

Service-Learning Projects: What Students' Reflections Reveal

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Service-Learning Projects (SLPs) play an important role in students' learning processes when they are considered a part of the course content and assessment. To ensure that learning occurs during a SLP, it is necessary to include the projects as part of the curriculum, specifying percentage of effort within a course's goals, design, and implementation with appropriate information and guidelines, Briggs (1975); Briggs & Wager (1981); Gagné (1975 and 1985); Gagné & Briggs (1979). The idea is to have students apply what is learned in classes or academic programs to real situations that at the same time will contribute to the betterment of the community served.

The challenge for instructors who have incorporated SLPs into the curriculum is to determine how learning actually occurred on the part of the student and if they were able to produce a positive change in the community served. There have been a number of studies in this area, Gagné & Driscoll (1988); and Gagné, et al. (2005); Simonet (2008); Kuh, (2005); Kuh et al. (2007); Tinto (2006); Astin (1993); Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, and Lee (2000), among many. Boruff-Jones (2006), in an online newsletter, emphasizes the focus on students when dealing with civic engagements or service-learning projects. Boruff-Jones affirms: "Civic engagement is increasingly acknowledged as an important component of higher education...Civic engagement activities may be student-focused and take the form of experiential learning, service-learning, internships, or community service projects...(95). Similar conclusions are offered by Jacoby (2009), and Jacoby and Associates (1996 and 2003).

Motivation is an important factor in the learning process and service-learning activities are at the core of motivating students' interest in the subject matter; especially for improving student teacher interaction as well as student community interaction, and providing them with a meaningful context and real life application of their knowledge and skills. This principle has been suggested initially by Gagné and Briggs (1979); Gagné et al. (2005); as well as more recent researchers: Kenworthy-U'Ren (1999); Hatcher, J.A. (2010) and Hatcher et al. (2004);

Abstract

Service-learning projects, especially the ones focused on the community, and on the Hispanic community in particular, need to be based on real felt and documented needs, and the outcomes need to be assessed in order to decide the worth and possible sustainability of the projects. This paper will focus on service-learning samples from my courses, addressed to the Hispanic Community in the Upstate of South Carolina. The projects have been implemented as part of the assessment criteria used to assign students' grades. A needs assessment survey was conducted earlier to determine the areas of work that students would address in their service-learning projects. At the conclusion of each semester students are required to provide a written page about their projects, not only from the point of view of application or enrichment of their learning, but also from their attitude and feelings about the service provided. Using students' reflection documentation, a qualitative analysis and conclusions will be provided to document the relative importance and worth of the different service-learning projects analyzed.

Pribbenow (2005); and Celio, Durlak, and Dymnick (2011). According to Simonet (2008), by integrating academic and community service-learning activities, students improve in leadership, learning, and academic performance, “By being actively involved in their learning experience as opposed to passively receiving it, the students view the material as relevant, interesting, and absorbing” (1). Other researchers that share similar opinions are Astin (1992 and 1993); Astin et al, (1999 and 2000);Tinto (1998, and 2006); Kuh (2005 and 2007); and Celio et al. (2011).

Another important factor in developing better cognitive achievement for students is the fact that they become involved in the learning process at the higher levels of rule application, problem solving, and discovery, Kolb (1984); Gagné & Briggs (1979); and Kuh (2005). In addition, working in teams increases their sense of collaboration, sharing, and connecting with different cultures, Kraft & Wheeler (2003); Phillips (2003 and 2004); Worrell-Carlisle (2005); Reising, Allen, and Hall(2006); and Baumberger-Henry, Krouse, and Borucki (2006).

Assessment Instrument:

According to Astin (2000), there are four fundamental principles in SLP outcome measurement: *Individual and collective structure and program impact on the individuals and the community*. Astin et al (2000); Gallini and Moely (2003); Hepburn, Niemi, and Chapman (2000); Steinke & Buresh (2002); and Celio et al, (2011), among others state that students’ improvement in class performance and academic engagement works as a way to determine the success in the assessment of SLP activities. Others have considered civic engagement to be a solid indicator, Braxton (2000); Hepburn et al. (2000); Perry and Katula (2001); Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, and McFarland, (2002); and Kuh, (2005). Another indicator of student’s learning in SLP that has been researched is social improvement as demonstrated by social respect and tolerance in the face of cultural diversity, Gallini and Moely (2003). One more indicator is skills development through structural gain in writing and speaking abilities, Tucker, McCarthy, Hoxmeir, and Lenk, (1998); and Dubinsky (2002).

Description of Case Study: Antecedents

Students attending any of my courses at the advanced levels have been assigned, as part of the course curriculum, to participate in SLPs related to their class content. Some of the students that have taken Spanish classes with topics such as Latin American culture or literature are usually asked to select from a list of contacts that include schools; kindergarten, elementary, high school, adult education; police stations; social centers and institutions, ELS courses; Spanish Clubs, and others. Students who take courses with topics such as health and health management are usually assigned projects that they select from a list of contacts that includes health centers, hospitals, clinics, doctors’ offices, community health centers, free clinics, and others. As part of the SLP, students form groups of three or four students, who make decisions about responsibilities for each team member as well as the name of the group. Those groups are then entered in Blackboard where students can communicate with each other through chat, file exchange, and other means of collaboration. They contact the source selected and start negotiating their service and schedules.

