

Examining the Process of Civic Learning Through A Systematic Service-Learning Experience  
in Teacher Education

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## Examining the Process of Civic Learning Through A Systematic Service-Learning Experience in Teacher Education

### **Abstract (100-150 words)**

This paper presents findings from a mixed method investigation of how service-learning infused into a secondary education course played a role in helping preservice teachers connect their awareness of academic, personal, professional, college, and civic learning skills over a three-year study. The study uses two types of analysis – qualitative analysis over three iterations of a fall semester course (2010, 2011 and 2012) based on reflective writings after the community experience. In addition, a quantitative analysis was paired with the qualitative data over a two-year period (2011, 2012) to further categorize and explicate student learning and broader impact. Results from the three-year study frame an academic service learning experience that is infused into a course in a systematic way. Examining the process of civic learning through quantitative and qualitative outcomes explores and defines how to facilitate the process of a high quality service-learning pedagogy for preservice teachers.

### **Background of the Study**

The role of higher education in building student capacity includes many facets such as academic skills, discipline specialization, and career and work-force preparation (Conway, Amel, & Gerwein, 2009; Cress et al., 2010). An often over-looked facet but one that is gaining recognition is the role of higher education in setting the foundation for fostering active, informed and responsible students who are knowledgeable, skilled and motivated to engage in their community (Furco 2010; Hartley et al. 2010; and Barber 2012). Also, there is a realization that this disposition needs to be fostered not only during their higher education experience but beyond their academic studies (Raphael et al. 2009). This broad conceptualization of student involvement and engagement is commonly referred to as community service-learning or in an abbreviated form, CSL (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012). Advancing the practice and scholarship of service-learning among students in higher education requires an increased need for higher education faculty to develop pedagogical strategies and data points that capture the multiple voices and perspectives of students in their courses and programs (Lichtenstein et al. 2011). Then too, researchers (Flanagan and Levine, 2010; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001) have found that there is a critical time frame to do this, principally, in the first and second year at university, a time when students are still exploring their careers and future goals. The reciprocal feature of having opportunities for service-learning embedded in a university is that it provides a “mature educational reform” and has important implications for the first-year experiences of undergraduates (Gardner, 2002). Researchers such as Bringle, Hatcher, and Muthiah (2010) found that this is an ideal time to study the effectiveness of what qualities in a course are essential to include in a service-learning experience.

While community service is important throughout the many majors and minors in higher education, it has a natural connection to helping fields such as education. For one reason, coursework brings preservice teachers closer to those in the community or in the schools in a natural setting – like the classroom or in tutoring arrangements. Also, the curriculum for learning and teaching is designed to help preservice teachers relate service-learning to

educational theory (Slavkin, 2000). Researchers (e.g., Coffey, 2010; Hart, 2006) have found that learning through service is beneficial to develop a university's student understanding of how learning takes place – that is, that theory becomes visible as one learns about learning. Then too, service-learning fosters a personal sense of ownership for one who is engaged in the process; moreover, service-learning promotes a likelihood that the student will continue to be involved in service-learning in the future (Anderson, 1998; Slavkin, 2000).

Service-learning that serves as “stand-alone” courses have a distinctly different set of variables as compared to those courses with a service-learning component (Conway, Amel, & Gerwein, 2009). Then, too, coding what is an outcome behavior, such as professional skills, is difficult to distinguish in a course with an embedded community service component. Questions such as “*Were professional skills enhanced by activities in the course or in the service-learning experience?*” are also points of interest in weaving service-learning in a course (Lichtenstein, Thorne, Cutforth, & Tombari, 2011). The ultimate question is what components of the course help make powerful differences in building student capacity? Additionally, we need a better understanding on the *process of civic learning*, regarding *how do students integrate concepts and techniques with their own knowledge and experiences to impact their level of civic engagement* (Barber, 2012). These questions help frame the investigation of what actually takes place in a higher education classroom, but methodology is complicated by complexities of capturing these data in order to make claims on the outcomes of a service-learning project (Lichtenstein et al., 2011; Barber, 2012). Refining pedagogy through informed research is an evolving process and may appear “fuzzy at times” however, this iterative process enriches course design and instruction as well adds to the research literature.

