A Qualitative Assessment Project Comparing and Contrasting Faculty and Administrators' Perspectives on Service-Learning

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Abstract

More than 130 service-learning courses have been developed and taught at the University of Utah, a major Research I university, over the last ten years. A series of focus groups were conducted to identify salient factors related to faculty and administrators' perspectives of the advantages and challenges associated with service-learning. The study also compared perspectives of faculty with those of administrators. This article provides a brief background on focus groups followed by a description of the methodology used in the assessment. The analysis procedure and results are reported with a discussion of three strategic responses that were generated and implemented to address the concerns identified by focus group participants.

Introduction

There is relatively little research on faculty perspectives on service-learning *(Driscoll 2000)* or on the relationship between faculty and service-learning *(Driscoll and Lynton 1999; Holland 1997)*. There is even less research on perspectives of administrators toward implementing and sustaining service-learning. Few researchers have explored similarities or differences between faculty and administrative approaches to service-learning.

Faculty perspectives: Hammond *(1994)* conducted a survey of faculty throughout the state of Michigan to identify factors related to motivation and satisfaction. The results of that study revealed that the strongest motivation factors were tied to enhancing the relevance of content and promoting self-directed learning. The results also suggested faculty satisfaction was related to sufficient freedom, autonomy, and control, a sense of purpose, and feedback. Faculty concerns were associated with coordination of the class and students, increased time demands, and modifications in teaching methods.

Stacey and Foreman *(1999)* examined whether faculty incentives were necessary for integrating service-learning and further investigated what types of incentives would best motivate faculty. While there was no unanimous opinion that incentives were necessary, "intrinsic" types of incentives, defined as those relating to the work itself, were perceived to better motivate faculty. In this case, release time and graduate assistants were used as examples of intrinsic motivators.

Much of these results are consistent with recent survey findings by Abes, Jackson, and Jones *(2002)*. Faculty members are generally intrinsically motivated to teach service-learning, and logistical coordination is often perceived as a deterrent. One quantitative study investigated administrators' perspective on institutional support of service-learning *(Serow et al. 1996)*. The results of their multiple regression analysis suggested that faculty involvement is dependent on the number of faculty involved in teaching service-learning and emphasis on academic goals. While these factors appear to be related to institutional support, they don't address infrastructural factors, such as technical support, teaching assistants, administrative support, or faculty reward system.

In addition, little qualitative research has been conducted on faculty perspectives. One exception is the work of Hesser *(1995)*, who combined focus groups and interviews with surveys to assess faculty attitudes toward experiential education and service-learning. The results indicate that 83 percent of the faculty found that service-learning enhances the quality of learning in comparison to traditional courses. Another finding indicated that faculty viewed service-learning as an effective vehicle for promoting problem-solving and critical reflection.

Administrators' perspectives: While it is important to understand faculty motivation for engaging in service-learning, it is equally important to explore institutional factors, such as administrative support, that also play a role in promoting and practicing service-learning. Bringle and Hatcher *(2000)* conducted a comprehensive study of organizational factors that determine the level of institutionalization of service-learning. Of the many factors, they indicated that "broad administrative and staff understanding of and support for service-learning, infrastructure, [and] faculty roles and rewards" *(p. 275)* are critical.

Ward *(1998)* noted that many campuses have benefited from presidential support, due in large part to the influence of Campus

Compact, a consortium of more than eight hundred college and university presidents that focuses on service-learning and civic engagement. However, administrative support of deans and department chairs is equally important, as they are involved in academic management and policy. Holland *(2000)* indicated the need to explore the role of the department chair and departmental culture in making service-learning part of the teaching strategies and approaches. Specifically, she calls for research on how service-learning is treated in the context of departmental budgeting and suggests "that the academic department, the locus of curricular decisions, is the key organizational level where service-learning must be accepted and integrated if it is to be sustained" *(p. 54)*. Ward suggested that a major impediment to institutionalization is administrators' lack of awareness or understanding of service-learning and its benefits. While there has been research exploring institutional factors that support or impede service-learning, there appears to be very little exploration of the perspective of deans and department chairs, especially with regard to necessary infrastructure and resources to support and sustain service-learning.