To control the time and service provided, individual students keep a journal of project activities and they are asked to reflect on the project at intervals during the semester. For the final SLP in-class presentation at the end of the semester, they provide a detailed presentation of work done by using a PowerPoint presentation. They are also asked to write their final reflections on the project at the end of the semester. Those final reflections are the tools used to determine the students' accomplishments and gains, worth of project, community interaction, problems encountered and alternative solutions.

Sample Description

A good number of service-learning projects for the Hispanic community have been implemented in my Spanish courses since 1993. Students have participated in organized teams dealing with a variety of community needs. For this study I will focus on the following areas of services rendered: interpreting for Hispanic patients; helping with elementary and high school students' performance through the use of English as a second language to help students' reading and writing assignments; helping official institutions, such as police departments, the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), South Carolina Employment Security Commission (SCESC), and the Susan G. Komen Foundation for the Cure; and coordinating planning and archiving services for free clinics.

A random sample of thirty five (35) students was selected from five diverse types of SLPs performed by students from my Spanish Health, Spanish Culture, and Spanish Literature courses. The five SLPs selected included one from the area of health; one from "Café Cultura," a Hispanic cultural center; one from schools (teaching services); one from English Language Services (ELS), a multicultural language center; and one from "Susan G. Komen for the Cure," a nonprofit organization. For the purpose of facilitating data analysis, the following terms were used to identify each one of those types of SLPs selected:

1. In regard to the first type of project (Health Projects), the term "(A) health" was used;
2. For the second type of project (Cultural Centers Projects), the term "(B) Café Cultura" was used;
3. For the third type of project (School Projects), the term "(C) Schools" was used;
4. For the fourth type of project (English Language Services Project) the term "(D) ELS" was used;
5. For the fifth type of project (a non-profit organization), the term "(E) S. G. Komen" was used. See in table #1 below:

Table 1: Distribution of Students per Type of Project	
Type of Project	Number of students
(A) Health	10
(B) Café Cultura	6

(C)	Schools	10
(D)	ELS	7
(E)	S. G. Komen	2
Total		35

Expanding on the information in Table 1:

- A. Health Project:** the ten students from health projects have provided interpreting services to Hispanic patients in the area of the Upstate of South Carolina and to migrant workers in the Oconee County area. The health service was coordinated by the Health Center at the University, through a Mobile Health Clinic in coordination with the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Students' responsibilities included receiving patients, taking vitals, and interpreting for doctors and patients, such as regular patients or pregnant women and recent mothers.
- B. Café Cultura Project:** the six students from the cultural center "Café Cultura" provided help to diverse Latino communities in the north eastern area of South Carolina. Students in this group worked with elementary school students by providing help in regard to homework, reading, and communicating in Spanish and English; participants in those SLPS also worked with students' parents in activities designed to stimulate the sense of community, social interaction, and cultural values.
- C. Schools Project:** The ten students from elementary and high schools provided service to Hispanic students who needed help with homework and reading given their limited English proficiency. Some of those students worked teaching basic and practical English to kindergarteners, as well as other grade levels, and to high school age and adult Hispanics.
- D. ELS Project:** The seven students from ELS provided an important service to college students from different racial and cultural backgrounds who needed to improve their English proficiency while, in addition, practicing Spanish with the Hispanic students. One important aspect of the work included cultural and social interaction with the populations addressed.
- E. S. G. Komen Project:** the two students from the S. G. Komen sample focused their work on providing translation services in English for documents about the problems and alternatives related to the prevention of cancer in women. Another function was to become familiar with the services provided by that institute so that they could communicate it properly to Hispanic women.

Data Source

The data for the study consisted of students' reflections at the end of their SLP; the reflections were requested as open-ended written statements. That information was found in the students' journals. According to Hatcher et al, (2004); and Hart and King (2007), students' reflections on their work helped them to self assess and meditate about the worth and benefits of the service provided. For the purpose of the SLP case

studies, I have decided to use aspects of Astin's individual and collective approach to project assessment; according to Astin: "Research on service-learning needs to look at both individual and collective organizational/structural outcomes..." (99).

Astin (2000) equally emphasizes the importance of the program impact on both the learner and the community served. Similar approaches to Astin's have been documented in the works of Eyler et al, (1997); Seifer, S. D., (1998); Cameron et al. (2001); Litke (2002); Valdez (2001); Cooks & Scharrer (2004); Wolff & Tinney (2006); and Reising et al, (2006), among others.

More specifically, the study would be guided by the "assessment in context" theory proposed by Cooks and Scharrer (2006). The theory is supported by the principle that the assessment goals are based on students' interaction with diverse cultures and social environments, close to Astin's individual and Collective approach resulting from students' interaction with the community served. From Astin's four assessment aspects, I derived an assessment instrument composed of two main categories and seven indicators, some of which were based on the ones recommended by Cook and Scharrer.

For the Individual Category, a total of three Indicators were used:

- Indicator of new learning;
- a. Indicator of applied knowledge;
- b. Indicator of project worth.

In regard to the Collective Category, four indicators were used:

- a. Indicator of Project Obstacles, (Cook and Scharrer called it "Indicator of Resistance");
- b. Indicator of negotiations and suggestions (Cooks and Scharrer called it "Indicator of Roles and Rule Negotiations"); two indicators were added to the collective approach:
- c. "Indicator of Community Interaction;" and
- d. Indicator of Interaction with Community Leader."