### **Purpose of the Paper**

This paper includes a two-foci approach: pedagogy linked to data. The purpose of the paper is to share findings from a systematic course that uses service-learning pedagogy that yields multiple data points and helps how service-learning infused into a secondary education course played a role in helping preservice teachers raise their awareness of their academic, personal, professional, college, and service learning skills. This course has been delivered in the College of Education for the past four years. In the first year, the course was mirrored after the previous instructor and preservice teachers completed their 20 hours of community service as a course requirement but lacked structure to consider learning outcomes. In the next two years, the course was more organized and the researchers used a qualitative design based on previous studies compiled from the literature (Bringle, Phillips, & Hudson, 2004; Mabry 1998; Moely et al. 2002). The focus was on capturing aspects of CSL frameworks and intentional curriculum integration of CSL. Data were gleaned by using student reflective writings in the course to see changes in their perceptions of CSL during their course and their community experience. The preservice education course was designed around the essential components of a service-learning project, one that students selected based on choice, student learning objectives, personal fit, and reciprocity in driving community partner missions. Data collected in 2010 and 2011 informed the pedagogy on how best to infuse effective service-learning into the classroom. As course instructors were refining their practice, new research was informing service-learning impact assessment and practice. In 2012 course instructors further refined the quantitative measures based on the work of Lichtenstein and his colleagues (2011). The course had several data points built into the fifteen weeks and were designed to measure impact in five core themes across the service-learning dimension related to student capacity: 1) professional development skills 2) civic engagement, 3) college experience, 4) academic skills, and 5) personal growth. The overall question that guided this course was to consider to what degree do elements of community service-learning that are infused into a preservice teacher education course make a difference in

building student capacity. The second component of the study was to examine if students in the treatment section of the course in year three (2012) had different outcomes in their reflections (qualitative measures) as well as pre/post survey assessments (quantitative measures) about their experiences around the five themes of CSL as compared to students in a control section who did not take part in the infused curriculum component of the course.

### **Review of Literature**

The value of service-learning needs to be made more visible through measurable outcomes. Innumerable researchers (e.g., Furco, 1996; Lee, 1997; Meyers, 1999) have noted that importance of students' using their classroom experiences and community experiences to link theory to practice. The challenge is how to do this in a systematic way to identify what is working, make adjustments in the classroom and community, and continue to stay linked to new ideas, technologies, and methodologies. This is especially imperative in fields that support teacher preparation. It is recognized that field experiences before the formal experiences of internship and first year teaching serve an invaluable experience for preservice teachers. It is a time for higher education students, whether they continue in the education program or not, to be faced decision-making authority regarding the service they provide, including the ability to choose the curriculum they teach and the methods they use (Erickson & Anderson, 1997). In this way, service-learning placements offer preservice teachers stimulating, responsible positions (Eyler & Giles, 1999). As a result, the potential for personal learning and professional growth is expanded through the connection of academic study and a program of service that allows them to be directly responsible for providing a needed service (Spencer, Cox-Peterson, & Crawford, 2005).

Secondly, preservice teachers typically have different types of experiences on their journey to become a teacher. Service-learning as it is applied in teacher education programs varies widely, but as noted it is most generally designed to complement and extend field-based experiences already present in such programs. The service-learning within this study was designed to support both service and learning – and thus the hyphen that links service with learning helps show that there is a balance in the emphasis (Sigmon, 1996 as cited in Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 5). The power of CSL is that when it is designed in a systematic manner with research and reflection, it becomes part of the essential life experiences that prepare preservice teachers for their own classroom of the future. From this perspective the purpose of engaging students in service-learning activities is similar to that of various field experience or practicum, student teaching, and internship. However, service-learning assignments are ones in which students provide a community service outside the formal classroom (e.g., after school programs, community service organizations), and as such they address a real need for the students with whom they are working (Wade, 1997).

Third, the design of the study needs to be naturally integrated into the content of the course if the CSL is going to go beyond the course. The issue of sustainability is one that confounds those who recognize the importance of CSL beyond high school and college graduation. It is essential to take the time in the structuring of the assignments for the course to ensue that some of the tools to increase civic engagement within a course are a natural and intrinsic part of the course. These include strategies such as reflective, specific engagement strategies, and time to articulate and share personal service-learning objectives. Then too, it is important for students to look within themselves and consider their own personal skills and knowledge, their personal family background on service-learning, and their choices in terms of preference for a CSL.

