin - specifically in the **Blackland** neighborhood, as the University fights to annex land in this neighborhood. | | | | | |
| 1992 | The CRP is downgraded from "'department" status to "program." Some faculty feel that this is an attempt to dissolve the CRP program, entirely - and there is talk of transferring the program to the LBJ School. | | | | | |
| 1995 | The first volume of CRP's *Planning Forum* is published - a "nontraditional, cross-disciplinary forum" for "students, faculty members, and field practitioners." http://www.ar.utexas.edu/planning/forum | | | | | |
| 1995 | The **Urban Issues Program (UIP)** is launched by Robert Wilson of the LBJ School to serve as a "clearinghouse for information about courses, research, community outreach, and related events at UT." http://www.utexas.edu/academic/uip/ | | | | | |
| 1996 | Spring | Paterson | Growth Management Seminar w/ Downtown Austin Alliance | CRP 390: Growth Management | | |
| | | Butler | Springdale Park Concept Plan | | Springdale Park Steering Committee (see document for committee members0 | |
| 1997 | Fall | Handy | Work with the Gardens Neighborhood | CRP 384: Neighborhood Transportation Planning | PODER | Gardens, Neighborhood, Austin, TX |
| 1997 | Spring | Paterson | Growth Management Seminar w/ Downtown | CRP 390: Growth Management | | |

| 1998 | | | Austin Alliance | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1998 | Fall | Handy | Work with the Cesar Chavez Neighborhood | CRP 384: Neighbor hood Transport ation Planning | | |
| 1998 | Spring | Paterson | Growth Management Seminar w/ Downtown Austin Alliance | CRP 390: Growth Manage ment | | |
| 1998 | | Mueller | | | | El Paso, TX |
| 1998 | Spring | Oden | Initial work developing a survey of Texas CDC's | CRP 384 Affordab le Housing Policy | Texas Association of Community Development Centers | |
| 1998 | First CRP **web area** launched and maintained by Prof. Barbara Parmenter | | | | | |
| 1998 | Paterson & Moore convene the first UT Sustainability Roundtable | | | | | |
| late 1990's | CRP establishes a **Latin America Studies** dual degree | | | | | |
| late 1990's | **Athenaeum** listserve created "for and by CRP students" - later formalized. | | | | | |
| 1999 | Fall &Spring | Paterson & Spellman (LBJ) | Work with Georgetown Capital Improvement s - Georgetown Century Plan - APA best small town comprehensiv e plan | CRP 388K: Growth Managemen t? | | |

| 1999? | | Wilson? | "A pilot Community Vision Project Design Workshop" - for the Old East Austin neighborhood | CRP 384: Participatory Methods in Community Planning | | Old East Austin, TX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | | Oden | Continued work surveying Texas CDC's | CRP 384 Affordable Housing Policy | | |
| 1999 | | Oden | Work in Cuero, TX | | | Cuero, TX |
| 2001 | Fall | Butler & Moore | Design of Colombia, Nuevo Leon, MX | CRP: Infrastructure Planning | | |
| 2002 | Fall | Beamish | work with students in Mike's Colonia | CRP 980z: Planning Theory & Practice | | Starr County, TX |
| 2002 | The **Center for Sustainable Development (CSD)** is formed  http://www.utcsd.org/ | | | | | |
| 2002 | The Core CRP curriculum is reformed based on feedback from past students - including the desire to make sure that all CRP students receive instruction in **GIS use** as part of their core studies. | | | | | |
| 2003 | The Urban Issues Program is ended, due to state allocation cuts | | | | | |
| 2003 | MSCRP program enrollment increases to approx. 35 students - requiring the purchasing of new furniture for some classrooms.   Some students are drawn to the program because of its association with "sustainable development." | | | | | |
| 2003 | Spring | Wilson | Students conduct a workshop in the St. John's Neighborhood to bring together "traditionally conflicting groups to find common ground and | CRP 384/CRP 381: Participatory Methods in Community Planning | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | build a shared vision" | | | |
| 2003 | | | Prof. Robert Paterson's **Sustainability Indicators Project**. http://www.centex-indicators.org | | | |
| 2003 | Fall | Beamish | Work with Marble Falls | CRP 980z: Planning Theory & Practice | | |
| 2004 | The **City Forum** series, a bimonthly speaker's program featuring discussions on contemporary urban issues with national and local perspectives, launches a web area. http://www.utcityforum.org/ | | | | | |
| 2004 | Fall | Wilson | Work with Barton Hills Neighborhood | CRP 381: Planning Processes & Practices | Barton Hills Neighborhood Association | Barton Hills Neighborhood - Austin, TX |
| 2004 | Fall | Oden & Danze (ARC) | Work with St. John's Neighborhood | CRP 388: Affordable Housing Design / Development | | St John's Neighborhood - Austin, TX |
| 2004 | Fall | Beamish | Work with St. Ignatius Catholic Church | CRP 980z: Planning Theory & Practice | | |
| 2005 | Spring | Mueller | Gentrification in the East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood | CRP 385: Community Development | | East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood - Austin, TX |

