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The Dynamic Tensions of Service Learning in Higher Education: A Philosophical Perspective

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The Dynamic Tensions of Service Learning in Higher Education

A Philosophical Perspective

Senior faculty in a peace and justice program at a small liberal arts college reject the efforts of a student affairs professional to help the faculty connect their teaching to practice through service activities in the local community. One faculty member openly wonders how "out-of-class" activities such as community service have anything to do with interdisciplinary theories of social justice. A director of an office of community service is upset because the provost has decided to develop a Center for Community Service Learning. The director sees this as an attempt to usurp the good work of student affairs and feels that attempts to engage faculty will be difficult, if not futile. A department chair in an American Thought and Language program at a large research university asks an associate professor being considered for promotion to full professor to explain in writing to the promotion and tenure committee the relevance of his research on service learning. Both the chair and the committee are apprehensive about service learning as a legitimate area of scholarly inquiry. And finally, a local social service agency in a university town has had its fill of student volunteers after repeatedly receiving complaints from clients about patronizing attitudes expressed by the students.

The preceding examples represent real-life organizational tensions that we have encountered over recent years through research in the area of service learning. Tension revolving around the meaning and relevance of service learning may be summarized by the following four questions:

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1. Is service learning best understood as part of the historical mission of higher learning as in fostering social responsibility and citizenship, or in new goals of developing empathy and multicultural understanding, or in traditional academic goals such as critical thinking and writing? In other words, what are the central learning outcomes we expect service learning to yield? This is what we term the *Learning Question* and relates to debates over the diverse set of learning outcomes and which are prioritized on campuses. This is sometimes characterized as a debate between affective versus cognitive conceptions of student learning as well as discussions of experiential versus abstract academic work.

2. Related to the first concern is the following: Is service learning to be associated with the formal curriculum and fall under the domain of faculty, does it pertain more to the co-curriculum and the work of student affairs professionals, or is it seen as an outreach effort and within a separate unit such as continuing education? How do organizational structures impact the ability of service learning to meet educational goals? What are the problems posed by making service learning a goal of more than one bureaucratic unit? This is what we term the *Locational Question*.

3. A third concern relates to the definition of work suggested by service learning. How does service learning fit within the expectations that accompany faculty and student affairs work? This is what we term the *Organization-of-Work Question*.

4. A fourth concern raised by contemporary debates about the meaning and relevance of service learning is associated with its implementation and evaluation. What key features should we seek to include as part of constructing service-learning experiences? This is what we term the *Implementation Question*, and it addresses the nature of the service-learning experience and how it is to be structured.

We recognize a degree of artificiality posed by these questions. Few serious higher education scholars or practitioners, for example, see an impenetrable divide between cognitive and affective learning, or classroom and out-of-classroom learning, as the work of scholars such as Kuh (1996), King and Baxter Magolda (1996), and Love and Love (1995), among others, clearly reveals. These questions are helpful nonetheless in that they highlight organizational issues associated with service learning. In this sense, they serve more as a heuristic device for thinking about implementation issues surrounding service learning. Furthermore, these dualisms are maintained within the bureaucratic structures that exist within many, if not most, of our educational institutions. Thus, dualisms are real and exist, to some degree, within the way that organization and roles are structured and the way that learning is con-

ceived of. Anyone who has spent time within higher education has experienced them.

In what follows, we explore the origins of these tensions by discussing forces contributing to the rise of the service-learning movement. We move on to discuss recent research on service learning organized around the four guiding questions that highlight philosophical dualisms within higher education. We then attempt to address these organizational concerns (and the philosophical dualisms within higher education) by applying John Dewey's philosophy of education to the four key questions, reminding the reader that service learning largely has evolved out of this philosophy. Stated in another manner, we seek guidance from the founding voice in the service-learning movement as we seek to address current tensions—tensions that Dewey documented throughout the educational systems of his time. Finally, we conclude by suggesting the benefits for institutional leaders in familiarizing themselves with this philosophy and its utility in overcoming these organizational tensions. We believe the application of Dewey's work can lead to creative solutions to contemporary organizational problems.

Although there are significant pedagogical issues instructors and student affairs practitioners must consider in developing service-learning courses and activities, our concern in this article is primarily at the institutional level. Hence, we do not intend to specifically address service-learning pedagogy to any great extent, although certainly some key issues will emerge in discussing institutional change. As will become clear, part of the problem with advancing service learning is the conceptual boxes that have been constructed as part of our organizational lives in higher education. For example, the tripartite divisions of teaching, research, and service make it difficult for faculty to adequately communicate their efforts in the area of service learning, which often combines two or even three of these dimensions of faculty work. Likewise, a limited view of student learning as that which only occurs in formal classroom settings makes legitimizing out-of-class learning such as community service difficult. But, as we will illustrate, the creative solutions to thinking outside these conceptual boxes has already been laid by one of the most prominent educational philosophers and theorists, John Dewey.

