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Wisconsin Center for the Advancement
of Postsecondary Education

Institutional Support for Advancing Undergraduate Service-Learning
A Case Example from a Large Public Research-Intensive University

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Institutional Support for Advancing Undergraduate Service-Learning: A Case Example from a Large Public Research-Intensive University

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Abstract

Colleges and universities across the country are encouraging the integration of service-learning and community-based research into the curriculum, often by establishing centers to assist in that process. The goal of this paper is to outline a set of tasks for campus-wide institutional support of service-learning that are necessary and that can organize the development and evaluation of service-learning centers. We use the example of a large research-intensive public university to examine these tasks, how they can be adapted to the specifics of an institution, and how one service-learning center pursues them.

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Introduction

Engagement has become one of the ubiquitous buzz words in discussions of the goals and strategies of undergraduate education today. Although many different strategies seek to help students develop habits of mind and practice that support engagement, the integration of *service-learning* and *community-based research* into the undergraduate curriculum is one of the widely-accepted approaches.[2]   Service-learning has vocal advocates and practitioners on hundreds of campuses, but strong institutional support is necessary to make sure its promise is fulfilled in reality. But what kinds of campus-level institutional organization and support are necessary to ensure that students have substantial opportunities for high quality service-learning experiences? What strategies are realistic and effective in the face of today's widespread budget challenges? We offer a case study of the institutional support available at one major research-intensive public university, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, to explore some of the questions, problems, and practices, and to suggest guidelines that might be useful developing strong service-learning programs.

The Tasks of Campus-Based Institutional Support

We believe that institutional support for service-learning must be aimed at six major goals, including making sure that service-learning is (1) part of the understood and accepted models of pedagogy, both generally and within the wide range of disciplines and interdisciplinary areas; (2) a pedagogical practice that is supported adequately to allow faculty to pursue it without place undue burdens on their ongoing professional obligations; (3) a pedagogical practice that is understood in community agencies, and supported so that it does not create undue burdens for them; (4) integrated into the curriculum at the programmatic and campus level, (5) widely available to students, and (6) maintained at an appropriately high level of quality. These goals are described in greater detail below.

Ensuring service-learning is part of understood and accepted models of pedagogy among faculty, staff, and administrators, both generally and within particular disciplines, interdisciplinary areas and the academic schools and colleges

Service-learning involves new pedagogies and structures of teaching and learning. Although there is widespread support for community-based, engaged learning, many institutions and faculty probably still envision these activities in the more traditional modes of internships and peripheral enhancements. Integrating community engagement into the core of the learning activities, rather than placing it at the periphery, even as a valued enhancement, is a new concept. Service-learning models that identify the community-based partners explicitly into our understanding of "teachers"

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[2]   Throughout this paper when we reference service-learning, we are including community-based research as part of that concept. Moreover, we are always referring here to academic service-learning.

are new to most faculty and institutions. It is these transformed ideas of the learning model, and not simply the question of whether learning can take place outside the classroom that must be the focus of institutional activities to build awareness and support.

To be useful, the transformed model cannot be a general template; its details are likely to be strongly shaped by the nature of the field in which learning is taking place. Service-learning models of teaching and learning are likely to differ in important ways across fields as diverse as engineering, English, and economics. As useful as abstract discussions of pedagogical values are, institutional support must further the building and understanding of models that can work in real life situations.

Ensuring that service-learning as a pedagogical practice is supported adequately to allow faculty to pursue it without placing undue burdens on their ongoing professional obligations

One of the biggest problems for expanding service-learning and community-based research—or any new pedagogical practice or subject matter—is the inadequacy of resources to help faculty who want to initiate new teaching projects to do so. Time is probably the resource in shortest supply for research-active teaching faculty, including time to learn new pedagogical strategies, develop the new course or course elements, and create and sustain community partnerships. Expertise is another crucial resource necessary to support faculty in the development of service-learning courses. Further, faculty who may be interested in developing the expertise and course plan necessary to offer a service-learning course may find the prospect of developing and maintaining the necessary community partnerships too burdensome, either because of lack of adequate knowledge of or connections to potential partners or because of the organizational demands of maintaining the partnerships. Faculty investment in developing and teaching service-learning courses must be given appropriate credit and reward so they do not feel they have to do this work as an "overload" or suffer negative repercussions because of their work. Departments and programs also face resource issues that might make it difficult to release colleagues for teaching that might be valuable but that does not fill their highest priority needs. The resource issues are real, and these needs must be faced in a period in which departments, colleges, and universities face increasing demands and budget challenges, especially in the public sector. Some faculty will proceed in any case, but universities must guard against burning out their most dedicated teachers.