> *"Faculty members are generally intrinsically motivated to teach service-learning, and logistical coordination is often perceived as a deterrent."*

One of the few studies examining administrators' perspectives we could find in our research was by Smith *(1994)*, who used a series of qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups, to determine the impact of service-learning on fostering an understanding of citizenship and civic responsibility. Results of a content analysis of documents, papers, journals, and focus groups revealed twelve distinct categories of effects of service-learning. However, in this study, the only administrator interviewed was a vice provost at a private, faith-based liberal arts institution of higher education. The vice provost participating in this investigation did not emphasize or acknowledge citizenship as an important outcome of service-learning. This consequently has limited generalization to other types of administrators at other types of institutions.

Another study by Stanton *(1994)* summarized a dissertation study that explored the experience of faculty and administrators

following a faculty development seminar on service-learning. Participants were nine full-time faculty and three full-time administrators. The administration group consisted of an assistant dean, a chaplain, and a program director. Six participants perceived administrative support as critical. One participant tied low level of support for service-learning at his institution with a perceived lack of administrative support.

Holland *(1997)* conducted twenty-three case studies between 1994 and 1997 to develop a matrix linking organizational factors to levels of commitment to service and service-learning. Administrators (presidents, provosts, deans, chairs, community relations staff) were interviewed as part of this qualitative study. While administrators were sampled in Holland's investigation, they were not the sole focus of attention, as they were interviewed along with students and faculty. Overall, there appears to be a paucity of research on administrators' perspectives and understanding of service-learning.

Background

We were interested in assessing faculty and administrators' perspectives on the advantages and challenges of service-learning. This interest included comparing and contrasting these perspectives to determine if the two separate constituencies viewed service-learning in the same way. We conceptualized this as an exploratory assessment project rather than a carefully controlled experimental study. Gelmon and colleagues *(2001)* argued that we must demonstrate the impact of service-learning and do so in the context of the engaged campus. They suggested that "assessment serves a useful purpose as a mechanism to tell the story of what one has learned from one's work—articulating that learning for oneself as well as for others" *(Gelmon et al. 2001, 4)*. Furthermore, we attempted to glean richer information through qualitative methods employing focus groups. Holland *(1997)* cites Merriam *(1988)* regarding the advantages of qualitative methodology when "the goal of research is to explain processes and describe and interpret the context of complex actions" *(p. 32)*. This qualitative assessment project provided direction for continuing support of faculty and how best to articulate service-learning as a pedagogy to administrators.

More than 130 service-learning courses have been developed and taught at the University of Utah, a major urban Research I university, over the last ten years. The Lowell Bennion Community

Service Center, established in 1987, was originally developed to promote student volunteer service opportunities. The program expanded to include service-learning in 1992 after obtaining a grant from the Corporation for National Service. Following the two-year grant period, the Bennion Center received institutional support from the academic vice presidents. Over the past decade, service-learning has been promoted across campus through two key strategies. One approach involves seed grants provided to faculty and departments to create courses. The funds for these initiatives are part of the institutional support provided by the academic vice presidents. A second strategy provides technical support through mentoring by a faculty fellow who is funded by a private foundation grant. The fellow works directly with faculty and departments to develop, implement, and evaluate service-learning courses under the oversight of the Bennion Center's

". . . the assessment process included a focus group with deans and department chairs to gain their perspective as well."

Service-Learning Advisory Board. This board provides academic oversight of the service-learning program across campus and guides the efforts of a number of working committees. One of these committees, the Class Committee, is composed of numerous faculty as well as student and community partner representatives. It meets approximately four times a year to review proposals for designating courses as service-learning. All courses must address nine criteria that are deemed essential to maintain the principles and quality of successful service-learning practices.

