

Marquette University
e-Publications@Marquette

Psychology Faculty Research and Publications

Psychology Department

1-1-2011

Evaluating the Impact of Service Learning on Student Outcomes in a Health Psychology Course

Astrida S. Kaugars

Marquette University, astrida.kaugars@marquette.edu

Astrida Seja Kaugars. (2011). "Evaluating the Impact of Service Learning on Student Outcomes in a Health Psychology Course," in B. Harrison, B. O'Steen, P. Clayton, K. Edwards, & Editorial Fellows (Eds.), *Proceedings of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement 11th Annual Conference*. (pp. 235-236). New Orleans, LA: IARSLCE. [Permalink](#).

Evaluating the impact of service learning on student outcomes in a health psychology course

Astrida Kaugars, Assistant Professor, Marquette University [Astrida.Kaugars@marquette.edu]



Keywords: Biopsychosocial model, transactional model, service-learning, undergraduate

Track: Student development and learning

Format: Research paper

Summary:

Although positive effects of service learning have been demonstrated for personal, citizenship, and social outcomes there is a need to target specific outcomes in psychology course design and to incorporate appropriate service learning experiences (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009). The purpose of the present study was to examine how aspects of an undergraduate Health Psychology course, which included a project-based model of service learning, may contribute to changing students' perspectives on public service, community engagement, and social justice.

Participating undergraduate students (70% female) were predominately Caucasian (85%), and the majority (64%) had never participated in service learning prior to the present course. In preliminary data analysis comparing data from the two time points, there were no significant changes in students' public service motivation, however, there was a statistically significant increase in students' community service self-efficacy scores ($t(29) = -2.230, p < .05$). Moreover, more than half of the respondents reported that as a result of their service learning experience they became more aware of racism, educational issues, environmental issues, discrimination, health care issues, inequality, alcohol/drug abuse, and poverty. Ongoing analyses will include coding the perspective-taking task transcripts for stereotypical representations, affect, and attributions. Further analyses will also examine the influence of social desirability on students' responses.

Preliminary results suggest that the inclusion of a project-based service learning activity was influential in changing students' community service self-efficacy. Analyses of student responses to a perspective-taking task hold promise for demonstrating the value of reducing students' stereotypes about children's health.

References:

- Conway, J. M., Amel, E. L., & Gerwien, D. P. (2009). Teaching and learning in the social context: A meta-analysis of service learning's effects on academic, personal, social, and citizenship outcomes. *Teaching of Psychology, 36*(4), 233-245.
- Galinsky, A. D. & Moskowitz, G. B. (2000). Perspective-taking: Decreasing stereotype expression, stereotype accessibility, and in-group favoritism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*(4), 708-724.
- Mabry, J.B. (1998). Pedagogical variations in service-learning and student outcomes: How time, contact, and reflection matter. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 5*, 32-47.
- Perry, J. (1996). Measuring public service motivation: An assessment of construct reliability and validity. *Journal of Public Administration and Research, 6*, 5-22.
- Reeb, R. N., Katsuyama, R. M., Sammon, J. A., & Yoder, D. S. (1998). The Community Service Self-Efficacy Scale: Evidence of reliability, construct validity, and pragmatic utility. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 5*, 48-57.
- Reynolds, W. M. (1982). Development of reliable and valid short forms of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 38* (1), 119-125.