Engaging Millennial Students through Community-Engaged Experiential Learning

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Recommended Citation

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Abstract: Millennial students and workers are high-achieving, have a strong desire for ongoing personal and professional development, and tend to be invested in making a sustainable impact on society and in the communities in which they live and work. One avenue to engage these students is community-engaged experiential learning (or service learning). While service learning is not new, this "civically-engaged" pedagogy has increased in popularity and usage. It provides meaningful community-service opportunities that simultaneously teach civic responsibility and encourage life-long civic engagement, while also providing significant real-life, hands-on learning of important skills and vital social understanding. This quantitative study examines the connections between students' motivations for enrolling in service-learning courses and their perceived likelihood for course and program completion. It also connects student motivations for enrolling in service-learning courses to the literature on millennial students and preparing students for the future workforce. Findings not only identify gains in service-learning motivations overall, but also specific volunteerism motivations that contribute to students' expressions of intent for course and program completion. The findings also demonstrate that study participants exhibited typical characteristics associated with the millennial generation and that these are strengthened through service-learning participation

Keywords: Service learning, high-impact practices, learning outcomes, completion, millennial students

Service learning is a type of experiential-education pedagogy that consists of specifically designed learning activities that address community needs, and benefit both the student providing the service and the community recipient (Jacoby, 1996). Institutions of higher education are increasingly embracing service learning and similar pedagogical strategies to help students develop the essential learning outcomes valued by employers. These skills include problem solving, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, valuing diversity and the application of knowledge in real-life

contexts (Hart Research Associates, 2015). Service learning and engaged learning also positively impact retention and graduation (Bringle, Hatcher & Muthiah, 2010; Gallini & Moely, 2003; Lockeman & Pelco, 2013; Reed, Rosenberg, Statham, & Rosing, 2015), which is of primary importance for institutions of higher education

This pedagogical approach is particularly appropriate for millennial students, who are high-achieving, have a strong desire for ongoing personal and professional development, and tend to be seriously invested in making a marked sustainable impact on society and in the communities in which they live and work. Service learning provides meaningful opportunities that teach civic responsibility and encourage life-long civic engagement, while also providing opportunities for significant real-life, hands-on learning of important skills and vital social understanding.

Institutions officially recognized with Carnegie's elective Community Engagement Classification have established a commitment to and success in partnering with their communities to create mutually beneficial learning experiences (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2015). This success has been widely documented in terms of student learning, particularly in the areas of personal development, social outcomes, leadership skills , academic knowledge, and academic skills (Fairfield, 2010; Litzky, Godshalk, & Walton-Bongers, 2010; Madsen, 2004; McCrea, 2010; McGoldrick, Battle, & Gallagher, 2000; Munter, 2002) (see Table 1). As institutions strive to improve and provide evidence of student learning and increase completion rates, they must consider and adopt curricular and co-curricular practices with the greatest impact. This helps address concerns regarding return on investment and decreasing funding for higher education. Educational paradigms and programming with the most impact on student learning, and on persistence to graduation, must be identified and prioritized. The primary purpose of this study is to connect student attitudes about volunteerism and civic engagement to service learning-enrolled students' perceived likelihood for course and program completion. Additionally, this study connects student motivation for enrolling in service-learning courses to the literature on millennial students and preparing students for the future workforce.

Literature Review

Service learning is situated within the framework of high impact practices (HIPs). HIPs are characterized by eight underlying components: expectations for high performance, investment of time and effort, interactions with faculty and peers about learning, diversity experiences, timely and

frequent feedback, reflection, real-world application, and public demonstration of competence (Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013). HIPs include first-year seminars and experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, writing- and inquiry-intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, service learning and community-based learning, internships and field experiences, capstone courses and projects, and ePortfolio, which was added as the 11th HIP in 2017 (Kuh, 2008; Kuh, O'Donnell, & Schneider, 2017). The literature on service learning and engaged learning has identified extensive positive outcomes for students, faculty, institutions and communities. We review each of these, followed by a brief discussion of millennial students.