Studies related to service-learning state that in order to identify the outcomes of integrating

service-learning into coursework there must be opportunity for student reflection (Burns; 1998; Erickson & Anderson, 1997; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gallego, 2001; Gray, Ondaatje, & Fricker, et al., 1999; Rhoads, 1997), be it through writing or discussion, to facilitate the connection between service and learning. It is generally believed that opportunity for reflective thought allows students to step back and be thoughtful about their experiences and monitor their own thinking processes. However, this type of reflective process is not routinely built into most community service work; therefore, reflection activities that tie theory and practice must be developed by faculty and embedded in the service-learning assignment (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The use of such activities can push students toward a more critical evaluation of their experiences. The outcome of the study, that is, the systematic examination of students paired with critical reflections (as well as other program data) can yield greater insight into student learning, and help to develop guidelines for the successful use of service-learning in teacher education courses.

### **Pedagogy**

The Office of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement at the university where this study took place supports professors in their service-learning initiatives, helping to set up community service contacts and provide resources to help students raise their-learning awareness of the importance of being involved in service-learning projects. The course, Introduction to Secondary Education, is offered every semester for students exploring their career path and typically sophomores enroll in the course. It is a popular course in the fall and generally 40 students complete the 3-credits successfully. The course instructor works closely with the Office of Service-Learning in studying the impact of the course on the students in the course, largely preservice teachers. With this team approach, the course has made a difference in helping preservice teachers learn about teaching and learning hand-in-hand with developing a disposition for service-learning that leads to civic engagement.

Preservice teachers have a choice of their community experience and these are indeed diverse – Green environment settings like Urban Roots; social agencies like the Boys and Girls Club; or community-school links like the Holland Project. In total, there are 16 settings that are available for students to choose. The experience involves working with students and developing a project that supports the community agency. Preservice teachers develop a deeper understanding of their involvement through readings and reflective writings, engagement in a World Café exercise centered on the Civic Reflection program, and guest speakers. The culminating activity is a class sharing of their experience captured in videos and posted on You-Tube, available to have their agency use on their website. Data are collected on an on-going basis with preservice students – a pre and post survey of attitudes on service-learning and reflective writings – and with their partners. In addition, students' reflections and course assignments provide rich opportunities for qualitative data analysis.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

A mixed methods approach included multiple data sets over three fall semesters (2010, 2011, and 2012) with students enrolled in a higher education introductory secondary education course that incorporated 2 to 3 hours of community service-learning per week (totaling 20 hours per semester) over three fall semesters. Qualitative data were gathered in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and analyzed through a content analysis program using MAXQDA, a color-coding output to indicate changes in student profiles based on categories over time. MAXQDA (2011) relies on

traditional methods of analysis such as those used in grounded theory, a process used in this study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Grounded theory was selected as a method as it is an ideal manner from which to inductively develop theory from the ground up through a systematic process, such as applied in this course design.

Quantitative data were collected in 2011 and 2012. The data from the qualitative analysis in 2011 and 2012 were paired with quantitative assessments in 2011 and 2012 to examine more robust findings regarding student civic learning and academic skills. Additionally, as a systematic approach to examining and exploring the civic learning that occurs during a community service-learning experience, in the third year (2012) the researchers incorporated a quasi-experimental design with a control group and a treatment group. The control group included students enrolled in the same introductory secondary education course, but a different section. Both the control and treatment group were administered the same pre/post test and students received the same course content, materials, and all students had to complete 2 to 3 hours per week of a community service-learning experience.

Quantitative results in 2012 were gathered from the pre/post test questionnaire, as adapted from Lichtenstein et al. (2011). The pre-test was administered on the first day of class and the post-test was administered on the last day of class. Questions on the survey were used to quantitatively measure growth or change in the five key areas of examination, academic skills, personal growth, college experience, professional development and civic engagement, in addition to demographic data and previous community or service-learning experience. To measure change regarding the five key areas, the questionnaire stem began; *I feel my service-learning experience this semester will (or had, for the post-test)*. Responses categories on the survey were collected via a four-point Likert Scale from Strongly Disagree “1” to Strongly Agree “4”, creating a forced response by the student.

Cronbach alpha statistics were calculated for all five key areas of examination to indicate reliable measures, ranging from .657 to .820. An Independent Samples T-test was conducted to compare differences between the control and the experimental group in 2012. Specific areas of focus included gains for student mean scores in academic learning, personal growth, college experience, professional skills and civic engagement (Table 2).

