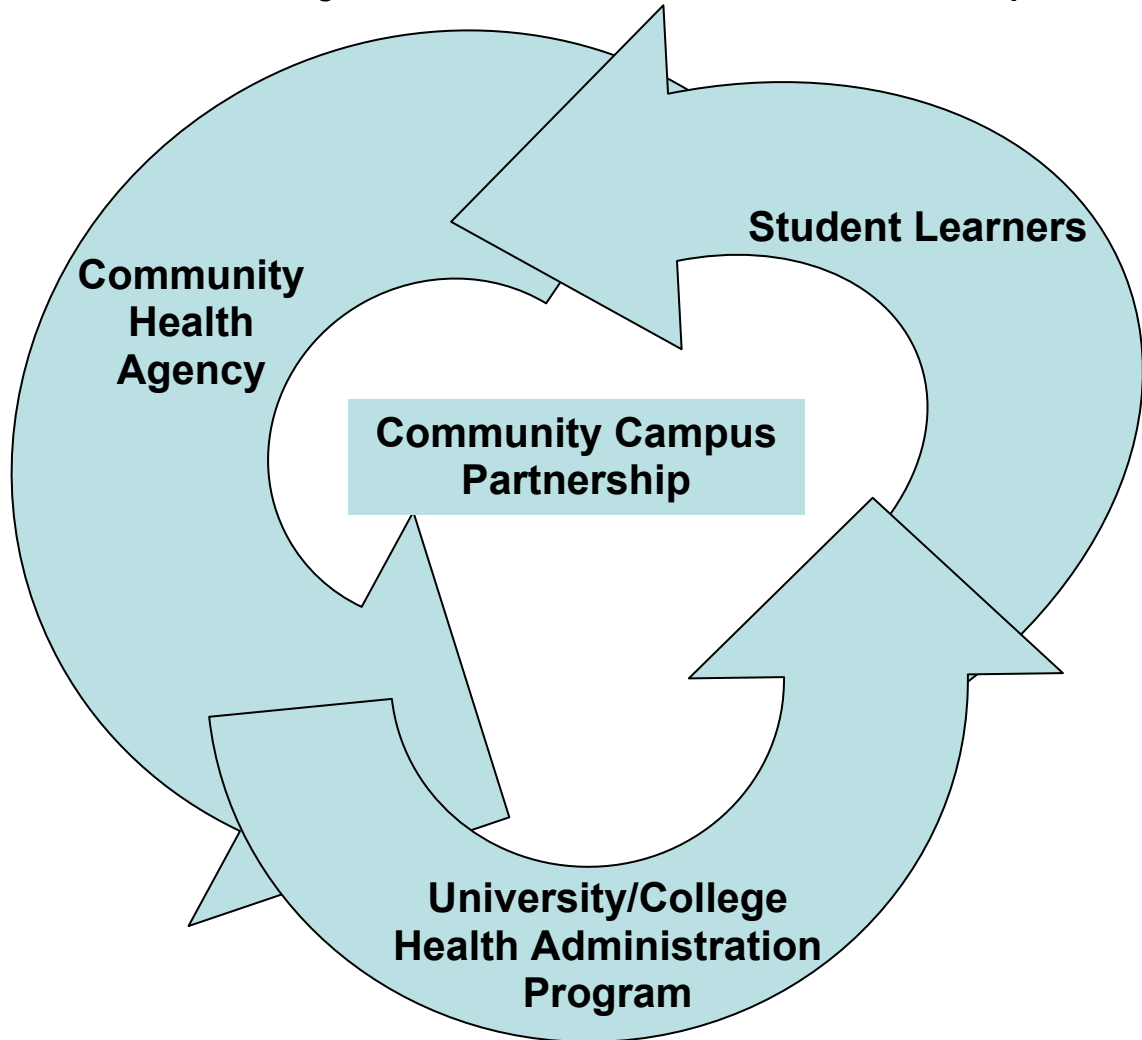


Community-Campus Health Partners in Action ©

A Service-Learning GuideBook for Health Administration Faculty



**Anne M. Hewitt, Ph.D., CHES
CCPH Fellow, Seton Hall University
2003**

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About This GuideBook

The purpose of this GuideBook is to provide a faculty-friendly framework for incorporating successful service-learning experiences into a health administration curriculum. The GuideBook contains templates, surveys, guidelines and protocols that will enable health administration faculty and program directors to integrate service-learning into their courses.

A primary emphasis is placed on not only providing students with opportunities to establish reciprocal learning relationships with community health organizations and agencies, but to also encourage and facilitate communication and trust between the campus based program and the community at large. The GuideBook logo depicts the interlocking relationships necessary for a successful service-learning partnership.

The goals of the GuideBook are to:

- (1) Provide an overview of service-learning and its applicability to graduate programs in health administration
- (2) Identify the step-by-step actions and activities needed to integrate a service-learning component into the curriculum
- (3) Share sample templates, letters, checklists, guidelines and other necessary protocols and tools
- (4) Demonstrate the success of an integrated service-learning health administration course by including a recent case example

This GuideBook provides a step-by-step approach to implementing a service-learning experience into the health administration curriculum. A variety of suggestions and alternatives are presented so that faculty sponsors may select the options most appropriate for their program, students and community needs. The Table of Contents is available to locate any section of the GuideBook that may be particularly relevant.

The pedagogical model integrated into the GuideBook format is based on a traditional service-learning orientation. However, several adaptations have been suggested to make the learning experience more relevant for a management discipline as compared to previous GuideBooks that highlight a health professions approach with a clinical component or rotation.

Overview of the Guidebook

Part 1 “Understanding the Foundations of Service-Learning” provides the reader with a succinct overview of service-learning, a discussion of the advantages and a list of the course components necessary for a successful service-learning experience.

Part 2 “Identifying the Community Partners for Collaboration” focuses on developing a database of qualified and appropriate community partners and includes sample templates.

Part 3 “Selecting Appropriate HA Courses and Faculty” shows how to evaluate the current curriculum for appropriate courses, development of sample syllabi and selecting appropriate projects and objectives.

Part 4 “Working with your Community Partner” includes templates and guidelines for implementing a community/campus project. Sample forms include proposal development worksheets and key elements of a partnership agreement.

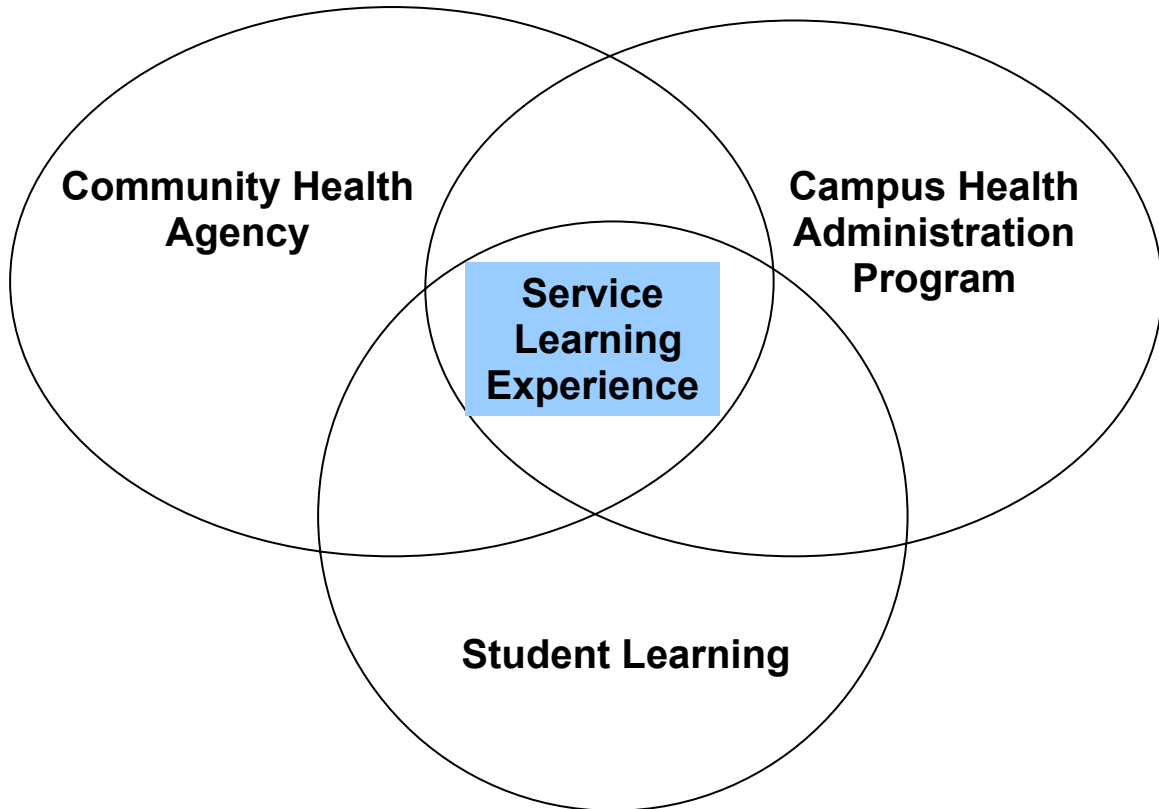
Part 5 “Partnering for Service-learning: The Student Perspective” highlights the necessary protocols, policies and learning strategies to fully engage the graduate student in the service-learning process. Emphasis is placed on explaining expectations, the service-learning orientation and the reflection component.

Part 6 “Focusing on Outcomes and Sustainability” identifies strategies and tools for student and community partner evaluations and provides guidelines for sustaining emerging community relationships. Service-learning evaluation forms for both student and community partner are included.

Part 7 “Lessons Learned” is a case study of a community/campus partnership in action: Seton Hall University MHA students and Orange Model Cities 2010.

Part 8 “References and Resources” is a compilation of specific reference materials that provide further explanation on service-learning for the reader.

Part 1: Understanding the Foundations of Service-Learning



Where to begin?

It is often said that "knowing which question to ask" is just as important as finding the answer to the question. Part 1 of this GuideBook provides the reader with a succinct overview, characteristics and criteria of a service-learning experience. Because the service-learning philosophy will serve as the core of the community campus experience, all partners should be familiar with its definition, language and pedagogy.

What is service-learning?

Service-learning with its community service orientation can simply be described as a teaching methodology that synthesizes the goals of academic learning with a community experience to produce a service-focused, community-campus partnership (Hewitt, 2003b).

The Community-Campus Partnership for Health (CCPH) organization and others define service-learning as "a structured learning experience that combines community service with explicit learning objectives, preparation and reflection. Students engaged in service-learning provide community service responses to community-identified concerns and learn about the context in which service-learning is the connection" (Seifer, Hermanns & Lewis, 2000). For students, that connection is found between the community experience, their academic coursework, and their roles as citizens.