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| 2005 | Summer | Zhang | Community Planning Workshop in Ji'an, China | (Fall) CRP 384: International Transportation Issues | | Ji'an, China |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | Fall | Butler | Work with Bull Creek Watershed | CRP 383: Applied Techniques in Environmental Analysis | | |
| 2005 | Fall | Oden & Danze (ARC) | Work with St. John's Neighborhood - Recommendations for an Austin Community Design Center | CRP 388: Affordable Housing Design / Development | | |
| 2005 | Fall | McMillan | Bond Fund Proposal for the City of Austin | | | |
| 2006 | CRP Student Forum (CRPSF) launches, to provide students a "gathering and online platform" to "present and host dialogue on topics of their choice" including sharing research and internship experiences. | | | | | |
| 2006 | The CSD announces that a strategic planning process is underway, and that "academic service learning" will be a part of the CSD's new focus. | | | | | |

**Appendix B   CRP Student Focus Group Responses**

The following document summarizes the responses of current second-year+ CRP students participating in a focus group conducted on October 28, 2005 by Mark Tirpak, MSCRP candidate.   A total of nine (9) CRP students participated in the focus group.  Students were invited to participate in this focus group, and were screened based on their past experience with course-integrated community-based projects as a component of their CRP studies.  Students who had served as teaching assistants (TAs) for CRP courses utilizing community-based project work approach to instruction were not eligible to participate in this focus group.

During the one-hour focus group session, participants were given the option to respond orally to the following ten (10) questions.   Participants' responses were documented through field notes taken by Mark Tirpak.

*Participant responses are in italics.  Each bullet point represents a unique student response to the question posed.*

NOTE:   The structure and content of this focus group session is based on the work of **The UC Berkeley Service-Learning Research & Development Center – Evaluation System for Experiential Education (ESEE)** http://gse.berkeley.edu/research/slc/evaluation.html

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**REFLECTION ON EXPERIENCE AND IMPACT OF PROJECT:**

1.  Why did you become involved in a course with a "community-based project" component?

- *didn't enter any CRP course deliberately because it had a "community-based project" content, but I hoped / believed / expected that most courses within the CRP program would have this content.*

- *for the free "real world" experience.  Wanted the experience of working with a real client, site, and community.*

- *happy to have an application for class work.  This type of learning has more staying power for me*

- *I chose the CRP program here because there is the perception that UT does this type of work frequently.*

- *If anything, I am disappointed that there haven't been more courses with community-based projects offered during my time in the CRP program so far. The experience really varies depending on when you enter the CRP program.*
2.  What did you hope to learn or achieve through participation in the course or project?

- *to build experience for my resume.*

- *wanted to work on more complex assignments - assignments with a complexity that couldn't be modeled in classroom-based exercises.*

- *wanted the chance to be more creative.*

- *wanted the chance to work with an actual client - to learn from that experience.*

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3.  Did you accomplish these goals?
(note: participants responded to the question in terms of benefits for the community / project accomplishments - did they accomplish project goals)

- *some of the info that we presented to the "community" / client(s) was truly surprising to them.*

- *in one case, the community/client embarked on the work that we suggested a few months after we completed the course.*

- *I'm not sure. The information we gathered and the tools that we produced were compiled, but I don't know what was implemented - or even where this information went.*

- *in some cases, we presented our work and the client just filed it away . . .*

- *there's the question of follow-up.*

- *there's also the issue of the time frame of our program and a course versus the pace of real-world development.*