A Movement Whose Time Has Come

The recent growth and interest in service learning may be interpreted as a response to three general critiques leveled at academe: lack of curricular relevance, lack of faculty commitment to teaching, and lack of institutional (and faculty) responsiveness to the larger public good. Yet,

its roots lay deeper than these three recent critiques. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a wave of innovation in higher education. Many current pedagogical innovations owe their creation and development to this time period, including multiculturalism, collaborative learning, learning communities, and service learning. Each of these pedagogical innovations evolved out of newly applied philosophies of education grounded in experiential and emancipatory approaches to learning. These pedagogical innovations share the core assumptions of Dewey's philosophy. For example, service learning evolved from Dewey's belief that dualisms in philosophy had created a problematic distinction between doing and knowing, emotions and intellect, experience and knowledge, work and play, individual and the world, among other forced dichotomies. Two long-standing traditions in philosophy supported a dualistic view of the world: (1) that body and mind were separate, and (2) that the spiritual and material world were separate. These beliefs led to the development of institutions that enacted dualistic values and structures. Medieval universities were formed with this separation in mind, and our modern universities and colleges often reinforce these same belief systems. We believe Dewey's work is key in helping us rethink dualistic structures in higher education, particularly as they relate to service learning. We will return to Dewey's philosophy and its contribution to service learning in greater detail.

Over time, service learning lost its foundation in Dewey's philosophy; instead, discussions turned to how service learning could address current educational concerns, no longer framed in Deweyan terms. During the 1980s, for example, national reports such as *Involvement in Learning* (Study Group, 1984), *Integrity in the College Curriculum* (Association of American Colleges, 1985), and *Access to Quality Undergraduate Education* (Commission for Educational Quality, 1985) called attention to what many perceived as the lack of relevance throughout the undergraduate curriculum. Boyer's 1987 publication of *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* added fuel to this growing attack when he argued that there is "a disturbing gap between the college and the larger world. There is . . . a parochialism that seems to penetrate many higher learning institutions, an intellectual and social isolation that reduces the effectiveness of the college and limits the vision of the student" (p. 6). Boyer went on to add, "What we urgently need today is a constructive debate about the meaning of the undergraduate college and a willingness to make this part of the educational enterprise more vital and enriching" (p. 7). For Boyer, creating vital forms of education involved integrating community service into the undergraduate experience:

> Today's undergraduates urgently need to see the relationship between what they learn and how they live. Specifically, we recommend that every student complete a service project—involving volunteer work in the community or at the college. . . . The goal is to help students see that they are not only autonomous individuals but also members of a larger community to which they are accountable (p. 218).

The growth of organizations such as Campus Compact and Campus Opportunity Outreach League (COOL) in the late 1980s was in part a response to curricular irrelevance and the desire of students and institutional leaders to create meaningful undergraduate experiences. Such organizations fostered opportunities and incentives for students to connect their educational experiences with activities such as community service.

Criticism during the 1980s and 1990s about the changing role of faculty work also has contributed to the rise of service learning. A number of scholars and policy experts have pointed to the growing trend for faculty to be increasingly removed from the teaching component of higher education as the pressures and rewards to focus on research and publication have taken on greater importance (Boyer, 1987, 1990). Fairweather (1996) reported that even at smaller liberal arts colleges faculty who publish the most, not those who spend more time teaching, receive higher salaries. What Clark (1987) pointed out in the late 1980s is as true today as ever: "The prestige hierarchy dictates that the research imperative propel the system" (p. 101). Thus, for many within academe, service learning has been seen as an innovative pedagogical strategy offering the potential to invigorate faculty teaching (Howard, 1998; Stanton, 1994; Zlotkowski, 1998). This view situates service learning as a form of faculty development that addresses concerns raised by Boyer as well as others. As an innovative pedagogical strategy in need of evaluative findings, service learning also offers the potential to link teaching and research in clear and expository ways, but only if institutions are willing to broaden their definitions of scholarship.

The third trend contributing to the rise of service learning is linked to criticism of colleges and universities, in general, and faculty, in particular, for their lack of responsiveness to public concerns (Bok, 1982; Ehrlich, 1995; Hackney, 1994), and relatedly, the general malaise encouraging student, faculty, and institutional disengagement (Harkavy & Benson, 1998; Weigert, 1998). A body of literature emerging in the 1980s and continuing throughout the 1990s has raised significant concerns about contemporary conceptions of community and civic-mindedness and often has targeted education as both a problem source as well as a possible solution (Barber, 1992; Battistoni, 1985, Bellah, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Parks Daloz, Keen, Keen, & Daloz Parks,

1996; Rhoads, 1997; Wuthnow, 1995). Linking student learning and faculty teaching to community concerns through activities such as service learning enables institutions to address larger community, state, and regional needs and challenges students to give serious consideration to their roles as community members and as citizens in a democratic society. The work of college and university presidents in the late 1980s to create Campus Compact was not only an effort to increase the relevance of the undergraduate experience, but it also helped to forge a stronger link between institutions and their communities.