### **Data Points**

Construction of the questionnaire in 2011 was used to assess student learning and impact in areas related to student leadership, career development, civic engagement and social justice awareness. These measures were derived from previous measures in the service-learning literature (Mabry 1998, Moely et al. 2002) and revised to fit our research questions. In 2012, the research design was further informed and enhanced based on the work of Lichtenstein et al. (2011); therefore, the survey was further refined to focus on five key themes of dimensions of service-learning that included academic learning, college experience, professional development, personal growth and civic engagement.

The first set of analyses describes the qualitative study that was in place for all three years of the study and helped the researchers look closely at the curriculum integration component of the study and how variables associated with the course and the experience impacted student understanding of self and their impact on the community. The researchers used these qualitative findings to make adjustments for the next year of the study. In the third year, the researchers added a quantitative feature to the study – a pre and post questionnaire that was administered to a control and treatment group of students who were both in a secondary introductory course. The

mixed method design for the study was largely exploratory as its focus was on instrument development and taxonomy development (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The weighting for the design was principally qualitative and the purpose was to connect the data between the pre-post questionnaire and the reflective writings of the students over the course of the semester.

In all three years, the qualitative measures captured student reflections on their changes in their perceptions of CSL at various points during the semester and a final reflective essay that summarized their overall statements on their growth of self during the service-learning experiences. The researchers first identified multiple categories individually and then compared their categories for consistency and discrepancies. The MAXQDA program helped the researchers assess impacts by comparing the analysis through specific colored themes that had emerged in some preliminary text analysis research. After the open coding phase, the two researchers developed a more consistent way to categorize the data – using broad categories and noting differences in terms of positive and negative categories (Appendix A). The second part of the analysis was used to set up axial coding. In this process, the researchers put the data back together by making connections among categories. In this phase, the researchers used the color-coding format of MAXQDA to set up a series of portraits for each of the students in the study (Appendix B). This step helped the researchers see the changes in each student's level of reflection in the reflective writing as the student tried to capture his or her service learning understanding over the span of the course. The final process used was selective coding; this was used to select core categories, helping the researchers find common links to relate the broad categories to match the five themes of the research basis underpinning this study (Appendix C)

Students in both sections completed a pre and posttest adapted from Lichtenstein and his colleagues (2011). In the third year, the quantitative design included a pre and post-test to measure student perception of self growth through a service-learning experience and a follow-up survey to measure persistence in service-learning or civic engagement activities after the course was completed. This aspect of the study in year three included a control/treatment group of students (n=65) who took the same course but had different course instructors and a different focus on service-learning. The experimental group's instructor was one who has integrated CSL throughout the introductory secondary education course while the control group instructor had used CSL as one of the assignments of the course. Students in the treatment group were: 1) instructed about and prepared to engage in service learning—this included aspects of what and why of service-learning, 2) asked to develop their own learning objectives prior to the experience, 3) facilitated through a series of individual and group reflection processes both before, during and after their experience. Quantitative data were statistically analyzed using an independent samples t-tests to compare differences between pre and post-test assessments regarding student capacity across the five themes of the service-learning dimensions (academic learning, college experience, professional development, personal growth and civic engagement). The key difference between the control and treatment group was in the course instruction component related to the community service-learning experience.

## **Results and Discussion**

Qualitative data organized around the five themes provided some interesting findings over the three-year period. Each year's data were helpful in redesigning the course for the following year. Appendix C depict the five themes for the three years showing the percentage of statements in the final reflective essay and how these percentages changed each year. Appendix C also shows

the nature of the responses – positive outcome statements and negative outcome statements and how these percentages also change as adjustments were made in the course:

## Qualitative Results

**Academic Skills.** This was the highest percentage in all three years of the study demonstrating that preservice teachers reported that they learned about learning through their community service experience. The sub-categories of teaching insight, lead teacher connection, classroom management and understanding the role of the teacher were consistently identified in all three years. Within this category was a subcategory set of negative statements – students did not have buy-in to learning and student misbehaved. These two categories remained low over all three years (3-5%).