As part of the transition of a new Bennion Center director in 2001, a series of focus groups were conducted to identify salient factors related to faculty perspectives on the advantages and challenges associated with service-learning. Based on the recommendation of a faculty advisory committee of the Bennion Center, the assessment process included a focus group with deans and department chairs to gain their perspective as well. This article provides a brief background on focus groups followed by a description of the methodology used in the assessment. The analysis procedure and results are reported with a discussion of how the results have been used to support and expand service-learning on this campus.

Focus Groups

The process of posing specific questions to a small group for discussion was named "focus groups" by Merton, Fiske, and Kendall *(1956)*. Focus groups were originally developed by market researchers to interview a group of consumers about product preferences *(Fontana and Frey 1994; Patton 1990)*. Schmiede *(1995)* described the use of focus groups as a research method for assessing the impact of service-learning. In her comprehensive discussion, Schmiede gives an overview of this qualitative research method, including recommended procedures as well as advantages and limitations. Typically, a single individual facilitates the discussion by posing a limited number of neutrally worded questions to a group of three to ten participants. In contrast to quantitative methodologies that typically require large sample sizes, focus groups utilize smaller numbers of participants but in a fashion that provides richer and more detailed information than can be acquired from mean scores derived from Likert-type responses by "telling stories" *(Janesick 1994; Morse 1994)*. A distinctive feature of focus groups is the interaction of the participants, who can respond to each other's remarks. The discussion often yields rich information that cannot be obtained from quantitative methods such as surveys or questionnaires. Responses are typically recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to identify themes.

Methodology

Data collection and analysis: Following procedures recommended by Schmiede *(1995)*, we conducted one-hour focus groups with three distinct groups. The focus groups were intended to give faculty teaching service-learning courses, as well as administrators within colleges and departments that were engaged in service-learning, the opportunity to describe successful and challenging aspects of this form of pedagogy. The first group consisted of four faculty members who had taught a service-learning class at one time. Two faculty currently teaching service-learning courses constituted the second group. The third group consisted of five administrators, including the dean of the School of Pharmacy, an assistant dean from the College of Engineering, a chair from the Department of Communication, a chair from the Department of Family and Consumer Studies, and a program coordinator from the School of Medicine. Each college and department had institutionalized at least one service-learning course.

For each of the groups, we compiled a list of ten individuals with knowledge of or experience in service-learning. Interested individuals responded to an e-mail invitation to participate. The focus groups were scheduled for times when at least five respondents indicated they would attend. A doctoral student who had expertise in conducting group interviews and had no affiliation with the Bennion Center facilitated the focus groups. Each group was asked the following questions: (1) What is the value of service-learning? (2) What are challenges associated with service-learning?, (3) What technical support and infrastructure are necessary to sustain service-learning?

The focus groups were tape-recorded. The independent interviewer conducting the interviews transcribed responses of focus group participants. The interviewer, a staff member, the Bennion Center director, and a faculty member familiar with service-learning currently serving on a Bennion Center advisory board first independently reviewed the transcriptions. Each reader identified statements by participants that corresponded to each of the three questions stated above. Any responses related to the first statement (What is the value of service-learning?) were considered "positive statements." Responses to the second question (What are challenges associated with service-learning?) were considered "negative statements." Finally, responses related to the third question (What technical support and infrastructure are necessary to sustain service-learning?) were considered as "institutionalization statements." Each reader independently considered all three types of statements and identified tentative thematic units *(Patton 1990)*. The three reviewers reconvened to discuss their interpretations and reach a consensus on thematic units. The use of triangulation helps minimize individual bias in interpreting transcriptions.