A definition of service-learning derived from the National and Community Service Trust Act more clearly links the idea of service-learning with academic practice:

Service-learning means a method under which students learn and develop through thoughtfully-organized service that: is conducted in and meets the needs of a community and is coordinated with an institution of higher education, and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and **enhances the academic curriculum of the students** enrolled; and includes structured time for students to reflect on the service experience.

What are the advantages of service-Learning?

As the diverse and multiple demands on health administration faculty continue to increase, the opportunity to use community-campus partnerships as a teaching tool offers a creative pedagogical option. Godfrey (1999) lists some of the real advantages of the service-learning experience as a learning strategy for students in management disciplines:

- **Practical experiences** that places students within the communities social context
- Introductions to **new domains and situations** such as nonprofit projects
- Opportunity for **exposure to diverse stakeholders**, including the community perspective and the general public
- Recognition of the **complexity of organizational problems** that are the result of external funding, limited resources and use of volunteers
- Requirement for real-time **tangible project deliverables**
- Exposure to the complex **social, demographic and cultural problems** of each unique community

How does service-learning differ from civil engagement?

The concept of “civic engagement” also has multiple definitions. A well known educational organization, Campus Compact, provides a useful definition: **Civic engagement includes ... “those activities which reinvigorate the public purposes and civic mission of higher education”.** The civic engagement approach places a priority on public leadership, civic professionalism, social responsibility and justice. This approach, while not dissimilar to service-learning, encourages a broad citizenship focus while service-learning emphasizes the role and responsibilities of the community relationship.

Though civic engagement and service-learning may not be familiar terms for AUPHA member programs, Gelmon and Stefl (2002) in a recent AUPHA annual meeting presentation identified three major points of agreement between the two pedagogical ideologies:

- **Academically-based, for credit, integrated into the curriculum**
- **Projects defined through mutual agreement and negotiation between community and faculty**
- **Deliberate reflection as a specific learning strategy.**

What are the criteria for the service-learning experience?

While a complete set of criteria do not yet exist for a service-learning experience appropriate for health administration courses, experts in many different disciplines agree that a successful course should include the following characteristics:

Characteristics of Service-Learning Experiences

Collaboration with Community
Extension of curriculum beyond the classroom
Fulfillment of civil and social responsibilities
Application of student learning to real world situations
Leadership development and reflection
Expression of caring for others
Focus on community needs and assets

The health professions have successfully integrated service-learning into various courses and rotations within their curriculums. But health professions are distinctly different in their focus, clinical orientation, accountability structure and discipline philosophy than students enrolled in a graduate health administration programs. These conceptual issues need to be recognized and remembered in order to make any community-campus relationships effective.

Are there major principles to follow?

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health has developed the following principles to help facilitate successful service-learning collaborations between universities and community organizations (Maurana , Beck , & Newton ,1998, Seifer & Maurana, 2000).

- ✓ Partners have **agreed upon mission, vision, goals and measurable outcomes** for the partnership

- ✓ The relationship between partners is characterized by **mutual trust**, respect, genuineness and commitment
- ✓ The partnership **builds upon identified strengths** and assets, but also addresses areas that need improvement
- ✓ The partnership **balances the power** among partners and enables resources among partners to be shared
- ✓ There is **clear, open and accessible** communication between partners, making it an on-going priority to listen to each need, develop a common language, and validate/clarify the meaning of terms.
- ✓ **Roles, norms, and processes** for the partnership are established with the input and agreement of all partners.
- ✓ There is **feedback** to, among and from all stakeholders in the partnership, with the goal of continuously improving the partnership and its outcomes
- ✓ Partners **share the credit** for the partnership's accomplishments
- ✓ Partnerships take time to develop and **evolve over time!**

Who has been successful?

Service-learning became more visible in the education of health professions when in 1995 the Health Professions Schools in Service to the Nation program (HPSISNP) was begun (Gelmon, Holland, Morris, 1999). The Center for Healthy Communities in Dayton, Ohio has identified key characteristics of service-learning experiences for those involved in the health professions and provided a service-learning protocol for health profession schools (SLPHPS) which involved four basic steps:

SLPHPS Service-Learning Protocol

Step 1: Identify student participants, community partners and recipients of the service

Step 2: Identify primary learning and service objectives and describe how they will be integrated

Step 3: Develop a curriculum

Step 4: Monitor and Evaluate student performance

How can we make service-learning applicable to health administration?

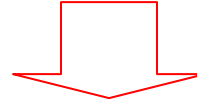
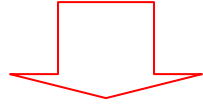
Linking service-learning with a health administration curriculum will require volunteer activity, advanced planning and intentional goals derived by all partners (Sinay, 2000). Most healthcare community organizations appear to be more comfortable working with clinical programs and students in learning relationships that include an onsite clinical coordinator. However, these community health agencies may not have a general understanding of their roles and responsibilities in dealing with health administrative students who do not follow the standard preceptor/student asymmetrical learning relationships.

There are many suggested differences between service-learning, traditional clinical education in the health professions (Seifer, 1998) and a health administration service-learning perspective. The following table examines the relationship between traditional clinical education learning and a proposed HA service-learning perspective (Hewitt, 2003b).

Contrasting Service-learning Perspectives in the Health Professions and Health Administration Programs

**Health Professions
Community-Campus Focus**

**Health Administration
Community-Campus Focus**



Service-Learning Perspective	Clinical Perspective	Administrative/ Managerial Perspective
Community concerns/Broad determinants of health	Community Focus	Priority Population Focus
Principle centered partnerships	Collaborations	Strategic Partnerships
Reciprocal Learning	Preceptor Learning	Mentor Learning
Balanced Relationships	Reciprocal Relationships	Organizational Development/ Consulting Arrangements
Role seen as professionals and citizens in a larger societal context	Historic community involvement through rotations	Recent recognition of community benefit role
Citizenship skills, achieving change	Team Focus	Leadership Focus/ Team Contribution
	Designated recipient of the service	Community serves as recipient of product or service
Reflective practice leads to critical thinking	Accreditation emphasis on skills, rotations and experiences	Accreditation emphasis on competencies

Service-learning opportunities can help health administration programs fulfill their responsibilities in exposing students to important and influential health initiatives. Healthy People 2010 provides a foundation for many community health programs and for health providers and organizations. CCPH recently published "A Toolkit: For Health Professional Faculty, Students and Community Leaders Committed to Achieving the Nation's Health Objectives through Community-Campus Partnerships" that focuses on the nation's health objectives (Connors & Seifer, 2002). In addition, recent recognition on the importance of community benefit for all healthcare agencies and the renewed emphasis on the development of professional competencies for graduate healthcare administration students, including cultural competence and community sensitivity, will continue to place emphasis on the role of community-campus partnerships for learning. Finally, the transforming focus of the health care system from the individual patient to population-based prevention and health management will continue to direct interest and innovation towards the health of the community (Sinay, 2000).

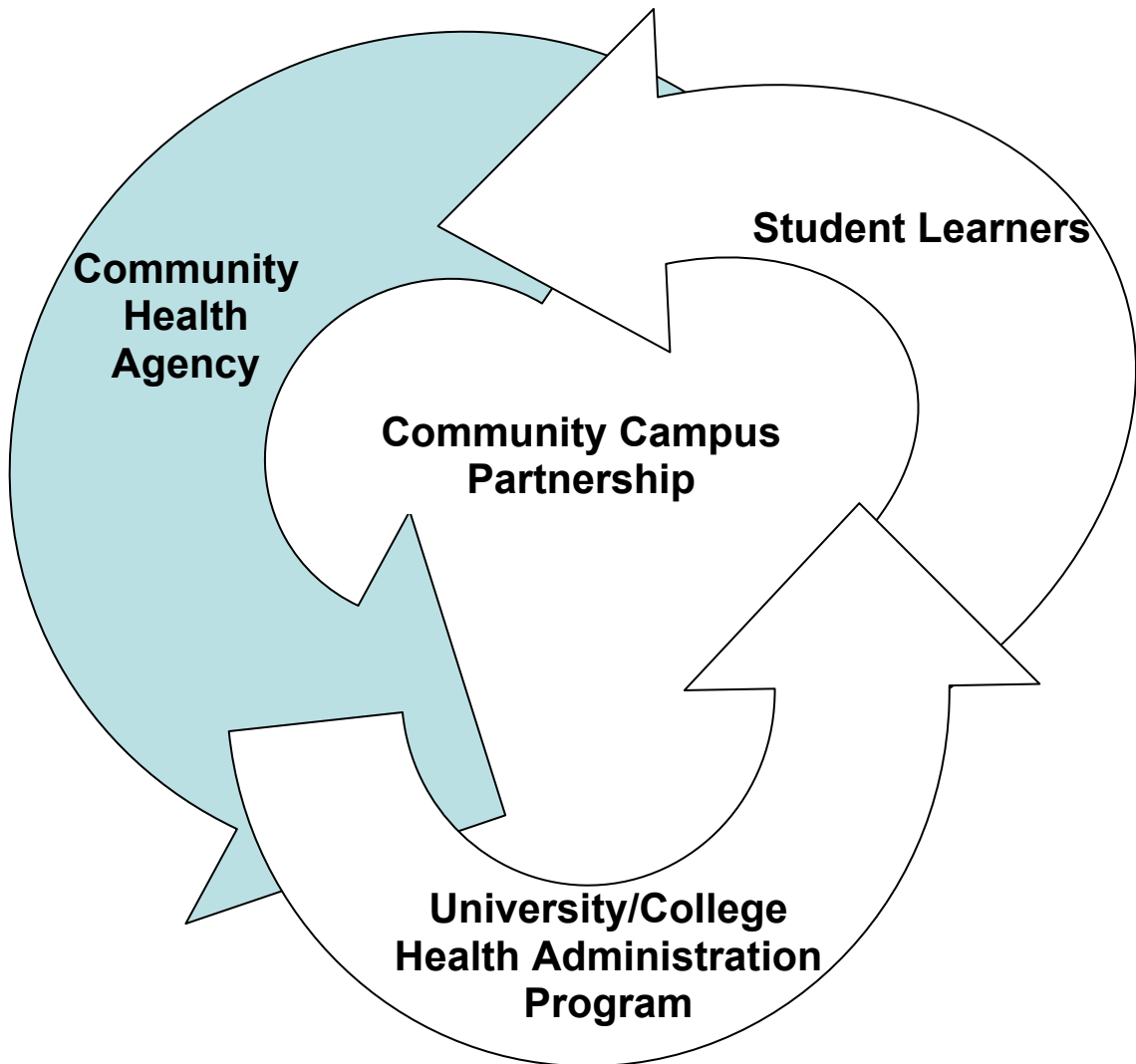
What are some examples of health administration service-learning projects?