**Personal Growth.** This theme was the second highest mentioned category over the three-year period ranging from 20% to 27%). Students cited areas such as connecting with students, a rewarding experience, and a positive experience in their community service as validation of this theme. This was also a category that yielded a range of negative statements about challenges related to the community service experience. It was an area that was taken into consideration as part of the course analysis each year. In the first year, preservice teachers reported a total of 13% negative comments about their community experience, one that was largely structured in district classrooms. In year two, preservice teachers also reported 13% negative comments – with similar themes: false expectations (did not expect this in my experience), fear (afraid to go back to the experience), discouraged (students did not want to learn), and false hope (students had no hope of learning). The continued negative statements caused the researchers to add another aspect to the community service-learning in the third year – choice. This revision was based on research findings by Clerkin, Paynter, & Taylor (2009) who found that choice was associated with student motivation. In the third year of the course, the researchers were able to note that by the midpoint of the community service experience, preservice teachers were reporting more instances of personal growth and academic skills awareness. The negative comments in year three decreased to 5%.

**College Learning.** This area was largely unchanged during the three years. Typically preservice teachers reported that gained more insights on working with others (student collaboration) and higher order thinking.

**Professional Skills.** This area was also largely unchanged during the three years of the study. Typically preservice teachers talked about understanding student expectations as part of learning how to become more professional.

**Civic Engagement.** This area has grown steadily over the three-year study, moving from 8% to 12% by year three. While this is not significant, it supports the curriculum infusion component of the course.

**Direction for the Future with the Qualitative Component of the Study.** The course infusion program paired with systematic qualitative data has helped shape the future direction of the course. For the next iteration of the course, the preservice teachers will have these changes in the course as part of the structure of their learning:

1. A choice in their service-learning setting
2. An opportunity to meet the potential partners in the second week of the course
3. A reflective goal setting statement by the third week of the course
4. Two scholarly research critiques on service learning



5. Two group activities (team-based) using World Café and Civic Reflection
6. A revised essay as their final writing assignment that addresses each of the five themes specifically.

## Quantitative Results

In 2011, much of the results assessed on the student experiences, specifically, how variables associated with the course and the experience impacted student understanding of self and their impact on the community. A factor analysis (Varimax Rotation)—explained 70% of the variance regarding reasons a student selected their community partner. Reasons for partner selection were loaded into three categories 1) student passion and interest (50% of variance explained), 2) Sense of civic duty/attitude (12% of variance), and 3) Opportunity to gain new skills (9% of variance).

Fifty-nine (59%) percent of a student's reason for selecting a community partner is determined by a student's passion for an issue and the ability to have an influence on the issue. A chi-square analysis indicates a significant correlation ( $p < .001$ ) between rating the quality of the engagement experience and the student's ability to self-select the partner based on their individual passion and direct influence ( $X^2 = 65.5$ ,  $df = 16$ ). Eighty percent (80%) percent of the undergraduate students who were involved in a community engagement experience indicated they plan to be active members of the community and hence scored higher on indicators of civic responsibility (Table 1).

Quantitative results in 2012 were gathered from the pre/post test questionnaire, as adapted from Lichtenstein et al. (2011). The pre-test was administered on the first day of class and the post-test was administered on the last day of class. Questions on the survey were used to quantitatively measure growth or change in the five key areas of examination, academic skills, personal growth, college experience, professional development and civic engagement, in addition to demographic data and previous community or service-learning experience. To measure change regarding the five key areas, the questionnaire stem began; *I feel my service-learning experience this semester will (or had, for the post-test)*. Responses categories on the survey were collected via a four-point Likert Scale from Strongly Disagree "1" to Strongly Agree "4", creating a forced response by the student.

Cronbach alpha statistics were calculated for all five key areas of examination to indicate reliable measures, ranging from .657 to .820. An Independent Samples T-test was conducted to compare differences between the control and the experimental group in 2012, Specific areas of focus included mean gains in academic learning, personal growth, college experience, professional skills and civic engagement (Table 2). The following research themes were assessed as follows:

**Academic Skills.** Five questions were asked on the pre/post to determine a students increase in academic skills; based on the stem: *I feel my service-learning experience this semester:* a) *Improved my academic writing skills*, b) *Enhanced my understanding of academic content*, c) *Helped connect classroom ideas with real-world experience*, and d) *Helped me remember more in the classroom* e) *Helped me to better understand the course lectures and reading*. Indicators related to college experience were folded into the rubric for Academic learning to provide a more robust measure of overall academic and college learning. An Independent Samples T-Test comparing differences between the pre and post-tests from control and treatment group indicated no significant difference regarding the composite measure for academic skills, nor on any of the individual questions (Table 2).