Results

A total of six thematic units were identified and operationalized: pedagogy (statements pertaining to learning and teaching); fulfillment (comments articulating personal gratification within dimensions such as professional, political, or spiritual); citizenship (remarks reflecting collaborative efforts to promote civic awareness and action to address concerns and issues in the community); organization (statements reflecting systemic, cultural, administrative, or governance factors in higher education and at its various levels); logistics (comments pertaining to management and coordination); and public relations (remarks associated with the

image of the institution). The total number of statements (positive, negative, institutionalization) by thematic unit is reported in Table 1. The number of thematic units by statement by group is presented in Table 2. The prevalence of thematic units by statement by group is summarized in Table 3. Totals of thematic units by statement across all groups are presented in Table 4.

Table 1: Total number of statements

	Positive	Negative	Institutionalization
Group 1 (former faculty)	10	9	12
Group 2 (current faculty)	13	9	5
Group 3 (administrators)	12	17	7

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Table 2: Number of thematic units by statements by groups (some are combined/shared)

	Positive	Negative	Institutionalization	Total
Group 1 (former faculty)	**Ped – 4** Ful – 1 **Ci t – 4** Org – 1 Log – 0 PR – 0	Ped – 0 Ful – 2 Ci t – 1 Org – 3 **Log – 5** PR – 0	Ped – 0 Ful – 0 Ci t – 0 **Org – 6** Log – 5 PR – 3	Ped – 4 Ful – 3 Ci t – 5 **Org – 10** **Log – 10** PR – 3
Group 2 (current faculty)	Ped – 3 Ful – 4 **Ci t – 7** Org – 0 Log – 0 PR – 0	Ped – 0 Ful – 3 Ci t – 2 Org – 2 **Log – 6** PR – 0	Ped – 0 Ful – 0 Ci t – 0 **Org – 4** Log – 1 PR – 0	Ped – 3 Ful – 7 **Ci t – 9** Org – 6 Log – 7 PR – 0
Group 3 (administrators)	Ped – 3 Ful – 3 (all stdt) **Ci t – 4** (3: stdt) Org – 2 Log – 0 PR – 1	Ped – 1 Ful – 0 Ci t – 0 **Org – 11** Log – 5 PR – 1	Ped – 0 Ful – 0 Ci t – 0 **Org – 5** Log – 1 PR – 1	Ped – 4 Ful – 3 Ci t – 4 **Org – 18** Log – 6 PR – 3

Ped = Pedagogy   Ful = Personal/professional fulfillment   Cit = Citizenship
Org = Organizational factors   Log = Logistical factors   PR = Public relations

Table 3: Prevalence of thematic units by statement by group

	Positive	Negative	Institutionalization
Group 1 (former faculty)	Tie – Ped & Cit (4)	Log (5)	Tie – Org & Log (6)
Group 2 (current faculty)	Citizenship (7)	Log (6)	Cit (4)
Group 3 (administrators)	Citizenship (4) (student focused*)	Org (11)	Org (5)

Ped = Pedagogy   Ful = Personal/professional fulfillment   Cit = Citizenship
Org = Organizational factors   Log = Logistical factors   PR = Public relations

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Table 4: Total of thematic units by statement across all groups

	Positive	Negative	Institutionalization
Pedagogy	10	1	0
Fulfillment	8	5	0
Citizenship	15	3	0
Organization	3	16	15
Logistics	0	16	7
Public Relations	1	1	4

Group 1: Former faculty: Faculty who used to teach service-learning gave an equal number of positive comments (4) in the thematic categories of pedagogy and citizenship. Essentially, respondents reported that service-learning gave students opportunities to apply concepts from class to authentic situations. Similarly, faculty valued the reciprocal nature of service-learning whereby the role of teacher and student were often blurred when students interacted with service recipients.

Respondents also recognized the community relations aspects of service-learning. One faculty member saw service-learning as "an opportunity for faculty and students to serve as ambassadors to the rest of the community." Said another: "I think it's clear that universities all around this country have problems with community relations. They have trouble with their legislatures. The general population thinks that we're increasingly irrelevant to the conduct

of daily affairs. This movement [service-learning] is one of the few remedies available."