Service-learning projects for undergraduate or graduate health administration students can be as diverse as the community health agencies or organizations that serve as their community partners. Forti and White (2001), Sinay (2000) and Hewitt (2003b) provide many current project examples, on the next page.

Health Administration Examples of Service-Learning Projects

Assessment	Planning	Evaluation	Other
Administering access to care survey for the state public health department	Conducting focus groups at local senior citizen center about healthy life styles	Community health center/migrant clinic physician-managed care contract evaluation	Rural/ inner city hospital internship programs
Senior citizen needs assessment	Community advisory board strategic plan	Benchmark comparison of peer county public health programs	Patient satisfaction surveys
Bi-lingual community health needs assessment	Developing a feasibility study for a community health center	Physician satisfaction surveys	Development of a policy for family health program subsidies

Part 2 - Identifying Community Partners for Collaboration



Who is a community partner?

The community health agency partner and its representatives are not only academic partners, but also serve as mentors and project collaborators in the process of reciprocal learning. The community partner provides access to community sites that introduce the graduate students to a learning environment that is culturally diverse, structurally, socio-economically, and strategically different from the university learning experience.

Community participants determine the focus, scope and depth of the student service-learning project, as well as the time frame, type and format of the final outcome, report and presentation!

Service-learning and the community partner

Community health organizations are beginning to collaborate with diverse institutions to better serve their members and stakeholders (Sinay, 2000). Many non-profit community health agencies are familiar with protocols and roles and responsibilities for working with volunteers. They may be less familiar with the concept of service-learning, especially as it relates to graduate students and their academic learning experiences. The same definitions and criteria of service-learning experiences that are provided to the student are also appropriate for the community partner. Using previous community agency partners to attend orientation sessions and address agency participant's questions is very helpful in explaining the reciprocal relationship.

What is your criteria for selecting a community partner?

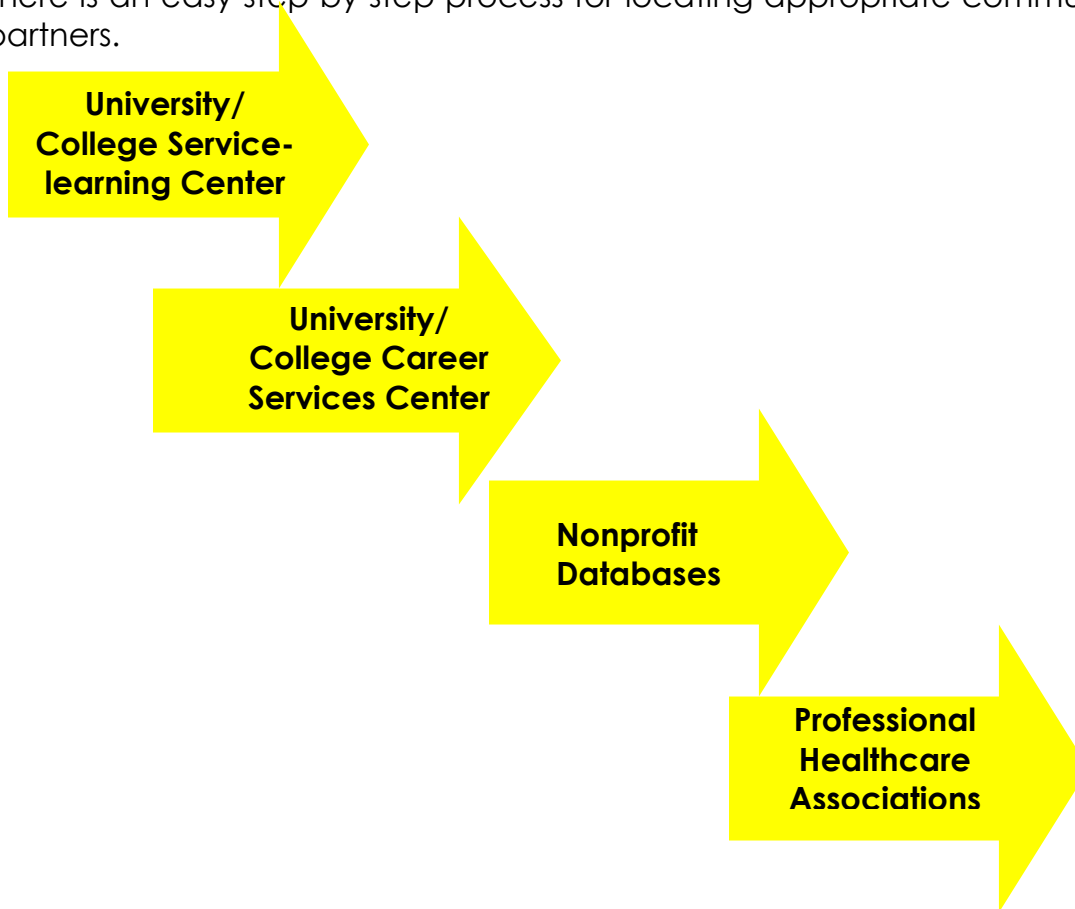
Every health administration program has a set of unique characteristics that reflects the student, faculty, department and university values and philosophy. Identifying which values are most important and then prioritizing them will help you determine which community partners will align best with your perspectives.

The following checklist can help you decide which community organizations might be appropriate as a partner for your program.

YES	NO	CRITERIA
		1. Is the mission of the healthcare agency or organization compatible with the mission of the University, College and Department?
		2. Does the agency or organization have a non-profit status?
		3. Is the focus of the community partner on improving health, health care services or delivery?
		4. Will this healthcare agency or organization benefit directly from this relationship?
		5. Is the organization located in a geographical location convenient to the campus or one of the off campus sites?
		6. Would you characterize the size of this agency as being small (<50) to mid-size (<125)?
		7. Has the agency indicated prior need or interest in our health administration program?
		8. Will the community partner be able to sustain the relationship for a minimum of three years?
		9. Will the agency partners support technology integration?
		10. Do the community partners understand and accept the appropriate roles and responsibilities necessary for a service-learning project?

Which strategies can help locate a community health partner?

There is an easy step by step process for locating appropriate community partners.



The first two places to begin your search are your University or College Service-learning and Career Service Centers. They can provide you with a list of organizations or agencies who currently or previously have participated in learning relationships with your academic institution. These centers may also be able to direct you to other program directors who are currently involved in service-learning experiences. State and national databases of nonprofit organizations (Guidestar is an example) are sometimes available without charge to university faculty and provide an extensive listing of community agencies. Another suggestion is to obtain membership listings from professional healthcare associations and organizations. You may also want to contact state hospital associations, public health organizations, state government associations, nursing home and assisted living trade associations, and state health plan (insurance and HMO) groups.

Finally, most health administration programs rely on their students, alumni and advisory boards for assistance in developing curriculum and updating their offerings. These groups are also excellent providers of links to potential community health partners.

How do you recruit a community partner?

You **do not** "recruit" a community partner, you participate in a reciprocal process known as **partnership development**. Partnership development is more than establishing mission agreement and collaborative goals. Partnership development requires a strategy for matching the community health agency needs with the competencies of your health administration students and then moving forward with common goals and objectives.

Assuming you have identified several health care agencies/organizations or community coalitions that are a match for your program, the next step is to approach the leadership. Personal interactions can facilitate a quicker understanding of opportunities, so face-to-face meetings are optimal. Sometimes a phone call or email sent by a mutual friend can serve to establish the beginning relationship. However, if your program needs to establish many such partnerships, a letter of introduction and recruitment may be appropriate. A sample invitation letter is provided below.

Sample Invitation Letter

Dear Healthcare Agency Director:

The Master's of Healthcare Administration (MHA) program at Seton Hall University strives to prepare our graduate students to be professional and responsible members of the many New Jersey healthcare systems and nonprofit agencies. Our MHA degree will be one of the first New Jersey academic programs to include community based service-learning as part of the MHA core requirements. I would like to invite you to be one of the first in forming these unique community partnerships.

This letter offers a dual opportunity for your organization. First, we are interested in assessing your desire to participate with SHU in providing our MHA students with opportunities for internships (paid and unpaid), practicum (team) assignments and research experiences. During their entire community collaboration experiences, all MHA graduate students are supervised by full time faculty to ensure a successful relationship. Secondly, we are trying to assess the type of expertise that you would desire from our students and exactly what skills would be specifically of benefit to you

Attached you will find a very short survey that addresses community/campus service-learning opportunities in your organization. We hope to facilitate the matching process between your organization's needs and our students' competencies. Please feel free to share this questionnaire with other colleagues. The more information we receive from your organization, the easier it will be for us to match our students with your needs!

If you have any questions, regarding the survey or opportunities for graduate MHA student placement, please feel free to contact me at 973-275-2070 or at hewittan@shu.edu. I welcome the opportunity to speak with you as we plan for January, 2003.

Sincerely,

Anne M. Hewitt, Ph.D., CHES
Assistant Professor/Assistant Director MHA Program
Seton Hall University
400 South Orange Avenue
South Orange, NJ 07079

How do you manage the community partner information?

A very simple strategy for management of potential community partners is to develop and update a database as responses from your initial recruitment letter are returned. The following template includes most of the basic information that would help you match a community partner with a specific project or student.