Impact on Students

Service learning and engaged learning undeniably impact student learning. This holds true across a variety of studies and measures (Novak, Markey, & Allen, 2007; Warren, 2012). Due to the extensive research in this area, we summarize the key findings in Table 1.

Table 1
Impact of service learning and engaged learning on students

Personal development
• Personal satisfaction and fulfillment (Fairfield, 2010; Rehling, 2000) • Increased personal and social development (Fairfield, 2010; Simons & Cleary, 2006) • Exploration of personal attitudes and values (Fairfield, 2010; Madsen, 2004; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; McGoldrick, Battle, & Gallagher, 2000; Rhee & Sigler, 2010) • Self-efficacy (Fairfield, 2010; Weber, Weber, & Young, 2010; Tucker & McCarthy, 2001; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006) • Confidence (Fairfield, 2010; Konwerski & Nashman, 2002; Rhee & Sigler, 2010) • Consequences of decisions (Larson & Drexler, 2010; McCrea, 2010; Waddock & Post, 2000)

Social outcomes & leadership skills
- Increased social capital (D'Agostino, 2010; Fairfield, 2010)
- Social responsibility (Bowman, Brandenberger, Mick, & Smedley, 2010; Kolenko, Porter, Wheatley, & Marvelle, 1996; Westover, 2012)
- Cultural awareness and diversity (Keen & Hall, 2009; Robinson, 1999; Simons & Foster, 2002)
- Organizational strategy (Larson & Drexler, 2010; McCrea, 2010; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Rehling, 2000; Robinson, Sherwood, & DePaolo, 2010)
- Conflict resolution and leadership skills (Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2010; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Thomas & Landau, 2002)
- Desire to continue volunteerism (Butin, 2010; Bush-Bacelis, 1998; Weber et al., 2010); Civic engagement (Butin, 2010; Godfrey ,1999; Rama, Ravenscroft, Walcott, & Zlotkowski, 2000; Weber et al., 2010)

Academic and essential learning outcomes
- Course content and technical concepts (Larson &Drexler, 2010; McCrea, 2010; Robinson et al, 2010; Tucker &McCarthy, 2001)
- Teamwork; interaction, interpersonal, and communication skills (Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Michaelsen, Kenderdine, Hobbs, & Frueh, 2000; Rehling, 2000; Tucker, McCarthy, Hoxmeier, & Lenk, 1998)
- Analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Litzky et al., 2010; McCrea 2010; McGoldrick, Battle, & Gallagher, 2000)
- Professional and real-world work experiences (Gujarathi and McQuade, 2002; Larson & Drexler, 2010; Madsen, 2004; McCrea, 2010; Rhee & Sigler, 2010; Robinson et al, 2010)
- Effective communication skills (Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2000; McCrea, 2010)
- Problem-solving (Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Robinson, Sherwood, & DePaolo, 2010; Zlotkowski, 1996)

Academic strategies & skills
- Motivation to learn (Fairfield, 2010; Madsen, 2004; Munter, 2002)
- Learning how to learn (Westover, 2012; Munter, 2002)
- Time management and networking skills (Litzky et al., 2010; Tucker et al., 1998)
- Career exploration (Fairfield, 2010; Robinson, 1999; Vroman, Simmons, & Knight, 2010)

Impact on Faculty

According to research summarized by the Center for Community Engagement at Sonoma State University ("Impact," n.d.):

Research shows that faculty find that service-learning provides:

- Increased satisfaction with quality of student learning
- Increased commitment to research

- Motivation to increasingly integrate service-learning more deeply into more courses
- More lively class discussions and increased student participation
- Increased student retention of course material
- Increased student awareness of community and "real world" issues
- Increase in innovative approaches to classroom instruction
- Increased opportunities for research and publication
- Increase in faculty awareness of community issues (para. 5)

Although faculty may be intrinsically motivated to improve student learning and also extrinsically motivated by rewards such as tenure and promotion, institutions may not value teaching activities such as service learning, or weight it as heavily as scholarship, thus creating a gap between policy and practice (Hou & Wilder, 2015). Other issues such as the need to re-design courses, lack of resources, increased workload, and limited institutional support may also impact the successful adoption of service learning (Tucker et al., 2013).