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Ensuring that service-learning as a pedagogical practice is understood and valued by community agencies, and supported adequately to allow agency leaders and staff to pursue it without creating undue burdens for their ongoing obligations

Traditional internships and other public service experiences related to the curriculum have always required attention to make sure students' volunteer work has meaningful academic significance and is not merely clerical work assigned without any clear linkage to larger learning questions. Service-learning takes the problem one step further; the community agency shares in the teaching role more directly, which requires more awareness and training. Moreover, although community agencies benefit from the assistance of dedicated students, the presence of students in an agency is also costly to the agency. Students require training, supervision, and a coherent stream of tasks. Students usually arrive inexperienced and unfamiliar with the community, the agency, and its work, and perhaps also deficient in an understanding of appropriate work habits and appropriate forms of interaction. Students from relatively privileged backgrounds may face challenges in working in more economically disadvantaged areas and with people who have fewer educational and social opportunities. These students sometimes underestimate the knowledge and skill of the community agents, creating tensions and other problems for it and the clients. Thus adequate institutional support must address the potential sources of costs to community partners.

Ensuring that service-learning is integrated into the curriculum at the programmatic and campus level

Integration into the curriculum is essential so that the knowledge gained from these academic experiences becomes a coherent part of the larger whole rather than an isolated experience. But this means that expanding service-learning on campus is not just a matter of encouraging individual faculty to teach courses; it also requires thinking through its relationship to curricula, requirements, and advising. Once an institution or any portion of it begins to think in these terms, a series of other practical matters crop up that need coordination and careful attention, such as timetabling and the identification of service-learning courses in catalogs and timetables.

Ensuring that service-learning is widely available to and valued by students

If service-learning opportunities are very limited, they will probably be monopolized by the students who will gain the least value from them, students who have already built the best bridges between their academic experiences and the wider world. For the promise of service-learning to be fulfilled, the population of students with service-learning experiences must expand, as well as the number of fields in which service-learning experiences are offered.

Ensuring that service-learning is maintained at an appropriately high level of quality

Assessment and accountability are becoming increasingly important throughout university programs. Many claim service-learning courses are worth the expenditure of human and financial resources because of their impact on students, so those impacts should be assessed. Assessment requires institutional support and must be linked to readjustment and improvement. Once again, for service-learning to fulfill its promise, the development of criteria and assessment methods must reflect field variations.

Challenges and Opportunities for Service-Learning at a Large Public Research-Intensive University: The Case of the University of Wisconsin–Madison

Supporting the integration of service-learning experiences into the undergraduate curriculum requires paying attention to institution-specific missions, challenges, and opportunities. The remainder of this discussion uses the University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison) as an example. This discussion begins with a review of various characteristics of a large, research-intensive public university and their implications for the needs and opportunities for institutional support for service-learning. It then focuses on the institutional response to the requirements for the support enumerated above.

Size, complexity, and the nature of funding all determine the kinds of educational opportunities an institution can offer its students. UW–Madison is one of the nation's largest public universities, with about 29,000 undergraduates and 41,000 students overall. Education functions and budgeting, for the most part, are in the direct control of the 11 major colleges, plus interdisciplinary schools and scores of component departments. Its sheer size, combined with the decentralized nature and institutional complexity typical of this type of institution, poses great challenges to planning for and supporting the expansion of any educational innovation on an all-campus basis. Moreover, UW–Madison is a public university in a state that has been facing severe structural budget deficits and has already suffered large budget cuts.

UW–Madison's mission as a premier research-intensive university creates some hurdles, as well. It is well known that at such universities junior faculty especially face the demands of high research productivity as well as teaching while they are still in the steep phase of building their research and teaching skills. For most assistant professors at research-intensive universities who are already struggling to develop their teaching repertoires and, contrary to stereotype, are stretching to do high quality teaching, investing a lot of added time in developing service-learning courses rather than in research productivity would not be a wise choice.