Community/Campus Partner Database Template

Name of Agency	Address Street City State Zipcode	Contact Person	Title	Phone Fax Email	Agency Size	Relation-Ship Preference*	Primary Area of Need**	Notes

Key

*Relationship Preference:

- P = Practicum
- I = Internship
- R = Research Experience
- F = Field Experience
- O = Other

**Primary Area of Need

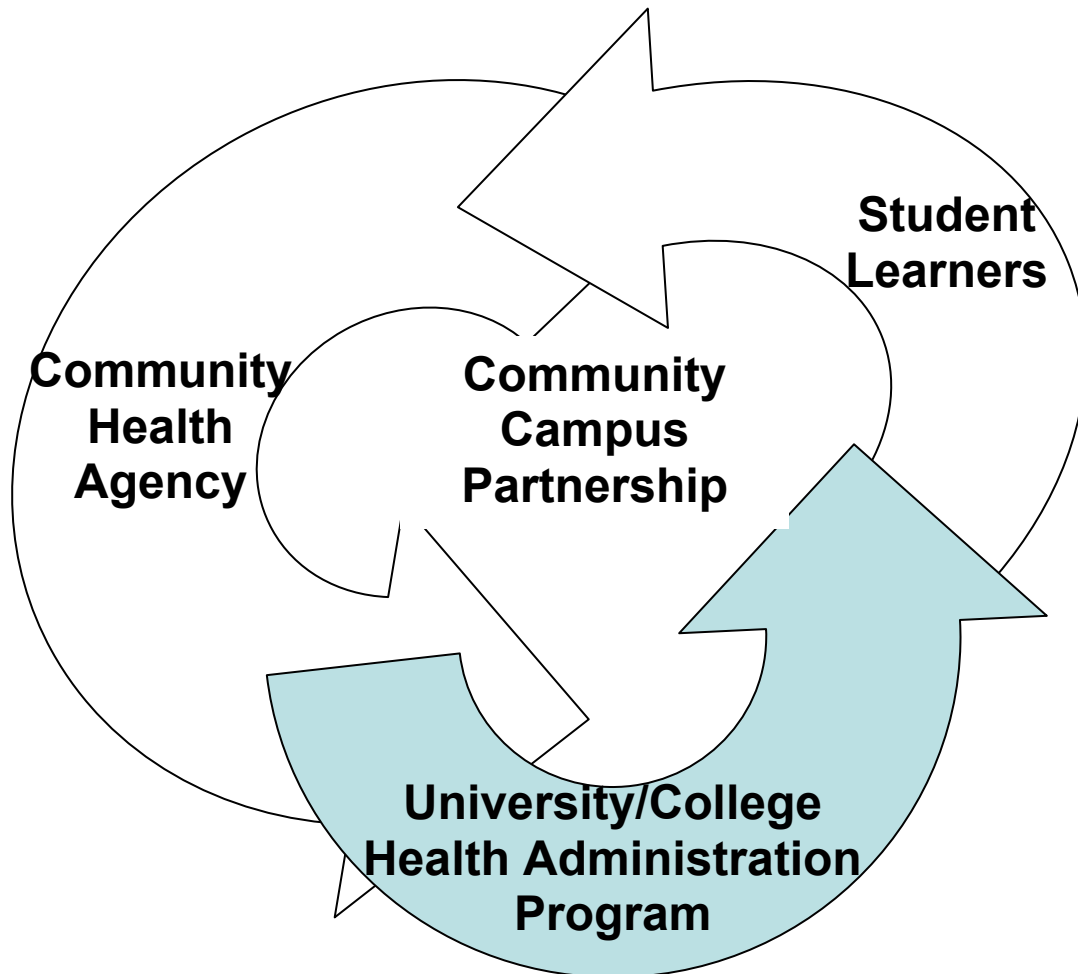
1. Community Health
2. Decision Making Strategies
3. Executive Development
4. Health Policy
5. Healthcare Ethics
6. Healthcare Financial Admin/Economics
7. Health Management
8. Human Resources
9. Research
10. Strategic Planning

You may want to revise the template by adding an additional category for type of project. Project options might include: strategic plan, feasibility study, needs assessment or other types of administrative activities.

What is the role and responsibility of the community partner?

The community organization and its representatives are true partners in all phases of the service-learning process. In addition to the above general community partner description, the responsibilities can be very specifically delineated:

Part 3 - Selecting Courses and Faculty for Service-Learning Experiences



How do you decide on an appropriate Health Administration course?

Five categories of service-learning courses have previously been described in relation to the HA curriculum (Sinay, 2000). These include: (1) service-learning and independent studies, (2) service-learning as part of the course, (3) specific service-learning course, (4) extra credit option and (5) fulfillment of a college or department graduation requirement.

Based on the idea of categorizing all the courses in a HA curriculum, the following framework can assist an interested faculty member in selecting the appropriate courses.

How to Select a Service-Learning Course

Step 1: Generate a complete list of all courses that might be considered appropriate for service-learning.

Step 2: Group the courses into five categories using the following framework:

Type of Course	Typical Examples
Experiential Focus/ Capstone Courses	Internship, Field Experience, Co-op placement, Practicum (Team), Executive Leadership
Community Health	Community Health, Health Promotion/Disease Prevention, Managerial Epidemiology
Discipline Specific	Strategic Planning, Health Management, Health Policy, Health Finance, Research*
Special Topic Courses	Contemporary Issues, Topics in Healthcare Administration
Service-learning Courses (Designated)	May be required for undergraduate programs, but not traditionally located in graduate HA curriculum.

*Note: The emergence of community based participatory research (CBPR) offers an additional opportunity to place a student who enjoys or seeks a research experience in the community (Israel & Allen, 2002). This may be especially relevant for programs with large numbers of students employed by clinical research groups or pharmaceutical organizations.

Step 3: Select the first course for introduction to the service-learning concepts. Develop appropriate syllabi in consultation with the faculty. (Note: Any change in syllabi and course description may require an accompanying catalog revision as well as faculty and administration approval!)

Step 4: Schedule the service-learning course as an integral part of the regular health administration curriculum.

Because each of these five course types would have distinct course objectives and student outcomes, faculty may be required to develop a slightly different approach for optimizing the campus and community experience, even though each course would follow a common foundation of core service-learning principles. Sinay (2000) provides excellent examples of how to link the community service to various health administration courses. For example, a healthcare finance course would require a very structured community project involving financial skills or analysis and a specified final report. Students participating in an introductory community health course could be involved in a much less structured project with broadly defined outcomes that would offer more flexibility in working with the community agency or organization.

How do you identify a compatible faculty member?

Faculty members are attracted to community service and learning for such diverse reasons that a comprehensive set of attributes may not be useful. Instead, focus on faculty that teach capstone or experiential courses or that already share their expertise in a community setting through relationships as board members, community volunteers or participation in other service activities.

The Center for Community Involvement at Miami-Dade College recently addressed common faculty issues surrounding service-learning courses. Faculty concerns are usually expressed in the following three questions:

(1) Will these projects exhibit academic rigor or are they just “feel good” opportunities?

(2) Do our students have the ability to contribute meaningful service to these community organizations?

(3) What about my time constraints?

Of course the answer to all three questions is “It depends!” Successful service-learning courses are based on thoughtful structure and collaboration involving faculty, the individual student and the community partner. A breakdown in any part of the reciprocal learning experience and the consequences can be poor academic quality, time wasted and a lost opportunity to connect with others.

What do you include in the syllabi?

The Community Campus Partnership for Health has recently announced their “Curriculum Planning Guide” that covers in detail the essential components of a service-learning course syllabi. In addition to the traditional syllabi elements, you may also want to include the following:

Common Syllabi Elements:

- ✓ **A brief definition of service-learning**
- ✓ **Service-learning goals for the course as well as specific course objectives**
- ✓ **Role of student in community partnership**
- ✓ **Review of student reflection journal component**
- ✓ **Introduction of community partnership project**
- ✓ **Avenues for community communication**
- ✓ **Copies of required college or university forms**
- ✓ **Description of the evaluation structure**

What are appropriate goals and objectives?

Listed below are examples of learning, service and service-learning objectives:

1. **Learning Objective:** MHA students enrolled in PSMA 7992 will develop competencies in working with community health organizations that enhance their managerial skills such as project management, leadership, team development and communication skills.
2. **Service Objective:** An opportunity exists for MHA students to serve as partners with local not-for-profit healthcare agencies who are seeking collaboration and assistance in planning and implementing community-based projects.
3. **Service-Learning Objective:** MHA students will partner with Orange Model Cities 2010 to develop a project plan for a school health fair and a strategic plan for development of a community advisory board.

How do you describe the service-learning requirement?

Describing the service requirement is the most crucial component of syllabi development. The goal is to emphasize the reciprocal learning arrangement and at the same to reinforce the necessity for a structured process with desired outcomes and accountability.

You may wish to use service-learning language already adopted by your university or college or you may provide your own rationale for the purpose of this experiential component and its integration within the course. Students should know that the service-learning component is not an “add-on”, but an essential part of the course experience, as presented in the example below.

The “service-learning” component of this course is intended to permit you to transcend the typical practicum experience which often results in a one way learning experience. Instead, this opportunity will allow you to “share” and “receive” knowledge and expertise in a variety of ways with the community organization and your partners. You will be given an opportunity to practice “self-reflection” on the service-learning component of the course through a journal writing activity.

You will also need to place special emphasis on the reflective component of the experience. Most graduate students already pressed for time will need to be convinced of the relevancy of this approach. However, on completing the course, their reactions are almost always positive towards the contemplative experience.

Matching the student with the community project

The interaction process between the student and the community begins when the student is matched with an individual or healthcare organization of interest. This process can be accomplished by student request, recommendations of faculty or by community partner requests. Surveying the students to identify their interests and perceived competencies and then matching that information with the health partner's description can help facilitate more successful partnerships (Hewitt, 2003c draft).

Sample Syllabi

Center for Public Service Graduate Department of Public and Healthcare Administration Syllabus

Course Information

Course Name and Number: PSMA 7992 NC Service-Learning Practicum- Health Care **Semester/Year:** Spring 2002

PSMA 7992 NC Service-Learning Practicum- Health Care

Dates/Hours:

Wednesday 5:00-9:00

June 5 - July 31

Location: TBA

of Credits: 3

Instructor Information

Anne M. Hewitt, Ph.D., CHES
Asst. Professor, Asst. MHA Director

Instructor's Office: Room 564
Kozlowski Hall

Phone #: 973-275-2070

Email Address: hewittan@shu.edu
Summer Office Hours – June 5 – July 31
(Other times always available by appointment.)

Office Hours: W: 3:00-5:00

Instructor's Web Address: www.shu.edu

Course Description

This course consists of a three credit service-learning project related to an area of healthcare administration or management. The practicum requires teams of students to complete a service-learning experience with a local community health agency or organization. The student and community partners will collaboratively determine the project and complete the necessary activities. Deliverables will include an executive summary, management report and oral presentation. All work is completed under faculty supervision.

The “service-learning” component of this course is intended to permit you to transcend the typical practicum experience which often results in a one way learning experience. Instead, this opportunity will allow you to “share” and “receive” knowledge and expertise in a variety of ways with the community organization and your partners. You will be given an opportunity to practice “self-reflection” on the service-learning component of the course through a journal writing activity.

Recommended Prerequisite Competencies

Students should have completed all MHA core courses and/or permission of the instructor.

Assignments

Community Project Report
Community Project Presentation
Community Project Executive Summary
Self-Assessment Measures (Reflection Journal, Self Evaluation)
Group Assessment Measures

Mission-Related Course Objectives

After completing the course, students will be able to:

Leadership

1. Acknowledge and respond to the special responsibilities of health care managers to fully integrate desirable leadership qualities and values into everyday life and professional practice.

Ethics

2. Show by professional role-modeling and consistent personal behaviors a strong commitment to emphasizing the importance of making the ethical choice as a health care administrator and in partnerships with community organizations.

Cultural Diversity

3. Appreciate and embrace the importance of diversity between individuals and among the multiple cultures represented in daily contacts with superiors, peers, clinical personnel, patients and with the community.