Impact on Institutions and Communities

Enrollment in service-learning courses, full-time enrollment, and GPA are better predictors of continuation at an institution than age, gender, or race (Reed et al., 2015). Students in service-learning courses feel more encouraged to continue their education (Bringle et. al, 2010; Gallini & Moely, 2003), demonstrate higher re-enrollment behaviors, and graduate at higher rates than those in non-service-learning courses (Bringle et al., 2010; Lockeman & Pelco, 2013). These findings support Tinto's (1993) model of student retention in that participation in service learning facilitates social and academic integration. Students develop meaningful connections as they interact with peers, faculty, and community partners, which furthers commitment to the institution and the goal of graduation (Braxton, Sullivan, & Johnson, 1997; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001). As such, both students and universities benefit from service learning. Institutions wanting to improve retention and graduation would do well to extend opportunities for service learning and engaged learning.

Although research unequivocally supports the benefits of service learning for students, fewer studies have measured reciprocity outcomes for community partners and educational institutions (Harrington, 2014). Community members sometimes do not understand the academic definition of service learning, but do identify positive benefits such as economic, transfer of knowledge, productivity, and intercultural exchange (Harrington, 2014). They may also find that service learning creates additional work and is challenged by issues such as sustainability of a project beyond the time

that students are available, the lack of continuity of short-term projects that frequently change, communication problems between the university and the community, and failure to see resulting research (Harrington, 2014).

Millennial Students and Workers

The term "millennials" refers to the 71 million individuals born from 1981-1996 (Fry, 2018). Millennials are civic-minded with a strong sense of local and global communities (Strauss & Howe, 1997). Seven basic traits describe them: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving (Strauss & Howe, 1997). The millennial generation is characterized by a cautiously optimistic outlook on life, and what some have termed a poor work ethic due to millennials' likelihood to change jobs every 2-4 years, and a preference for flexible work schedules to maintain work/life balance (e.g., dislike of traditional work hours, preference to work remotely, and a desire for an extended break every 8-10 years) (Brack & Kelly, 2012; Myers, 2010; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000).

Millennials have been using computers since before kindergarten and, as such, are likely to be e-learners in a constant state of partial attention and used to instant communication (Myers, 2010). They communicate through social media, do well on time-sensitive projects, and are good at outside the box tasks and gathering information from multiple sources (Myers, 2010). They expect and give direct and constant feedback (consider product reviews, online ratings, "likes," and digital badging) (Myers, 2010). They are also accustomed to diversity and have an inclusive approach to relationships (Zemke et al., 2000). They are oriented towards collective action, teamwork, and collaborative projects (Brack & Kelly, 2012; Myers, 2010). They do not respect authority based on position; rather, respect must be earned (Myers, 2010).

In 2014, the workforce consisted of approximately 34% millennials. By 2020, this percentage will be 46% (Brack & Kelly, 2012). Consistent with the characteristics identified earlier related to millennials' work philosophies, a hopscotch-like career approach is replacing linear career paths (Myers, 2010). As of 2017:

- 21% switched jobs in the past year (more than 3x higher than non-millennials)
- 60% are open to different job opportunities
- 50% would consider taking a job with a different company for a raise of 20% or less
- Millennial turnover costs the U.S. economy $30.5 billion annually (Gallup, 2017)

Given these attributes and preferences, millennials are well-situated to benefit from community-engaged learning where they can collaborate, use technology, work in diverse environments, and identify creative solutions to challenging problems. In such environments, millennials also benefit from interaction with those from other generations who have different perspectives, habits, and skills. These experiences and encounters together will prepare them well for future careers.

Methodology

Institutional Context and Sample

The context for this study is a large, regional, public university in the Intermountain West. The institution received elective Carnegie Community engagement Classification in 2008. This was renewed in 2015. Service learning is viewed as an engaged teaching and learning strategy in which students participate in structured academic service-learning activities that meet community needs, enhance discipline-based knowledge and skills, and strengthen their sense of civic responsibility and community engagement in keeping with both the goals of service learning and HIPs.