**Personal Growth.** Four questions were asked on the pre/post to determine a sense of personal growth during the community service-learning experience. Based on the stem, *I feel my service-learning experience this semester:* a) *Helped me to become aware of my personal strengths and weaknesses*, b) *Help me to better understand and find my passion*, c) *Increase my awareness of the needs and problems facing the community in which I live*, and e) *Increase my understanding of people whose race, ethnicity or culture is different from my own*. An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare changes in personal growth indicators between the control and treatment group. There was a significant difference in the composite scores for student's responses in the treatment group for personal growth ( $M=17.65$ ,  $SD=2.22$ ), versus the control group ( $M=16.0$ ,  $SD=2.8$ ), ( $t=2.532$ ,  $p=0.14$ ).

**Professional Skills.** Five questions were asked on the pre/post to examine how the experience and course structure may impact the student's professional skills. Based on the same stem, questions were asked, a) *Enhanced my ability to communicate with others in a real-world setting* and b) *Helped me to feel better prepared for my future career*, c) *Helped me to develop my problem solving skills*, d) *Build my confidence that I can accomplish goals*, e) *Clarify my major and future path*. No significant difference was found between individual items (Table 2).

**Civic Engagement** Six questions were asked on the pre/post to determine an increase in civic learning or a change in the student's attitude, disposition or skills related to civic learning and engagement. In addition to the questionnaire stem, students were asked a) *I plan to be an active member of community*, b) *I am committed to making a positive difference*, and c) *I plan to vote this election year*. Responses related to the stem, *I feel my service-learning experience this semester will:* d) *Helped me to see how I can contribute to the community*, e) *Helped me to realize the importance of being actively involved in the community*. A Cronbach alpha statistic indicated a strong reliability composite measure (.820). An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare changes in civic engagement indicators between the control and treatment group. There was a significant difference in the composite scores for student's responses in the treatment group for civic engagement ( $M=18.18$ ,  $SD=1.74$ ), versus the control group ( $M=16.5$ ,  $SD=3.0$ ), ( $t=2.64$ ,  $p=0.10$ ).

Both quantitative and qualitative results empirically support the strongest and most significant gain in pre-post assessments regarding student capacity is civic dispositions and attitudes for engagement. Additionally a total sum score was calculated in 2012 for each student in both the control and treatment group. The total sum score reflects a total score for service-learning and civic engagement for each student. An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare changes in overall service-learning impact between the control and treatment group. There was a significant difference between the treatment group and the control group for their overall pedagogical impact related to service-learning ( $M=69.14$ ,  $SD=8.6$ ), versus the control group ( $M=63.43$ ,  $SD=11.2$ ), ( $t=2.051$ ,  $p=0.46$ ) (Table 2).

### **Direction for the Future with the Quantitative Component of the Study**

1. A personal learning outcome articulated and written by the student for 2 of the 5 categories of assessment.
2. Refine academic learning indicators to include a broad yet reliable scale. Currently a scale for measuring academic learning is missing from the research as this component is typically measured through course grades and it is considered too diverse to be applied as a research scale—however research scales ought to be created for a reliable measure on academic learning in conjunction with other course factors.

3. Allow the practice to inform the research, and research to inform the practice to maximize student impact and capacity.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The bottom line for any course is, to what degree did the preservice teachers leave this experience with powerful “take-ways?” Did change happen based on the course instructor and his or her pedagogical techniques? Did the change happen based on the service-learning project? Did individual change not happen – and what external variables may have prevented this change? In this study, the researchers used multiple tools to examine the larger phenomena involved in the process of civic learning and caught a glimpse of the impact service learning plays in overall teacher education. Despite the narrow visions that to emerge from this study, there is a glimpse of powerful light – a tentative research design that can continue to be “fleshed out” in future iterations of courses that include service learning as part of the inherent curriculum. Together, as teacher educators, it is important to continue to share multiple ways of capturing and celebrating change.

The study helps set up a structure to: 1) review of key design elements in structuring a meaningful engagement experience; 2) provide examples of how to assess and measure quantitative and qualitative indicators of engagement which can be applied across a variety of undergraduate and graduate classes; and 3) empirically show the "classroom to community connection" with qualitative and quantitative results on a variety of measures assessed. One of the prevailing assumptions behind the pedagogy of service-learning is that active participation of students with community organizations is a way to cultivate and nurture good citizenship through applied civic learning. As more and more institutions of higher learning are moving toward service learning projects, it is important to look at a critical question that continues to remain elusive: *“Does service learning make a civic difference in the overall development of our students in higher education?”* This study does more than this: It helps create a focus on a group of student, that is, teachers of the future who will have opportunities to set up meaningful service learning projects and ask themselves as action researchers: *“Does service learning make a difference in the overall development of my students in secondary settings?”*

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Table 1. Student Percent Response for 2011 on Civic Responsibility Indicators (N=54).