Quality of Life

4. Seek opportunities to support and advocate for equality, accessibility and individual dignity through support for implementation of appropriate health care management policy, decisions and strategies within the community framework.

Student Outcome Objectives

After completing the course, students will be able to:

1. Delineate the role and accompanying responsibilities of the successful consulting team in a service-learning situation.
2. Using relevant, contemporary and best practice management skills: (1) identify the problem, (2) research the problem (3) synthesize the information into an appropriate summary with recommendations (4) complete a professional presentation.
3. Complete a service-learning journal that traces the partnership and impact on the learning experience.
4. Demonstrate professional behavior through the team development process and all interactions with community partners.
5. Display cultural and ethical competencies appropriate for the various community initiatives and partnerships during the practicum service-learning experience.
6. Complete self-assessment and group assessment performance management measures.

Criteria for Assessment of Student Performance

See attached Center for Public Service Grading Policy

Grading

Group Assessment	20%
Self Assessment	10%
Community Project Presentation	15%
Community Project Executive Summary	10%
Community Project Report	45%
TOTAL	100%

Teaching Techniques

Interactive class discussion, guest agency personnel, group work, presentations and computer assignments.

Community Classroom Connection

The service-learning project for this semester will be done in collaboration with Orange Model Cities 2010, a local, non-profit community organization. Orange Model City 2010 (OMC) is a volunteer, community based organization located in Orange, New Jersey and dedicated to enhancing the quality of life through strategic revitalization visioning. This primary community partner for the team based, SL experience is located geographically adjacent to the University.

Technology Used to Enhance Teaching and Learning

Students are required to use the internet to search for various Web-sites for appropriate content materials. In addition, all class members are encouraged to communicate with each other and the instructor via email. Various assignments will also require students to access the state's web-site and peruse specific databases.

Students should demonstrate familiarity with the following technological capabilities: word processing (Word), basic spreadsheet analysis (Excel), elementary knowledge of a database (Access) and the ability to create presentations using a graphics program (Powerpoint). In addition, it is assumed students are comfortable with using email, searching the WEB and utilizing library databases for information retrieval. Students should also be familiar with Blackboard - myweb.shu. **EXTENSIVE USE OF MYWEB will occur during this course. We will be communicating and sharing information via email, discussion board, and chat sessions.**

Recommended Publications and Websites:

(See Handouts)

MHA Program Policies

- **Academic Integrity**

As stated the Academic Policies and Procedures Section of the Graduate Catalogue:

All University programs require high standards of academic integrity. All forms of dishonesty whether by act or omission, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism and knowingly furnishing false information to the University are prohibited and may elicit University sanctions of suspension or expulsion.

PSMA 7992NA – Service-Learning Practicum – Health Care
Class Policy - Summer 2002

1. Class attendance, Preparation and Participation:

Class attendance is required and missed classes will result in a lower grade. Late assignments will be reduced by one letter grade for each class day missed. All assigned readings and assignments for a session should be done prior to that session. Students are expected to participate in all class discussions. Although each class session will focus on the topic listed, relationships with previous and additional material may be discussed.

2. Quiz, In-Class Activity and/or Weekly Assignment:

Students should be prepared for unannounced short quizzes on the required readings. The class may be asked to participate in short group projects during the semester. Other activities may include completing self-assessment measures or presenting short critiques of relevant articles or cases. These learning activities will be used to clarify and apply basic class concepts.

3. Community Project Presentation

Each team will formally present their research and findings to the class and instructor. Agency representatives will be asked to attend. A Powerpoint presentation and accompanying handouts are required.

4. Community Project Executive Summary

A two page executive summary of the final project report will be required. The executive summary should be distributed to all class members.

5. Community Project Report

Each student will be assigned to a team. The teams will then coordinate with their service-learning community partners, their goal, objectives and action plans to produce a final document. In order to develop an action plan, each team will need to:

- a) identify scope of project (complete action plan)
- b) obtain necessary resources
- c) develop appropriate recommendations
- d) complete a comprehensive project report

6. Group Assessment

Each student will be asked to weekly rank the other team members on their cooperation and level of collaboration. This will help determine the final grade.

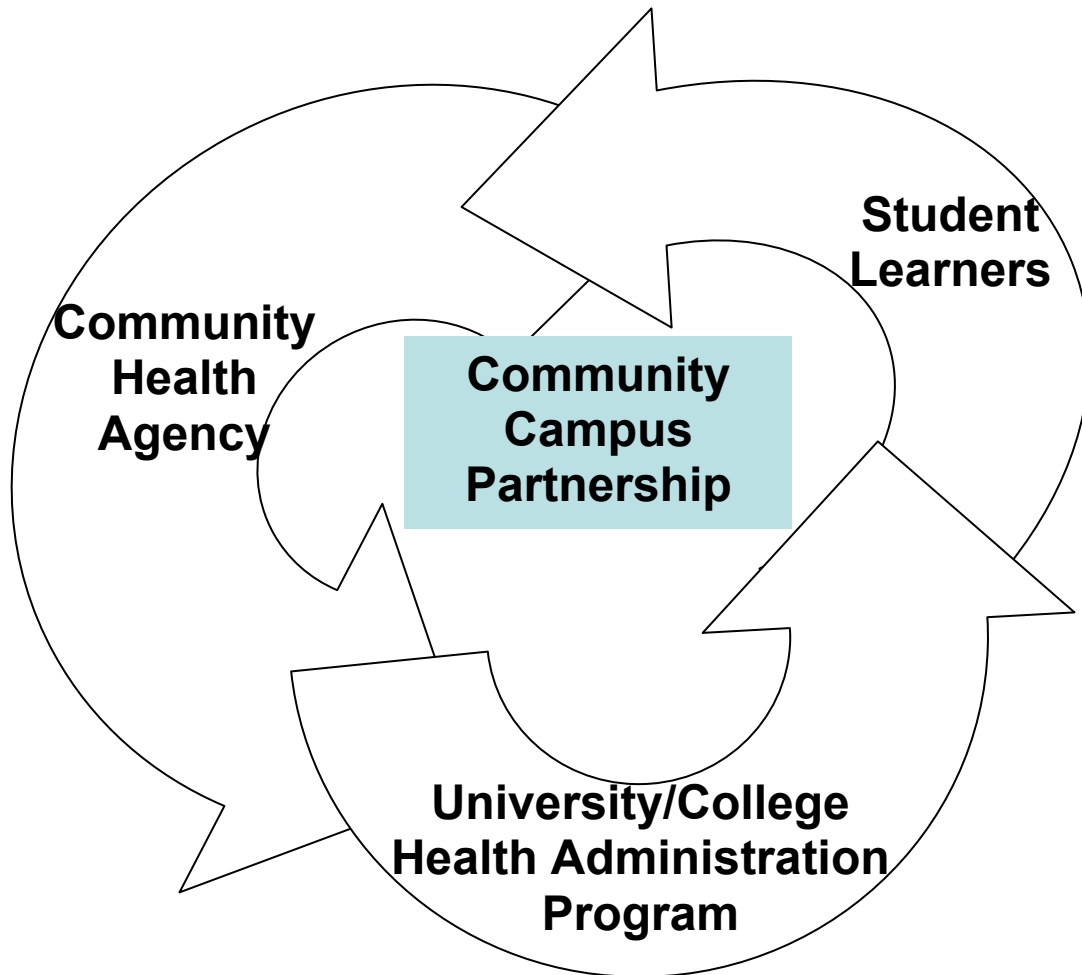
7. Self Assessment (Reflection)

Each student will be asked to record in a service-learning reflection log, their observations, emotions and learning experiences throughout the course. In particular, students should focus on their relationships and experiences in dealing with the community.

**PSMA 7992 NC - Tentative Course Schedule
Summer 2002**

	Date	Topic
June	5	Course Introduction Team Project Selection Action Plan Proposal Myweb Technology Review
	12	Agency Meeting Action Plan Revision
	19	Group Work (Dr. Hewitt will be at AUPHA Conference)
	26	Class Verbal Report #1 Status Report Due
July	3	Group Work
	10	Class Verbal Report #2 Status Report Due
	17	Group Work
	24	Class Verbal Report #3 Status Report Due
	31	Final Presentation Due Final Report Due Final Executive Summary Due
Aug	2	Group Assessment Due Individual Assessment Due

Part 4 - Working with your Community Partner



How do you facilitate proposal development with the community partner?

Many community health agency directors are eager to work with graduate HA students, but are unsure of their ability to craft a proposal. Although all partners must be involved in this process, the community partner may need assistance with identifying the specific area of need within the organization. The initial survey will have helped narrow the focus of the project, but additional suggestions or options should be presented.

The following project identification worksheet, may help the community partner to define the potential project in terms that can be translated into a project proposal.

Project Identification Work Sheet

What is Needed by the Community Agency?

1. **Community Health Assessment?** _____
 2. **Community Health Surveillance?** _____
 3. **Competitive Analysis?** _____
 4. **Strategic Plan?** _____
 5. **Financial/Funding Analysis?** _____
 6. **Project Proposals/Grant Development?** _____
 7. **Human Resources Issues?** _____
 8. **Management Expertise?** _____
 9. **Marketing Plan?** _____
 10. **Technology Assistance?** _____
-

These are just a few ideas for the various types of projects appropriate for a community-campus service-learning experience involving graduate health administration students.

In addition, community partners may benefit from completing a questionnaire that identifies their project needs using management and administration skill and strategy terminology.

What should be included in the proposal?

One simple method for structuring the proposal is to divide it into the three partnership areas: Community Partner Information, Collaborative Project Information, and Student/ Faculty Partner Information.

The following table lists necessary proposal information in a partnership designated format:

Community Partner Information	Collaborative Project Information	Student & Faculty Information
Principal or key contacts	Short Project Description: Goals & Outcomes	Faculty contact: Location and address
Mission of agency or organization	Project Length or Timeline (One time or ongoing project)	
Location and address	Requested number of students (individual or group)	Student contact (s): Location and address Student competencies
	Orientation Meeting	
	Partnership Agreement	
	Evaluation Components	

What information is included in a Partnership Agreement?