The sample for this project included 12 faculty members from six departments and three colleges/schools teaching 16 total service-learning designated sections (565 total enrolled students). Each faculty member first participated in a 6-week Service-Learning Faculty Fellowship training (a combination of 6 one-hour workshops, complemented by a series of online modules and assignments, culminating in course redesign and service-learning designation) and was partnered with an experienced service-learning faculty mentor. Nearly half of the enrolled students were freshman or sophomores and just over half were juniors or seniors. Courses included student leadership and success, introduction to business, business presentations, statistics, organizational behavior, marketing, writing, and psychology.

Operationalization of Study Variables

At the beginning of each service-learning course, students voluntarily participated in a 35-item community volunteerism and civic attitude pre-test survey (adapted from Clary et al., 1998; Mabry, 1998) to record baseline student attitudes at the beginning of the semester. Upon completion of each 16-week service-learning course, students again participated in the same survey, this time as a post-test, to capture potential changes in attitude after completion of the service-learning project and course. More specif-

ically, to measure the goal of promoting positive volunteerism attitudes, the pre/post-test assessment incorporated the Volunteer Functions Inventory developed by Clary et al. (1998). The Volunteer Functions Inventory consists of 30 Likert-scale items, each rated on a 7-point scale, which result in six motivators for volunteerism (e.g., protective, values, career, social, understanding, and enhancement [see Appendix A for pre/post-test survey instrument]). Additionally, to measure the goal of promoting positive civic attitudes, the pre/post-test assessment incorporated the Civic Attitudes Scale developed by Mabry (1998) that consists of five Likert-scale items (each are rated on a 5-point scale [see Appendix A for pre/post-test survey instrument]). Finally, four questions were asked regarding the students' perceived likelihood to complete their degree at the university, the projected length of time still needed to complete the degree, the perceived likelihood of course completion, and the perceived likelihood of program completion (see Appendix B and Cfor pre/post-test survey instrument).

Statistical Methodology

To begin, we performed a descriptive statistical analysis of the pre/post-test data on student motivations of volunteerism and civic attitudes. These bivariate and multivariate analyses include correlations, ANOVA and ANCOVA procedures, cross-tabulations, and confirmatory factor analysis for the Volunteer Functions Inventory scale (due to space limitations, these descriptive analyses are available upon request). Second, we utilized Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression to test two models examining the impact of changing motivations of volunteerism and civic attitudes: (1) on students' perceived likelihood of course completion and (2) on students' perceived likelihood of program completion.

Results

Descriptive Results

In both the pre- and post-tests, students were asked to rate 30 different reasons for volunteerism, which then resulted in six motivators of volunteerism scales: protective, values, career, social, understanding, enhancement (e.g., "Please indicate how important or accurate each of the following possible reasons for volunteering is for you"). As can be seen in Table 2 below, the scale averages and percentage change between pre- and post-tests are presented for the three different colleges/schools and for all three combined. While there is some variation in the extent of change between

pre- and post-tests, protective, social, and enhancement scales each had statistically significant positive changes in student attitudes between the administration of the pre-test and post-test, while values, career, and understanding scales were not significantly different.

Table 2

Pre-/Post-Test Motivators of Volunteerism Scales by College/School

Volunteerism Scales	All		UC		WSB		CHSS	
	Avg.	% Change	Avg.	% Change	Avg.	% Change	Avg.	% Change
Protective	18.9	7.6%	19.1	1.9%	18.8	8.0%	19.0	8.4%
Values	21.8	1.2%	22.8	0.0%	21.5	0.6%	22.6	1.5%
Career	20.7	2.2%	20.7	-0.3%	20.6	2.7%	20.9	-0.5%
Social	18.6	8.9%	18.9	8.8%	18.7	8.7%	18.3	12.1%
Understanding	21.3	1.1%	22.2	-0.5%	21.0	0.8%	21.9	0.7%
Enhancement	20.3	5.1%	21.6	5.9%	20.1	4.5%	20.2	6.8%

OLS Regression Results

While only three of the motivation of volunteerism scales showed significant attitudinal change between the pre-test and post-test, individual items within the three non-significant scales did show statistically significant change. For this reason, all volunteerism and civic attitude variables were initially included in the OLS regression models looking at the likelihood of course completion and program completion. After further testing the parameters of the independent variables included in the initial model, seven volunteerism and civic attitude variables remained significant in looking at the likelihood of course completion and eight volunteerism and civic attitude variables remained significant in looking at the likelihood of program completion. Additionally, we included a control variable for whether the course was an upper or lower division class and dummy variables for the colleges/schools when looking at the models with all colleges/schools combined.