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Other possible effects of teaching at a major research-intensive university are less widely recognized. At these universities, faculty impose on themselves relatively demanding expertise criteria for determining what range of courses a professor is qualified to teach, whereas at smaller and less research-active institutions, faculty are expected to teach a wider range of courses that often go well beyond their training. Because the self-imposed professional expertise criteria of faculty in research-intensive institutions mean they place a high premium on keeping up with the current research literature in the field as a prerequisite for *both* teaching and research, they are likely to be less willing to experiment in unfamiliar areas of teaching if they believe they lack sufficient resources such as time, sources of expertise, and assistance to "get up to speed."

A final roadblock that may be particular to major research-intensive universities is the "leakage" of conceptions of first-rate Ph.D. training into undergraduate education. Faculty who teach in a Ph.D. program are responsible for making sure their graduate students have the breadth, depth, and analytical skills in the discipline to teach it to others and to make original research contributions to it as professionals. We suspect that faculty at these universities are also more likely to infuse their undergraduate teaching with the same professionalism, creating what we might label junior graduate courses. Focusing pointedly on the very different missions of undergraduate education might lead to less emphasis on transmitting the current research literature for its own sake and, perhaps, paying more attention to the relationship between academic learning and the lives students will live long after they graduate. Each of these characteristics suggests needs for configuring institutional support to aid faculty in the development of expertise for service-learning teaching and establishing the linkages between service-learning and their disciplines.

Some characteristics of major public research-intensive universities also facilitate expanding the service learning. Public universities, by their very nature, have responsibility to the broader community and are increasingly held responsible for providing an education that will demonstrably enable students to live successful, productive lives. For scholars at research-intensive universities, original research (i.e., discovery) is a central concept in their professional lives, and they are increasingly eager to share the excitement of discovery with their undergraduates.

UW–Madison has additional characteristics that provide groundwork for institutional support of service-learning. It is a land-grant institution with a long tradition of linkage between education and the larger community. The Wisconsin Progressive tradition, with its emphasis on public service and expertise, became infused into the history of the university in the form of the "Wisconsin Idea," first propounded most explicitly by university President Charles R. Van Hise (not incidentally, a classmate of Robert M. LaFollette). Van Hise advocated "extending the

boundaries of the University to the State," a concept eventually transformed into the university slogan, "the boundaries of the university are the boundaries of the state." The campus culture and the kind of students it attracts have long resulted in a high level of participation of UW–Madison students in community and political action and service. The Wisconsin Union became the home of an office of volunteer service activities in the 1960s. From an early date, numerous internship courses appeared in the catalog in departments and programs across campus. For years, UW–Madison has sent more alumni to the Peace Corps annually than any other college or university.

The result is that the concepts of engaged learning, service-learning, and community-based research easily found a basic foothold at UW–Madison.   "Infusing curricula with service-learning" is an explicit part of the undergraduate education portion of the campus strategic plan. More recently, the accrediting body for this university, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, has included engagement and service among its criteria for accreditation.[3] But, as we have argued, strong traditions and good intentions are not sufficient to achieve the goals that help service-learning and community-based research become adequately integrated into the curriculum and teaching and learning practices. Fortunately, the campus had an opportunity to create an internal agency that could help provide the necessary institutional support.

In 1994, two UW–Madison alumni, John and Tashia Morgridge, generously endowed a center to strengthen and expand the university's public service programs and link them explicitly into the formal curriculum in response to a campus committee report. The Morgridge Center for Public Service, which opened in 1996, has campus-wide responsibility and reports both to the Office of the Provost and the Wisconsin Union, which emphasizes its diverse mission. It is charged with promoting civic engagement; strengthening related teaching and learning; and building collaborative campus and community partnerships through public service, service-learning, and community-based research. The Morgridge Center is also the primary UW–Madison-based liaison with the Campus Compact[4] and the Wisconsin Campus Compact.[5]

The Morgridge Center's mission is reflected in its three major activities, which are summarized below.

Promoting and helping to facilitate volunteer service activities
This is achieved largely through collaboration with the Wisconsin Union, and especially two student-run committees, Alternative Breaks and Community Services, in fostering volunteer activities among students.