There are a variety of ways in which service-learning initiatives may benefit external constituents. For example, as part of economic development efforts for the city of East St. Louis, community members formed an alliance with the University of Illinois. From this alliance emerged the East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP), which involved faculty and students working in the area of urban planning and architecture. Together students, faculty, and community members conducted research and market analysis, drafted architectural plans, and recruited and organized community and campus volunteers, all of which contributed to the eventual construction of an open air, retail food market. The East St. Louis Farmer's Market was opened in 1994 and over the next three years generated $395,000 in direct sales and helped to revitalize an entire neighborhood. From the students' perspectives, they gained valuable experience applying classroom concepts through both research and application. Additionally, the faculty were able to link their teaching efforts to action research and service to a community in need (Reardon, 1998).

The discussion in this section highlights the forces both internal and external to the academy that have tilled the soil for service learning to take root. However, the key philosophical points undergirding the movement have in many ways been usurped as institutional leaders and organizations began implementing service learning. Not surprisingly, dualistic institutions are having difficulty making the necessary changes (if there is even an understanding that organizational changes need to be made). Questions about what service learning contributes to student learning, who is to be involved, how it impacts the nature of academic work, and how it is to be implemented remain somewhat unanswered. We examine these tensions by returning to our four guiding questions.

The Learning Question

With the growth of service learning, both in the realm of faculty work and student affairs practice, has come much confusion about what it ac-

tually is, what relevance it has, and what contributions it has to offer college students. Is service learning part of the developmental component of higher learning concerned with social responsibility and citizenship? Or, is it more relevant to helping students master abstract academic concepts and principles? In other words, what are the learning outcomes to be expected from service learning? A common perspective stresses service learning's contribution to cognitive development, the sort of learning typically associated with a student's academic field of study or discipline. Indeed, Zlotkowski (1995) maintained that the survival of the service-learning movement is in doubt if service-learning practitioners cannot adequately connect service to academic learning and, in particular, to specific disciplinary practices. Zlotkowski's recent work with the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) to develop disciplinary monographs in part is designed to address this concern, as was the Campus Compact work by Kraft and Swadener (1994). Another example is the work of Barber and Battistoni (1993), which explicitly linked service to the classroom as part of formalized civic education. They offered their rationale for placing academic learning at the center of the service-learning movement: "Educational institutions are learning communities, not service agencies, and . . . the primary justification for service programs has to be pedagogical" (p. 236).

But what about educational goals tied to student development, including the promotion of citizenship, social responsibility, and perhaps moral commitment? This is an area of learning described as affective development (Love & Love, 1995), and although this type of education is often associated with student affairs work, the fact is that many faculty also are concerned with the affective dimension. In order to better assess these separate, but arguably interactive learning domains, it may be best to examine what is already known about learning outcomes and service learning.

In the realm of the affective dimension, including such outcomes as self-confidence, social responsibility, civic-mindedness, self-esteem, and personal efficacy, just to name a few, there is clear evidence of the positive impact of service learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Boss, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1996; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Gray et al., 1996; Kendrick, 1996; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Waterman, 1993). Also, evidence exists that service learning contributes to students developing more accepting attitudes toward cultural differences (Coles, 1993; Myers-Lipton, 1996; Neururer & Rhoads, 1998; Rhoads, 1997, 1998a, 1998b). This last outcome highlights the confusion in distinguishing between the cognitive and affective domains: Does, for example, increased cultural

understanding reflect an affective outcome (connected more to attitudes), or does it reveal cognitive growth (as in more complex thinking about diversity)? For example, research by King and Shuford (1996) argues that reasoning skills reflective of a multicultural point of view are more cognitively complex than non-multicultural perspectives. Hence, learning related to cultural understanding highlights how the boxes that we label as "cognitive" or "affective" may not adequately represent the interactive aspects of holistic forms of learning. A similar point can be made for most of the affective outcomes often raised in discussions of student learning.