As can be seen in Table 3 below, all seven study variables were statistically significant in the model including all three colleges/schools, while there was some variation when looking at statistical significance and co-efficient strength of the variables across the colleges/schools. Generating employment opportunities, expressing genuine concern for those in the community, creating opportunities for career exploration, and increasing one's personal comfort with diversity were the strongest student motivators and had the biggest impact on the students' perceived likelihood to

complete the course. Additionally, the adjusted r-squared for each college/school model, as well as the combined model, demonstrate that the motivators of volunteerism and civic attitudes predict anywhere between 29% and nearly 43% of the variation in students' perceived likelihood to complete the course (depending on the college/school).

Table 3

OLS Regression Results of Study Variables on Likelihood of Course Completion by College/School

Variable	UC Beta Coef.	UC Stand. Error	WSB Beta Coef.	WSB Stand. Error	CHSS Beta Coef.	CHSS Stand. Error	All Beta Coef.	All Stand. Error
Employment Opportunities	-0.195	0.175	0.252****	0.089	-0.150	0.134	0.154***	0.069
Genuine Concern	0.384*	0.137	0.186***	0.076	0.078	0.226	0.195****	0.065
Career Exploration	0.438**	0.135	0.069	0.090	0.593***	0.205	0.152**	0.074
Comfort with Diversity	0.383**	0.180	0.064	0.106	0.359**	0.228	0.143**	0.085
Feel Needed	-0.125	0.123	0.169**	0.078	-0.106	0.173	0.101*	0.064
Build Resume	-0.069	0.142	-0.094	0.096	-0.269*	0.177	-0.105*	0.075
Make a Difference	0.243*	0.145	0.089	0.086	0.015	0.158	0.083*	0.068
College/School	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.084*	0.094
Lower/Upper Division Class	—	—	-0.107**	0.150	—	—	-0.113**	0.098
N	37		238		51		326	
Adjusted R-square	0.428		0.290		0.334		0.295	
F	4.84****		13.11****		4.59****		16.13****	

Level of significance: * = p < .1; ** = p < .05; *** = p < .01, **** = p < .001

As can be seen in Table 4 below, all eight study variables were statistically significant in the model including all three colleges/schools, while there was some variation when looking at statistical significance and coefficient strength of the variables across the colleges/schools. Similar to the likelihood of the course completion model, generating employment opportunities, expressing genuine concern for those in the community, and increasing one's personal comfort with diversity all remained highly significant predictors of one's perceived likelihood to complete their program of study. However, creating opportunities for career exploration, while still statistically significant, had a weaker predictive effect in this model. In contrast to the previous model, having the chance to feel needed, the opportunity to make a difference, and the opportunity to help others without pay all also proved to be strong student motivators and had a large impact on the students' perceived likelihood to complete their program of study. Additionally, the adjusted r-squared for each college/school model, as well as the combined model, demonstrate that the motivators of volunteerism and civic attitudes predict anywhere between 31% and nearly 41% of the variation in students' perceived likelihood to complete the course (depending on the college/school).

Table 4

OLS Regression Results of Study Variables on Likelihood of Program Completion by College/School