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[3]   http://www.neiu.edu/~neassess/pdf/BriefReport1.pdf
[4]   http://www.compact.org/
[5]   http://www.uwp.edu/departments/community.partnerships/wicampuscompact/

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Developing campus-community partnerships

The Morgridge Center is a key partner in the Campus Community Partnerships Center (CCP)[6], located in a former shopping mall in an ethnically diverse, economically-challenged part of the city. CCP develops cooperative ventures between UW–Madison programs and community groups to address needs identified by the leaders and residents of the ten neighborhoods in South Madison adjacent to the campus. The Morgridge Center is also a partner in providing the shared data base called VolunteerYourTime.org[7] through which over 300 nonprofit agencies, posting over 900 volunteer and/or academic service-learning and community-based research opportunities, can easily be found so that individuals seeking them can get connected. The other partners are United Way of Dane County, the Madison Area Technical College, Edgewood College, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program.

Encouraging and enhancing curricular opportunities such as service-learning and community-based research for UW–Madison students, especially undergraduates

This is the part of the mission that connects the Morgridge Center closely with the Office of the Provost, and thus, academic affairs.

These three different foci serve somewhat different constituencies, and in different ways, but they are also inextricably linked together. The remainder of this discussion will focus primarily on the ways in which the Morgridge Center serves as the primary locus of campus-wide institutional support for expanding the integration of service learning and community-based research into the UW–Madison curriculum, especially at the undergraduate level. This discussion frames these activities with the tasks of institutional support discussed earlier.

The Morgridge Center as a Site of Institutional Support

Because the Morgridge Center is designed to be the site of institution-wide support for service-learning and community-based research, it is useful to discuss its activities with respect to each of the goals of institutional support enumerated earlier.

Morgridge activities aimed at ensuring service-learning is part of understood and accepted models of pedagogy among faculty, staff, and administrators, both generally and within particular disciplines and interdisciplinary areas

A first, obvious element of promoting more widespread understanding and acceptance of service-learning pedagogies is to define it and clarify what it means, both theoretically and practically. The Morgridge Center does this through making helpful documents available in print and online;

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[6] http://www.uc.wisc.edu/ccp/

[7] http://www.volunteersolutions.org/uwdc/volunteer

providing workshops and other forms of face-to-face training and education; and by using other forms of communication, including public relations.

A grant from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Extended Programs allowed the development of the first version of a practical guide to service-learning aimed primarily at faculty and staff published in August 2002. It has been revised and is available as the *University of Wisconsin–Madison Service-Learning and Community-Based Research Manual for Faculty and Instructional Staff*.[8] In 2003, the Morgridge Center published a companion manual titled *Service-Learning and Community-Based Research Manual for Community Partners.* Both manuals were collaborative efforts of Morgridge Center staff, faculty, students, and community agency representatives, and they draw ideas from other service-learning centers, especially those at the University of Michigan, Louisiana State University, and Colorado State University. Both are used intensively in training on campus and in the community.

Updated regularly, the manuals begin with conceptual issues, but are also designed to offer practical assistance to facilitate faculty, staff, and community agency leaders' work both by preparing them and offering just-in-time knowledge. Two sections merit special attention. The first is a matrix of different kinds of community outreach and public service opportunities that might be available to students, distinguishing among volunteer community service, fieldwork and clinical placements, internships, and service-learning. By outlining differences among these forms in the focus of effort, time commitment, supervision and grading practices, and relationship to grading, this matrix is a practical introduction to the different pedagogical possibilities faculty and staff might consider.

This second is a chart that distinguishes among five different models of service-learning (individual placement, group project, partnership, independent study, and service-learning internship), describes the differences among them, and offers concrete examples from the university curriculum. These simple outlines are all faculty need to begin to consider the specific ways in which service-learning might be integrated into their teaching in ways that are appropriate to the subject, the aims of the course, the needs of their students, and their own teaching styles and expertise.