- *there are some universities / CRP programs  that make a long-range commitment to a specific commitment or project.   I don't necessarily see that here.*

- *in some cases, I feel like we have repeated the work of past groups - that our work has been unnecessarily repetitive.*

- *I took this work very seriously, and it has given me the confidence to do more of this type of work.*

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- *I definitely gained the real world experience that I sought from this work.*

- *there's the danger of some professors advertising us as / some communities or clients perceiving us as a "free pool of labor."  That shouldn't be the focus of the work.*

4. What did you learn about yourself from participating in this project?  Others?  The CRP Program?

- *a lot of these projects come down to / require much group work.  You learn a lot about yourself through working in a group setting.*

- *As a result of specific project work, I can more clearly see myself doing certain kinds of professional work and not other kinds.*

- *I think as a result of having a real client, our group work becomes much more synergistic and fruitful.*

- *as a result of project / intense group work experience, I have learned much about my personal work and learning style.*

- *I learned how difficult it would be for me to work in certain communities - because of cultural and other differences.*

- *I learned that with hypothetical work, there is really is no priority to do it - amongst students or even from communities or clients.*

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**REFLECTION ON PROCESS:**

5. Were there any situations/activities related to the project that you felt were too difficult to handle?

- *challenging, yes. Too difficult to handle, no.*

- *possibly the work was not challenged enough - some elements of project work (such as working with actual financial constraints with planning) were dropped, because it was assumed that it would be too difficult for us to do this level of work.*

- *limiting the project might relate more to the semester length than the abilities or learning needs or desires of students -  or the interests of clients or communities.*

*- if there was more synergy between the classes (courses and academic years) especially in courses with community-based projects repeated each year, some of these barriers to achieving what students need and clients want could be eliminated.*

6. What were some barriers or problems that you experienced in the course or project work?

*- students are coming from different backgrounds - but some projects could benefit from being more interdisciplinary . . . though it has been said that such interdisciplinary classes encourage students to "stay in their camp," in terms of just doing the part of the project work that they are most familiar with or are specializing in.*

7. What were some of the highlights/low lights of the project?

*- there's concern that we are sacrificing learning because of the desire to put out a good product for a client. Better course design could address this.*

*- it is possible that you put a lot of work into a project and be totally rejected by the client or community – which is truly "reality-based!"*

*- the factors limiting the project (time, directives, etc.) make for limited suggestions or offerings with project work.*

*- there's the problem of tokenism - if our work is not at a depth that is useful to communities.*

*- there's a fine line between pushing new ideas and the desires of the client or community.*

*- there's concern with some projects that we are a burden to the client or community and are not producing much for them with our efforts.*

*- some courses are more suitable for community-based work than others.  Which raises the question - if community-based work is not applicable to some of the courses we are taking, why are we taking them?*

*- there is difficulty in balancing academic learning with community desires or benefits in this type of work.*

*- with certain projects, there is concern with the professor and client morphing into one - especially in areas where the professor has a vested interest.*

8.  How would you improve course and/or project work in the future?

-   *course learning objectives need to be more clearly spelt out and assignments, readings, and project work need to be more directly related to each other. Keeping things "sufficiently vague" isn't necessarily that helpful or productive.*

-   *make sure that the project work is not too broad and that it considers the time frame of the course.   Projects with very limited community involvement can be extremely effective.*

-   *I wish that projects involved the alumni pool a bit more.   And UT and the CRP program could do a better job of publicizing our community-based work.  There needs to be a centralized way to initiate these types of projects.*

-   *Faculty members need to address issues of client expectations head on.*

-   *Projects need to be structured in such a way as to allow student to really explore an issue or place.*

9.  Do you feel like your course work was fairly assessed (in classes utilizing community-based projects as a teaching method)?