As part of the view that cognitive change ought to be the cornerstone of service learning, research on learning linked to particular course content is of great importance. In general, however, the picture is rather incomplete. Although there are a variety of studies offering support for the contribution of service learning to course comprehension (Giles & Eyler, 1994, 1998; Hesser, 1995; Hudson, 1996; Kendrick, 1996; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Mendel-Reyes, 1998), generally speaking, more research is needed. As Giles and Eyler (1998) noted, "Faculty and administrators are intensely interested in this issue and there is not yet convincing evidence of the importance of service learning to subject matter learning" (p. 109). There is however strong evidence linking service learning to advancing critical reflection and writing skills, as Cooper (1998) pointed out in his work on service, reflection, and writing. Following the work of Kolb (1984) and King and Kitchener (1994), Cooper demonstrated how critical thinking may be advanced through experiential course components and reflective writing. When students are challenged to write about experiences that confront their basic assumptions about the world, a degree of serious or "critical" reflection is required. The outcome, according to Cooper, is that students are forced to integrate new and more complex ways of thinking about their social world. Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede (1996) support Cooper's findings, but stressed that certain themes must be incorporated into the service-learning experience for it to challenge students' reflective thought: "The best reflection is Continuous in time frame, Connected to the `big picture' information provided by academic pursuits, Challenging to assumptions and complacency, and Contextualized in terms of design and setting" (p. 21).

Given the preeminence placed on course-related learning (and cognitive development in general), we well understand why so many of the longstanding devotees of service learning seek to strengthen the movement by solidly anchoring it within the cognitive realm. However, separating cognitive and affective learning, and, in turn, assigning specific

responsibility to either faculty or student affairs practitioners is unrealistic, if not impossible (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). As Terenzini, Pascarella, and Blimling (1996) argued, "This functional and organizational dualism continues to conflict with holistic theories of how students learn and develop, and with the growing body of research on this topic [student learning outcomes]. Over the last 30 years, numerous people have lamented the separation of cognitive and affective dimensions of student growth" (p. 149). The need for a seamless view of learning is readily apparent when one understands that affective concerns, like helping students develop social responsibility, often involve cognitive processes, such as understanding the meaning of community and citizenship and the complex interaction between the two. Service learning promotes a seamless view of learning in that it requires educators to link classroom learning with out-of-class experiences. Consequently, conceptual and experiential learning are brought together in a holistic fashion.

The Locational Question

Is service learning to be located in the work of student affairs professionals and associated with the co-curriculum, or does it pertain more to faculty work and the formal curriculum? The "locational question" is closely tied to the issue of affective versus cognitive development and addresses some of the tension surrounding debates about the source of service learning initiatives. Relatedly, many leading scholars of service learning limit its application to learning contexts organized by academic instructors and connected to formal courses. For example, Howard (1998) offered one particular definition of service learning in what he described as "academic service learning":

> Service learning is a *pedagogical model;* it is first and foremost a teaching methodology, more than a values model or a leadership development model or a social responsibility model. Second, there is an *intentional* effort made to utilize the community-based learning on behalf of academic learning, and to utilize academic learning to inform community service. This presupposes that academic service learning will not happen unless concerted effort is made to harvest community-based learning and strategically bridge it with academic learning. Third, there is an *integration* of the two kinds of learning—experiential and academic; they work to strengthen one another. And last, the community service experiences must be *relevant* to the academic course of study. (p. 34)

Clearly, Howard stresses service learning as a faculty activity. Similarly, Bringle and Hatcher (1996) assigned service learning to "credit-bearing

educational experience" in which students "gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility" (p. 222). Scholars such as Howard and Bringle and Hatcher do not deny that learning through service takes place beyond the formal curriculum; they simply prefer to reserve the term "service learning" for course-related service.

Other scholars and practitioners suggest a broader view of service learning, including the work of student affairs practitioners and efforts to foster out-of-class learning within their definition. For example, in her edited book on service learning Jacoby (1996) opined, "While service-learning that is embedded in the curriculum provides opportunities for faculty to enhance students' learning by integrating course content with practical experience in a structured manner intended to meet course objectives, powerful opportunities for student learning and development also occur outside the classroom" (p. xviii). Non-credit bearing service learning often emphasizes student development concerns, including identity exploration and fostering social responsibility, aspects of which may also be incorporated into the goals of credit-bearing service-learning courses.

Somewhat related to the second vision of service learning is a third position that tends to resist the distinction between course-related learning (in-class) and noncourse-related learning (out-of-class). This view favors a redefinition of the classroom and a more holistic understanding of student learning (Love & Love, 1995). This third position is less rigidly bound by the traditional notions of in-class and out-of-class learning and lends itself to the idea of "seamless learning environments," whereby a variety of learning contexts are seen as legitimate, including such sites as Multi User Domains (MUDs) or chat rooms, residence halls, athletic fields, and, of course, community service settings. Kuh (1996) clarified this perspective: "The word seamless suggests that what was once believed to be separate, distinct parts (e.g., in-class and out-of-class, academic and non-academic, curricular and co-curricular, or on-campus and off-campus experiences) are now of one piece, bound together so as to appear whole or continuous" (p. 136). From this perspective, service learning is not so much about who initiates it—faculty or student affairs professionals—as much as it is concerned with how and what is accomplished.

