IN TOUCH WITH MAIN STREET?
DESIGNING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ABROAD PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY IMPACT

Noel Habashy, Pennsylvania State University
David Puente, ISA (International Studies Abroad)
Katherine Martin, University of Limerick, Ireland
COMMUNITY MEMBER PERSPECTIVES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED EDUCATION ABROAD PROGRAMS

NOEL HABASHY
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
(PENNSYLVANIA, USA)
What is the problem?
Whose voice do we hear?
Very minimal empirical research exists exploring community perspectives of education abroad.
How is community defined?
SOFAR Framework

(Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009)
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

Two sites in Costa Rica
RESEARCH STUDY

Qualitative Comparative Case Study

- Semi-structured interviews
- Conducted in Spanish
- Direct observation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Service Learning Program</th>
<th>Applied Research Program</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Involvement</strong></td>
<td>Students conduct development projects with community members</td>
<td>Students conduct research in and around community</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Living Accommodations</strong></td>
<td>Apartments</td>
<td>Study center</td>
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<td><strong>Research Participants</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Professional Benefits
- Social workers
- NGO staff
- Farmers

Social/Cultural Benefits
- Teachers re: interactions with students

Economic Benefits
- Taxi drivers
- Shop owners
Social Benefits/Challenges

“Personally, I really like the opportunity to interact with them... say hello or sit down to talk with them for a while, know where they are from, what they do, what they study, what is the purpose of them coming here to study.”

- Antonia, Local Community Member Near the Study Center
“We are definitely like strangers... You over there and me around here. Then there is not a ‘Hello’ or a ‘How are you?’ ‘Do you live around here?’ So I do not learn anything from them and they learn nothing from me; there is no relationship between us.

- Antonia, Local Community Member Near the Study Center
“Sometimes I think everything’s fine, however, to benefit more the community and to bring more interest, maybe I would ask the university to reach more farmers.”

- Marcos, Farmer in the region where students do research
“...the agreement exists, but we haven’t worked very closely. So it’s something that we both have to better in the future, but it’s something that hasn’t been very strong. We collaborated for example, our students were... we coincided for a time with one class... but they worked on their part, and we worked on ours. We never worked together.”

- Diego, Local university partner
Economic Benefits

What would you change in this relationship?

“Well... I wouldn’t change. I would change maybe bringing more students. It’s very important because the more students the more work the town has, they have more benefits.”

- Melvin, Taxi Driver
A Provider Perspective

David Puente
Regional VP Academic Affairs
ISA
Seeing host community POV from provider POV

Another piece of the puzzle
‘As international educators, our responsibilities lie not only in providing the highest quality programming for our students, but also in understanding the impact our presence has within our host communities.’

Anthony Ogden, “The View from the Veranda”
6-Day Visit To Rural African Village Completely Changes Woman’s Facebook Profile Picture
To be addressed...

- Selecting host organizations
- Student preparation/ expectation management
- Intervention to encourage reflection about host community
- Mutuality and reciprocity
- Who is vulnerable?
- Program design (reverse engineering metaphor)
- Is host the right metaphor?
Criteria for Partner Host Organizations

- Good local rep as assessed by our staff
- Clear mission aimed at needs of local individuals
- In existence more than 1 year (3 yrs preferred)
- Clear designated contact will be present
- Agrees to evaluate participants
- Demonstrates clear need for volunteers
- Full disclosure of donation use
- Can be reached via safe, secure transportation
- Clear schedule and operation hours
- Accepts local volunteers too
- Signed MU and ind’l commitment agreements
When staff are embedded in the community

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Assistant to Resident Director & Internship Coordinator
Auckland, New Zealand

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Roxana Paredes
Service-Learning Coordinator
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Lima, Peru

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Service-Learning Coordinator
Wellington, New Zealand

Mairead Fanning
Internship & Student Services Coordinator
Dublin, Ireland
Marketing S-L

Community & Collaboration in Limerick, Ireland

SERVICE-LEARNING
ISA Service Learning merges the concept of civic responsibility and community-based learning by connecting students and recent graduates with service opportunities abroad. By partnering students with community-based organizations and following a structured, reflection-based curriculum, participants develop intercultural and leadership skills in a real-world context while learning how local experts are addressing issues with the available resources.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FILTER BY:
- Program Locations
- Community Sectors

STUDY + SERVICE-LEARNING COMBO PROGRAMS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
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<td>Costa Rica</td>
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<td>Dominican Republic</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
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<td>Galway</td>
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<td>Peru</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Granada</td>
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<td>Salamanca</td>
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**SELECT A LOCATION FROM THE FILTER TO BEGIN.**
STUDENT PREPARATION

• First do no harm; non-negative v. positive impacts
• Enrollment in an S-L course via Schoology LMS
• Guided interventions
• Self-reflection
• Community asset mapping
• Intercultural Competence Assessments (formative v. summative)
Pre-Departure Webinar dedicated to setting expectations of what Service-Learning is (includes section on ethical photography and community storytelling through social media posts).
MOVING TOWARD ASSESSING S-L

“International S-L would benefit from using intercultural competence theories to more intentionally frame articulation of learning objectives, project planning, community engagement and critical reflection...”

