

ABSTRACT

One goal for higher education that should be taken very seriously is the development of students who learn the value of being productive members of their communities by contributing pro bono expertise to those with a need, but without the expertise or resources necessary to accomplish the task(s) on their own. In an effort to enhance their images, many modern organizations reward employees for such community service. One very promising area for service-learning activity is through marketing research class projects. This manuscript first provides an overview of service-learning including a conceptual framework, and then supports that introduction with examples.

Service-Learning Through Marketing Research Class Projects

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Service-learning is becoming increasingly more important in the United States. This method provides educational institutions and their faculty and students a worthwhile and visible way to both give back to the community and achieve learning goals. The concept of “service-learning” is one which blends some form of community service with an academic learning experience. One common theme of most service-learning definitions is that the pedagogy can be used to effectively promote future volunteerism and responsible citizenship (Domegan and Bringle 2010; Weber and Weber 2010). Service-learning is different from simple volunteerism because it is specifically designed to meet established learning objectives. According to Bringle and Hatcher (2009, p.38), service-learning is defined as:

A course or competency-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility.

However, according to Furco (2003, p.13): “One of the greatest challenges in the study of service-learning is the absence of a common, universally accepted definition of the term. All service-learning activities, regardless of their overall design and programmatic goals, involve a complex interaction of students, service activities, curricular content, and learning outcomes. Indeed, no two service-learning activities are alike.” Review of the service-learning literature reveals several definitions of service-learning that do not necessarily require the activity to be course-based for credit. For example:

Service-learning programs emphasize the accomplishment of tasks which meet human needs in combination with conscious educational growth....They combine needed tasks in the community with intentional learning goals and with conscious reflection and critical analysis (Kendall 1990, p.20).

In a speech delivered at the 1994 Conference of the *National Society for Experiential Education* in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Kinsley stated:

So here is a definition: Community Service Learning is an educational process (that word again) that involves students in service experiences with two firm anchors: First their service experience is directly related to academic subject matter; and second, it involves them in making positive contributions to individuals and community institutions (Kinsley 1994, p.41).

Finally, Jacoby (1996, p.5) defines service-learning as:

A form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development; service-learning combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity changes both the recipient and the provider of the service.

Integrating Service-Learning in Courses for Credit

Methods for conducting service-learning projects range from non-credit activity through student organizations, to independent studies with individualized instruction for one or a few students, to course credit specifically designed to fit one class. Although the focus of this article is on incorporating service-learning marketing research projects into courses for credit, there are several common service-learning marketing activities that do not occur in class. One is when American Marketing Association (AMA) student clubs are formally evaluated on their community service by judges at an annual Collegiate Chapters Conference. Student AMA chapters that plan to compete for awards at the annual conference submit a plan that describes specific projects that chapter is planning to conduct in various categories such as community service. That academic year's actual activities are then presented to AMA by the deadline in a chapter report for judging. This is a planned service-learning activity that directly relates to the discipline-specific nature of that organization, and it is evaluated for merit.

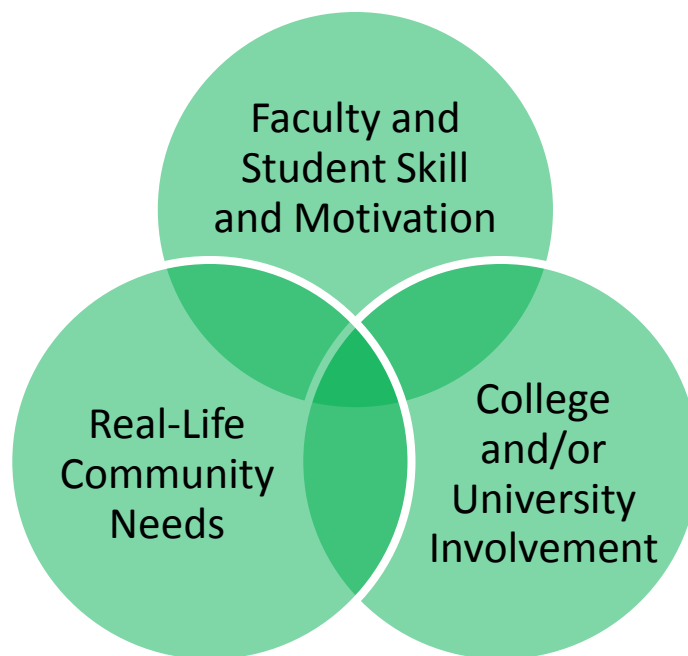
Several authors provide frameworks for incorporating service-learning projects into course requirements (e.g., Brower 2011; Cook 2008; Dixon 2011; Flannery and Pragman 2010; Hall and Johnson 2011; Larson and Drexle 2010; Pless, Maak and Stahl 2011 among others). It is somewhat difficult to derive one comprehensive model for all service-learning projects due to