One of the ways the manuals are designed to assist faculty, staff, and community leaders with their work in service-learning is to help each of these parties understand the work and challenges of the others. Students' experiences in an agency are more than a participant-observation placement, so the community agents and the faculty and instructional staff are mutually and collaboratively involved in teaching. Consequently, both must understand the pedagogical issues and develop

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[8] http://www.morgridge.wisc.edu/communitymanual/foreword%20and%20introduction.html

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good linkages with each other. In contrast, traditional internships tend to require oversight and collaboration to make sure that students are given meaningful work in the agencies, but only under some circumstances would there be any idea that the community agent fully plays a teaching and curricular role.[9]

The Morgridge Center also engages in other broad-based education about service-learning and provides training to participate in service-learning through workshops, forums, and other means. A good example is a morning-long forum on international volunteerism and service-learning in which faculty and students who have engaged in service-learning on an international basis share their experiences, perspectives, and advice.

The close relationship between the Morgridge Center and the Office of the Provost, through the vice provost for teaching and learning (who also serves as co-chair of the Board of Directors along with a student), is also important to raising awareness and integrating service learning into accepted models of pedagogy. When the first director of the Morgridge Center announced her retirement, the Morgridge Center and its supervisory offices agreed to transform the directorship to make it a part-time position for a faculty member in order to emphasize and support the linkages with faculty, departments, and programs.

An important strategy is to create a buzz about service-learning and community-based research by bringing to campus nationally recognized speakers every fall who lecture, teach classes, lead discussions, and sponsor other campus events and meetings. The Morgridge Center also works closely with University Communications to make sure news and information about its work are distributed widely on campus and through the press.

Much of the best outreach to inform and involve new faculty and staff takes place on a one-to-one basis as Morgridge Center staff and affiliated faculty and students identify specific faculty members who they believe might be interested in service-learning, generally, or in particular partnerships and opportunities. Of course, as the Morgridge Center, service-learning, and community-based research have become better known, faculty increasingly approach the center to explore the possibility of developing these pedagogical strategies, or to seek help.

As we have argued, although campus-level support for service learning is important, the solutions have to vary to fit particular programs, and the commitment and support has to be integrated with the goals and practices of the different parts of campus, especially at large, complex, and

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[9]   Clinical and practicum placements for professional students are usually exceptions to this generalization.

decentralized universities. The Morgridge Center has developed partnerships with particular colleges and programs to pursue this goal, which are described below.

School of Human Ecology (SoHE)

The dean and her faculty made a two-year commitment to integrate service-learning teaching methods into her college with the assistance of a half-time graduate project assistant funded by the Morgridge Center. This collaboration resulted in curricular changes including graduation requirements and a lasting commitment to service learning in SoHE on the part of the college administration and faculty.

Institute for Cross Campus Biology Education (ICBE)

ICBE is a newly-organized umbrella organization for 38 biology and biology-related majors across the campus in the schools and colleges focusing on the provision of the common gateway courses. A partnership between the Morgridge Center and ICBE focuses on identifying and developing service-learning and community-based research opportunities across the departments that teach gateway biology courses. The center assigned an undergraduate service-learning fellow to work with ICBE faculty and staff, and the Morgridge Center also assists with website design and training courses for faculty.

Department of Landscape Architecture

The center has granted funds and staff time to assist the department in developing a five-year plan to establish a Center for Community Design; writing and distributing an illustrated compendium of recent service-learning and community-based research courses; and designing an evaluation to document both the student outcomes and state-wide benefits of the department's service-learning and community-based research activities during the past three years.

Center for Humanities

This Center recently established the Humanities Exposed Program (HEX), which has recruited five humanities graduate students to engage in community-based research projects to benefit the community. Their work will form the basis for their theses. The Morgridge Center is providing modest financial support to HEX, including underwriting a major lecture.

College of Letters and Science

The largest college on campus has established a consultant for service-learning and community-based research within the central administrative staff. The consultant's primary responsibility is to work with faculty in collaboration with the Morgridge Center to increase the number of service-learning courses in the college with the goal of integrating these teaching methodologies into every department.

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These are only a few examples of how the Center helps ensure that appropriate understandings of service-learning pedagogies and practices develop at the local level and are integrated with the diversity of fields and disciplines that exist on campus.

Morgridge activities aimed at ensuring that service-learning as a pedagogical practice is supported adequately to allow faculty to pursue it without placing undue burdens on their ongoing professional obligations

The Morgridge Center has developed numerous programs aimed at providing necessary resources such as time, training, expertise, and infrastructure support. The service-learning manuals discussed above offer one example of the training and expertise available. Others are described below.