Darla Deardorff, Assessing ICC (2011), p. 70
Core Georgetown Study findings*: To what extent do traditional “immersion” practices foster intercultural learning?

- Send students abroad for longer periods: Limited impact
- Take steps to improve SL proficiency: No impact
- Maximize contact with host nationals: No impact
- Enroll in host school classes: No impact
- Doing Internships, service learning: No impact
- Maximizing contact with host nationals: No impact
- Being housed in home stays: No impact
- Pre departure cultural orientation: Yes—some impact
- Home stays: Yes—when students engaged with host family
- Cultural mentoring at sites abroad: Yes—the highest impact practice in the study

Course Information
Read the materials in this folder to learn more about your Service-Learning Program and the requirements for your Service-Learning Portfolio.

Pre-Departure Assignments
Complete the assignments in this folder before you leave for your program. Pre-departure assignments communicate threshold concepts that are important for you to know before you embark on your service-learning adventure.

Reflective Essays
These reflections will assist you in applying academic concepts to your service-learning experience. Essay questions will encourage you to think critically about your time abroad, using cultural and organizational theories, as well as independent research, to help you understand your experience within a richer context.

Weekly Journals
These journal entries will provide an opportunity for guided self-reflection. Journal prompts will explore your personal experience with your host community, cultural differences you encounter, the challenges of international service, and concepts of poverty.
Link to Schoology S-L Course
E-PORTFOLIO ELEMENTS

- Reciprocity-themed reflection exercise
- Intercultural competence/sensitivity exercise
- Volunteering v. S-L group discussion topic
- Community Asset Mapping
- ‘Confronting your national identity’ exercise
- Interview local citizen on social/political current issue
## E-PORTFOLIO ELEMENTS

### Weekly Journal Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4-week Service-Learning Program</th>
<th>8-week Service-Learning Program</th>
<th>Additional Journals for Combo Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Initial Impressions</td>
<td>1. Initial Impressions</td>
<td>1. Critical Consciousness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Conceptualizing Poverty</td>
<td>5. Your Civic Responsibility</td>
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<td>6. Professional Development</td>
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# E-PORTFOLIO ELEMENTS

## Reflective Essay Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4-week Service-Learning Program</th>
<th>8-week Service-Learning Program</th>
<th>Additional Essays for Combo Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pre-departure</td>
<td>1. Pre-departure</td>
<td>1. Organizational Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Reciprocity</td>
<td>2. Reciprocity</td>
<td>2. Civil Service: History,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community Asset Mapping</td>
<td>3. Intercultural Competency</td>
<td>Intentions, Consequences,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intercultural Competency +</td>
<td>and Sensitivity</td>
<td>and Potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Reflection</td>
<td>4. Social and Political Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Final Reflection</td>
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“Reciprocity is related to solidarity. It is a social value that encourages personal growth through being attentive to the community partner’s mission and vision and considering the legacy of the partnership.”

Camila Franco, student in Spain (2018)
“I believe that our association is on a good path and we hope we will be able to provide women who live in bad conditions with more help and support... That of course is not going to happen without the help and dedication we receive from the volunteers who help us reach our goals.”

SALWA J., SUPERVISOR
Al-Amal Foundation
(Meknes, Morocco)
Global Ambassadors for Patient Safety (GAPS):
Students completing their service learning with an organization in the health field are required to complete the GAPS training (covers the ethical implications of medical work abroad)
Salobreña limpia sus playas con un sistema novedoso y ecológico

Se están quitando hierbas sin fitosanitarios y se está haciendo una recogida manual exahusita de basura


Ogden, Anthony. ‘The View from the Veranda.’ *Frontiers 15* Fall-Winter 2007/8

Works consulted


In touch with the main street?
A view from University of Limerick
OVERVIEW

- Service Learning National and Local
- Introduce the UL Practicum
- Relevance of Community engagement from Institutional perspective
- Benefits to community
- Benefits to students
“Engagement with the wider community must become more firmly embedded in the mission of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions need to become more firmly embedded in the social and economic contexts of the communities they live in and serve”

_The Irish National Strategy for Higher Education 2030, Department of Education and Skills Ireland, 2011_,
National Policy: Campus Engage
THE CONVERSATIONS

- How can we work with our communities?
- How do we support our communities?
- How can we enhance engagement with our communities?
- How do we learn from our communities?
- How do we define our community/communities?