the multidimensional nature of this pedagogy. For example, service-learning projects that integrate students into communities in developing nations will require extensive travel planning, whereas locally-based projects will not involve as much travel planning. Human subject research requires Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before the project can proceed, whereas secondary research, helping low income citizens complete tax forms, or teaching at-risk children basic financial principles will not require IRB approval.

The Value of Service-Learning

Service-learning projects are intentionally designed to cause reflection among participants on how the course topic relates to community involvement. A well-designed service-learning project will structure regular discussion of the issues at hand into the course requirements (e.g., written narratives), plus they are formulated through a collaborative process with community entities of some type (Domegan and Bringle 2010; Pless, Maak and Stahl 2011). Thus, faculty and students work with businesses and other organizations to help solve problems and address specific needs through a shared learning experience. Exhibit One illustrates three major factors that typically combine when a successful service-learning project occurs. Although service-learning can certainly occur in high schools and even through other organizations (e.g., religious), the focus of this article is on post-secondary education.

EXHIBIT ONE: Factors for Service-Learning to Occur



Several authors have empirically investigated the value of service-learning to the constituency groups involved (e.g., Brower 2011; Furlow 2010; Helm-Stevens and Griego 2009a, 2009b; Pless, Maak, and Stahl 2011, and Wilson 2008 to name a few). Some interesting items used in the questionnaire administered by Helm-Stevens and Griego (2009a) include: “I

believe I led by ‘doing’ rather than simply by ‘telling,’” and “I had a sense of ‘usefulness’ during my service learning experience.” Significant intrinsic variables analyzed by Helm-Stevens and Griego (2009b) include the relationships that developed through the project, making a difference in the lives of those involved in service-learning activities, and role modeling. These extrinsic variables exerted an influence on leadership and teaching, and subsequently predicted the students’ perception of their overall service-learning experience. Brower (2011) lists several benefits from service-learning, including enhanced understanding, trust, and self-esteem for both community and student participants, plus sustained change in student character and enhanced capacity for the community organization to be flexible and address future issues. According to Brower (2011, p.65), students develop “cognitive ability to identify, frame, and resolve unstructured problems.” Interdisciplinary service-learning projects have even been developed to help integrate two academic fields of study on one campus (i.e., marketing and environmental studies), disciplines that the authors note often display inherent tensions (Wiese and Sherman 2011).

Universities and their colleges are increasingly being held to assurance of learning standards by accreditation agencies that include learning requirements across the entire hierarchy-of-effects, from *cognition* through *affection* to *conation* (i.e., thinking, feeling, and doing). Based on the results reported by Helm-Stevens and Griego (2009a, b), service-learning outcomes range across the entire hierarchy. Pless, Maak, and Stahl (2011) provide a detailed content analysis of service-learning outcomes that materialized in their study at the cognitive, affective, and behavioral stages in the learning hierarchy. However, several assessment methods reported in the service-learning literature focus only on one aspect of the learning hierarchy. Whereas Dixon (2011) used service-learning in a project management undergraduate course to instill in students the Project Management Institute’s nine Knowledge Areas (i.e., cognition), Hall and Johnson (2011) focused on preparing Information Systems students to interact with end users in the real world (i.e., actual behavior, or conation). Other studies have measured the outcomes of various service-learning projects in different but reasonably compatible terms. Furlow (2010) used the “four Rs” of service-learning to assess the lessons learned by students in her class project, which are *Reality, Reciprocity, Reflection, and Responsibility*. From the viewpoint of a College of Business, AACSB-International requires activity-based group learning experiences in assurance of learning standards (Schwartz and Fontenot 2007).