Regarding the indicator of Roles and Rule Negotiations, Cooks and Scharrer (2006) say "... building on the previous point, an approach to assessment-in-context views the assessment concepts of engaging resistance, role and rule negotiation, terms for identity and practice, and emergent abilities and constraints as necessary parts of determining the usefulness of concepts such as critical thinking or social justice in specific social scenes." (53). By using those two main categories and indicators selected, I was able to analyze the information provided by students in their final project reflections to determine which part of their statements refer to one or more of the proposed indicators (see tables #2 and #3).

Table 2: Data per category and Indicators per Type of SLP							
Individual Gain				Collective Interaction			
	New Learn.	Applied Learn.	Project Worth	Project Barriers	Rule Neg.	Comm. Inter.	Leader Inter.
Health	5	7	9	1	2	8	6
Café Cult.	1	3	7	4	4	4	4
Schools	4	7	9	4	4	10	6
ELS	5	2	8	2	0	7	0
S.G. Komen	2	0	2	1	1	2	0
Total	17	19	35	12	11	31	16

Table 3: Data in Percentages							
Individual Gain %				Collective Interaction %			
	New Learn.	Appl. Learn.	Project Worth	Project Barriers	Rule Neg.	Comm. Inter.	Leader Inter.
Health %	14.28	20	25.71	2.86	5.71	22.86	17.14
Café Cult %	2.86	8.57	20	11.43	11.43	11.43	11.43
Schools%	11.43	20	25.71	11.43	11.43	28.57	17.14
ELS %	14.28	5.71	22.86	5.71	0	20	0
S.G. Komen %	14.28	0	5.71	2.86	2.86	5.71	0
Total %	48.57	54.28	100	34.28	31.43	88.57	45.71

For the first main category, "Individual Gain," information related to any or all of the three indicators was analyzed.

- a. For the first indicator, "New Learning," I found a total of seventeen (17) instances where students indicated gaining in new learning from the project. Of those 17 instances, five (5) statements came from the health group, one (1) from the Café Cultura, four (4) from schools, five (5) from ELS, and two (2) from the S. G. Komen group. Examples of those statements were: "I have learned a lot this semester through my experience in the clinics." "I was able to spend a lot of time talking with Hispanic patients about their daily lives and histories, which are very different than my own, and I learned a lot about the situation of immigrants in the U.S." "I have no words to describe my unbelievable experience at the Parental Clinic. I am studying nursing and Spanish at the University and my experience in this clinic has helped me to learn more about both of them."
- b. In regard to the second indicator "Applied Knowledge" I found nineteen (19) total instances of statements indicating that such phenomena had occurred; seven (7) instances from the health group, three (3) from Café Cultura, seven (7) from schools, two (2) from ELS, and zero (0) instances from the S. G. Komen group. Examples of those statements are: "...it was a small clinic and there were many opportunities to practice and use the material studied in class." "The happiness that comes from speaking Spanish and interacting with the Hispanic community is my 'drug'." "...we were able to serve as translators between the patient and the medical provider." "I really love doing the service-learning projects because I enjoy giving back to the community and this particular one helped me practice my Spanish a little." "We not only worked with school age children at the elementary school level, but we were also able to work at the high school and college levels. This gave us an opportunity to use our Spanish skills at different stages throughout the semester ..."
- c. For the third indicator "Project Worth" there was a total of thirty five (35) instances (the total number of students in the sample). Of those, nine instances (9) were from the health group, seven (7) from "Café Cultura," nine (9) from schools, eight (8) from ELS, and two (2) from S. G. Komen. Examples of instances from students are: "I really hope students continue to use this service (Café Cultura) as their service-learning project in the future!!"

Considering the second main category, "Collective Interaction," information was analyzed and classified as they related to each of the four indicators for this category.

- a. For the first indicator "Project Barriers or Obstacles," I found a total of twelve (12) instances of the indicator; from that total, one (1) instance came from the health group, four (4) from "Café Cultura," four (4) from schools, two (2) from ELS and one (1) instance from the S. G. Komen group. Examples of some of the students' statements: "Going to this Center is incredibly difficult and I know how much help they need at Café Cultura, I just wish it was closer!" "It