The Organization-of-Work Question

Is faculty involvement in service learning to be considered as part of one's contribution to teaching, research, or service? And, in terms of stu-

dent affairs practitioners, where does service learning fit within their working lives? Because service learning is a pedagogical model and, arguably, a rather innovative model at that, the implementation of service-learning experiences suggests a redefinition of the work of faculty and student affairs practitioners. We first will address faculty work.

For years, faculty have been evaluated along the lines of a tripartite definition of work. And for years there has been a general trend toward greater emphasis being placed on research despite significant differences in institutional type and mission (Fairweather, 1996). If service learning is to be advanced as a common pedagogical strategy, incentives should be explored for faculty to be innovative in their teaching (Rhoads, 1997; Ward, 1996, 1998; Zlotkowski, 1998).

But there is an additional complexity to service learning that the tripartite view of faculty work fails to capture. In many ways, service learning cuts across all three areas and includes faculty work in teaching, research, and service. For example, planning and implementing a service component as part of a course may be considered a teaching-related task. At the same time, because community involvement is promoted for students and ideally for the faculty member as well, the service aspect of faculty work also comes into play. Although not all institutional definitions of faculty service would include such activities, it is perhaps time to push for a broader interpretation of what institutions define as "service."

Although developing and implementing service-learning courses may involve both teaching and service roles, the third aspect of faculty work should also be brought to bear on the success of service learning. As Giles and Eyler (1998) correctly point out, greater knowledge is needed about how service works to augment student learning and what works best. Thus, faculty involved in service-learning initiatives are needed to conduct evaluative research on student learning outcomes. Faculty engaging in evaluative research can contribute to the present knowledge gap, and they need not be cognitive or educational psychologists to do so—engineering professors ought to be able to evaluate student learning through engineering-oriented, service-learning courses (indeed, the *Journal of Engineering Education* provides just such a venue for engineering faculty as well as other scholars concerned with teaching and learning in engineering). Of course, the problem is and continues to be the narrow definition of research favored by many institutions. This is especially true of some of the most elite research universities where applied research, such as that suggested by service-learning inquiry, is often denigrated in favor of more esoteric forms of scholarly work. Once again, we face the problem of a narrowly defined organizational box

known as "research." Service learning challenges organizations to re-think what counts as legitimate forms of scholarly inquiry.

Student affairs also faces organization-of-work concerns when it comes to advancing a service-learning agenda. For years, student affairs divisions at many institutions have had to battle for institutional legitimacy facing yearly budgetary debates about their relevance to the academic mission. The Student Learning Imperative (SLI), in part, has been a conscious effort to more clearly situate the work of student affairs practitioners within the primary educational mission of academic institutions (Kuh, 1996; Schroeder, 1996; Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996).

Student affairs involvement in service learning is one way of actively engaging in the teaching and learning mission. Whether as support to faculty assisting them in the development of service options connected to specific course objectives, or as skilled facilitators in guiding student reflection, service learning pushes for a redefinition of student affairs work. After all, few faculty are trained in the area of cognitive and affective development, and because many student affairs practitioners are (if they have gone through one of the many student affairs graduate programs), their knowledge of this scholarship can be helpful to faculty in developing service-learning courses or modules. Additionally, there are opportunities for student affairs professionals to construct their own service-learning options; indeed, it is hard to imagine an area of student affairs that could not in some way create or support service options. Career service professionals could train student mentors to work with low-income elementary and high-school students by implementing a series of career exploration projects. Residence life staff might develop service projects to benefit surrounding neighborhoods while incorporating reflective group processes to help students connect their efforts to civic-mindedness and social responsibility. Advisors to Greek Life might add a reflective process to already existing service activities. The list is endless, but again the organizational box in which we place student affairs work needs to be revisited so that we directly link the profession's efforts to student learning.

The Implementation Question

A fourth concern relevant to understanding service learning is implementation. From where and in what manner should initiatives to advance service learning derive? This question concerns itself not only with fostering a commitment to service learning at a particular campus, but it also raises questions about the development of specific service-learning projects and how community partners might be involved.

In terms of institutional efforts to advance a service-learning agenda, in the past such efforts have derived from formal organizational leaders such as college or university presidents, from faculty, or from administrative and academic support staff. Ward (1996) discusses the role that presidents can play in promoting service learning, but like other scholars writing in this area, she notes that the faculty play a key role because they largely control the formal curriculum. And although student affairs professionals might initiate a variety of noncredit-bearing service-learning opportunities (Delve, Mintz, & Stewart, 1990; Jacoby, 1996), their ability to influence classroom learning through service-learning initiatives may be limited by faculty reticence. The successful implementation of service learning across an institution's academic mission must necessarily involve a commitment from formal leaders, the faculty, and support staff (Rhoads, 1997; Ward, 1996). Lack of commitment from any of these groups can potentially stymie service-learning initiatives.