The majority of negative statements regarded logistical coordination of service-learning courses. This included establishing and maintaining partnerships with community agencies, monitoring student progress, and keeping in touch with agency representatives. "It was a real challenge," said one faculty member, "to identify, link with, and get buy-in from various community partners. It took a lot of time outside of class preparing for it."

Not surprisingly, the majority of statements regarding sustaining service-learning were associated with organizational factors. These statements noted that retention, promotion, and tenure (RPT) policies, reward structures, and limited financial or human resources made it difficult to maintain service-learning courses. Group members discussed the important role college deans and department chairs could and should play in supporting service-learning efforts. At the same time, they recognized that support from the university's top administrators, such as the president and vice president or provost, was critical. Remarked one faculty member, "A lot of my colleagues do not value [service-learning], they don't necessarily see it's a part of scholarship, and the number one goal in a lot of colleges is to publish, publish, publish in your area. But with a certain amount of leadership from the deans, I think the chairs will go along. I think that it could increase and, more important, sustain some of the service-learning classes."

Overall, most comments from this group centered on organizational and logistical issues. This group valued the technical assistance provided by the Bennion Center, with one faculty member commenting, "I really appreciated the Bennion Center giving me the first year a teaching assistant who was very familiar with service-learning and reflection and a lot of the experiential types of activities that are associated with service-learning."

Group 2: Current faculty: The majority of positive statements (7) from faculty currently engaged in teaching service-learning were related to citizenship. In essence, faculty commented that students' sense of citizenship was developed through service-learning. One faculty member teaching a service-learning course on global environmental issues felt his students were "empowered" by their work in the local community. "They can see," he said, "that a small group of informed and conscientious people can actually make a difference."

The theme of reciprocity surfaced in this group, as it did in the first group, with one respondent noting he was trying to instill in his students "a sense of giving something back. I like reciprocity. I like the sound of the word, and I like what it means. And I expect my students to like it, too." Another faculty member described reciprocity in terms of developing a "community of teachers-learners," adding, "If you're not willing to do both sides, there's no place for you. Everyone has something to teach, everyone has something to learn."

Challenges were associated with logistical coordination (6 comments), and institutionalization remarks focused on organizational factors (4 comments). As in the first group, respondents indicated the difficulty in establishing and maintaining partnerships with community agencies. Likewise, faculty noted that organizational factors such as RPT guidelines and other reward structures within the institution that did not appear to value or recognize service-learning could be a deterrent to teaching these courses. Responses reflected the importance of and appreciation for technical support from the Bennion Center.

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Group 3: Administrators: Administrators made four positive comments regarding student citizenship. Curiously, none of the administrators' comments in this topical area focused on faculty citizenship or the notion of the institution as citizen. Instead, administrators recognized that service-learning promoted students' sense of civic duty.

A total of eleven negative remarks were associated with organizational factors. These comments were related to generating student credit hours, funding for program coordinators, emphasis on research over teaching, and the overall reward structure that does not recognize or value service-learning. One respondent captured how administrators had to approach service-learning: "It is very costly to run service-learning classes. In an environment where the budgeting model is based completely on credit hours generated, it's increasingly hard for me to say, sure, let's mount this section, cap it at 35 students, give it a T.A. And the opportunity

cost of doing that is that I don't have a faculty member teaching a section of 150 students . . . a regular lecture section class."

Yet, this same administrator saw service-learning as "an integral part" of her department's educational mission but described funding for service-learning as "catch as catch can." As did service-learning faculty, she recognized the importance of support from central administration, particularly in terms of funding, and presented the following analogy: "I think of how computers became over my twenty years here a very integral part of our research and education activities, and yet, there still isn't a line item for getting new computers. And so you have to do it in very creative ways. I think service-learning is the same way."