Service-Learning and Community-Based Research Resource Library

The center maintains a large library of books, journals, and manuals related to service-learning and community-based research. These are available for borrowing and many of the resources, including the manuals discussed earlier, are available online.

Professional Staff and Faculty Mentors

Morgridge Center staff and members of the Faculty Consultation Team are available to assist faculty and instructional staff throughout the service-learning course development and implementation process. Team members also have the opportunity to attend professional conferences about these teaching methodologies in their areas of interest. The center can also connect them with other faculty and instructional staff who are familiar with service-learning and/or community-based research.

Campus List Serv

This allows interested faculty, teaching assistants, and instructional academic staff to have ready access to developments, information, and best practices.

The Morgridge Center also assists with financial support for course development. Center staff keep tabs on and circulate information about possible financial support, such as opportunities offered by the National Campus Compact, the Wisconsin Campus Compact, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Surdna Foundation. Other programs supported through the Morgridge Center's are described below.

Service-Learning Course Development Grants[10]
Up to $1,500 per course is available to assist faculty in creating new service-learning and community-based research courses or in modifying existing courses to incorporate one of these teaching methodologies. Recipients are expected to share their expertise when their grant period is completed by participating in an information session or workshop and to writing a report aimed at assisting colleagues in their work.

The Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowship Program (WIF)
WIF fellowships support academic service-learning and community-based research projects involving students, faculty/staff advisors, and community organizations working together to address community needs. Past projects have included projects in the arts, community development, environmental concerns, literacy, and hunger and poverty issues. Students earn three academic credits and fellowships vary from $1,000-$5,000 based on project length. Faculty, staff, and community organizations each receive $1,000 to defray project costs.

Undergraduate Service-Learning Fellows
Five undergraduates are each assigned to a specific faculty member for at least one semester to assist in planning and implementing a service-learning course. Fellows are trained to establish community placements, lead reflection exercises, and maintain ongoing communication between the community organizations and the course. They can assist with class discussion and journaling activities that tie the service activities, class lectures, and required readings together.

The partnerships discussed earlier also constitute important aspects of the support offered to faculty and programs to remove burdens and encourage their participation in service-learning.

The Morgridge Center's function as a primary liaison for campus-community partnerships is an important source of support to faculty interested in teaching service-learning courses because of the vast knowledge of potential partners available and the center's role in maintaining those partnerships and helping to train the agency partners in service-learning work. Both the Campus Community Partnership Center (CCP) and VolunteerYourTime.org, described above, are crucial centerpieces to that infrastructure and set of connections, as are the community people directly involved in the Morgridge Center through participation on its Advisory Board.

One of the most difficult tasks can be finding strategies to increase recognition and moral support for faculty service-learning efforts among their colleagues. It is not possible to separate this from broader considerations of how faculty work loads and efforts are managed and evaluated, and the

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[10]   http://www.morgridge.wisc.edu/grants.html

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impact of the full range of different innovations the university is supporting at any given time. From the point of view of individual faculty members, of course, different groups and offices on campus (with the support of central administrators, at least in spirit) are variously telling them to do more service-learning, participate in writing across the curriculum, internationalize the curriculum, introduce more ethnic studies material, introduce more technology into their teaching methods, focus on classroom climate, become more interdisciplinary, and pay more attention to assessment. For all these reasons, the Morgridge Center has maintained a strong and active Faculty Consultation Team, an Advisory Board, and close partnerships with deans, directors, and the Office of the Provost. The effort to maintain a constant stream of communication and assistance is also aimed at creating this culture change. In the end, however, it is the faculty with engaging and successful ventures in service learning who probably have the most impact.

Morgridge activities aimed at ensuring that service-learning as a pedagogical practice is understood and valued by community agencies, and supported adequately to allow agency leaders and staff to pursue it without creating undue burdens for their ongoing obligations

The partnerships programs discussed above serve the community agencies and their clients by being attentive to identified community needs, working to be sure that the net gain in the community is far greater than the costs of participation, and by providing training for participating in service-learning, community-based research, collaboration with the university, and supervising students. Communication of needs and opportunities for solution is a key challenge. VolunteerYourTime.org is a crucial element in information exchange. Beginning in 2007, a new electronic bulletin board, the Wisconsin Idea Exchange, will enable community agencies to post topics, problems, or issues for which academic service-learning or community-based research courses could provide assistance, and faculty will also be able to post ideas and partnerships that might be of interest to agencies.