An additional implementation concern relates to the role of the community. A number of service-learning writers have raised concerns about the adequate involvement of communities and their representatives in college and university service initiatives (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Kraft, 1996; Mintz & Hesser, 1996; Porter & Poulsen, 1989; Ruch & Trani, 1990/1991; Sigmon, 1979). Too often, as these writers convey, postsecondary institutions forge ahead with service initiatives without proper involvement of the respective communities. The attitude often conveyed on the part of academic institutions is that "we know what's best for you." In response to this concern, Sigmon (1979) developed two principles specifically relating to questions of implementation and community involvement: (1) Those being served control the service project; and (2) Those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions. Radest (1993) and Rhoads (1997) highlighted implementation concerns in terms of the ideal of "mutuality," arguing that equal participation is key: Community members and campus service providers ought to engage jointly and democratically in identifying needs and how such needs are to be met. Kendall (1990) addressed similar issues through what she described as "reciprocity." As Kendall explained, "In service-learning, those being served [ought to] control the service provided; the needs of the community determine what the service tasks will be [or ought to be]. It is this sense of reciprocity that creates a sense of mutual responsibility and respect between individuals in the service-learning exchange" (p. 22). For Kendall, reciprocity is the key to avoiding the kind of paternalism often associated with helping others.

Dewey's Philosophy of Education

In helping us to make sense of these tensions within service learning, we present Dewey's philosophy of education. Although Dewey presented a complex philosophy in his over fifty published books and articles, we will only discuss key aspects of his work as it relates to service learning and his concern with dualisms. It is appropriate to discuss his concern in this area, because Dewey's philosophy of education evolved out of his analysis that the history of philosophy was plagued by artificial dualisms that prevented the evolution of education for a democratic society. Dewey describes how a democratic education is prevented:

> The notion that experience consists of a variety of segregated domains, or interests, each having its own interdependent value, material, and method, each checking every other, and each is kept properly bounded by the others, forming a kind of balance of powers in education. On the practical side, they were found to have their cause in the divisions of society into more or less rigidly marked off classes and groups—in other words, in obstruction to full and flexible social interaction and intercourse, . . . resulting in various dualisms such as practical and intellectual activity, labor and leisure, individuality and association. (1916, p. 323)

Dewey makes the compelling argument that distinctions emerged to serve the interests of power and privilege. In a democratic society, these distinctions cause us harm not only in education, but in all areas of public life. Dewey suggests that education within a democratic society must evolve beyond these problematic dualisms, because the method and process of education must match its aim. In addition to their pernicious role of exclusion, he describes how they prevent learning by hampering a student's ability to draw on all resources, such as experience, emotions, intuition, and so forth.

Dewey traces the history of philosophical dualisms over the last two thousand years, illustrating the impact on philosophies of education and on the process of education. For example, Aristotle and Plato both believed that people should be educated for their station in life. They recommended divisions between practical and intellectual knowledge, which would be acquired within separate training institutes or academies (Noddings, 1998, p. 12). Dewey discussed how educational organizations and processes developed within this dualistic philosophy. In particular, he focused on the way educational institutions elevate intellect over experience, work over play, passivity over activity, knowledge over vocation, individuals rather than community, and intellect rather than knowledge. He also noted how these philosophical orientations result in

un-engaging pedagogical techniques, depleted curriculum, lack of moral development, lack of unity, and lack of integrity of experience and knowledge (1916, p. 336).

What sort of education is better suited to a democratic society? Dewey described a philosophy of continuity. This philosophy is based on a belief that people, as holistic beings, learn best by engaging mind, body, spirit, experience, and knowledge. In some ways, he argued for a universal form of education in that he resisted tracking individuals into certain forms of education—or having separate types. Yet, Dewey encouraged individualized or customized education. Although he laid out a new philosophy of education, he did not describe in detail what new educational institutions might look like. Perhaps this is best though, because it leaves the process of creatively applying his philosophy to particular contexts and time periods.

Dewey's beliefs are mirrored in many current business theories that evolved out of research in the sciences. For example, Wheatley's (1992) *Leadership and the New Science* draws from chaos theory in physics as a means of illustrating inter-relationships among organisms. In *The Fifth Discipline*, Senge (1990) discusses systems thinking, which is also adopted from scientific discoveries about biological systems. Senge discusses systems thinking as the art of seeing the whole and not simply individual components of an organization: "You can only understand the system of a rainstorm by contemplating the whole, not any individual part of the pattern" (p. 7). Interestingly, Dewey also formulated his philosophy based on scientific findings in biology and evolution at the turn of the century—a striking return to findings of one hundred years ago!