-   *our work is never totally "fairly assessed," but I think that professors do a good job assessing learning - and our final grade is based on the learning that occurred.*

-   *varies from person to person / class to class*

-   *it is really transparent how much time a professor has invested in the class.*

-   *there is a line between professional training and academia that these projects attempt to straddle.*

-   *anecdotal / experiential classes are harder to evaluate.  Some subject matters make for easier evaluation.  Similarly, some classes are more suited for community-based projects than others.*

-   *thankfully, participation is always part of our grade!  But there is the "big mouth factor."  Quieter students might not be getting graded fairly.*

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- *I think more conscientious faculty try to correct for bias.*

- *there's an expectation that students will be earning a 4-point or close. There's grade inflation in grad school that people expect. There's a big difference between a 95 and a 92.*

- *I wonder sometimes if professors are evaluating where students start off? I've never had a professor really evaluate where we are before a class starts.*

- *to follow that idea, I think there is the assumption that students have no background in any of these subjects.*

- *sometimes it is less about student learning and more about what the professor (or the client) wants.*

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10. Do you have any additional comments or reflections on your experience that you would like to add?

- *I think that it would be interesting to compare voluntary versus contractual community-based work.*

- *With money changing hands, there is more of a concern for conflict of interest.*

- *With "real world," group projects, some students take a lot of ownership of projects - too much, at times.*

- *UT has an obligation as a state institution to do community- based work, but there's a feeling that more needs to be done.*

- *A lot of student and professor work gets lost over the years. There should be more collaboration between schools and individual faculty members and over time.*

**Appendix C  CRP Faculty Structured Interview Responses**

The responses below were collected from nine (9) current CRP faculty members via individual structured interviews conducted October 14 – November 23, 2005, by Mark Tirpak, MSCRP Candidate.

Participation in these interviews was completely voluntary.  Combined, the faculty members interviewed represent 100+ years of UTSOA-CRP teaching experience and work with course-integrated community-based projects.

 Responses are paraphrased from the structured interviews, based on interview notes, and language was changed to conceal respondents' identities.

*Participant responses are in italics.  Each bullet point represents a unique faculty member response to the question posed.*

NOTE:   The structure and content of the structured interview is based on the work of **The UC Berkeley Service-Learning Research & Development Center – Evaluation System for Experiential Education (ESEE)** http://gse.berkeley.edu/research/slc/evaluation.html

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1. In general, what do you think were some of the benefits for the communities partnered with or targeted by your course-integrated community-based projects?

- *depends on the community and/or the client.*

- *often, the benefit for them is simply having people from outside interested in their work.*

- *project work can boost the energy of an organization or community.*

- *the presenting of different ideas – not the attempt to solve a problem.*

- *our work has opened up issues that they hadn't thought of before (or necessarily wanted to deal with!).*

- *specific technical and environmental information that the community was seeking.*

- *information synthesized and presented in a way that they found useful.*

- *cost-effective planning work done for them.*

- *we've done foundational work versus offering just a report (we've provided them with work and/or data to build from).*

- *we've offered them a much broader lens / more complex view of the issues that they face – and have helped them consider strategies that they might not have anticipated.*

- *provided them resources that they normally could not afford.*

- *often, community-based projects are exploitive.  The community benefit can be inadequate if their benefit is not factored into project design.*

- *avoiding definite commitments to specifics is crucial for creating a good deliverable with this kind of work.*

- *in a best case scenario, we have given the community the information that they've needed  to move forward on their own plans – or that have offered them different options or decisions.*

- *establishing the potential for an ongoing relationship with our institution – groups continue to call / use us as a resource – which can lead to future project work.*

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2. In general, what do you think were the benefits of course-integrated community-based project work for the students participating in these projects?

- *the benefits for students can be huge.   At a simple level, students learn about dealing with the social reality of planning decision-making – it is no longer abstract.  From a pragmatic approach, we understand that you learn by doing.*

- *it gives students a reality check on what's going on in communities / society, and the challenges faced trying to make change.*

- *students learn not to idealize the communities worked with and the actual complexities of the work and issues that must be addressed.*

- *students learn about the human dimension of planning.*

- *students learn the humility of planning – society judging you as planners.*

- *students learn the pace and cadence of planning –this leads to the problem of projects not on pace with the course time frame.*

- *students appreciate the possibility of their assignments having a value beyond the class (typically, CRP students are a bunch of "do-gooders").*

- *students are happy to have the chance to get real-world experience - getting honest answers / professional development opportunities.*

- *project work has opened up job prospects for students.*

- *students gain in responsibility and ability for team and project management.*

- *students often get the chance to present to a live, non-academic audience, as a result of this work.*