While administrators seem to struggle with how to institutionalize service-learning within their college and departments, one college dean expressed a heightened understanding of how service-learning can "burn out" individual faculty members. Consequently, he hired a service-learning program coordinator for the entire college, with the understanding that the coordinator would work with individual departments and faculty within the college. According to the dean, "the dividends [from hiring a program coordinator] are high and it does institutionalize it as a college-level program . . . and there's a quality control from an academic point of view that is different than just one person trying to run a [service-learning] course. We would have never been able to get faculty who are as research intensive as our faculty are to engage in this kind of activity without the college making a huge investment."

Despite this expression of support, it was also apparent that some administrators did not understand service-learning as a pedagogy, as some comments were related to the perception that "students pay tuition to do volunteer work." Another five statements regarding organizational variables were made in the context of institutionalization. Specifically, these comments were related to infrastructure necessary to sustain programs. This included finding staff to coordinate service-learning. Unlike both of the faculty groups, administrators were unclear on the role and purpose of the Bennion Center in terms of promoting service-learning. There were many misperceptions about the center's capacity to provide financial resources. Faculty, on the other hand, recognized the center's role in providing technical support.

Another interesting finding in the administrators' focus group was awareness, expressed by two participants, that accrediting

bodies are recognizing the value of service-learning and expecting programs to incorporate this pedagogy in their curricula. Said one participant, "Maybe we were lucky in having [an] accrediting body almost force it [service-learning] on us, so we had to come up with a mechanism [to implement service-learning], a legitimate one." Another participant agreed, noting "we use that [service-learning] terminology with our accrediting body . . . and it's a good thing to do. . . ."

Discussion

A key goal of this assessment project was to compare and contrast the perspectives of faculty and administrators. The most striking outcome from the focus groups is the divergent perspectives of these two groups. Faculty comments primarily focused on pedagogical and citizenship issues, while administrators, not surprisingly, were mostly concerned with organizational factors. This suggests that service-learning directors must carefully consider priorities of both constituencies when promoting and sustaining service-learning. Likewise, it became apparent that while our institution has administrative support at the presidential and vice presidential level for service-learning, there is a degree of confusion and lack of understanding among the midlevel administration: deans and department chairs. They appear to be sandwiched between awareness and support from grassroots faculty members engaged in service-learning and higher-level administrators. If, as Holland *(2000)* and Ward *(1998)* suggest, administrative support from deans and chairs is critical, then our particular institution, which is nationally recognized for its service-learning program, still has much work to do. Consequently, the Bennion Center has targeted this group of administrators for meetings and presentations to clarify its role in supporting departments and colleges as they attempt to develop and sustain service-learning programs. While the Bennion Center is "pushing from the inside," administrators will increasingly begin to feel outside pressure from accrediting bodies to move in this direction. Service-learning directors can use this pressure as additional leverage to convince administrators of the importance of institutionalizing service-learning within their college and departments.

The overarching issues related to sustaining and promoting service-learning surrounded organizational factors. Specifically, RPT criteria and faculty rewards, cost in terms of human and financial resources as well as time "taken away from other activities such

as research," were consistently voiced as impediments to service-learning. These results are, however, not consistent with findings reported by Abes, Jackson, and Jones *(2002)*, who suggested that RPT and reward structures did not appear to be significant factors that either promote or impede faculty use of service-learning. Based on comments from these focus groups, both faculty and administrators appear to view service-learning as something separate from research and do not seem to recognize how it can be integrated with teaching, research, and service. Likewise, it does not appear to be rewarded in the tenure review process. This may be due to the misperception of service-learning as a form of "service," which was consistently voiced by both faculty and administrators. Therefore, it is important that faculty members be urged to frame their service-learning under their teaching responsibilities as pedagogy and innovative teaching methods and to think creatively of publishing opportunities that can flow from their work.

> *". . . both faculty and administrators appear to view service-learning as something separate from research and do not seem to recognize how it can be integrated with teaching, research, and service."*

Logistical coordination and availability of technical support were persistent themes in both faculty groups. Respondents consistently commented on the need for and value of training workshops and ongoing assistance. These responses are consistent with findings in other studies *(Abes, Jackson, and Jones 2002; Stanton 1994)*. It is necessary to provide ongoing technical assistance such as workshops to faculty as they develop and implement service-learning courses. This could include supplying teaching assistants to faculty. Additionally, this may include distributing faculty manuals on service-learning.