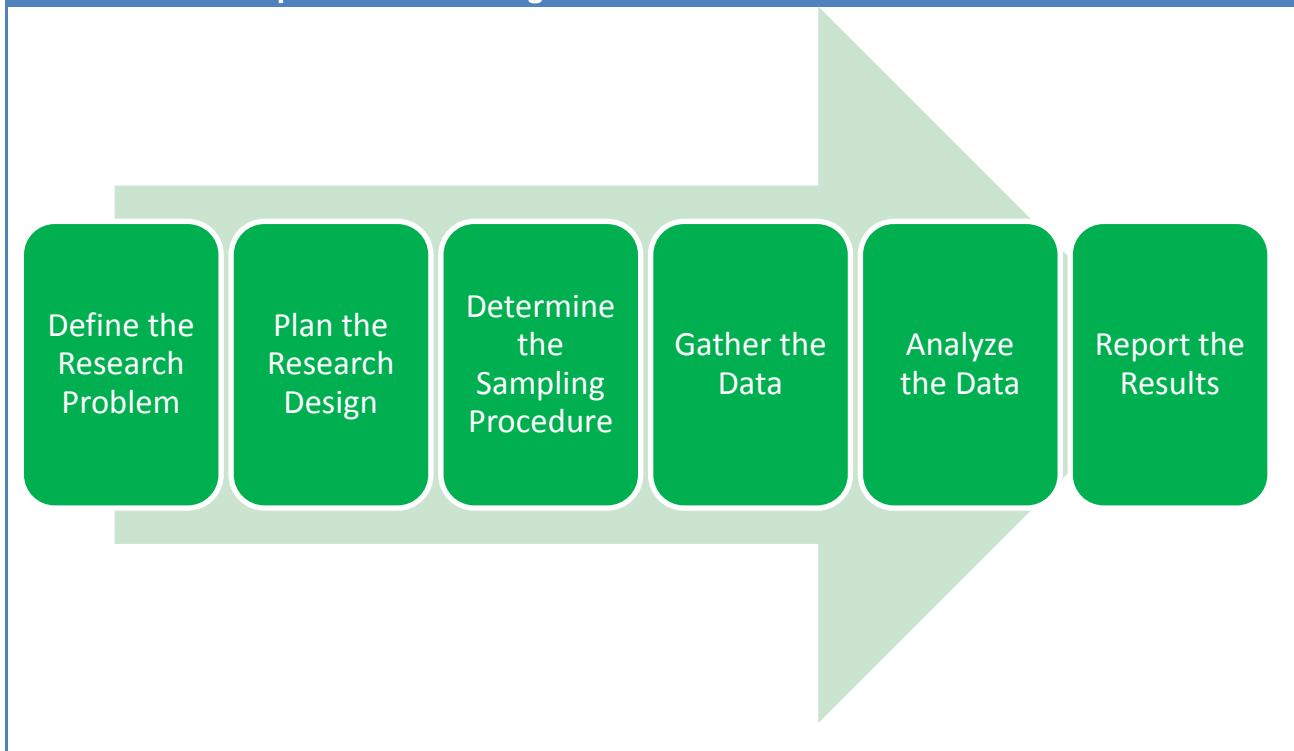
Service-Learning Marketing Research Projects

Before we begin to specifically discuss service-learning marketing research (SLMR) projects, a brief overview of *marketing* and *marketing research* is warranted. According to the *American Marketing Association* (2007): “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” This definition views marketing as a broader activity providing long term value to a host of constituency groups rather than narrowly as an exchange of money (short-term) only for the benefit of the shareholder or organization. Marketing textbooks are organized to cover four functional areas that must be managed by organizations operating to satisfy consumer needs across all industries both domestically and abroad. These four variables are known as the *marketing mix* (also called the 4-Ps), and include product, price, place (i.e., distribution channels), and promotion.

The process of determining information needs for a variety of marketing decisions, designing a set of activities necessary to gather that information, collecting the data, analyzing it, and reporting the results is *marketing research*. Marketing research is used to make better marketing decisions, identify and correct problems with the marketing-mix, better understand customers and competitors, and help determine the value of what the organization offers. Steps involved in the marketing research process are illustrated in Exhibit Two.