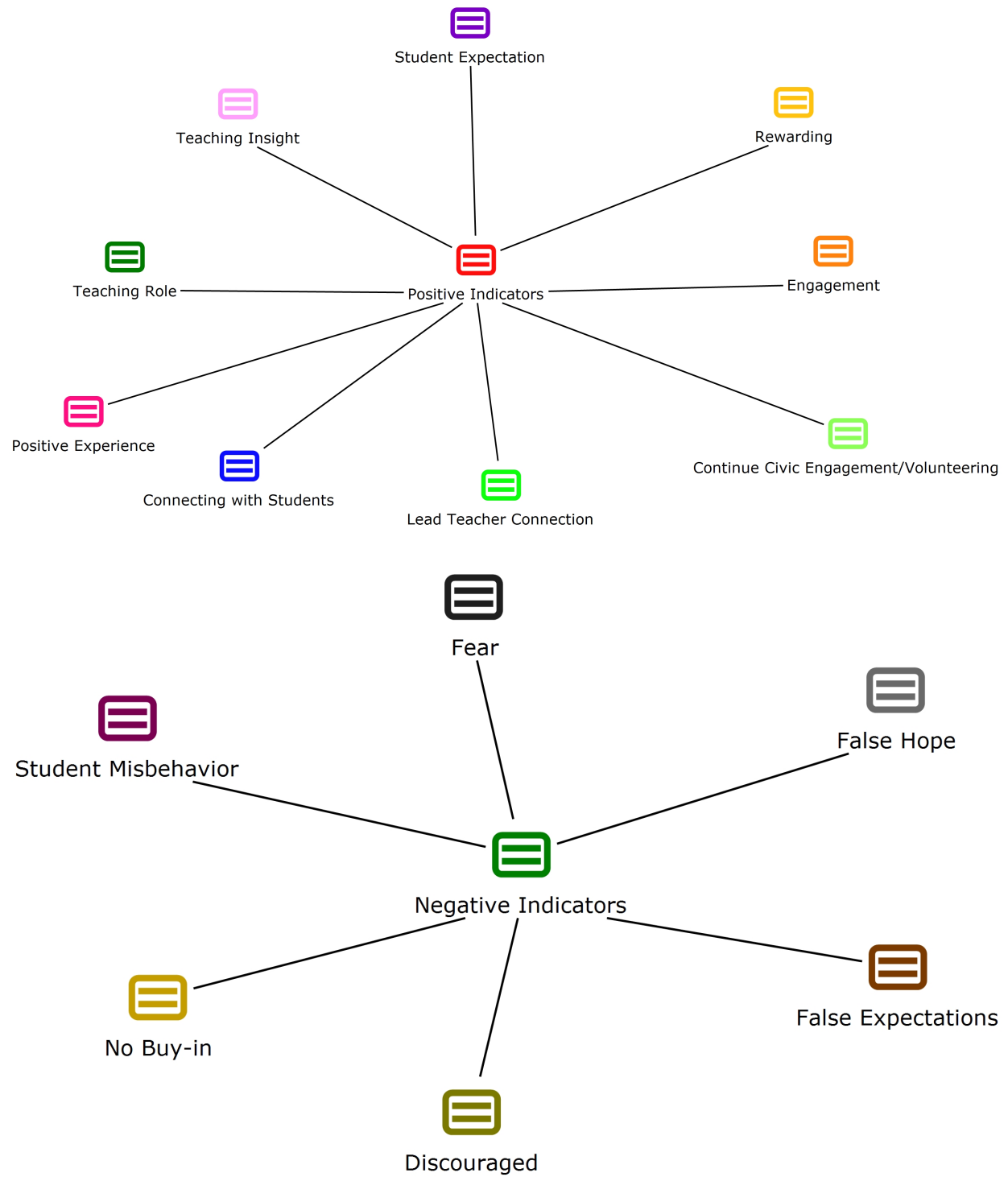
<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
I plan to do volunteer work after the semester	3.7	14.8	79.6
I plan to become involved in my community	5.6	24.1	80.4
I hope to become an active member of my community	11.2	18.5	60.4
I feel committed to making a positive difference	3.7	14.8	81.5

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for 2012 Control and Treatment Group Across Service-Learning Dimensions.