Although both faculty and administrators seem to value and embrace service-learning, it appears that little to no thought is given to how to provide infrastructure to sustain or institutionalize it. On a similar theme, Walshock *(2000)* speaks of the gap that exists between academic and civic knowledge. She draws on successful examples to suggest that the academy can and should benefit from a rich collaborative dialogue between various community

professionals. From that, resources and funding capacities can evolve to support a broad base of stakeholders. This suggests that directors of service-learning programs must also provide technical assistance in these areas. One approach is to provide "seed money" for initiatives that include a plan for sustaining the service-learning efforts after the initial support. Likewise, it appears necessary to explore RPT policy issues at multiple levels.

The findings of both faculty groups provide little new knowledge, with one notable exception. We were surprised that the topic of reflection surfaced only superficially in focus group discussion, even though it is a critical and unique element of service-learning. Curiously, there were virtually no comments regarding reflection by any of the groups. This is in stark contrast to Hesser's *(1995)* findings that faculty viewed service-learning as an effective means to promote critical reflection. The only comment that was made was the misperception that only one type of reflection (journaling) was recommended by Bennion Center staff, and a respondent correctly indicated there were many ways to conduct reflection. This surprised us to an extent because it has been our experience that many faculty express concern or trepidation about reflection as they either do not know how to conduct it or fear it will take time away from course content.

Limitations: It is important to note that the purpose of this project was program assessment caveat not a carefully controlled experimental study. Given that , it is also important to note the limitations of this assessment process. Those who participated in the three focus groups were self-selected and therefore predisposed to share this information. In addition, the group of faculty currently teaching service-learning consisted of only two participants. Five faculty members were expected to participate in the focus group but were unavailable due to unexpected calendar conflicts at the end of the semester. We were concerned with this small number of participants, as Schmiede *(1995)* recommended a minimum of three participants. We have attempted to address this limitation by referring to existing survey responses from faculty members who had taught or were currently teaching service-learning courses. The survey was part of a trends analysis conducted by the Bennion Center earlier that same year. Based on eighty-one syllabi on file, a survey was sent out to each faculty member. From that group, fifty-eight surveys were completed and returned. In addition to obtaining basic descriptive and demographic information

about the instructor and course, the survey included the same two open-ended questions used in the focus groups: (1) What are the advantages of service-learning? and (2) What are challenges associated with service-learning? There were fifty-one responses to the first question regarding benefits to service-learning. Of these, eleven statements centered on the usefulness of technical support from Bennion Center staff and teaching assistants, and nine responses were related to the effectiveness of the "hands-on" approach of the pedagogy itself. There were forty-nine responses to the second question related to challenges. Of those, ninteen (51%) referred to logistical challenges such as establishing contacts with community agencies, while five statements referred to the amount of time involved in developing and implementing a service-learning course. The advantages and challenges articulated in these responses appear to reflect the comments from the focus groups and therefore validate the responses made by the smaller focus group consisting of two participants.

Another limitation of this assessment project is the limited generalizability. The perspectives of faculty and administrators at an urban research university may not reflect those of faculty and administrators from other types of institutions. Clearly, further exploration is needed in this important area. The intent of this study was to gather information to help support and sustain service-learning programs at this campus.

Next Steps and Conclusion

Overall, at this institution, it would appear that faculty members are more aware of the benefits of service-learning to students, community, their discipline, and the institution than are administrators. Faculty members in this study were cognizant of and focused on pedagogical issues and citizenship. In contrast, and understandably, administrators were more concerned with budget, resource, and infrastructural issues. Therefore, in order to promote and institutionalize service-learning, it is important that faculty understand the constraints on administrators in implementing it. Conversely, administrators must understand and appreciate the advantages of service-learning that faculty appear to recognize and embrace. While there are pockets of support among the midlevel administration of deans and chairs for service-learning and its benefits to various constituencies, there is still a long way to go in terms of enlightening administrators.