Another current theory resonates with Dewey's philosophy of continuity–"seamless learning." Seamless learning suggests a systemic perspective in that typical organizational boundaries are seen as seamless, and separate departments and divisions are viewed as interconnected. As Kuh (1996) explains, "Systemic thinking demands a broad, inclusive understanding of the complex nature of the institution. . . . Students, classes, faculty, and out-of-class experiences are not discrete variables, events, and activities, but are connected at several levels; . . . they affect one another in myriad ways that are not necessarily obvious to the casual observer" (p. 142).

Dewey's philosophy and its recent incarnation in systems thinking and seamless learning call attention to the fact that contemporary colleges and universities are often trapped within philosophical boxes constructed years ago (hundreds, even thousands of years ago!). Such philosophical boxes have served to restrict the structure of colleges and universities. These organizational structures, such as traditional occupational roles

that limit the collaboration between faculty and student affairs practitioners, in Senge's (1990) words, act as "organizational learning disabilities" in that they prevent us from learning new ways of thinking about our organizations. The various roles, patterns, and policies reproduced by organizations may be thought of as "organizational structure" in that these existing frames "structure" our behavior. As Senge explains, "Structure produces behavior, and changing underlying structures [or philosophies] can produce different patterns of behavior" (p. 53). The role of a professor, for example, defines a fairly concise organizational pattern in postsecondary education, and regardless of institutional type, there are certain behaviors one expects from an individual filling such a role—teaching classes, advising students, recording grades, reading in one's field, and so on. Although there are many desirable aspects of the role of college professor, there also are aspects that may limit an individual's productivity and ability to contribute to student learning. For example, promotion and tenure procedures may not reinforce pedagogical innovation, as innovation by its nature involves risk taking. And risk taking challenges the comfort zone of assistant professors whose early careers often rest precariously in the pretenure balance. So, here is a case where an organizational structure, the promotion and tenure process, may in fact limit one's ability to learn new ways of teaching.

Applying Dewey's Philosophy to the Four Organizational Tensions

In this final section, we present ways in which Dewey's philosophy can be applied to the four key questions. We also provide possible directions for institutional leaders. Ultimately, all institutional practice is based on philosophy (every decision to act reflects some fundamental assumption about the world in which we exist). Our goal is to encourage a thoughtful and conscious application of Dewey's philosophy to overcome organizational barriers to service learning. We offer several recommendations that Dewey might make if he were alive to witness organizational practice today. We hope institutional leaders and researchers of service learning will also engage in this type of philosophical problem solving in order to confront these complex issues. Some of these proposals for change may seem radical, even impractical, yet Dewey was able to accomplish many of these changes within the school system. Both minor more immediate changes, as well as more extreme long-term changes are described. Dewey reminds us that the most radical modifications can only be achieved through a change in the collective thought process of educators (their philosophy), not through structural alterations alone.

Dewey's philosophy provides clear vision on the *Outcome Question*; there is no division between affective and cognitive outcomes. In addition, developing hierarchies of these various learning outcomes is problematic. The methods of education employed must develop students as whole individuals. Engagement in practical activity is necessary for education. Educational institutions engaged in this debate are doing a disservice to their students. Ultimately, most higher education mission statements reflect the belief in educating the whole student; it is the bureaucratic structures that create divisions that are eventually translated into a philosophy antithetical to campuses' mission statements. Service learning should focus on the outcomes suggested in campus mission statements, almost all of which contain citizenship, social responsibility, and understanding of others as important concerns. Dewey's philosophy reminds us that learning might be hampered by the presence of the cognitive-affective dualism and that students are perhaps not receiving the benefits of an integrated and continuous education.

Dewey faced the same problem with reshaping schools in the 1930s that we now face in colleges. His recommendation was for a retraining of faculty/staff, who were embedded in a philosophy that separated mind and body, experience and thinking, subject matter and teaching method, the individual and the world, values and knowledge, among other dualisms. School organizational structures reinforce these dualistic assumptions, impacting learning outcomes. Dewey's philosophy calls for continuous learning on the part of teachers, his model includes ongoing, required training. This systemic change will only be possible if staff and tenure policies are changed to require ongoing training or certification similar to other professional fields like medicine or law. It is important to note that the outcome question itself is a symptom of the organizational problems described next.

The *Locational Question* is also clearly addressed in Dewey's philosophy; there ought to be no curricular and co-curricular separation. The whole issue of location would violate his sense of the importance of continuity of learning throughout the educational environment. Such a system marginalizes certain forms of knowledge as well as the individuals who carry out certain work. This has commonly been the situation in higher education, in which student affairs practitioners have been seen as less legitimate than faculty as educators, and the educational programs they offer less rigorous or worthwhile. Additionally, there is also a more seamless relationship with the community, which was also seen as involved with teaching students through work placements and community and business leaders coming into the classroom. From Dewey's perspective, we are challenged to break down these organizational

dualisms and have service learning offered by all groups with equal legitimacy.