Variable	UC Beta Coef.	UC Stand. Error	WSB Beta Coef.	WSB Stand. Error	CHSS Beta Coef.	CHSS Stand. Error	All Beta Coef.	All Stand. Error
Employment Opportunities	0.207	0.195	0.267****	0.094	0.139	0.154	0.266****	0.072
Genuine Concern	0.229	0.167	0.171***	0.079	0.089	0.223	0.166***	0.067
Career Exploration	0.226	0.164	0.034	0.095	0.591***	0.246	0.111*	0.078
Comfort with Diversity	0.046	0.150	0.203***	0.082	0.092	0.197	0.150**	0.067
Feel Needed	-0.312*	0.198	-0.109	0.099	-0.394**	0.199	-0.163**	0.079
Build Resume	0.246	0.224	0.147*	0.115	-0.016	0.218	0.150**	0.089
Make a Difference	0.327**	0.174	0.108*	0.095	0.139	0.177	0.144***	0.075
Help Others without Pay	-0.063	0.223	-0.124*	0.113	0.000	0.347	-0.112**	0.096
College/School	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.036	0.098
Lower/Upper Division Class	—	—	-0.039	0.155	—	—	-0.023	0.103
N	37		238		51		326	
Adjusted R-square	0.405		0.311		0.307		0.323	
F	4.06***		12.86***		3.77***		16.490	

Level of significance: * = p < .1; ** = p < .05; *** = p < .01, **** = p < .001

Limitations

There are two main limitations to this current study. First (and most importantly), due to unforeseen difficulties in working with the University's institutional research office, we were unable to link student responses to student control variables, such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic status, etc. Extensive research has demonstrated the importance of demographic variables on outcomes for course and program completion. As such, not being able to include these variables in the OLS models represents both a challenge and an opportunity for future research. Based on what has been previously noted in the service-learning literature, we suspect that the addition of these demographic control variables would only enhance and strengthen the impact and overall predictability of the models presented here. Second, the pre- and post-test assessments were administered only 3.5 months apart, after only one service-learning experience. Ideally, the instrument would be administered at greater intervals, such as at the beginning and end of an academic year or, better yet, at the beginning and end of the students' university experience, when they have had the opportunity to engage in multiple community-engagement and service-learning experiences.

Discussion

This study examined the connection between students' attitudes toward volunteerism and civic engagement and their intentions for course and program completion as well as how their motivations reflect the characteristics of millennial students. The pre- and post-survey findings demonstrated that

students' experiences in service-learning courses—across six departments and three colleges/schools—resulted in significant increases on three specific scales (e.g., protective, social, and enhancement). Increases were also realized on the other three scales (e.g., values, careers, and understanding), but were not statistically significant.

Individual items on these latter three scales, however, had a significant impact on students' course completion intentions. Specifically, generating employment opportunities, expressing genuine concern for those in the community, creating opportunities for career exploration, increasing one's personal comfort with diversity, feeling needed, building a resume, and making a difference were the strongest motivators and had the biggest impact on students' perceived intent for course completion. Further, eight volunteerism and civic attitude variables were significantly related to the likelihood of program completion. These included the same variables for course completion but with the addition of the opportunity to help others without pay.

All the variables associated with the instrument scales have been previously identified as outcomes of service learning outlined below. As such, the findings provide further support for these personal, social, and academic learning gains.

- *Protective*: Motivations related to feeling better about oneself, less lonely, and having the increased ability to resolve personal problems.

  Personal development outcomes such as personal satisfaction (Fairfield, 2010; Rehling, 2000), exploration of personal attitudes and values (Fairfield, 2010; Madsen, 2004; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; McGoldrick, Battle, & Gallagher, 2000; Rhee & Sigler, 2010), and problem-solving (Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Robinson et al, 2010; Zlotkowski, 1996) are outcomes of service learning.

- *Social*: Motivations for social adjustment and adaptation.
  The social benefits of service learning include teamwork, interaction, interpersonal skills, and communication skills (Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2000; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; McCrea, 2010; Michaelsen et al., 2000; Rehling, 2000; Tucker et al., 1998).

- *Enhancement*: Motivations centered on self-knowledge, self-development, and positive feelings about oneself.

Service learning increases confidence (Fairfield, 2010; Konwerski & Nashman, 2002; Rhee & Sigler, 2010), personal satisfaction, and fulfillment (Fairfield, 2010; Rehling, 2000).

- *Values*: Motivation related to the expression of values reflecting altruistic or humanitarian issues.