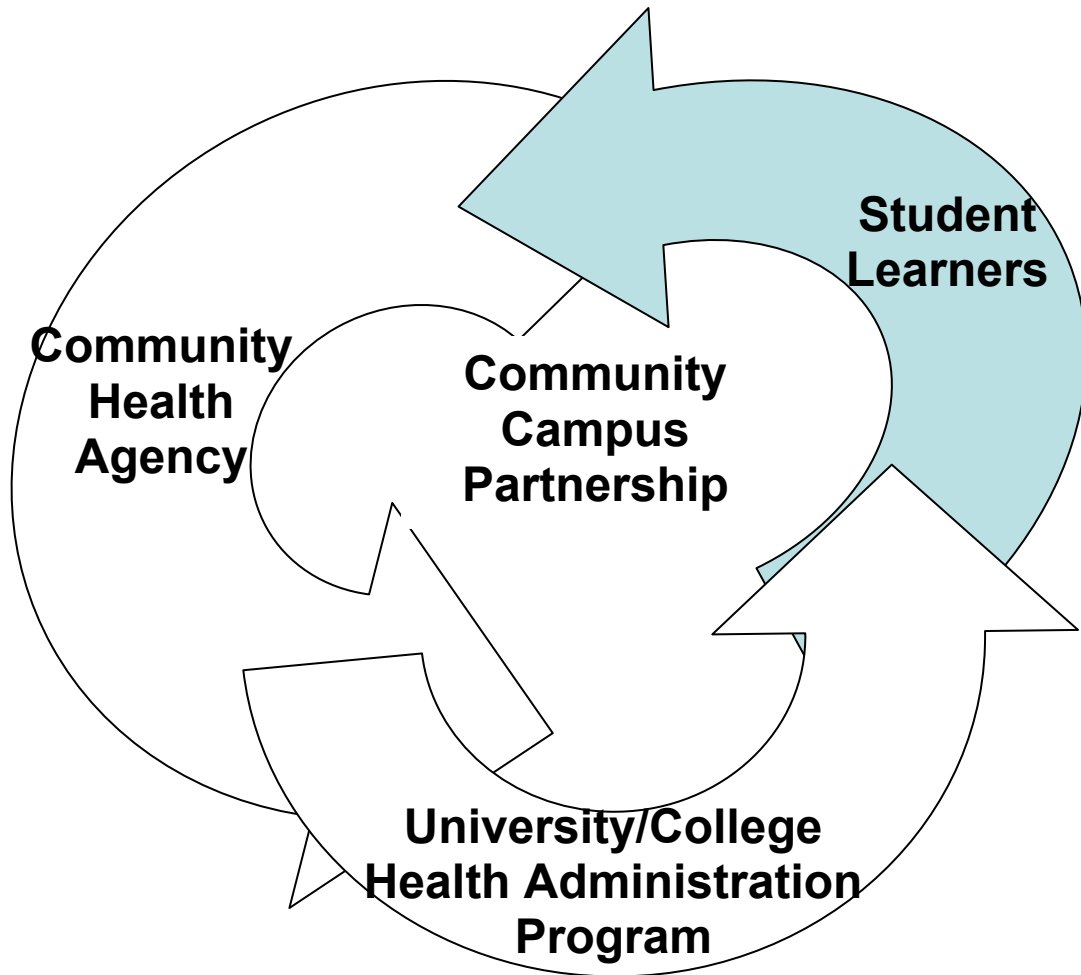
Once the project has been defined, the process for recording the community-campus relationship can be formalized in a document that is known as a partnership agreement. This protocol is necessary when working with larger healthcare community organizations that may have frequent employee changes or when potential projects will last longer than a single semester. See the checklist below for step by step guidance in developing an agreement. Seifer and Maurana (2000) have described several of these key elements necessary for a partnership document.

Key Elements of a Partnership Agreement

- Involve all key partners**
 - Reach consensus on the partnership's purpose, goals and objectives**
 - Verbally discuss and determine each partner's expectations and anticipated benefits before completing the agreement**
 - Determine the roles, responsibilities and key tasks of each partner along with an accompanying timeline**
 - Clearly articulate the partnership's outcomes and benefits**
 - Realistically determine the partnership's financial and staffing considerations**
 - Anticipate the partnership's products and resulting copyright and ownership issues**
 - Plan an evaluation process**
 - Create an external communication agenda - publicity plan**
-

Facilitating a successful relationship with the community agency partner begins with establishing a sense of trust and develops into a dynamic relationship based on mutual expectation, commitment and collaboration. **The project proposal and partnership agreement enable and ensure that all three partners become equal participants in the service-learning experience.**

Part 5 – Service-Learning Partnering: The Student Perspective



How do you prepare the student for the service-learning experience?

The initial introduction to the service-learning component of a Health Administration course occurs when the student reviews the general course description. However, it is the course syllabi that serve as the official statement of the role, responsibilities and various requirements that are unique to the service-learning experience for the student. Even graduate students benefit from a “walk through” of the syllabus with special

attention being paid to the definition of service-learning, the selection of community partners and the potential for project development. This step also provides an opportunity to answer many student questions, which often turn out to be very similar to faculty queries about service-learning. The most frequent questions that I've encountered and possible responses are provided below.

Common Student Service-Learning Questions

1. Why does this course include a service-learning component and how will it benefit me in health administration?

This service-learning course provides you with the opportunity to develop and **practice** the various health administration and management skills that have been a part of your MHA core curriculum. This is more than learning on the job, this is a type of educational experience involving **exposure to new and complex situations** that you might not have encountered in the past. This is not a case study and you will be working with real people and real organizations!

2. I'm lost. I've never worked with a community health organization before. How can I help them?

This service-learning course is based on a **partnership philosophy**. You will be meeting with the community partners several times and together you will develop a proposal, timeline and mutually acceptable outcomes. As a MHA graduate student you have **developed many strengths** that will benefit your community partner. They in turn will provide you with opportunities to learn their strengths. Your faculty **instructor serves as a third partner** for this course.

3. I have a full-time job, three kids and a husband. How can I fit this in?

This service-learning course relies on a **very structured process** to ensure that all participants have their expectations met and that the team experience and the various community **interactions are productive**. Communication strategies can involve more than face-to-face interactions and you will be surprised how much "work" can be accomplished via emails, list-serves and discussion boards.

How do you match the student with the community experience?

Not all graduate health administration programs are large enough to match particular students with individual health agencies and projects as part of the service-learning protocol. Asking each student to complete a competency questionnaire based on curriculum and related skill development may be beneficial when trying to create "teams" for various health agency projects (Hewitt A, 2003a). This same idea can be used in assessing the community health agency needs enabling the faculty member to search for "win-win" matching opportunities between organizational needs and student competencies.

Facilitating the process: Orientation meeting

Once students have been introduced to the service-learning philosophy and the course requirements, the next step requires a partnership orientation meeting. This meeting includes all partners with a flexible agenda usually created by the faculty member. Asking MHA students who have served on previous teams working with the community partner to attend this orientation meeting and present a brief overview of their projects, provides continuity for the community partner and a succinct and real world introduction for the new students.

This meeting can then evolve into a roundtable discussion or brainstorming session, but all partners are represented and participating. As the meeting progresses, faculty members can interject suggestions as to process, feedback (status reporting) and communication strategies (computer mediated technologies; email, list-serves, discussion boards, etc). A follow-up session may be necessary for project proposal development, but it will usually be much shorter and may even be accomplished without face-to-face interaction.

How do you incorporate the reflection component?

Helping a busy graduate student to understand the reflection component of a service-learning experience can be a difficult undertaking. Most students will readily accept and enjoy the reciprocal learning dynamic underlying the community campus model, but taking the time and developing an acceptable way of expressing their thoughts and emotions of the experience requires faculty facilitation. One technique is to provide checklists or questions that provoke additional thought. Another strategy is to require a weekly log or journal by the student, to be reviewed and summarized at the end of the project.

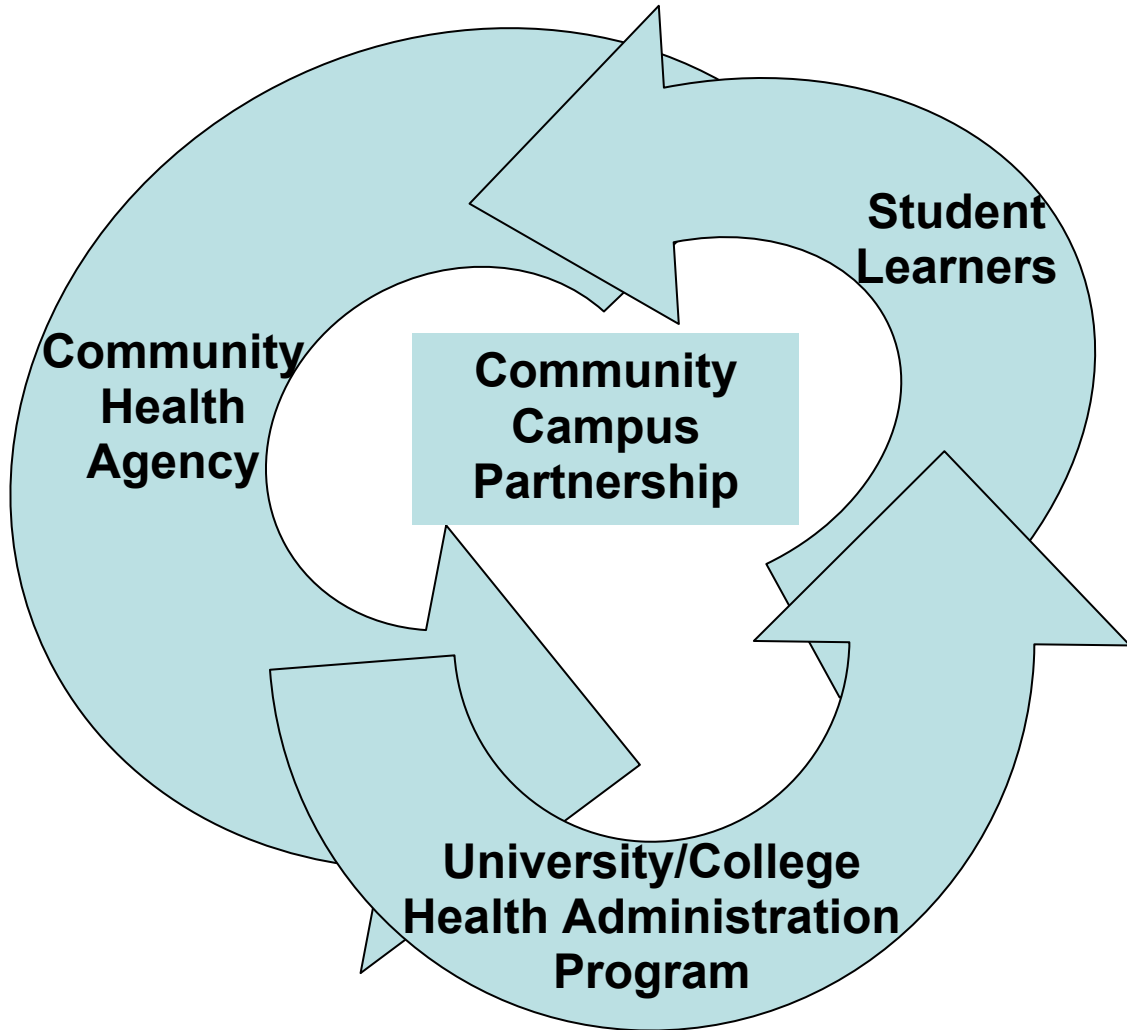
A partnership model developed by Elias and Bul (2002) identifies four components that must be mutually shared by all the partners: respect, responsiveness, reciprocity, and reflection. These four principles can help students examine their relationships with each other, the community organization, its representatives and the faculty mentor.