The Morgridge Center has also developed an orientation course for students who are taking service-learning courses. Students enrolled in service-learning courses are encouraged to take the orientation, and many faculty require their students to attend. Part of the intention of the orientation is to bridge the knowledge gap for students who are going out into the Madison community for the first time, giving them needed background on the city, on the communities, and on appropriate ways to engage in community activity and interact with the agencies. Community leaders and former service-learning students have assisted in developing the orientation.

Morgridge activities aimed at ensuring that service-learning is integrated into the curriculum at the programmatic and campus level

The internal partnerships between the Morgridge Center and particular schools and colleges or programs constitute one strategy of making sure that service-learning and community-based research are not just pedagogical approaches that happen to be used here or there by particular interested faculty, but also become coherent parts of the curriculum and overall package of students' academic experiences.

Concentrating on majors and certificates tends to focus attention on the later years of academic experience. At many large universities, innovative first-year undergraduate programs that include more intimate academic experiences are aimed at the necessarily large gateway courses. The Morgridge Center is pursuing similar activities in introducing service-learning at UW–Madison. Like many campuses, UW–Madison has a Freshman Interest Groups (FIGS) program that ties a core seminar of no more than 20 students with two other gateway courses so that the same 20 students enroll in the courses together. The Morgridge Center is working with the FIGS director to encourage some of its core courses to include service-learning components. Although some of the FIGS have done this, this feature has not yet been regularized.

Morgridge activities aimed at ensuring that service-learning is widely available to and valued by students

Experience shows that, with respect to courses with service-learning and community-based research components, if we build them, they will come. But the Morgridge Center has also developed a number of special opportunities and rewards to heighten attention to these programs and support and reward students who participate, which are described below.

The Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowship Program (WIF)
This program allows students to earn three academic credits and receive $1,000-$5,000, depending on project length.

Undergraduate Service-Learning Fellows
These fellow are assigned to assist faculty in developing and teaching service-learning courses.

Morgridge Center Student Peer Advisors
Advisors include one undergraduate from each university residence hall for a total of 10 students who are employed part-time, jointly, by their living units and the Morgridge Center, and work in both places. As leaders in public service among the students, advisors teach their peers about the center and organize specific volunteer projects for groups of students to get them out in to the

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community. Although they focus more on volunteer opportunities, they also share information about service-learning and community-based research courses.

Awards

An increasing number of awards on campus take account of students' leadership and community engagement in their criteria. Association with service-learning is an important credential. For example, there is now a formal Leadership Certificate Program on campus which requires 100 hours of service based on the number of hours served through a course or volunteer opportunity, or both. Another example is the Meyerhoff Undergraduate Student Awards for 26 juniors and seniors each year who receive $800 for their scholarship, leadership, and service.

Service-learning and community-based research are also important categories of work that students are encouraged to present about at the Annual Undergraduate Symposium.[11] These presentations give experienced students an opportunity to share what they have learned with other students, and they give other students an opportunity for peer-learning about service-learning. A representative of the Morgridge Center is a member of the planning committee and the center took a turn serving as the administrative home of the Undergraduate Symposium.

We have mentioned the potential cost of service-learning to faculty, staff, and community agents; students also shoulder extra burdens to take these courses. Engaging in service-learning usually means commuting to an off-campus work location. For a public university with many students without the financial means to keep a car, commuting may be exceedingly difficult in a small city with limited public transportation. For this reason, the Morgridge Center has sought and obtained modest grants to pay for taxi service for students commuting to a regular volunteer placement or enrolled in a service-learning course that is off the public transportation routes or beyond the main transfer points in the bus service. Without the taxi program, students could face an hour-long commute to a placement that is only a few miles away. In 2005-06, over 900 round-trip rides were given to individuals and small groups of students.