  Research has demonstrated outcomes such as the desire to continue volunteerism (Butin, 2010; Bush-Bacelis, 1998; Weber et al., 2010); civic engagement (Butin, 2010; Godfrey, 1999; Rama et al., 2000; Weber et al., 2010); social responsibility (Bowman et al., 2010; Kolenko et al., 1996; Westover, 2012); and exploration of personal attitudes and values (Fairfield, 2010; Madsen, 2004; Madsen and Turnbull, 2006; McGoldrick, Battle, & Gallagher, 2000; Rhee & Sigler, 2010).

- *Understanding*: Motivations focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

  Gains in course content, technical concepts (Larson & Drexler, 2010; McCrea, 2010; Robinson et al, 2010; Tucker & McCarthy, 2001), and problem-solving (Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Robinson et al, 2010; Zlotkowski, 1996) have been previously identified.

- *Career*: Motivation to enhance knowledge in a specific area related to professional and academic development.

  Academic strategies and skills such as motivation to learn (Fairfield, 2010; Madsen, 2004; Munter, 2002) and career exploration (Fairfield, 2010; Robinson, 1999; Vroman et al., 2010) are outcomes of service learning.

Course and Program Completion

In addition to demonstrating the enhancement of specific skills and attributes, the study contributes new understanding to the benefits of service learning in terms of outcomes that impact student intentions for course and program completion. Once again, although service-learning courses have been shown to predict continuation and graduation (Bringle et al., 2010; Gallini & Moely, 2003; Lockeman & Pelco, 2013; Reed et al., 2015),

this study identifies specific variables that lead to completion intentions.

On the practical side, generating employment opportunities, building a resume, and creating opportunities for career exploration might be fairly straightforward ways for students to recognize what lies ahead for them and motivate them to continue their education. The other items related to completion intentions were more altruistic: genuine concern for those in the community, increasing one's personal comfort with diversity, feeling needed, making a difference, and helping others without pay (the latter was connected to program completion rather than course completion). These findings represent an encouraging mix of both practical and socially responsible motivations for service-learning involvement on the part of students and provide strong support for the benefits of service learning for institutions. The increased commitment to graduation (e.g., see Tinto, 1993) on the part of students as a result of participating in service learning provides strong rationale to continue and strengthen these opportunities.

The Millennial Generation

An additional contribution of this study is looking at the findings in light of the characteristics of millennial students. In doing so, we see that several millennial generation characteristics are evident and were strengthened from student participation in service-learning. We examine a few key attributes:

1. Millennials are civic-minded with a strong sense of local and global communities (Strauss & Howe, 1997). These characteristics were evident among the population studied and increased due to participation in service learning. Consider, in particular, increases in the values scale related to altruistic or humanitarian concerns. The scale includes items such as concern for others, compassion, wanting to help others, and contributing to a cause.

2. Millennials are accustomed to diversity and have an inclusive approach to relationships (Zemke et al., 2000). This item related to the instrument's understanding scale, on which study participants showed an increase, although not statistically significant. Understanding involves learning about a cause, gaining new perspectives, learning through hands-on experience, learning how to deal with a variety of people, and making new friends. All of these are relevant to millennial students.

3. Millennials are oriented toward collective action, teamwork, and collaborative projects (Brack & Kelly, 2012; Myers, 2010). The findings of this study indicated increases on the social scale, which includes items such as associating with other volunteers who are interested in community ser-

vice and value community service, and being encouraged by close associates to volunteer. Thus, once again, the findings show evidence of millennial generation characteristics.

4.   Millennial students and workers are high-achieving, have a strong desire for ongoing personal and professional development, and tend to be invested in making a sustainable impact on society and in the communities in which they live and work (Strauss & Howe, 1997). Findings indicate that study participants had motivations related to career development (e.g., generating employment opportunities, building a resume, and creating opportunities for career exploration) as well as making an impact (e.g., genuine concern for those in the community and desire to help others).

This analysis indicates a close connection between the characteristics of millennial students and the outcomes of service learning. In particular, the study demonstrates that service learning is not only particularly relevant for millennials, but strengthens generational characteristics, which are connected to service-learning outcomes. This is a significant and new contribution to the service-learning literature.