Sample Reflective Questions

- Responsive** – Did I respond to the community needs and concerns as defined by the community?
- Respectful** – Did I exhibit cultural competence and sensitivity to ethnic, class, and ability differences in all my personal and community interactions?
- Reflective** – Did I closely examine my expectations and interpretations of the experience?
- Reciprocal** – Did I understand and communicate an awareness and tolerance for the community partner's preferences and expectations?

Although students appear to be apprehensive about sharing their reflections on the community experience, frequent opportunities for reflective discussion help make the process become more acceptable and comfortable. It is during these sessions that students reveal the true learning experiences offered by the community relationship. Without this special emphasis, these revelations can get lost or placed behind task and outcome achievement.

Part 6 - Focusing on Outcomes and Sustainability



Focusing on outcomes

Just as the purpose of the service-learning experience is to connect the student with the community health partner and the university health administration program, the focus on final outcomes should include specific assessments of each individual partner as well as an examination of the whole experience.

How do you assess student outcomes?

The easiest part of evaluating the service-learning experience is assessing student outcomes. The criteria for a students' grade should be clearly written and described as a part of the syllabi. Grading the student's performance involves matching the specific criteria with the level of achievement. One suggestion is to have students rate themselves, include peer or team evaluations and also, community partner evaluations. Although the reflection process component may or may not be considered for grading purposes, it serves as an additional measure of "learning" and should also be considered.

It's also important to receive feedback on the students' perception of the service-learning experience. The sample rating sheet provided below was adapted from Shinnamon, Gelmon and Holland, (1999).

Rating My Service-learning Experience

Name _____

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

The community served by our team benefited from the service-learning activities. 1 2 3 4 5

Participation in this program made the University more aware of the needs of the community. 1 2 3 4 5

I felt valued during this experience. 1 2 3 4 5

Participation in this course had valuable social benefits for myself and my teammates. 1 2 3 4 5

I developed a good relationship with members of the community organization. 1 2 3 4 5

This project made me more aware of my own biases and prejudices. 1 2 3 4 5

In general, the benefits of working with a community organization outweighed any burdens it might have added to our coursework. 1 2 3 4 5

I would recommend that this service learning experience continue for the applied Practicum students. 1 2 3 4 5

How do you assess partner outcome?

The community partnership can be assessed at two levels. The first approach is based on assessing the individual community partner's attitudes towards the service-learning experience using a rating sheet very similar to the one completed by the students (Shinnamon, Gelmon & Holland, 1999).

Community Partnership – Evaluation Form

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I developed a good relationship with students from this course.	1	2	3	4	5
I saw myself as mentor to the students.	1	2	3	4	5
I saw myself as a facilitator in their Learning.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel this partnership helped students use classroom material to solve everyday issues.	1	2	3	4	5
I could see real learning taking place throughout the experience.	1	2	3	4	5
My participation helped bring benefits to the students, my organization and the community.	1	2	3	4	5
The student's work will result in a healthier community.	1	2	3	4	5
This partnership helped promote a positive relationship between the University and my community.	1	2	3	4	5
I would recommend that this service-learning partnership continue to be developed and extended.	1	2	3	4	5

The second approach for assessing partner outcomes focuses more prominently on the community organization itself. The "Partnership Self-Assessment Tool" is available free to partnerships by the Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health at The New York Academy of Medicine.

How do you assess project outcomes?

Project outcomes are sometimes assessed on a simple continuum ranging from: **project initiated** to **project implemented** to **project completed**. In the early stages of community project development involving service-

learning, **it is sometimes advantageous to look at the various stages of change accomplished rather than to focus solely on the ultimate project outcome.**

There are many change process models, but one that fits with the service-learning model was developed by Bejaroni, Balcazar & Brewer (2002). As the community-campus relationship develops, each partner should begin to see progress through the stages of change towards a successful completion of one initiative and the development of that project as a potential benchmark for replication with other community partners.

Stage of Change	Types of Activities/Outcomes
Stage 1 – Getting together	Partner commitment, project definition, mission and vision development
Stage 2 – Building trust	Formalization of relationships, prioritizing operational strategies, resource commitment
Stage 3- Developing a Strategic plan	Identifying the who, what, where, when and how, role and responsibility acceptance
Stage 4 – Taking Action	Communication of project status, monitoring of activities and collaboration when facing barriers and challenges
Stage 5 – Implementation and Evaluation	Willingness to participate, provide feedback and contribute to project assessment and reassessment

This model may serve as an excellent assessment tool for evaluating the community partner relationship and the project outcomes.

Focusing on sustainability

Sustainability refers to the ability to achieve continuity and further expand project development to new levels among all the partners. Successful service-learning partnerships rely on appropriate and timely feedback communicated to all members. Common warning signs of partnership deterioration include: power and turf issues, leadership struggles, poor

meeting attendance, member burnout and goal or outcome shifts that create tension among the partners (Cohen, Baer and Satterwhite).

One method for promoting sustainability with your community partners is to complete an overview of all partnership components (Paine-Andres, Fisher, Campuzano, Fawcett & Berkley, Patton, 2000). Use the following checklist to examine the status of your partnership!

YES	NO	CRITERIA
		<p>Individual Level:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there commitment by students, faculty and community partners? 2. Is each partner empowered to fulfill their role and responsibilities? 3. Is there a particular challenge for any one of the three partners that needs to be addressed?
		<p>Organizational Level:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there high membership turnover? 2. Is there a community partner “champion” within the organization? 3. Does the community partner continue to have the necessary resources?
		<p>Community Challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is local politics influencing project development and outcomes? 2. Is networking becoming an issue? 3. Is there opportunity to focus on new issues? 4. Does a particular challenge exist for the community partner?
		<p>Communication:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is internal communication among partners effective? 2. Is external communication timely and effective? 3. Have funders and other stakeholders been included in the communication loop?
		<p>Relationship Development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a sense of accomplishment among all partners? 2. Is there an informal arrangement? 3. Is there a formal partnership arrangement?
		<p>Evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there process, impact and outcome evaluation? 2. Is there an established pattern for communicating feedback from the evaluation?

Finally, sustainability requires internal and external communication efforts. Partnership communication can be as simple as emails, list-serves and newsletters. Many non-profit organizations maintain their own web-sites with bulletin boards to post coming events. External communication activities of partnership accomplishments bring recognition and a sense of accomplishment to all participants. Common external communication activities include:

- News releases
- Press conferences
- Special events
- Letter to the editor
- Media advisory alerts
- Public service announcements
- Speaker Bureau/ Public speaking engagements

Regardless of the scope and depth of the service-learning project evaluations, the information provided will enable all the partners to continue and refine relationships. This sample evaluation form can also be used as a focus group tool when working with community partners

Service-learning Partner Evaluation Form

Directions:

Thank you for your cooperation during the past semester. Please answer these few questions regarding this service-learning opportunity.

- 1. Were you involved in the planning development process with the graduate students? If so, how?**

- 2. Did you provide any specific feedback to the students? If so, how often?**

- 3. Did the students complete a formal presentation of their plan to you and/or the agency?**

Please describe the presentation:

- 4. Do you have any specific recommendations for these students?**

- 5. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share:**

The feedback loop requires that this information be adequately shared with all involved. Project debriefings can be used as a strategy to convey lessons learned. Another technique is to invite the previous service-learning team to serve as mentors for the current group of students and community partners. The goal is to add value to the service-learning process from understanding previous challenges and successes.

Challenges to community-campus service-learning in Health Administration

As noted by Forti and White (2001), significant challenges exist for the implementation of service-learning in a health administration program. Extensive time commitments, due to travel, project length or communication barriers, can all pose significant challenges to the three way partnership. Solutions for these dilemmas are found in the initial process of partnership development which requires empowerment and commitment from all the service-learning partners – students, community members and health administration faculty.

Part 7 - Lessons Learned:

A Community-Campus Partnership in Action: Seton Hall University MHA Students and Orange Model Cities 2010 Use Technology to Enhance their Relationship.



Orange Model City 2010

Introduction:

During the Summer 2002 semester, a service-learning (SL) experience was developed for 12 graduate students enrolled in a Practicum course in the Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) program at Seton Hall University (SHU). These students completed a service-learning project with a local, non-profit community organization. Orange Model City 2010 (OMC) is a volunteer, community based organization located in Orange, New Jersey and dedicated to enhancing the quality of life through strategic revitalization visioning. This primary community partner for the team based, SL experience is located geographically adjacent to the University. OMC 2010 focuses on improving the quality of community life specifically in the areas of health, public safety, education and economic revitalization. In the past, OMC 2010 has successfully provided for the community leadership facilitation training workshops and community forums. Each project undertaken is directed toward "Enhancing the Quality of Life in the City of Orange".

Implementation:

Course Description:

The Practicum course is one of three options that form the capstone courses for students enrolled in the MHA program at SHU. Graduate students with previous management experience select this course in order to complete a team-based project and to develop consulting and management skills with community health agencies and organizations.

The original course description stated:

This course consists of a three credit group consulting project related to an area of healthcare administration or management. The practicum typically requires the writing of a management report and the delivery of

an oral presentation for the subject organization. All work is completed under faculty supervision.

The revised Summer 2002 course description:

This course consists of a three credit service-learning project related to an area of healthcare administration or management. The practicum requires teams of students to complete a service-learning experience with a local community health agency or organization. The student and community partners will collaboratively determine the project and complete the necessary activities. Deliverables will include an executive summary, management report and oral presentation. All work is completed under faculty supervision.

In addition, two student outcomes were added to the course syllabi:

- 1. Complete a service-learning journal that traces the partnership and impact on the learning experience.**
- 2. Display cultural and ethical competencies appropriate for the various community initiatives and partnerships during the practicum service-learning experience.**

Project Description:

Volunteer board members of OMC were invited to meet with MHA faculty to initially discuss potential forms of collaboration. A follow-up meeting was held with students enrolled in the Practicum/SL course to begin a dialog and to ultimately select potential projects for partnership collaboration. Three separate projects were identified and the class divided into three partner teams. These projects included:

- * A **strategic plan** for the creation of a hospital community advisory board based on face-to-face interviews with local hospital administrators
- * Development and administration of a bi-lingual **community health needs assessment survey** for the community and distributed in a local church
- * A **benchmark comparison** of four peer public health agencies and the availability of community programs through interviews with the local public health officers

Over a 9 week period, the graduate students worked with their community partners on all activities necessary to complete the three projects. Examples of these collaborative activities and the various roles of the team and community members are presented.