- How do we use the resources of the university to solve community issues and societal challenges?
- How do we learn from what is happening already?
- What mistakes have been made?

- How do we develop social responsibility in our graduates?
- How can learning in the community build graduate attributes?
- What kind of knowledge do we value?
COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING: THE UL PRACTICUM

- **For communities**, UL Practicum projects are established in response to community identified needs and are designed and implemented by collaborative teams comprising UL staff, Community Partners, and Students.

- **For students**, the UL Practicum provides curriculum based accredited learning in community projects, combining applied academic work with the development of UL Graduate Attributes.

- **For academics**, the UL Practicum is essentially a project shell. It provides a pre-approved module code that enables students to work on collaborative community projects and as part of their credited academic curriculum.

- **For the university**, the UL Practicum raises the profile of staff/student engagement with communities and applies consistent criteria for best practice community engagement.
UL International Practicum

Best Practice nationally
Emancipatory Research Paradigm

- Principles:
- Community centred
- Collaborative
- Empowerment
- aware of Power relations
- Civic focus rather than Philanthropic
- Reciprocal, Gain, and Empowerment
Framework for Communication and Shared Understanding

**WHAT DO WE WANT AND WHY?**
Are there different interpretations and/or expectations regarding the aim of the project?
Are there agreed priorities?

**WHAT SKILLS AND RESOURCES DO WE HAVE/NEED?**
Do all the stakeholders have the relevant information to facilitate partnership engagement?
Have we identified strengths and resources (Community/University)?
What do we need?
How do we get what we need and where do we get it from?

**WHO IS INVOLVED?**
Who wants to be involved and is not included?
Who needs to be involved and is not?
Who is involved and does not want to be?

**MUTUAL RESPECT SHARED GOVERNANCE**

**HOW ARE WE GOING TO WORK TOGETHER?**
Have we a clear communication process?
Have we an agreed leadership structure?
A UL Practicum seeks mutual benefit between the University of Limerick (UL) students and the community it works with.

Duration is normally for one academic term.

Students attend three mandatory workshops and spend approximately 4-6 hours per week working on their community project.

Student learning experience is supervised by a lecturer from UL in collaboration with a Community Co-ordinator.

Reflective practice is a core component.

Learning outcomes and assessments focus on application and co-construction of knowledge and development of generic transferable skills.
ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES

Four Workshops

- Information Sharing
- Community Project proposal
- Role of the community facilitator/Student/academic
- Facilitating student Graduate Attribute development
- Reflection
- Evaluation
- Partnership working
- Input to Resource Development
COMMUNITY CERTIFICATIONS

UL Engage, established in September 2015 in the University of Limerick, supports community-university collaborations through a variety of projects and programmes across local communities in Limerick City and County. These include the creation of student placements in local community activities/projects which address a need/problem in your area.

COME JOIN US
DATE: Tuesday 4th April, 2017
TIME: 7.00pm - 9.00pm
LOCATION: South Court Hotel, Limerick

Light refreshments will be served

- Are you currently involved or planning to develop a project which will benefit your community?
- Would you like to know more about how students can help with your work?
- Are you interested in hearing about the support UL Engage can offer you?

CERTIFICATE OF ENGAGEMENT

UL Engage recognises the role undertaken by

COLETTE QUINLIVAN
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE BLIND OF IRELAND

for their input as Community Co-ordinators on the International UL Practicum Module Spring 2017

Sinead Quilliman
Dir. Engagement Champions
ESOL Provision for refugees and asylum seekers

- The project focuses English language provision for refugees and asylum seekers. It involved the design and delivery of three courses in areas which address the English language needs as expressed by refugees and asylum seekers themselves.

Limerick Be Heard #Youth Engage 2017

- The project will create forums for political engagement where young people will feel confident and comfortable to have their say about what matters to them, supported by co-created educational resources and activities. Through creative Youth Work facilitation methods, the project will connect Young People across Limerick City and County to build a collective and authentic voice for change.