In Deweyan schools, faculty, administrators, and the community work much more collaboratively; this is facilitated through the modification of governance structures. Currently, most campuses' governance structures are separate with a faculty senate, administrative committees or cabinets, and perhaps a community advisory group. Instead, Dewey would recommend a single governance structure, that provides opportunities for all groups to have a voice within the decision-making process impacting institutional planning, budgeting, assessment, and so on.

Dewey would also find the separation of research, service and teaching as problematic. This issue can be (and is being) addressed through tenure and promotion standards. Ten years ago, alteration in current tenure policies was thought to be another impossible ideal, however, the Carnegie Foundation, through the work of Ernest Boyer—*Scholarship Reconsidered*—has supported efforts to assess teaching and service for tenure and to make these more central and integrated aspects of the faculty role (1990). The alteration of tenure policies provides another example about how belief in a new philosophy can lead to wholistic, systemic change.

In terms of the *Organization-of-Work Question*, Dewey's philosophy might suggest a specific office or resource person located neither within academic or student affairs, but straddling the two, at least until these structures are dismantled (or delimited). A range of responsibilities or roles could fall within the work of this new structure. Such offices or individuals should work closely with faculty, student affairs staff, and other administrative units across the institution, such as financial aid, admissions, honors, and so on to develop specific service-learning experiences that match both course and noncourse-related learning objectives. It might begin to develop the necessary community ties and continuity helpful to advancing democratic understandings of public life. Furthermore, this center or group of individuals could also provide the staff/faculty development noted as a critical component to change within the outcome question section. Another critical role for the center is acting as a catalyst for change by collecting data about community service learning, building databases that would be helpful to community issues and campus processes, and helping to facilitate action research. In higher education, innovation often happens within subunits, which develop unique structures, cultures, and operational practices, for example, cluster colleges or experimental colleges. These units can design interventions to transform the overall campus and to produce more profound structural and cultural changes. The University of Michigan and Brown

University have developed centers for community service; they can serve as models for other campuses that want to create new organizational structures that can serve as catalysts for institutional change.

A Deweyan perspective would avoid viewing service learning as the work of a few faculty. Instead, all educators within a particular institution ought to consider the experiential and democratic dimensions of service learning. But, until this happens, support mechanisms and incentives for faculty to be innovative in their teaching should exist. Release time should also be considered for faculty who employ service learning. Such efforts often require elaborate planning and coordination (with no institutional support systems), although collaboration with student affairs practitioners may alleviate some of the time demands. Having a service-learning center can also provide centralized support in terms of pedagogical aids, resources, and connections to community agencies and other colleagues. A center offers the potential for student affairs practitioners, faculty, staff, and the community to learn from one another in a community-oriented, democratic learning environment.

Applying Dewey's philosophy suggests that successful implementation of service learning across an institution's academic mission necessarily involves a commitment from formal leaders, the faculty, student affairs staff, and students. Lack of commitment from any of these groups likely will limit the success of service-learning initiatives. Consequently, presidents and academic and student affairs vice presidents need to speak out about the importance of service learning. In a democratic educational process, there should be an effort to build inclusion. Strategies should be adopted that advance an understanding of the importance that service learning offers to education and democracy.

Dewey was a forerunner to contemporary calls for the practical application of research. Boyer (1990) also called for an expanded definition of scholarship. Too often, action research or research having practical implications is seen as something less scholarly than theoretically oriented research. Obviously, we need both, and quite often they need to be integrated. Institutional leaders need to speak out loud and often about the need to apply research findings as well as seek connections across different forms of research.

The final tension concerns the *Implementation Question*, and it addresses the nature of the service-learning experience and how it is to be structured and evaluated. As one might guess, Dewey's work suggests that all groups—faculty, student affairs, and community agencies—are equal partners in service learning. His philosophy directs service-learning initiatives to include the full participation of community members as equal participants in identifying community needs and in constructing

service projects to be implemented. Consequently, guidelines should be developed to guarantee adequate community involvement. The central office or center can assist in developing these guidelines and facilitating the equal partnership.

Dewey was a firm believer in using research to guide educational institutions; he was heavily influenced by empirical science. His work suggests that institutions need to promote understanding of research findings on service learning and explore how such findings might be helpful in structuring service-learning programs. Deweyan philosophy also suggests that evaluations encompass all aspects of learning. Evaluations should avoid reinforcing the distinctions between affective and cognitive, or curricular and co-curricular learning.

In conclusion, as we develop an awareness about the nature of these tensions, institutional barriers to service learning's successful implementation may be more easily overcome. As we have argued throughout this article, the organizational boxes—and underlying philosophy—that have shaped the very nature of higher learning limit efforts to forge a culture of service learning. Perhaps the greatest challenge for leaders of the service-learning movement is to overcome the organizational barriers that restrict innovation. We suggest that Dewey—the founder of the philosophy undergirding service learning—offers powerful insight for understanding these barriers and developing solutions.

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