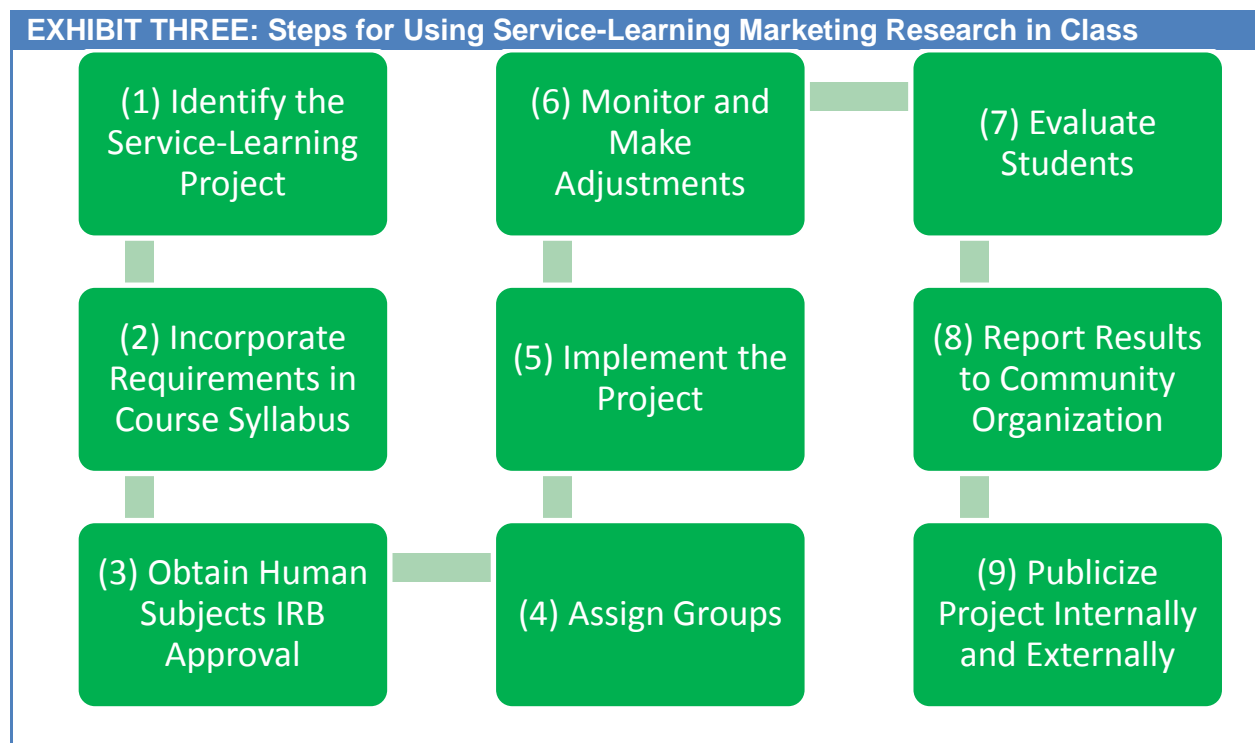
Only three papers that discuss service-learning and marketing research were discovered through our literature review (Garver, Divine and Spralls 2009; Gore 2006; Levenburg 2003), and none of them fully explains the application of service-learning marketing research class projects. Addressing that gap in the literature is our primary goal. Marketing courses are particularly well suited for service-learning projects (Berry and Workman 2007; Buff 2011; Domegan and Bringle 2010; Furlow 2010; Geringer, Stratemeyer and Canton 2008; Geringer, et al. 2009; Hagenbuch 2006; Kennett-Hensel 2010; Klink and Athaide 2004; McIntyre, Webb and Hite 2005; Metcalf 2010; Petkus Jr. 2000; Rudell 1996; Schwartz and Fontenot 2007). Many of the topics commonly discussed in marketing classes (e.g., marketing research, competitive market analysis, or target marketing) relate to needs in the business and nonprofit communities. However, we would like to make one point at this juncture: the type of SLMR project described in this manuscript can be incorporated into courses based in many disciplines, particularly social science fields such as Mass Communications, Psychology, and Sociology.