It is not easy for students to identify which courses have significant service-learning or community-based research components on a campus of this size with its massive list of course offerings. Faculty do not have to coordinate with the Morgridge Center to offer a service-learning course, and many faculty offer courses that are not known as service-learning courses as such, but which offer significant optional components of service-learning. The Morgridge Center has worked with the Office of the Registrar and the Office of the Provost to implement a rudimentary system to identify service-learning courses in the timetable. The center has also been collaborating

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[11] http://www.learning.wisc.edu/ugsymposium/

with the College of Letters and Science to establish criteria for granting the designation as a service-learning course at the time of formal course approval at the college level. This will be of great assistance to students, advisors, and faculty alike.

Morgridge activities aimed at ensuring that service-learning is maintained at an appropriately high level of quality

The Morgridge Center does not have the power to create or teach credit-bearing courses on its own. It works as a collaborative partner to assist colleges, departments, programs, and faculty to develop curricula and courses that must go through normal procedures of approval and timetabling. The Faculty Advisory Committee plays an important role in this process, as well. Thus colleges, departments, and faculty have every opportunity to apply their standards of excellence to the substance of courses, and the Morgridge Center's work is aimed at improving the practices of service-learning.

Conclusions: Criteria of Excellence in Supporting Service-Learning

Large national organizations and resources such as the Campus Compact,[12] its state affiliates (the Wisconsin Campus Compact was chartered in 2002), and the National Service Learning Clearinghouse,[13] offer tremendous support to university programs and individuals seeking to integrate more service-learning and community-based research into their curricula. Our goal here was to investigate a specific question: what types of campus-based institutional support are necessary for universities intent on increasing the service-learning opportunities available to their students? We have offered a simple framework of six essential goals for institutional support that promote progress, can be used to guide the strategic objectives of institutional support, and can be used for purposes of continuing assessment. Of course, the bottom line is the range and quality of service-learning experiences available to students. But during the period in which these opportunities are first developed, it is crucial to build the right support mechanisms carefully and coherently.

 In the end, the successes are suggested in the numbers. In 2005-06, the timetable included roughly 100 service-learning courses compared with about 50 in 2001-02. Between 75 to 100 faculty have service-learning courses in their teaching repertoires, and at least 2,000 students take a service-learning course every year.

The sense of community among faculty and students interested in service-learning is just as important as the number of courses and instructors invoved in these efforts. The center further

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[12] http://www.compact.ort/
[13] http://www.servicelearning.org/

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facilitates organization among the faculty who are involved through the Faculty Consultation Team. The center rotates the membership regularly, uses them seriously as consultants and deliberation partners, supports their attendance at conferences, and encourages them to provide needed assistance to others. The center has also worked to create similar leadership and organization among students by establishing a learning community of students who either work at the center part time, as peer advisors or undergraduate service-learning fellows, or serve on student-led committees associated with the volunteer activities and organizations based at the Wisconsin Union, such as the Alternative Breaks and Community Services Committees. These students have serious leadership roles in the center and around campus which earns them the respect of other students and faculty alike.

There is considerable unfinished business as well. Service-learning and community-based research are not as widely familiar to faculty or as supported as we would like them to be. In addition, the use of these pedagogies is not as in widespread use as we would prefer. Although the Morgridge Center has helped to provide the resources necessary to facilitate the participation of already stretched faculty, programs, and community agencies, the greatest resource that supports this work on the UW–Madison campus, as well as on others, is the willingness of many faculty, staff, and community leaders to go beyond the call of duty.

The normal turnover of community agency staff results in lack of understanding and continuity of service-learning and community-based research courses, not to mention the all-important personal relationships established with faculty and other campus personnel. The work of keeping up these connections is never done.

Another difficulty affecting all service-learning programs is the mismatch between academic and community calendars and needs. Universities work on semesters, trimesters, or quarters—time frames that begin and end in dramatic ways with the cycle of months. The rest of the world does not work that way. Problems are not necessarily designed to be solved in 15 weeks, and they do not begin or end at moments that are convenient for course management.

The Morgridge Center is only one of many such university-based centers for public service established on campuses across the country. These programs are connected with each other in many ways, including through participation in the Campus Compact on the national level and the state Campus Compacts. Together, these programs collaborate in a kind of institutional learning community to share ideas and solutions. This outline of institutional support needs and the ways the center addresses those needs, combined with the sharing of our results across universities and colleges, should be helpful in pursuing this important work further.

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