- *developing technical, verbal, and written communication skills.*

- *there's an empowerment component for students.*

- *the work can be incredibly exciting and motivating.*

- *the fact that  project-based class work is contributive – it is what makes people come to planning, the desire to do meaningful work and to make a change.*

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3. In general, what do you think is "bad" or problematic about course-integrated community-based project work?  (NOTE:  this question was not asked formally during structured interviews, but the following responses emerged during the course of interviews)

- *students take the work extremely seriously – to the point that it can inhibit their learning and exploration.*

- *there's the issue of client not being able to articulate what they want – changing direction mid course, and how that can impact the class.*

- *it is hard to find a project that can start and end in a typical semester format.*

- *communities tend to think that they were blown off – or used by the process, when work halts at the end of the semester.*

- *the additional time requirement of this work – community meetings, etc, - is not reflected in the hours assigned to the class.*

- *it can promote an unhealthy learning culture – much more competitive – students begin to feel that they are producing work in order to "win" – not to present a variety of ideas to a community.*

- *some clients don't understand that the priority must be educational.*

- *inexpert help – students have never done this work before.*

- *puts undo pressure on students – they would not be allowed to do this work in the outside world.*
- *the time it takes to do these projects is not worth the value in the tenure process. It is sad that we are evaluated this way, but you don't get extra credit for doing community-based work in the classroom.*

- *these projects are extremely time consuming – I can't do them all the time.*

- *in classes with community-based project work completed in groups, there is a real problem with free-riders – students & group members that don't carry their weight.*

- *there's also a problem of students with more ability "taking over" group work, because of the desire to make real deliverables.*

- *students don't necessarily have the time or skill to evaluate the data that they might attempt to use – bad data can equal bad results for the client or community.*

- *If I do an actual community / client-based project, I will end up spending my break trying to clean up student work to create a useable tool for the community.*

- *It can be a high-stakes gamble. A bad project experience, and course evaluations will stink, you lose a publishing opportunity, and the community is upset.*

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Use the following scale to respond to the next 2 questions about course design:

(A) Always
(M) Most of the time
(S) Some of the time
(N) Never
(NR) No Response

4. The courses with community-based projects that I have facilitated were designed to:

| | Range of Responses | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| Benefit community stakeholders | A-S | M | |
| Address identified community needs | A-S | M | *- sometimes there are no formalized needs identified before we begin the work.* |
| Establish a reciprocal relationship in which students, UT, and community stakeholders benefit | A-S | M-S | |
| Meet stated course educational objectives through project work | A-NR | A-M | *- honestly, I hadn't explicitly thought that out. before.* |
| Require students to apply course-specific learned content to new situations presented by the community-based project work | A-S | M-S | |
| Provide students frequent feedback from different stakeholders (other students, community members, etc.) in non-threatening ways | A-NR | M | *- depends on how you define frequency – it is tough to make this feedback extremely frequent.* |
| Encourage student collaboration | A | A | |
| Excite students about learning | A | A | *- you would hope so!* |
| Have multiple "right" answers / alternatives that students can present | A-M | A-M | |
| Engage students in project tasks that have real consequences | A-S | M-S | *- but it is not always clear that the community will use what we* |

| | | | *give them.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Provide students a safety net for high-stakes project mistakes | A-NR | M-S | *- I don't think so - I think the stakes are too high sometimes.* ***see comments below.*** |
| Grade students for the learning that occurs as a result of the project experience | A-NR | M-S | ***see comments below.*** |

Comments:

 *- I don't like these last two questions.  I assign the final grades – and it is not based on whether the client likes the student's work or not.  The students are covered (I am the safety net), but deliverables must meet the learning objectives of the course.*

*- Reflective journals / exercises are important (I'm familiar with service-learning and think it is a good model), but it is not enough to just reflect on the learning – you have to do something, too.  Again, I am the safety net for students.  "Learning" can not be a cop-out for not doing the work or a fair share of the work.*

*- In terms of a "safety net," you want to have that, but there is always an element of risk with community-based project work.  Sometimes people will fall on their face - students can fail at this work.  Otherwise, you are not entering a new area.  It's a balance . . . you want project outcomes to be useful. . . the student work has to be good.  There's an emphasis on student learning, but you want the community to benefit from the work, too.*

5. What kind of support for course-integrated community-based projects have you received from the institution (UT, the UTSOA, or the CRP program)?