EXHIBIT TWO: Steps in the Marketing Research Process



It is admittedly doubtful that corporations with in-house marketing research departments need students to conduct business analysis studies on their behalf, but small firms and nonprofit organizations often do not have the resources necessary to gather and analyze information about their target markets. Wilson (2008) reports that service-learning projects “used in an undergraduate marketing course, engaged students in assisting clients to evaluate business and market growth opportunities as well as conducting marketing audits for small, local businesses (p.59).” Nonprofit organizations are often managed by individuals with technical backgrounds in social work, psychology, or nursing, yet they find their organizations confronted with a need to be more marketing-oriented in today’s competitive fundraising environment. Small business owners may have well-developed marketing knowledge, but they may also need data that does not exist at the local level or is too expensive for them to afford. Service-learning is an excellent solution for these local community needs if performed properly. Publicizing successful service-learning activities is an effective method to let the public know ways colleges and universities benefit society with taxpayer dollars.

We base the flow diagram presented in Exhibit Three on our literature review, our personal experiences, and the specific needs that can materialize when using a marketing research service-learning project as a course requirement.



Step 1: Identify the Service-Learning Project

As illustrated in Exhibit One, an overlap among faculty, students, the community, and colleges/universities is how service-learning projects are identified and subsequently implemented. Sources for service-learning projects involving marketing research can be identified both on- and off-campus. On-campus service-learning projects implemented by the authors of this manuscript include surveying alumni for both the dean of the College of Business and the Director of the University Foundation; customer satisfaction surveys for campus food service operations; and evaluating on-campus service providers to identify areas where bottlenecks and critical paths lead to dissatisfaction and service failures, including surveying customers to determine their perceptions of current offerings and ways to improve that university service (e.g., student recreation facilities). Off-campus projects administered by the authors include among others conducting a survey of downtown merchants, employees, and customers as part of a Main Street grant initiative; primary research to develop a promotional campaign for a client targeting college students; primary research to assess target markets and to help determine demand for a local business start-up; primary research to help boost participation and services for a local nonprofit organization; and annual member surveys for a regional tourism promotion agency. Area businesses, non-profit organizations, and campus entities often initiate contact seeking student help with issues they are facing, either through direct contact with faculty members or through an administrator they personally know. A more proactive approach is for faculty members themselves to become involved with community organizations through committee assignments, serving on boards of directors, and other participation in community activity outside of the classroom.

Step 2: Incorporate Requirements in Course Syllabus

The SLMR project must be written in the course syllabus. Both task and time requirements for completion should be described. One might argue that under ideal circumstances, service-learning projects will be identified and planned well ahead of the academic period and incorporated into the course syllabus before the semester begins. However, worthy service-learning projects sometimes materialize after a semester has begun yet early enough to still be a viable class activity. One way to handle this potentiality is to incorporate a generic group project in the syllabus with details to follow, making it clear at the beginning of class that a client-sponsored service-learning project is one possibility. Regardless of whether the SLMR project is known at the beginning of the semester or is an opportunity that materializes at a later date, the instructions should be as specific, clear, and practical as possible. Part of a service-learning marketing research assignment made by one author for a Main Street nonprofit survey is included in Exhibit Four as an illustration.

EXHIBIT FOUR: Syllabus Example for Service-Learning Marketing Research

Retail Management (97.350) Group Project Assignment - Fall 20XX

Students have each been assigned to one of six groups per class. Each group will conduct its research in a specific zone containing downtown merchants which have been divided into six sectors, and each sector will be questioned to determine:

(1) *Owner/Manager/Employee Characteristics* – interview one or two owner/managers and one or two employees *per address = 3 total*.

(2) *Shopper Characteristics* – usable interviews with 70 shoppers on the street in each zone during each day and time period in the table provided:

	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
Morning (8:30-11:30)	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete
Lunch (11:30- 1:30)	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete
Afternoon (1:30-4:30)	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete
Evening (4:30-7:30)	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete
Night (7:30-1:30)	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete	#?s complete

Students are required to produce and have approved a questionnaire for each group, go downtown, and gather data using that questionnaire. Each team should model its questionnaire according to the attached example. I will finalize one version for the entire project. Keep in mind that we will be using Scantron forms to input the data for analysis, so you will have the questionnaire on a clip-board and the form to complete in #2 pencil as you conduct your personal interviews with owners/managers/employees and downtown consumers. For the teams interviewing downtown merchants and employees, an initial phone call to establish a meeting time convenient to each owner or manager is required.

The attached questionnaire was developed by the Center for Community Economic Development and the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension program. Their webpage provides invaluable guidance, and is *assigned reading* for this project.