As a result of this assessment project, the Bennion Center has embarked on three significant and strategic efforts. First is simple education and awareness outreach to administrators on what service-learning is and is not. This has been addressed in two ways. The director of the Bennion Center, who himself is a tenured full professor and former department chair, has now made a number of presentations to the Council of Academic Deans to clarify what service-learning is and its potential value by presenting a concise "top ten list" of why administrators should promote service-learning. The list was generated from input of three deans and department chairs to provide content validity and identify a rationale that would resonate with other administrators. The reasons on the list range from procurement of extramural funding from highly respected national granting agencies such as the National Science Foundation to advancing and promoting diversity in colleges and departments. The list and presentation also included exemplary instances of service-learning courses that show-cased departments in a variety of disciplines. This presentation has resulted in invitations to come to many departmental faculty meetings and retreats to speak directly to faculty members. Likewise, a series of professionally produced DVDs have been created and distributed to deans and department chairs that provide an overview of service-learning, including testimonials of students and faculty. The DVDs also include training information regarding how to create and implement service-learning classes as well as how to conduct reflection, establish and maintain relationships with community partners, and conduct research on service-learning.

> *". . . in order to promote and institutionalize service-learning, it is important that faculty understand the constraints on administrators in implementing it."*

The second strategy developed from the results of this assessment process is directly associated with midlevel administrators' concerns regarding infrastructure. The Bennion Center has now implemented a new approach of technical support by providing service-learning coordinators (SLCs) to departments. The SLCs are students who have received half-day training from Bennion Center staff on assisting faculty in establishing service-learning

sites and partnerships, communicating with agencies on student progress, conducting reflection sessions, and completing other logistical challenges unique to service-learning. In this sense, the SLCs are not traditional teaching assistants who grade papers. Each department is asked to identify students to serve as SLCs, and each department receives $1,000 per semester from the Bennion Center to pay the SLCs. More than one faculty member or course can share SLCs. The initial operating rubric has been one SLC per seventy students. One course might only have 10 students and another have 60 students; single SLC would work with both courses. The implementation of the SLCs has been the single most important infrastructural support based on the results of this assessment. The response has been overwhelmingly positive from faculty, administrators, and community partners. It appears that the implementation of the SLCs has directly addressed concerns of administrators regarding continued infrastructural support of service-learning, as well as faculty's concerns regarding the time involved in teaching a service-learning class. The Bennion Center is conducting a comprehensive assessment plan of the SLC program.

The third strategic approach taken is a comprehensive study of every departmental criterion for retention, promotion, and tenure (RPT). Specifically, departmental documents are being examined to determine to what extent service-learning is explicitly articulated and under what part of the academic trilogy. From initial exploration, we have discovered that faculty members often describe their service-learning efforts under service rather than teaching even though it is an innovative pedagogy. Furthermore, service is typically viewed as less important in the overall reward structure of a research university. Therefore, it is incumbent upon faculty to clearly describe service-learning as a pedagogy in their professional statements. Likewise, the review of RPT documents will be compared with the institution's mission statement. This is a purposeful strategy, as our institution's mission statement clearly articulates the importance of "fostering social responsibility" as well as other forms of public service to the community. In this way, we will be able to support faculty engaged in service-learning by arguing that their efforts clearly meet the mission of the institution. Furthermore, the Bennion Center and various faculty advisory board members can then play an instrumental role in revising RPT criteria to include service-learning so it will be recognized and valued.

The results of this program assessment clearly demonstrate that faculty and administrators have varying views of service-learning. Additionally, institutionalization of service-learning requires combining the pedagogical and altruistic rationales often embraced by faculty with the pragmatic realities facing administrators.

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