(Y) Yes
(N) No
(NA) Not Applicable

| | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| Help with Curriculum Development | N | |
| Help with / Suggestions | Y-N | *- from colleagues, but nothing* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| for Course Assessment | | *formalized.* |
| Public Recognition of Efforts | Y | *- yes, but not from U.T*<br>*- some, but slight.*<br>*- yes, but very little.*<br>***see comments below.*** |
| Credit toward Promotion/Tenure | Y – NA | *- little to none.*<br>*- a wee bit.*<br>*- it is a myth that this work doesn't / can't count in tenure.*<br>***see comments below.*** |
| Assistance with Project Identification & Development | Y-N | *- too much – so many requests for project work!*<br>*- Very informal – a colleague suggested a project.* |
| Assistance with Student Recruitment | N-NA | *- the fact that we do this type of work draws students to the classes – and the program.*<br>*- it isn't needed.*<br>*-the reverse – prospective students seek out the program because of my community-based work.* |
| Grant/Funding | Y | *- I wouldn't do a project if there was not funding.*<br>*- very minimal funding. gathered informally.*<br>*- I got $50 for my first project.*<br>*- I got a university grant.* |
| Transportation Assistance for Students | Y-N | *- in fact, they have made the rules harder.*<br>*- quite the opposite. the change in rules has made me decide on no more field trips – it is ridiculous.*<br>*- I have gotten funding for some project travel.* |
| Other | N | |
| None | N | |

Comments:
- *I would like to see more of a big deal made about the projects at the end. We need more places to publicize student work – including physical spaces. It is a*

*huge ordeal to get meeting space to present, sometimes.   Not presenting this work can be very deflating to students and the project.*

- *in terms of tenure, you don't get points for doing this kind of work – it's more like "let's see your book."*

- *if you are interested in doing community-based work, you will figure out a way to make it work towards your tenure, blurring the lines between your teaching, community-based work, and your tenure work.*

- *if you're savvy, you'll make your teaching feed into scholarship, research, and community service.   As a professor on the tenure track, everything you do must achieve these things – it is the only way that you can make tenure.*

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*6.* have you learned more about course-integrated community-based projects?
> (Y) Yes
> (N) No
> (NA) Not Applicable

| "Through ... | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| Colleague | Y | *- informally, over the years.* |
| Administrator | Y-N | |
| Journal/Book | Y | *- the Journal of Applied Education.*<br>*- Saul Alinsky's work.* |
| Conference | Y | |
| *Service Learning / Community Engagement / Community Service staff member at UT* | N | *- are there some?* |
| Student | Y-N | *- not directly.* |
| Own Academic Training / Coursework | Y | |
| Other | N | |

*if so, please name:*

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7. What professional development related to this teaching method, if any, have you p anticipated in?  *(Check all that apply.)*

(Y) Yes
(N) No
(NA) Not Applicable

| | **Most Common Response** | **Comments** |
|---|---|---|
| Service-learning / experiential education conference | N | |
| Presentation at conference in my academic discipline | Y | |
| On-campus workshop | N | |
| Off-campus workshop | Y | |
| On-going meetings with colleagues | Y | *- informal.* |
| Coursework on service-learning / experiential education pedagogy | Y-N | |
| Other | | |

8. What kind of support for community-based projects have you received from the community organizations / resident groups that have been involved in the work? *(Check all that apply)*

| | **Most Common Response** | *Comments* |
|---|---|---|
| Orientation for Students and/or briefing about the project and organization | Y | *- mainly with project briefing.* |
| Training of Students | Y-N | |
| Transportation Assistance for Students | N | |
| Documentation of Student Participation | N | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluation of Students | Y-N | | *- not in terms of grades, but they did let our students know how they did on their final projects.* |
| Project Funding | Y-N | | |
| Other | Y | | *- their time and assistance.*<br>*- participation in student-led activities.*<br>*- dinners, parties, and special events.* |

9. Please rate the importance of each reason below for your INITIAL decision to integrate a community-based project into your CRP classroom teaching. After each item, list the number corresponding to your response. Use the following scale:

(VI) Very Important
(I) Important
(SI) Somewhat Important
(NI) Not Important
(NA) Not Applicable

| | Range of Responses | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| To become better engaged in the local community | VI-S | VI-I | |
| To maintain previous connections in the local community | I-NI | NA | *- I didn't have any prior* |
| To improve student academic learning | VI | VI | |
| To reenergize my teaching | VI-NI | SI | *- I had just started teaching* |
| To offer students new societal perspectives | VI-I | I | |
| To advance my own career | VI-I | I | *- I thought that it would be valued more.* |
| To further my own research | I-SI | SI | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| To collaborate with colleagues | I-NI | SI-NI | *- yes, but not with departmental colleagues.* |
| To fulfill institutional obligations | SI-NI | SI-NI | *- only ones that I perceive.*<br>*- only those related to teaching.*<br>***see comments.** |

Comments:

*- As far as I am aware, there are no institutional obligations to do this type of work. No one has ever expressed them to me.*

___

10. If you have taught more than one course with a community-based project, please rate the importance of each reason for your CONTINUING your use of this teaching approach. After each item, list the number corresponding to your response.  Use the following scale:

     (VI) Very Important
     (I) Important
     (SI) Somewhat Important
     (NI) Not Important
     (NA) Not Applicable

| | **Range of Responses** | **Most Common Response** | **Comments** |
|---|---|---|---|
| To become better engaged in the local community | VI-SI | I-SI | |
| To maintain previous connections in the local community | I-NI | SI | *- Each of my projects has been in a new location.* |
| To improve student academic learning | VI-I | VI-I | |
| To reenergize my teaching | I-SI | I-SI | *- more like energy-exhausting!* |
| To offer students new societal perspectives | I | I | |
| To advance my own career | I-NI | NI | *- Not that important, as* |

| | | | *I've discovered.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| To further my own research | VI-SI | I-SI | |
| To collaborate with colleagues | I-NI | SI | *- would be nice.* |
| To fulfill institutional obligations | I-NI | SI-NI | |

Comments:

11. Approximately how many hours a month do you volunteer / are engaged in community service:

| None | Range of Responses | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1-5 hrs | | | *- I don't feel like there is any time to volunteer right now.* |
| 6-10 hrs | 1-5 hrs – 20+hrs | 11-20 hrs – 20+ hrs | |
| 11-20 hrs | | | *- it is impossible for me to separate out my volunteering from my work.* |
| 20+ hrs | | | |

Comments:

12. Rate your familiarity with / use of the services offered by the following three departments or centers at the University of Texas focused to community service and engagement:
    (VF) Very Familiar
    (F) Familiar
    (SF) Somewhat Familiar
    (NF) Not Familiar

| | Range of Responses | Most Common Response |
|---|---|---|
| Professional Development and Community Engagement (PDCE) *– Office of Graduate Studies* http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdce/engagement.html | F-NF | SF |
| RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service | VF-NF | F |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| _– LBJ School of Public Affairs_ http://rgkcenter.utexas.edu/research/articl es/2003/08/000004.shtml | | | |
| Volunteer and Service Learning Center (VSLC) _– Office of the Dean of Students_ http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/vslc/sl.p hp | SF-NF | NF | |
| University of Texas at Austin Humanities Institute _- Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center_ http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/huminst/ | VF-NF | SF | |

13. The following are some factors why faculty members might INCREASE their use of community-based projects in their classroom instruction. Please rate the following reasons in terms of their importance in allowing you to increase your use of community-based projects as a teaching method. After each item, list the number corresponding to your response.

(VI) Very Important
(I) Important
(SI) Somewhat Important
(NI) Not Important
(NA) Not Applicable

| | Range of Responses | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| More funding available | VI-I | VI-I | _- this is essential._ |
| Community–based projects considered more in tenure/promotion decisions | VI-NA | VI-I | |
| More logistical support for community-based projects | VI-NI | I-SI | |
| Release time for course development or project work | VI-I | I | **_*see comments_** |
| More professional development on service-learning / experiential education issues | I-NI | SI | |
| More supportive colleagues | VI-NI | SI | _-colleagues are already very accepting and positive about this kind of work._ _- In my perception, there_ |