- was a little harder to get the kids in one of the schools to become more interested in our lessons.” “It was difficult to find activities that would be appropriate for each age that would engage those children.” “However, the main thing that was difficult about this SLP was that it was so far away.”
- b. For the second indicator, “Rules and Negotiations,” I found eleven (11) instances of such behavior, with two (2) instances from the health group, four (4) from the “Café Cultura,” four (4) from schools, zero (0) from ELS, and one (1) instance from the S. G. Komen group. Some examples of students’ statements: “I wish that there were some way we could get a van from our University that could take us out there every week because I think that students in this class would be very willing to help out on a more regular basis.” “About halfway through the semester I noticed that they were running low on some arts and crafts supplies. After talking to the on-site director and finding out which supplies they were in need of, I organized a supply drive within my sorority to get as many of the supplies that Café Cultura needed as possible.”
 - c. Regarding the third indicator, “Community interaction,” a total of thirty one (31) instances were determined; from this total, eight (8) instances came from the health group, four (4) from “Café Cultura,” ten (10) from schools, seven (7) from ELS, and two (2) instances from the S. G. Komen group. Some excerpts from students’ reflections are: “The kids followed me everywhere I went every day, and they gave me memories I’ll never forget.” “Both the staff and community members we worked with were very friendly and were more than willing to help us with our Spanish.” “I was able to spend a lot of time talking with Hispanic patients about their daily lives and histories, which are very different than my own...”
 - d. For the fourth indicator “Interaction with Community Leaders” I found a total of sixteen (16) instances; six (6) instances were from the health group, four (4) from “Café Cultura,” six (6) from schools, zero (0) from ELS, and zero (0) instances from the S. G. Komen group. Some excerpts from this group are: “I also learned a lot about the Coordinator at the Center, one of the Nurses, who also immigrated to the U.S.” “...it was really fun to go to Café Cultura and help the Coordinator with all of the kids. She is very passionate about keeping Café Cultura running and her passion made me very excited to go each and every time I was able.” “Our first opportunity was with elementary school children, where we partnered with the Coordinator.” “By habitually coming every other Friday it gives one the chance to have a personal connection with the people with whom we interact, therefore making the learning experience that much more valuable.”

Results:

Based on the data analyzed the following are valid conclusions:

- a. In regard to the “Individual Gain” category:
 - 48.57% students working in any of the five types of projects described learning something new from their participation in the SLP, with interesting

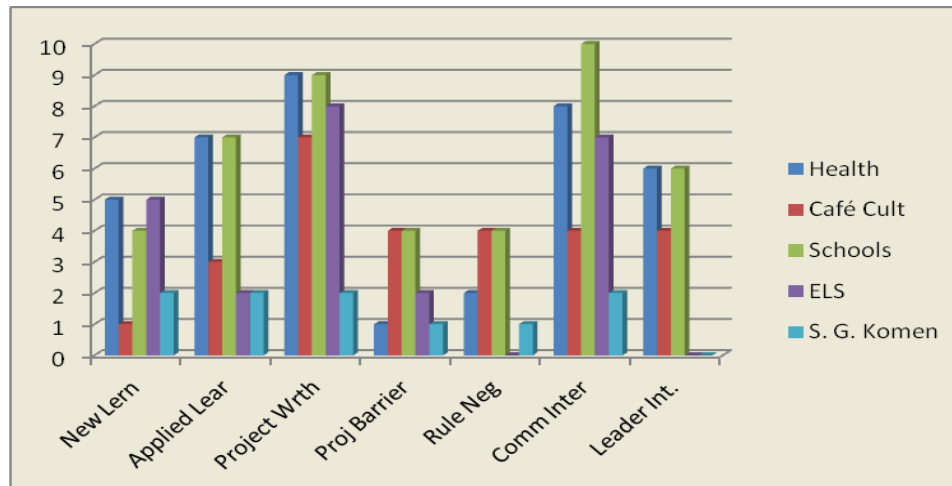
similar percentages (14.28%) for the Health, ELS and the S. G. Komen SLPs; followed by 11.43% from Schools and a minimum gain, 2.86%, from Café Cultura. The lower percentage indicates that students were dealing with basic teaching in a more comfortable and known culture and atmosphere.

- 54.28% of students participating in any of the SLPs stated that they used knowledge learned from the Spanish-health courses taken; the highest percentages were observed in the Health and Schools projects. For the S. G. Komen project there seems to have been no gain in Applied Knowledge, possibly because that was the smallest sample (2 students) and they did not have the opportunity to reflect on this type of gain.
- 94.3% of students participating in the five types of SLPs indicated the total worth of the SLPs; of that percentage, the groups Health, Café Cultura, Schools, and ELS, accounted for the highest percentages (from 20 to 25.7 percent each); again, the smaller percentage gain corresponded to the S. G. Komen group.

b. In regard to the “Collective” category:

- 34.28% of students from the five types of projects described any barriers or obstacles found in the implementation of the SLP; Of those, the Café Cultura and Schools groups showed the highest number of incidents (25.71 %) and stating only one or two incidents were the Health, ELS, and S. G. Komen groups. As indicated in the examples above, most incidents dealt with distance to the location of the SLP and few instances of unmotivated students at some of the high schools.
- In regard to Rule Negotiation and Suggestions: 31.43% of students stated ways of dealing with problems as well as interesting initiatives to problem solving; of that percentage, Café Cultura and Schools have highest percentages (11.43%); with 0% instances for the ELS project, and one of two cases for the Café Cultura and S. G. Komen groups.
- Dealing with the indicator Community Interaction, a total of 88.57% of students indicated that they had a very positive interaction with the community served; of that percentage, most instances (7 to 10) were indicated by the groups Health, Café Cultura, and ELS (20-22.86%). The lowest percentages corresponded to the S. G. Komen and Schools groups (5.71-11.43%).
- Dealing with the Indicator “Interaction with Leader,” a total of 45.71% of the students indicated that they had a very good interaction with the community leaders or representatives; of that percentage, the groups Health and Schools stated four different cases for a total of 17.14% each, and Café Cultura stated 4 cases or 11.43%. No cases were cited by either the ELS or S. G. Komen groups. For graphic details see summary graphic below:

Summary Graphic:



Conclusions:

The highest percentages were observed in the Individual Indicator “Project Worth” and in the Collective Indicator “Community Interaction” (see corresponding line graph). In other words, there is strong evidence that students appreciated and valued very highly the quality and worth of the projects in which they participated and were able to experience a healthy interaction with the community members served and assisted. Incidental gains can be inferred from the interaction of the above mentioned indicators; in other words, the combination of “Project Worth” and “Community Interaction” seems to provide the basis to infer that participating students understood the value of the project and how that knowledge provided for their positive integration and interaction with the community. By looking at the graphics it is important to highlight the higher percentages in the areas of “New and Applied Learning” with a higher percentage given to the indicator “Applied Learning,” which shows that students used their learned skills in Spanish effectively while gaining additional knowledge on culture and traditions from the groups served. Another important factor was the positive percentage given to the indicator “Leader Interaction” which explains the respect and appreciation students indicated regarding their projects’ coordinators. The indicators with the smallest percentages were Project Barriers which serves to evidence a smooth performance and familiarity with the service provided on the part of the students. The indicator “Rule Negotiations,” also showed a lower percentage, which is expected, given the fact that, according to the data, students did not have to negotiate many instances of misunderstandings or barriers regarding their respective projects. The result of this case study can be used to assess qualitative aspects of service-learning projects based on students’ perceptions and personal feelings gathered as project feedback. A future research project could focus on the qualitative assessment of service-learning projects from the point of view of the community.

Appendix:

Student's Reflections Samples:

(A) Health Group (10 Students):

Student A1:

This opportunity really improved my language skills and also my people skills while working with the Hispanic community. I am really happy I chose this volunteering opportunity because it puts you in the real world, interacting with people who are truly in need of your services. During my time at the clinic I have also seen familiar faces, and have also gotten to know families which make this experience much more personal than if I just volunteered once. By habitually coming every other Friday it gives one the chance to have a personal connection with the people they are interacting with, therefore making the learning experience that much more valuable.

Student A2:

I have learned a lot this semester through my experience in the clinics and in my medical mission trip to Nicaragua. Interpreting is something that challenges me and makes me feel accomplished at the end of the day. When working in another country, it's exciting and comforting to the patients for their caregiver to be able to speak their language so I was happy to be able to understand them and explain to them what we were doing. The kids followed me everywhere I went every day, and they gave me memories I'll never forget. I'm going to continue my work with the Center and to involve more people from the chapter of FIMRC next year, as well as go on the mission trip for my third time. My ultimate dream job is to work in Latin America as a nurse for a couple years, so this has been an excellent start for me. We feel that this was a worthwhile project to contribute to, and we really enjoyed all of the work that we did. We would definitely recommend this project to other students who wish to practice their Spanish and make a difference in the lives of the Hispanic farm workers. Both the staff and community members we worked with were very friendly and were more than willing to help us with our Spanish.

Student A3:

I think that more people should be able to volunteer at the Center, and hope that the new video the students are producing will get more people involved. It would be better if there were actual training for people who want to translate. Sometimes it was difficult to translate for conditions I had never learned how to say in Spanish, or even in English.

Student A4:

I would recommend other Language and International Health students to work with the center. It is really good practice for people who want to do medical translation after graduation. However, translators must have an outgoing personality and an ability to think on their feet. It isn't easy translating between languages verbally, but it's worth the effort.

Student A5:

Because I had worked with the Center last semester, I already had developed a relationship with the Coordinator and the Nurse Practitioners, and was excited about working with them again. The Coordinator and I agreed that I should come in every

other Thursday morning from 8:30 until 10:30 and help out when Hispanic patients needing translation. I also ran errands and helped in the Community Center with food packaging as well as getting to know patients and other employees. My favorite part of working at the center was getting to know patients and the nurses. I was able to spend a lot of time talking with Hispanic patients about their daily lives and histories, which are very different than my own, and I learned a lot about the situation of immigrants in the U.S. I also learned a lot about the Coordinator and one of the nurses, who also emigrated to the U.S. from Mexico. I will miss working with them after I graduate in May.

Student A6:

At the University, I study Spanish and International Health, with a concentration in Health Administration. My work at the clinic was very helpful for my studies because it was the first time I've seen a clinic or hospital from the interior. I could see the performance of doctors, nurses and clerks and receptionists at a clinic, and was a small clinic, and had many opportunities for practice and to use what we study in class. After the class and service-learning project, I realize that the Administration has to understand how to operate the hospital, clinic, or program. If the Administration is never seen or included in the operation, it will be very difficult to achieve anything.

Student A7:

I do not have the words to describe how amazing my experience was at the prenatal clinic. I'm studying nursing and Spanish and my experience in this clinic has helped me learn more about both. I've learned lots of medical information that will be useful in my future nursing courses. The best part is that while I was learning this information, I had the opportunity to practice speaking Spanish at the same time. My love for speaking Spanish and for the Hispanic community has grown stronger through this experience. The joy that comes through speaking Spanish and interacting with the Hispanic community is my "drug." As a translator and a nurse of the future, it is my hope that each patient will receive the same high quality care regardless of the language they speak. I am so excited that I have the opportunity to continue translating in this clinic the next semester. I want to love and take care of more Hispanic women in that area.