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/dma/>

The following grid defines the subject for each team:

Class Time	Owners/Managers/Employees	Shoppers
9-9:50 a.m. (97.350.01) - A	Team # A 1 – Merchant Zone 1	Team # A 2 – Merchant Zone 1
	Team # A 3 – Merchant Zone 2	Team # A 4 – Merchant Zone 2
	Team # A 5 – Merchant Zone 3	Team # A 6 – Merchant Zone 3
10-10:50 a.m. (97.350.02) - B	Team # B 1 – Merchant Zone 4	Team # B 2 – Merchant Zone 4
	Team # B 3 – Merchant Zone 5	Team # B 4 – Merchant Zone 5
	Team # B 5 – Merchant Zone 6	Team # B 6 – Merchant Zone 6

SCHEDULE OF DUE DATES	
Survey instrument developed by	Friday, September 29, 20XX
Survey instrument printed by	Friday, October 6, 20XX
Survey implemented by	Friday, October 27, 20XX
Survey results available by	Friday, November 3, 20XX
Survey results presented by	Monday, November 27, 20XX

Step 3: Obtain Human Subjects IRB Approval

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) phenomenon began to take form during the early 1970s as universities, teaching hospitals, and academic medical centers sought to redress unacceptable research practices using human subjects such as those used by the Nazis during World War II or by the U.S. Government in the Tuskegee syphilis study (Ferraro et al. 1999;

Jenson, Mackiewicz, and Riley 2003). Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations mandates the use of IRBs when grant funding is involved (Hogue 1979; Jenson, Mackiewicz, and Riley 2003; Putney and Gruskin 2002). The goal is to protect human subjects from physical or emotional abuse and ensure that research proposals conform to federal Department of Health and Human Services and Food and Drug Administration guidelines (DeVillie 2006). The IRB mandates voluntary subject participation with informed consent, and is particularly sensitive to concerns related to minors (younger than 18 years), pregnant women, prisoners, mentally challenged or disabled individuals, physically handicapped, those who have been institutionalized by the state, and students. Use and support for university IRBs is generally wide-spread and positive among faculty and graduate students, but not without controversy (Ferraro et al. 1999). IRB scrutiny has long been an issue related to freedom to conduct healthcare research (Hogue 1979), and Powell (2002) points out that many lawsuits have been filed against IRBs over the years.

Class assignments that include surveying human subjects require written approval by the university IRB chair, which means the principle investigator (e.g., the faculty member administering the service-learning project) must submit all required documents in a timely manner for the approval process. A cover sheet is normally required for each submission, to include date, investigator names and status (i.e., faculty, student, other), campus department, phone and e-mail addresses, funding agency if any, and review category. The IRB process requires researchers to anticipate that subjects will want to ask questions about the study to better understand its purpose and value, so contact information for the instructor and the sponsoring organization must be provided on the survey cover sheet for every respondent. Survey participants must also be given the opportunity to withdraw their participation from the study at any time during its implementation without penalty. University students used to gather data in class projects can be viewed by an IRB as subjects involved in the study and therefore required to sign informed consent forms. Risk is evident for students assigned to such a project. They might receive a bad grade for non-participation or be subjected to a rude rejection from someone refusing to participate. However, precautions taken by the instructor can effectively meet these IRB standards. Making each student aware of project details prior to the final day of drop/add will be considered in a positive light. The willingness of the instructor to assign an alternative project in the case of a student being unable to perform the tasks demanded by this project is another plus, and whether the class is required or an elective might also be a factor in the approval process.

Ferraro et al. (1999) report that: "Federal regulations classify projects as (a) being *exempt* from full federal human subjects review procedures, (b) qualifying for *expedited review*, or (c) requiring a *full review* (p.277)." If the results of a marketing research survey will be given to the client for use in a grant proposal, reported in a newspaper article, or made publically available in any of a myriad of possible ways, *exempt* status is not possible. All human subject research requires IRB approval when results will be disseminated *in any form* outside of the classroom. One project administered by an author of this article was granted an *expedited* review for two reasons: first, the market survey presented no more than minimal risks to human subjects, and second, it only involved research measuring individual or group characteristics and behavior, including perceptual, cognitive, affective, motivational, demographic, and lifestyle variables. Deception was not used, so subject debriefing was not required. Institutional Review Boards become particularly interested in studies that involve biomedical procedures, personality profiles, and behavior modification programs such as those often found in nursing, exercise science, or childhood education research. The average marketing research survey involves none of these dimensions, nor do they tend to cause discomfort, harassment, physical damage or

wounds, invasion of privacy, or threat to the dignity of subjects. Due to the lack of threatening characteristics typically found in marketing research surveys, *full review* is normally not necessary. Full reviews are done by all members of the review board, whereas expedited reviews normally only require input from one, two or three IRB members.