Service-Learning Collaborative Project Examples

Project/ Activity	Community Role	MHA Student/Team Role
Community Needs Assessment Survey	(1) Provided initial questions, (2) Assisted in setting up focus group, (3) pilot tested survey, (4) distributed survey (5) participated in survey analysis	(1) Completed literature review (2) created instrument (3) conducted focus group (4) collected and analyzed survey (5) developed final analysis document
Strategic Plan	(1) Introduced students to local hospital liaison (2) Developed interview questions (3) Recommended potential board members (4) Provided initial plan critique and feedback	(1) formalized interview document (2) completed hospital interview (3) created final plan and recommendations
Benchmark Analysis	(1) Identified needed services (2) Provided peer agency list for benchmarking (3) Contributed interview questions	(1) developed interview survey (2) conducted interviews (3) compiled data for benchmarking document

Technology Integration:

A secondary goal of this project was to enhance and strengthen the current community / campus opportunities available for Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) students by integrating technology into

all aspects of the service-learning experience. Every course offered at SHU has the technological capability of including a web-based learning platform, Blackboard™ or known at SHU as MYWEB. Students and faculty have 24 hour access to this learning enhancement technology.

Graduate students enrolled in the service-learning practicum course, used Blackboard™ as an essential communication platform. The syllabi, all assignments, daily announcements and weekly discussion boards were used throughout the course. Community partners were given special ID passwords to access the Blackboard™ platform. They were empowered to share information and communicate directly with the students.

The use of this technology allowed the various partners to communicate on an almost daily basis. Information sharing and clarification activities were completed routinely and this may have led to a substantial level of achievement that may not have been accomplished by the students and community partners without the availability of the web platform.

Service-Learning Outcomes:

The service-learning practicum teams presented each of their projects to a community-campus meeting attended by over 50 community members. Although formal reports were completed with executive summaries, individual teams used Powerpoint slides to share in a question and answer format to present the project results. The final project documents were also forwarded to other interested stakeholders including local government agencies and health care organizations. Recommendations made by the participants were recorded and documented for future student and community project teams.

All student and community partners completed evaluation measures assessing their perceptions of the project outcomes. All of the participating students strongly agreed with the statement “The community served by our class benefited from the service-learning activities”. The community members presented each of the students with a formal letter thanking them for their contributions and a request to continue the partnership.

Technology outcomes included improved facilitation of partner communication throughout the project as well as project outcome dissemination. Students were also able to complete a service-learning reflection component via an online journal format. Both, community health partners and graduate students reported being very satisfied with the technology component and its impact on project outcomes. This

pedagogical strategy may offer an additional option for HA program directors and faculty to consider as they integrate future computer mediated innovations to their health administration students' preparation and curriculum.

Lessons Learned:

Mission compatibility:

The relative ease at which the MHA students and the OMC community members meshed can be attributed in large part to a sharing of mission. The mission of Seton Hall University states "to prepare students to be leaders in their professional and community lives in a global society and to be challenged... by an evolving technologically advanced setting and values centered curricula."

It is this commitment to leadership, service and community that exemplifies the goals of the MHA program at Seton Hall University. All graduate students are aware throughout their campus experience of the focus on "servant leaders". The community partner organization, Orange Model Cities 2010 mission statement reflected an openness for collaboration "to create opportunities for city residents and service organizations to participate actively in articulating community needs and to focus especially on neighborhood revitalization, public safety, education and health issues". The success of the partnership was based on the value of the relationship as it enabled the community organization to achieve their goals. Without this mutual understanding, the give and take necessary for any reciprocal learning process would have been missing.

Role of Technology

Although the majority of MHA students involved in the SL-Practicum course were extremely familiar with the use of Blackboard™ as a learning platform, not all were comfortable in using it as a communication device with their community partners. Several students began the course relying on telephone calls and faxes, but later migrated to discussion boards and chat sessions when they realized the utility of almost "real-time" information exchange.

The community partners were almost equally adept at using computer mediated technologies. Through the use of the list serv, all community members were made aware of the SHU student projects and all participants used the email function.

Integrating computer mediated technology into service-learning experiences can help both the community agency and the student to: increase and clarify general communication, facilitate transfer of information, provide feedback and additional evaluation, aid in problem solving and encourage a “virtual” bonding between students, community partners and participating faculty (Hewitt A, draft 2003a).

Importance of Student Reflection

MHA students enrolled in the first Service-Learning Practicum course at SHU were given the opportunity to complete their reflections of this learning experience on-line. Their feelings and attitudes towards the service-learning progressed from initial doubts to team celebrations and congratulations. A few examples are provided below:

Initial Thoughts:

“After our first class, I can honestly say I was a little overwhelmed. This class is going to be dramatically different from the others as there are no lectures, books or test. I did get a little frustrated because it felt we were going in circles with no directions. We were forced to answer our own questions and try to think of the answers without much guidance. In the end my general opinion is that this class will be different, exciting and help apply many of the classes already taken.

“This assignment seems very interesting especially since it deals directly with healthcare. The project seems like a lot of work.

“In all honesty, I was not sure what to expect from this class. I had a vague idea that it would entail some community involvement, but had no idea about the task few were about to undertake in a matter of 8 weeks. In my entire college experience, I have never had quite an experience such as this.”

Mid-Course Reviews:

“We’ve had a few setbacks along the way. As we went outside to obtain our information and research it was very challenging to get full compliance. Not everyone was cooperative.”

“If I were a consultant on this project it would seem very difficult to obtain a favorable outcome. There seems to be a lot of barriers and obstacles to deal with in this community. With the great amount of diversity in the town, it seems difficult to get a majority to work together for a common goal”.

Final Comments:

"This class has served as an eye-opener as to what the real world can be. In the beginning it was frustrating and confusing. Then came what I refer to as "the level-out stage". At this stage, I was comfortable because I knew what I was supposed to do, what information to look and ask for. At the end, I was so proud of the work our team did. I think all our efforts were worth it. Thanks for giving me and the rest of the MHA students this opportunity and exposure."

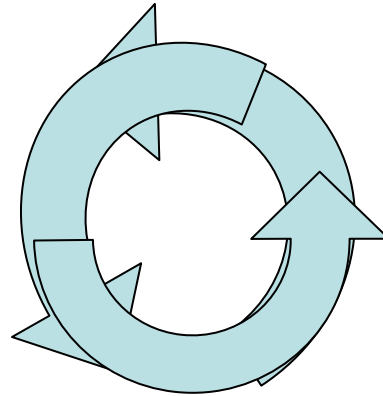
"Overall, I think it was a wonderful experience. I think OMC 2010 was very impressed and thrilled that maybe we have done some good for the town of Orange."

Conclusion:

This project was able to enhance and strengthen the current service-learning opportunities available for our MHA students who would not normally complete any type of standardized rotation with a community agency or organization. The community-campus partnership successfully produced three collaborative projects: a strategic plan for a community hospital board, a community needs assessment survey and a benchmark comparison of the community health status based on public health department interviews and programs. MHA students overwhelmingly indicated satisfaction with the service-learning opportunity. Community partners also expressed satisfaction with the partnership and requested further opportunities for collaboration.

The second goal of integrating technology to facilitate communication and project development activities for a service-learning course was also successful. The web-based platform Blackboard™ provided opportunities for faculty, students and community members to make communication and information sharing much more effective. This project will hopefully provide a model for other institutions to consider as they incorporate service-learning experiences into their health administration students' preparation and curriculum.

Part 8 - References



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Resources

Service-Learning:

The Annie E. Casey Foundation: <http://www.aecf.org>

Campus Compact: <http://www.compact.org>

Campus Compact is a national coalition of colleges and universities committed to the civic purposes of higher education and is funded by the Pew Charitable trusts. Campus compact is promoting work that develops students' citizenship skills and values, encourages community-university and support faculty to integrate public and community engagement into their teaching and research.

The Center for Healthy Communities – Service-learning:

<http://www.med.wright.edu/CHC>

The Center for Community Health Education Research and Services, Inc. (CCHERS) <http://www.cchers.org>

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH):

<http://www.ccph.info>

Community–Campus Partnership for Health is a nonprofit organization that promotes health through partnerships between communities and educational institutions (www.ccph.info).

The Community Health Scholars Program (CHSP):

<http://www.sph.umich.edu/chsp/>

The Corporation for National and Community Service: <http://www.cns.gov>

Helen Fuld Health Trust HSBC Bank USA, Trustee: <http://www.fuld.org>

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation: <http://www.wkkf.org>

The National Library of Medicine (NLM): <http://nml.gov/psr/>

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC): <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/>

The National Service-learning Clearing House:

<http://www.servicelearning.org/>

This organization offers Toolkits that provide information and strategies for practitioners, teacher, student leaders, and community activities interested in creating or enhancing service-learning programs.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships: <http://www.oup.org>

Community Focus:

Guidestar is a listing service that provides research access and financial information for 800,000 nonprofits

<http://www.guidestar.com>

Center for Service-Learning. University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Service-learning GuideBook 2001-2002. <http://www.uwec.edu/SL>

The Network. Towards Unity for Health is a non-governmental organization in official relationship with the World Health Organization.

<http://www.the-networktufh.org>

Health Administration Focus:

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health Bibliography (available only on the CCPH website): <http://www.futurehealth.ucsf.edu/ccph.html>

Center for Community Involvement, Miami-Dade College:

<http://www.mdcc.edu/cci/facultyinformation.html>

About the Author

Anne M. Hewitt, is Assistant Director and Assistant Professor of the Master in Healthcare Administration (MHA) Program in the Center for Public Service at Seton Hall University. She received her Ph.D. from Temple University where the American Lung Association awarded a grant to Dr. Hewitt for her doctoral dissertation study. In her faculty role, she is internship and practicum advisor for all healthcare graduate students, teaches two service-learning courses for the healthcare administration track students and is adjunct instructor in the online MHA program.

Dr. Hewitt provides program evaluation and grant review assistance to various public organizations as well as healthcare non-profit organizations. In addition to her health publications, she serves as a reviewer for several public and community health journals and has presented nationally for SOPHE (Society of Public Health Educators), AUPHA (Association of University Programs in Health Administration) and NASPAA (National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration). Dr. Hewitt's

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She is currently a state board member of the American Lung Association of New Jersey and an appointed state member to the New Jersey Interagency Council on Osteoporosis. Dr. Hewitt is also a member of Kappa Omicron Nu and Sigma Beta Delta.