Student A8:

For our service-learning project, we worked under the supervision of the Center's Coordinator at the Migrant Health Clinic in a rural area of South Carolina. This monthly clinic provides essential health services to both seasonal and migrant farm workers in this County. In the first phase of our project, we picked an appropriate flu handout that offered comprehensive information in both English and Spanish and then developed a handout on the novel H1N1 strain of flu. In the second phase of our project, we actually went out to the clinic in the area to help the medical providers. Our most important tasks included filling out the different forms each patient needed to be seen. Depending on the nature of the visit, patients needed to complete up to five forms, three of which were only available in English. In addition to these forms, we took the patient's medical history and their reason for coming to the clinic. Before bringing the patient in to see the medical staff, we were also responsible for measuring and recording the patient's height, weight, and blood pressure. When a patient elected to receive a flu shot, we asked them about their allergies and helped them fill out the vaccination waiver. In addition to these tasks, we also were able to serve as translators between the patient

and the medical provider. We feel that this was a worthwhile project to contribute to, and we really enjoyed all of the work that we did. We would definitely recommend this project to other students who wish to practice their Spanish and make a difference in the lives of the Hispanic farm workers. Both the staff and community members we worked with were very friendly and were more than willing to help us with our English.

Student A9:
The free clinic must have a translator for patients who speak Spanish because it is very difficult to communicate without a translator. It could be dangerous consequences if patients do not understand the instructions, or if the doctors do not understand the symptoms of patients. Doctors must arrive in time to reduce the amount of time that patients expect. Students who want a chance to help their community at the clinic can learn much about people and life.

Student A10:

I really enjoyed my time volunteering at the Samaritan Health Clinic. We faced challenges every week that tested our patience and taught us new things. There were feelings of embarrassment at times with patients and high stress in the environment. I will never forget the Hispanic patients I met while working there and the things they taught me. I am very grateful for this experience because it gave me a chance to look at my future. I am passionate about helping people and I see myself working in a place like this in a few years. I will keep in touch with our volunteer coordinator at the clinic and keep the relationships I have made. I have mixed emotions leaving the clinic because there is so much to be done there. They are much disorganized. Although we helped a lot, they still have a long way to go before they are functioning efficiently and effectively and fully serving the population they want to reach.

(B) Café Cultura Group (6 Students):

Student B1:

I love doing this. I have always wanted to be a teacher and so helping to tutor these kids and help them to understand their homework is something I really enjoy. It is difficult not knowing how they are taught because many times it is different from how I was. Going to that Center is incredibly difficult and I know how much help they need at Café Cultura, I just wish it was closer! For me to drive there and back it is about \$16 in gas because my car gets such terrible gas mileage. As a college student, it was so difficult for me to make this work. I loved the experience, but maybe there could be something worked out to help students get to Café Cultura for the future. This is such a great program for all involved I hope that our University keeps this partnership with the community center and more students are able to volunteer there.

Student B2:

I really enjoyed doing this service-learning project because it was really fun to go to Café Cultura and help with all of the kids. Every time I went, it was usually the same kids coming so it was fun to get to know them in a way and help them with homework. I also got to do a few arts and crafts with them for Valentine's Day the whole day and for Easter. It was really fun helping them make things for their parents! I really love doing the service-learning projects because I enjoy giving back to the community and this particular one helped me practice my English a little bit. The main thing that was difficult

about this SLP was that it was so far away. It is really hard to take four hours out of your week to get all the way out to the Center and back. I am extremely busy, so four hours is a lot of time and the fact that gas is so expensive makes it a lot more difficult. I wish that there were some way we could get a van from the University that could take us out there every week because I think that students in our classes would be very willing to help out on a more regular basis. They need a lot of help at the Community Center that should be coming consistently. It must be really hard for the Coordinator to keep this program up when she doesn't know who or how many volunteers she will have on a daily basis. She is very passionate about coffee culture keeping running and her passion made me very excited to go each and every time I was able. I really hope students continue to use this as their service- learning project in the future!

Student B3:

We helped with educational and recreational activities. Each Tuesday, we drove more than an hour to arrive at the community center, where we stayed for two hours, and then drove back for more than an hour. We helped the children with various subjects, de-stressing reading and spelling homework. After the children finished their homework, we would play and help to take care of them while their mothers would do aerobics or counseling. Often, we would translate school documents for the mothers so that they would understand the progress and activities of their children in school.

Student B4:

For this service-learning project, I wanted to work somewhere that I had not done a project before. Ultimately, I choose to volunteer at Café Cultura. I have heard our Spanish Professor talk about Café Cultura since freshman year, but I had never had the opportunity to go there to volunteer. I really enjoyed working with everyone at Café Cultura as everyone was so nice and appreciative of the volunteers' help. Usually on Tuesday's, I would go with some other girls from class and we would help the children with their homework. After completing their homework, we usually helped give out snacks to the kids. Afterwards, if it was nice out we would go outside and play on the jungle gym, and if it was rainy, we would play with them inside or help them do an arts and crafts project. About halfway through the semester I noticed that they were running low on some arts and crafts supplies. After talking to our Professor and finding out which supplies they were in need of, I organized a supply drive within my sorority to get as many of the supplies that Café Cultura needed as possible. The drive was successful, and I was able to collect many items on the list, including construction paper, watercolor paints, crayons, colored pencils, wet glue, and glue sticks. I loved working with Café Cultura and would recommend this project to other students as it is very rewarding. Even students in lower levels of Spanish could volunteer there easily and work with the children.