St Gabriel’s School and Centre
Limericks Gateway to Education

- a non-profit social enterprise organisation to address economic and social barriers to education. Create a website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts, to spread the message of what they do

NCBI (National Council Blind of Ireland)

- The project aims to provide training to adult users with vision impairment in the use of accessibility features for people with vision loss on iDevices (i.e. iPhone, iPad, iPod) thereby increasing the user’s independence and ultimately enhancing their quality of life. A key aspect of the project is to empower identified services users to deliver the intervention.
COURSE STRUCTURE

The first part focuses on Irish identities as they are shaped by our past and our own understandings of ourselves. Students will meet local community groups working with UL faculty in applied projects and be offered the opportunity to contribute their own skills and ideas to these projects in community identified areas.

The second part of the module looks at Ireland’s socio-economic status, focusing on Ireland’s recent experience of Global Financial crisis and examining its impact on local communities. Students will be introduced to the communities working with the university on the CWELL diploma programme.

- The Community Wellness Empowerment Leadership and Life-skills (CWELL) diploma programme was developed in a partnership between St Mary’s parish and UL staff. The two-year, part-time programme was designed to achieve specific outcomes in health literacy, application of knowledge to practice, and the personal and professional growth of programme participants, particularly the demonstration of leading and sustaining positive change. CWELL is innovative in terms of its collaborative design, philosophy and governance structures, as well as the community oriented pedagogical approaches it deploys. The CWELL approach is to engage the community/supporting them to develop projects utilizing community resources, rather than imposing solutions on them without their involvement.

- The programme is also notable in the way that it enables a variety of other UL and international students to work on community projects and modules that integrate academic learning with community practice in a locally supported environment.

The third part of this module focuses on Ireland’s most recent re-invention as a place of inwards migration for EU migrants and new Irish citizens. Students will join Faculty from the School of Languages and Cultural Studies and the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance to see the ways that traditional Irish culture shapes and is shaped by new migrant cultures, bringing opportunities for cultural exchange and enrichment.
Benefits to Study Abroad Student

- Fully Immersive
- experiencing Urban disadvantage and rural disadvantage
- working with a wide variety of people; age, background; culture
- fulfills social and civic remit of home university
- builds practical skill set: teamwork; presentations; report writing; event mgt
- enhances their resume
It is challenging coming to a foreign place and then working alongside new faces in a different workplace with its own special quirks; however, the experience is well worth it after overcoming those trial and tribulations. It is a great way to witness a different side of Ireland by interacting and working alongside an older Irish community than just being surrounded by students on campus.

Conor O’Riordan
State University of New York

This practicum played a huge part in me enjoying my time in Ireland and it came at a complete surprise when it was offered upon arriving here. Not only did I learn so much about myself and the community I was involved in but I learned about the culture and history of Ireland. I learned things that most students don’t take the time to learn while they are abroad. The best part about this class is that I learned it by leaving the classroom and getting involved.

Colleen Condry Syracuse University
“They (academics) weren’t aloof and full of their own importance and expertise who came as “experts” to “fix” us. They had respect and listened. They (academics) allowed time at the beginning for the group to get together and share about themselves and their strengths. I think that research can be in a bubble, and life isn’t, you know. They did not come to “pimp our pain”” (Community partner, 2016)
Guidelines For Community Engagement, Service-Learning, and Volunteer Experiences Abroad:

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCES

a. Ensure the identified needs and assets of the community, as determined by a wide range of community members, are upheld and prioritized within the academic program aims and objectives.

b. Make local community members partners in the relationship and rely on local knowledge in all stages of developing, implementing, and evaluating the program/experience.

c. Investigate potential partner organizations and community engagement activities and their implications thoroughly before establishing a program; refuse to partner with organizations that permit uncredentialed medical care, orphanage volunteerism, or other activities that are harmful to individuals or communities. Direct engagement with children in residential facilities/orphanages is discouraged.

d. Engage with recognized and established community organizations onsite, including governmental and non-governmental agencies. Program development should empower, not avoid, ignore, displace, disregard or circumvent local organizations and professionals.

e. Ensure that initiatives and projects provide sustainable feasibility and outcomes that benefit the host community.

f. Minimize harmful effects, and evaluate potential harmful, unintended consequences by asking questions.

Questions for consideration

e. Ensure that initiatives and projects provide sustainable feasibility and outcomes that benefit the host community.

• What is the purpose of SL?
Town and Gown: what role should universities/institutions play in the local communities
• To whose advantage is SL, community? student? institution?

m. Develop an appropriate mechanism for evaluating outcomes and local impact
• how can we ensure non negative community impact?
• From viewpoint of university, researcher, provider/large organisation

How do we define community?
• Local? National? Global?
• developed v developing?
• Vulnerable? Deprived? Disadvantaged?
Thank you & Questions