Step 4: Assign Groups

Once official approval has been granted by the local IRB, the instructor can proceed to form groups randomly or by some other means. Faculty members who have experience using group projects in their coursework will be aware of several issues that are associated with this step. One issue that must be addressed is whether students will be assigned to a group by the instructor or if they will be allowed to pick their own team members. If students are assigned to groups, how will underperforming group members be handled? One method that can be used is to enable a group to “fire” a member for just cause; an alternative is to require team members to evaluate each other at the conclusion of the project. Specific rules, requirements, and procedures must be detailed for the class as soon as possible. What will the alternatives be for a student who is fired by his or her group in terms of their grade? What grade penalties are possible for students who receive poor evaluations from team members, and how will the instructor assign the penalty? Will under- or non-performing students receive a zero for that part of the class or be allowed to make the work up somehow? Finally, how large will each team be? This could depend on the scope of the project itself, how much time is allocated for presentations at the conclusion of the project, and several other potential factors such as total course enrollment. Based on experience, we suggest that groups should typically range from three to six members. However, exceptions can always exist, so the final decision should be based on the totality of circumstances surrounding that specific SLMR project.

Step 5: Implement the Project

As previously stated, clear expectations between the instructor, students, and client organization must be established. Some clients are unable to precisely determine and/or delineate their organization’s needs related to a market research survey, and it might be difficult for an instructor to set specific goals without first-hand knowledge of the inner workings of that organization. Clients may be unable or unwilling to share certain information about their operations. Meeting with busy clients who are not on the semester timeframe can also be difficult, as can be collecting and analyzing data in a timely manner. This sometimes means that students do not see the fruits of their labor; inadequate feedback reduces the benefits that students receive from the service-learning experience, which is one of the main points of conducting the activity to begin with. Clients can be inexperienced interacting with college students, and might anticipate a level of performance that they would get from a paid consultant without fully realizing that this is a *learning experience* for students who are not yet professionally qualified. Projects that are one-time opportunities are learning experiences for all parties involved, including the instructor and the sponsoring organization.

Step 6: Monitor and Make Adjustments

Sometimes adjustments are necessary mid-project to address an unanticipated issue or problem. For example, one author hand selected two Honors students to conduct an alumni survey for the Executive Director of the University Foundation. Both of these students were

seniors about to graduate that semester, and the author had worked with each for over two years in various capacities. A clear description of the project and timeline for accomplishing tasks had been developed by the faculty member, Executive Director, and both students to complete the official paperwork required for approval of the independent studies. Unfortunately, these two senior Honors students did not begin the survey in a timely manner. Problems arose when the Executive Director requested a preliminary update on responses and found out the questionnaires had not been distributed approximately three weeks after they were scheduled to be mailed. Given past experience, the author expected these two students to implement the survey without tight control. Closer monitoring could have prevented this problem, plus any associated with client non-participation as well.

Step 7: Evaluate Students

Several methods for evaluating service-learning projects are discussed in the literature (e.g., written reflective narratives). Exams are another viable method. Part of the Main Street assignment previously illustrated included reading several articles related to the history and progress of Main Street programs across America, familiarity with the website used to develop the three questionnaires adapted for that survey, plus knowing the content of each questionnaire. One examination was dedicated to this material to measure individual performance. Group performance had two dimensions: total group output and individual member output. Each group was assigned a specific section of town and given a quota for completed questionnaires, and the grade for that group was based on that outcome. Each questionnaire required a signature by the student administering it; individual evaluations were made by the instructor at the end of the project based on these signatures (see Exhibit Five). Finally, team member evaluation forms were required from all students before their final grade was distributed.