Student B5:

Our services, and the other services provided by the community center, were very important because many Hispanic children cannot confide in the help of their Spanish-only speaking parents. This does not result due to the lack of *understanding* necessarily of their parents, yet was due to their inability to speak English. We were there to bridge this communication gap. After the children finished their homework, we would play and help to take care of them while their mothers would do aerobics or counseling. Often,

we would translate school documents for the mothers so that they would understand the progress and activities of their children in school.

Student B6:

It was a pleasure to be a part of the program of Café Cultura. It is an important service for Hispanics in the Upstate of South Carolina. The Coordinator and creator of the concept, is a remarkable woman. While I enjoyed working in the academic work of children, we also had the opportunity to speak in Spanish with the children when they had done all the work. The project taught me more than just Spanish. It taught me that many communities are around us who need our help. I am glad that I could be a part of a program so important in the lives of Hispanics in the Upstate. Our goal in our project was to provide services and activities adapted to the Hispanic culture and Spanish language. We helped to provide resources and services to the children of Café Cultura in the form of educational and recreational activities. Each Tuesday, someone from our group went to Café Cultura. We drove more than an hour to arrive at the community center, where we stayed for two hours, and then drove back for more than an hour. We helped the children with various subjects, de-stressing reading and spelling homework.

(C) Schools Group (10 Students):

Student C1:

From the moment we walked into the Elementary School, the students recognized us as volunteers and pointed us in the direction of the homework center. They appreciated our presence and we grew to appreciate their efforts and determination to finish their work. When they finished, they would always be extremely excited. To see the smiles every time we visited was heart-warming and rewarding. The other Hispanic students benefitted from our knowledge of the Spanish language. Although they all spoke English, it was nice to be able to have two means of communication. This allowed us to practice our skills while helping others.

Student C2:

During this semester, I have learned a lot about working in the real world... We worked with children from the Episcopal Church Day School, where we taught them basic Spanish vocabulary. Interestingly to me, I discovered that not only did the children know some Spanish, they were knowledgeable about some Russian language as well, this just made realize me how cultured children are becoming in our society.

Student C3:

The children from the elementary school selected were a bit of a challenge as it was a bit harder to get 4th and 3rd grade students interested in learning another language during a time that was normally for playing. Nevertheless, we were able to have some type of interaction with the students by involving them in Spanish exercises with the human body and nutrition. By the end of the meeting with each group of students, I feel as though we were able to successfully introduce the students to the Spanish language if nothing else. Overall, the process was very overwhelming, but once we got past the planning of the whole project, we were able to impact and to be influenced by our community.

Student C4:

Our group had a challenging time with the coordination between us and all the different contacts that we wanted to use, but after we were able to speak with a few key players it worked well. Since we had difficulties developing our SLP we decided to participate in a few different activities. Our first opportunity was with an elementary school where we partnered with the ESL teacher. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to interact one on one with the kids by reading books, creating art projects, putting up the class calendar, or working on Rosetta Stone software. We also got to observe her teaching, which was particularly interesting to see the methodology she used. The kids were very fond of her because she created a comfortable environment to talk and learn.

Student C5:

We worked at a high school in developing a health unit for the students. We wrote out a lesson plan and created a worksheet that she could use in the classroom. Our objective was to create a fun and interesting curriculum that would encourage the students to engage and learn Spanish. Thirdly, we came up with an idea to develop a blog targeted for Spanish speaking students or teachers to write questions or comments that we or others could then answer. With people utilizing the internet all the time we felt like this would be a creative and useful place that people could write and receive responses. Fourthly, we wrote an article about the importance of a healthy lifestyle for the university newspaper [This was a great part of the project because we were working with our very own community and able to speak up about making improvements to our lives].

Student C6:

This semester, our service-learning project centered on working with students; originally, we planned to work with a teacher to teach Spanish to young children. After many miscommunications, however, we decided to go a different route and chose to get involved at a different elementary school. We also worked with high school students and with fellow students through our online blog. Reflecting back on these experiences, we are extremely content with how our semester went. Although we didn't get to work with one particular place throughout the entire semester, we were able to do a variety of different activities that served a variety of people. We not only worked with school age children but we were also able to work at the high school and college level. This gave us an opportunity to use our Spanish skills at different stages throughout the semester and gave us insight into working with kids of different ages. Looking back, we are grateful that it turned out this way. Our service-learning project wasn't limited to one place or one group of people. Instead, we experienced a greater variety by working with different organizations. We enjoyed having the opportunity to serve others and feel like we were able to do that this semester. We served these different organizations through the skills we've acquired here in the classroom. We feel more equipped to work with students from our experiences with the service-learning project this semester.

Student C7:

I thought this project was a great way to bring the Spanish language to the community. I really enjoyed working with the kindergarten class. They were eager to learn and interested in what we were teaching them; however, it was a little harder to get the kids in one of the schools to become more interested in our lessons. The 3rd grade boys

weren't very interested at all in learning Spanish but we tried to teach them anyways. The 4th grade girls were much better and more interested in participating in the lessons. Overall, I thought it was a fun project but challenging at the same time.