Conclusion

This quantitative study examined the motivations of students in service-learning courses across six departments in three colleges/schools, to determine if service-learning participation increased specific attitudes, areas of learning, and behaviors, as well as if the experience increased students' intentions for course and program completion. Additionally, the study considered the possible impact of millennial generation characteristics on motivations for participating in service learning. Findings indicate a statistically significant increase in motivations for service learning from the beginning to the end of the semester in three specific outcome categories (e.g., protective, social, and enhancement) as well as increases in three additional categories (e.g., values, careers, and understanding). Individual items in the latter three categories did not increase by statistically significant amounts.

Generating employment opportunities, expressing genuine concern for those in the community, creating opportunities for career exploration, increasing one's personal comfort with diversity, feeling needed, building a resume, and making a difference were the strongest motivators and had the most impact on students' perceptions that they would persist to graduation. Program completion was also connected to an additional variable (e.g., the opportunity to help others without pay). The findings were also viewed through the lens of millennial generation characteristics. The result of this analysis was that motivations for service learning reflect the characteristics

of millennial students and that these characteristics are strengthened by participating in service learning.

This study contributes to existing research by demonstrating new connections between specific motivation variables for service-learning participation and course and program completion, as well as the relationship of millennial generation characteristics and service-learning outcomes. Future research might involve examining the impact of demographic variables as well as the impact of multiple service-learning experiences on the outcomes identified. Additionally, study participants might be tracked to determine if, indeed, their intentions to complete come to fruition.

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Appendix A

Volunteerism and Civic Attitudes Student Pre/Post-Test

Volunteerism Attitudes

Student Directions: You are about to participate in a service-learning class and will invest time in "volunteering" your skills toward helping a community organization or business. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate how important or accurate each of the following possible reasons for volunteering is for you. Please place the number corresponding to how important/accurate each statement is on the line preceding the statement.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

1 = Not at all important/accurate for you and
7 = Extremely important/accurate for you.

1. _____Volunteering can help me get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work.
2. _____My friends volunteer.
3. _____I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.
4. _____People I'm close to want me to volunteer.
5. _____Volunteering makes me feel important.
6. _____People I know share an interest in community service.
7. _____No matter how bad I've been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it.
8. _____I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.
9. _____By volunteering, I feel less lonely.
10. _____I can make new contacts that might help my business or career.
11. _____Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others.
12. _____I can learn more about the cause for which I am working.
13. _____Volunteering increases my self-esteem.
14. _____Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things.
15. _____Volunteering allows me to explore different career options.
16. _____I feel compassion toward people in need.
17. _____Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.
18. _____Volunteering lets me learn through direct "hands-on" experience.
19. _____I feel it is important to help others.
20. _____Volunteering helps me work through my own problems.
21. _____Volunteering will help me succeed in my chosen profession.
22. _____I can do something for a cause that is important to me.
23. _____Volunteering is an important activity to help the people I know the best.
24. _____Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles.
25. _____I can learn how to deal with a variety of people.
26. _____Volunteering makes me feel needed.
27. _____Volunteering makes me feel better about myself.
28. _____Volunteering experience will look good on my resume.
29. _____Volunteering is a way to make new friends.
30. _____I can explore my own strengths.

Civic Attitudes

Please use the following 5-point scale to answer the following statements, placing the number corresponding to your level of agreement/disagreement on the line preceding the statement.

1   Strongly Disagree
2   Disagree somewhat
3   Neither agree nor disagree
4   Agree somewhat
5   Strongly agree

To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1.   _____Adults should give some time for the good of their community or country.
2.   _____People, regardless of whether they have been successful or not, ought to help others.
3.   _____Individuals have a responsibility to help solve our social problems.
4.   _____I feel that I can make a difference in the world.
5.   _____It is important to help others even if you don't get paid for it.

Course and Program Completion

1.   How likely are you to complete your degree at UVU? (1-5 Likert-scale)
2.   How many total years do you expect to take to finish your degree at UVU? (open-ended text entry)
3.   How did your experience in this service and engaged learning class impact your likelihood to successfully complete the class? (1-4 Likert-scale)
4.   How did your experience in this service and engaged learning class impact your overall likelihood to successfully complete your degree at UVU? (1-4 Likert-scale)