EXHIBIT FIVE: Sample Evaluation for Service-Learning Marketing Research

Number of Surveys Completed by each Team			
Team	Owners/Managers	Employees	Shoppers
A1	8	2	0
A2	0	0	73
A3	18	21	0
A4	0	0	70
A5	14	12	0
A6	0	0	73
B1	17	24	0
B2	0	0	70
B3	12	12	0
B4	0	0	70
B5	14	13	0
B6	0	0	71
TOTALS	83	84	427

B4: Each group member had 14. Michael didn't fill in the answers on the scantron for the second page of the survey on several of the surveys. Natalie only had answers on the scantron for 7 of her 14 surveys (the surveys were blank).

Overall groups did a good job. The "B" groups were more organized and had fewer errors.

NOTE: Only a representative sample of groups is included for the individual evaluation comments due to limited space.

A1: Ashlee did 7 of the 10 for this team. Josh had the other 3. They each had a write up to go along with their completed surveys. Completed surveys were accurately filled out on scantron.

A2: Marina had 18; Whitney had 17; Kevin had 18; and Drew had 20. I found a couple errors when they filled in the scantrons. I corrected them. One survey was only complete to #27, so the scantron only had completed questions.

A5: Adam had 9; Jason had 6. Adam's surveys were not filled out. Only the scantrons were completed. Jason's were accurate. **Late Surveys: Philip: 6; 3 owner/manager and 3 employee. No errors; and Julia: 5; 3 owner/manager and 2 employee. No errors.**

B1: Tami had 5; Nicole had 11; Adam had 10; and Ryan had 9. I found one error on the scantrons. **Late Surveys: Tami handed in 2 surveys late; 1 owner/manager and 1 employee. No errors; Nicole: 2 total; 1 owner/manager and 1 employee. No errors; and Ryan: 3 owner/manager. There were no scantrons, only surveys, so I completed the scantrons. One of the three surveys only had a comment from the owner. Survey was not completed.**

B2: Lauren had 14; Katie had 15; Adam had 15; Krystle had 14; and Colby had 12. Overall done well, no errors found.

Step 8: Report Results to Community Organization

Once the data has been gathered and analyzed, it must be put in report form and presented to the client. Several methods have been used by the authors to perform this task, including but not necessarily limited to: the faculty member writes a report and gives it to the appropriate person at the client organization; the faculty member reports the results at a meeting to the Executive Director and Board of Directors with handouts; key personnel are invited to campus for class or a special session wherein individual students or groups present the results of their work in a Power Point slide show with handouts; a round-table discussion of the study is conducted involving the faculty member, students, and key personnel from the client organization; video tapes of focus group sessions are produced and given to the client; and finally, raw quantitative data is furnished to the client in electronic form for their own analysis. In certain circumstances, the faculty member should stress the need for confidentiality to the student participants.

Step 9: Publicize Project Internally and Externally

A final and very important step in this process is to publicize the service work done by students to various constituency groups, both on and off campus. The authors have experienced this result through the following methods: the client writes a press release to the

local newspaper; the faculty member and/or client writes an article or editorial letter featuring details of the work; the client thanks the faculty member and students in an internal newsletter distributed weekly, monthly, or quarterly to members of the organization (e.g., downtown retailers who are members of the local Main Street nonprofit); the client discusses the work done by students in an interview on a local radio show; a summary of the work is featured in an appropriate section on the university website; and finally, students present their analysis during research week in a campus-wide poster session. There are other channels to publicize SLMR projects as well that have not been experienced by the authors. For example, perhaps the university Public Relations department can assist by preparing and distributing a press release or feature story.

Conclusion

Incorporating service-learning projects across curricula in higher education is both possible and desirable. We know marketing students benefit through service-learning (Joseph et al. 2007; Mottner 2010; Rudell 1996). One very plausible area discussed by few articles other than ours is through the use of service-learning marketing research projects, which can easily fit a variety of courses if well-designed (even in other disciplines). Giving value back to the community through service-learning projects that simultaneously help educate students at cognitive, affective, and conative levels is one way academia can positively contribute to society. With a much larger proportion of households sending their children to college after high school; with more adults returning to college to finish or further their formal education; with the cost of attending school at the university level dramatically increasing, the pressure for higher education to provide more value to students and other constituency groups will inevitably continue to grow. Hopefully, we have provided a useful model with an array of examples that will encourage more faculty members to use marketing research service-learning projects as required course components. In this way everybody benefits, particularly students.

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