Student C8:

I was thinking about being a Spanish teacher to middle school children so this was perfect practice for me. The older ones at club 245 were very uninterested at first so it was hard to get their attention and keep it. I liked teaching the younger kids because they loved learning the new language. It was difficult to find activities that would be appropriate for each age that would engage the children. I think we did the best job with the kindergarten class. They retained so much of what we taught them.

Student C9:

Overall, students are committed to improving their English. As instructors, we learned a lot from our students! Though we spoke largely in English, we got lessons on culture and customs. I would definitely recommend doing this kind of project. It gives you hands on experience and is a lot of fun. The ESOL program really is a great way to help students and I was very glad that I got to be a part of someone's life. Also, the Coordinator worked very hard with me to make sure that I received the number of hours I needed.

Student C10:

I learned a lot through this experience. At first I was not sure how well my classmate and I would get along but we ended up having a lot of fun together. It was great to be in a different environment and see how someone else learns a language. I would definitely call this a beneficial experience and I am glad I did it. I would definitely recommend doing this kind of project. It gives you hands on experience and is a lot of fun.

(D) English Language Services (ELS) Group (7 Students):

Student D1:

This was an extremely eye opening and worthwhile project. The English Language Services is an extremely efficient program for learning English and they even schedule out of class activities for the students to engage in. This SLP is great for giving students' perspective on their own culture and how much they have to learn about the world's cultures.

Student D2:

Being able to volunteer as conversation partners for the international ELS students have turned out to be not only an educational experience for both us and the students, but it has also given us the opportunity to make friends with people from all over the world. Meeting with the students to share our lunchtimes or hanging out with them after class allowed us to have comfortable, amicable conversations that also gave them an ideal way to practice their English with someone other than a teacher. As American students, we gained a new perspective on many different worldly cultures, including that of Saudi Arabia, Japan, Korea, and Turkey in addition to the more familiar Hispanic cultures of Mexico and Venezuela.

Student D3:

This bilingual conversation relationship provided the students with a comfortable environment to practice their English with someone other than a teacher. I can relate to

the challenges of being in an unfamiliar culture and the desire of wanting to be accepted by the local students, so I think the ELS students were pleasantly surprised when I wanted not only to help them with their English but to practice my Spanish language skills, too. Though we began volunteering as conversation partners as a part of this Service-Learning Project, we plan on continuing to work with the students of ELS.

Student D4:

Gained understanding of a variety of cultures and helped educate other students about the Spanish language. ELS provided an opportunity to meet international students on a more personal level; allowed us to teach students from abroad about our American college life providing students with a comfortable environment to practice their English. Since we've all studied abroad, we understand the challenges of being in an unfamiliar culture and the importance of being accepted by the local students.

Student D5:

In early April I accidentally took the elevator to the basement of our university building and stumbled upon a small office labeled "English Language Services." I went in and discovered an entirely new untapped resource in that community center. The English Language Services, or ELS, host students from around the world who wish to attend schools in the United States, but lack the English skills or competency to do so. These students range in ages from early twenties to their late forties or fifties and married with children. At first I was disappointed because I wanted to use my English skills, but I quickly discovered that this was a great opportunity. Having lunch twice a week or more with the students has been a really great eye-opening experience because I have learned so much about all the different countries these people are from. For example, one of them was from Saudi Arabia and we have spoken at length about the difference in the status of women in the United States and in Saudi Arabia. I also made good friends with a student from Mexico D.F. and another one from Venezuela. It was very enlightening to talk to them about Hispanic culture as a whole, and then the cultural and regional differences between Mexico and Venezuela. I have also met some students from South Korea and Turkey and felt privileged to talk to people from a culture I know absolutely nothing about. Overall the experience was highly rewarding and humbling. It felt great to feel like I was part of an international community and to make friends I would have never met otherwise. I hope the friendships I have made will last a lifetime and I have continued to attend this program even after completing this project.

Student D6:

I met with ELS students on a weekly basis at the ELS Center to serve as a conversation partner helping the students practice English. We would share our lunch times while getting to know each other better. While there, I met students from all over the world. We often talked about our respective homes and shared aspects of culture with each other. There were also opportunities to participate with ELS students in community activities such as the International Festival and cultural dance events.

Student D7:

On multiple occasions, I shared common aspects of the American culture through music and video, and answered a plethora of questions the students had about what it's like to be a student at an American university like mine. My biggest recommendation for the ELS organization is more marketing! There are many students on campus looking to get

involved in the international community, but do not know where to start. Keep the Conversation Partner ideas going year-round by recruiting students from the Language courses!

(E) Susan S. G. Komen for the Cure Group (2 students):

Student E1:

With this service project, I learned lots of information about the role of non-profit organizations. I understand how it is important to be educated on services and treatments related to cancer of the breast by coordinating with a subsidiary like the Susan S. G. Komen institute. Now, I can guide the Hispanic community with appropriate information in this matter thanks to the help of Susan G. Komen Institute.

Student E2:

I recommend that Spanish students use this contact for their service-learning projects. It is best to work on an individual basis because the Office is very small. In addition, you have to spend a day without classes for driving to and from; and then work four to six hours. It is a great opportunity to learn the function of "Susan S. G. Komen for the Cure". In addition, you will learn a lot about breast cancer and how to best present the information to the Hispanic population.

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