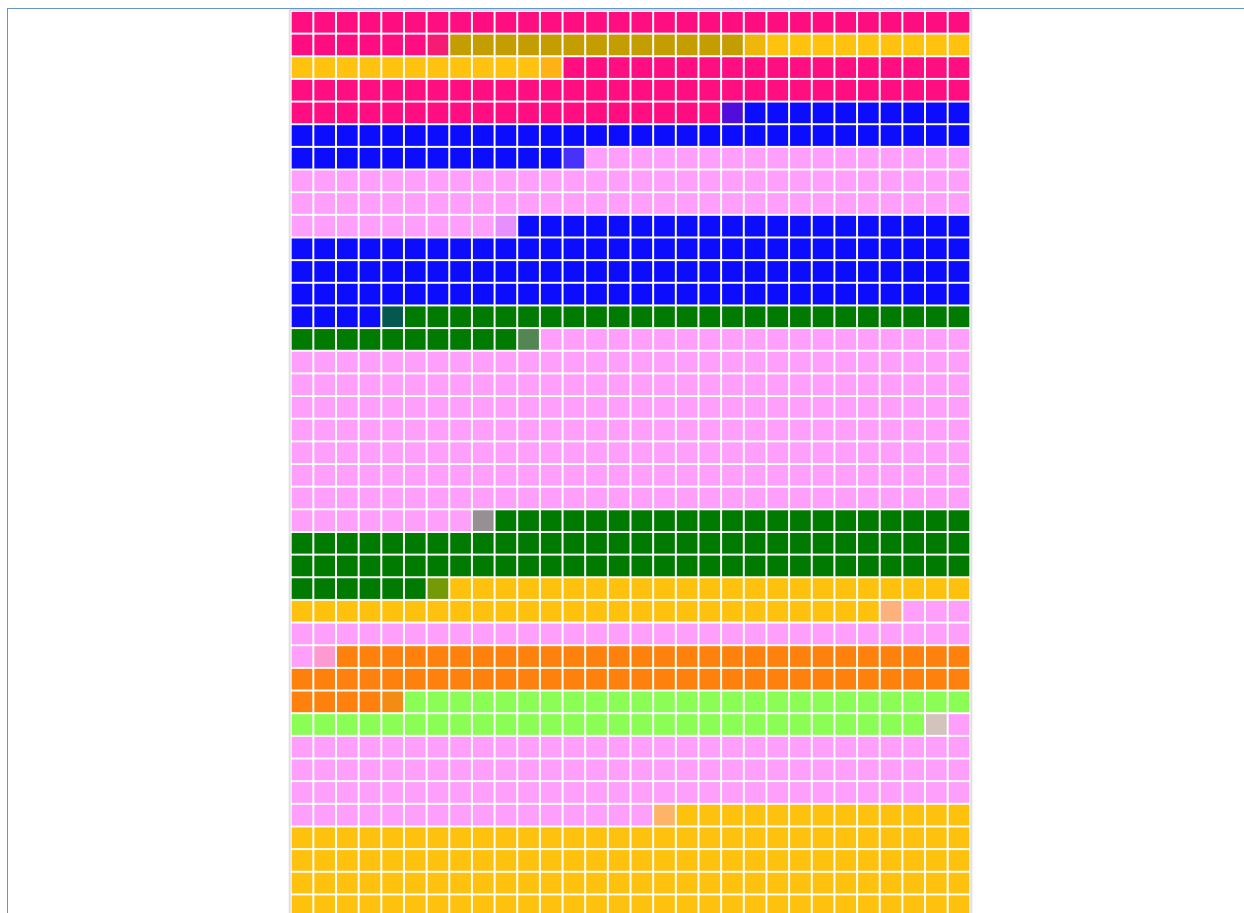
	<b>Control Group (N=31)</b>		<b>Treatment Group (N =33)</b>		<b>df</b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>		
Civic Engagement	16.5	3.0	18.18	1.74	59	0.10*
Personal Growth	16.0	2.8	17.6	2.2	57	0.14*
Academic Learning	14.0	3.3	15.6	3.10	56	0.65
Professional Development	16.5	2.9	17.5	2.7	58	.216
Total Service Learning Scores	63.4	11.2	69.1	8.6	49	0.46*



## Appendix A



## Appendix B



## Appendix C