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| | | | *is some level of misunderstanding about this work .* |
|---|---|---|---|

Comments:

- *release time would be great.  Professors end up doing much "tidy work" to get student project work to a level where it is useful to the public.*

- *the university rules about release time are very convoluted .*

13.  The following are some common CHALLENGES faced by faculty members utilizing community-based projects in their classroom instruction.  Please rate the seriousness of these challenges to your own involvement using the following scale:

(MC) Major Constraint.
(IC) Important Constraint.
(CO) Constraint I have Overcome
(NC) Not a Constraint
(NA) Not Applicable

| | Range of Responses | Most Common Response | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| Difficulties with recruiting students to community-based project classes | NC-NA | NC | |
| Lack of funding for community-based project work | M-NC | IC-CO | *- I'm not sure what kind of funding is available to do this kind of work* |
| Lack of administrative support for community-based project work | MC-IC | IC | *- More in the context of lack of administrative support for anything.* ***see comments below*** |
| Lack of support from colleagues for community-based project work | IC-NC | NC | |
| Difficulties connecting with community agencies | IC-NC | CO | *- Finding the right community* |

| | | | *with the right problems to meet classroom learning objectives is hard to do.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Difficulties communicating with community agencies | IC-CO | IC | |
| Lack of time | MC-IC | MC | |
| Community-based project work not considered in tenure/promotion decisions | MC-NA | I | |
| Community-based project work not connected to my research | CO-NC | CO | |
| Difficulties with connecting community-based project work to academic learning | CO-NC | CO-NC | |
| Lack of knowledge about community-based projects | IC-NC | IC-CO | *- the time I have to learn more about this is limited.* |

Comments/Other challenges:

*- Compared with other schools at UT, the ratio of administrative assistance to faculty in this school is way off.*

14. What are "best practices" with this kind of work (NOTE: this question was not asked during structured interviews, but is a theme that emerged in most interview responses)

- *the professor / program must be good at managing client expectations and selecting projects that fit the learning objectives and timeframe of the course.*

- *efforts should be made to not leave the community feeling "used" at the end of the semester. It should be clear what will be delivered as a result of project work and when and what kind of support the community can expect in the future.*

- *The level that a course becomes "embedded" in community work will vary from course to course, project to project.*

- *setting up a project where the class can deliver a "soft deliverable" is preferable – i. e. where students can present a range of ideas / new information and perspectives, and not necessarily attempt to "solve" a specific problem.*

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- *clients must understand that there is an emphasis on student learning. Project work cannot just be consulting work – students are paying to learn, offer inexpert help, and should not to be discouraged from remaining in graduate school through their project work / course requirements.*

- *Project work should be foundational, allowing the community to build from the work. The quality of data used in analysis or presented to the community should be critiqued – and the community made aware of that critique.*

- *students must understand that their project work must meet / is being evaluated on the learning objectives of class – as demonstrated in community-based project work and assignments. Clients / the community can and should offer feedback on the work, but students must understand that they are not being graded on how the client perceives their work.*

- *"learning" is not enough – students must attempt to do work to the best of their ability- work that, with refinement, can be used by the community. Collaborative work must be structured so that individual work and effort is evaluated.*

- *efforts should be made to relieve the pressure of course-integrated community-based project work on students – by making sure that the course requirements reflect the hours that are allotted to the course. Collaboration with other CRP courses on a project could help.*

- *time must be allotted for refining student work (most likely, after the requirements for the semester have been met) so that it can be made into useful / useable tools by the community/client and/or the broader public. This time must be planned for / supported with funding, paid assistance, leave time, and other resources.*

- *consider making participation in course-integrated community-based project work optional (via alternative assignments);*
- *project accomplishments need to be showcased, and students should be involved in showcasing this work. In addition, project results should be accessible to the community and the public.*

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**Vita**

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High School in Aurora, Ohio in 1993, Mark entered Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio.
Mark graduated from Hiram College with honors in 1997, earning a Bachelor of Arts in
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Since graduating from Hiram College, Mark has worked as a communications specialist
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an area manager of the Alamo Chapter of the American Diabetes Association in Texas.
Mark also completed two years of AmeriCorps service, one as a VISTA member serving
the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne in Montana, and the second serving
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