Integrating Service-Learning into Teacher Education
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Introduction
Over the past five years many colleges and universities have engaged in attempts to integrate service-learning (SL) into their teacher education (TE) curriculums (e.g., Olszewski & Bussler, 1993; Toole, Gomez & Allum, 1992). Integration of SL into TE implies work in two areas: 1) using service-learning as a pedagogical technique in the higher education setting, and 2) teaching post-secondary teachers-in-training to integrate SL into their repertoire of teaching techniques for use with K-12 students. Each of these spheres has some unique issues for the teacher educator. This article will attempt to highlight some of the critical issues we have encountered as we have attempted to accomplish both of these goals during the past three years at Augsburg College. In addition, we will review the particular integration model we have proposed. While this model may not be fit at some other institutions, it may set certain parameters in order to begin planning for SL integration at your institution.

Part I: Integrating Service-Learning into the Teacher Education Program at Augsburg College: One Model

Core Beliefs
In developing our model, we have attempted to clarify a set of core beliefs about SL. Here are several quotes which convey these core beliefs:

> "… student learning and development through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet real…(school)…needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school...The service-learning is integrated into the students' academic curriculum…" (Kielsmeyer, 1990).

> "To be defined as a legitimate instructional technique, service-learning must deliver a rigorous academic experience for students. Service-learning always incorporates reflection on the service activity and its application to the content domain under investigation. Exemplary service-learning must also incorporate opportunities for the development of higher-order thinking skills, e.g., decision making, problem-solving, interpersonal skill building, cooperation, etc.

> Service-learning, among other things that we have learned, and which form the backbone of emerging definitions of "service-learning," is the critical importance of "synergy" and mutual "power sharing." Service-learning is minimally a three-legged stool in which the interests and needs of the community, the student, and the academic institution must be balanced. Each entity must be given and must take an equitable responsibility for the service and learning" (Hesser, 1994, p. 5).

> "The unique combination of service and learning in the service-learning approach gives learners a unique opportunity to "do good" and at the same time realize more effective cognitive retention of important academic concepts" (Erickson, 1994).

We also endeavour to abide by the *Ten Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning* (Hounet & Paulsen, 1989). These core beliefs form the nucleus of this model for infusing service-learning into the TE program at Augsburg College.

While we believe it is imperative that individuals licensed to be K-12 teachers through our TE programs should have the competency to pursue such learning activities in their classrooms, the difficulty lies in reaching this goal when our curricula have little or no room for including additional content elements or course credits. The following model proposes a structure for accomplishing the task of producing beginning level teachers who can utilize the methodology of service-learning without proposing additional coursework.

Model

Phase I: Exposure The initial fieldwork experience for students in both the elementary and secondary education programs is in our introductory course, Orientation to Education in an Urban Setting (see Figure 1 for a graphic representation of the model). This class reviews American educational history and philosophy as well as involves students in a brief fieldwork practicum. Students are typically involved in a minimum of 30 hours of work in an elementary, middle school or secondary classroom. It is during this first course that Phase I of the model can take place. This phase includes a six-step process:

> Step 1: A class assignment requiring students to write down their personal needs/goals for the experience.
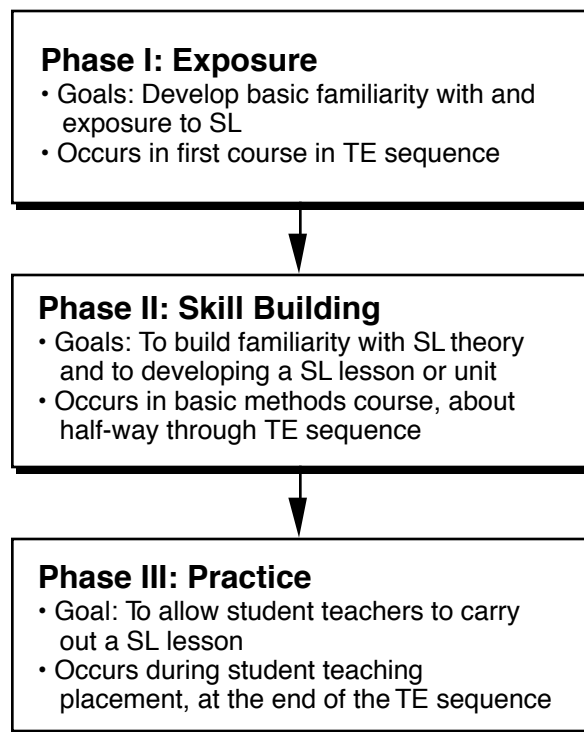> Step 2: A class assignment requiring students to discuss and identify in writing the ways in which the classroom teacher to which he/she is assigned wants to use him/her.
> Step 3: Class discussion (small group) of how students can reconcile their personal needs/goals and fulfill teacher expectations.
> Step 4: Ongoing reflection in the form of individual journaling, group and or class reflections during the semester.
> Step 5: Final class discussion/reflection on the benefits and effects of involvement.
> Step 6: Identification of this as a service-learning methodology and direct instruction on service-learning.

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│ Phase I: Exposure                        │
│ • Goals: Develop basic familiarity with and │
│   exposure to SL                         │
│ • Occurs in first course in TE sequence  │
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│ Phase II: Skill Building                 │
│ • Goals: To build familiarity with SL theory │
│   and to developing a SL lesson or unit  │
│ • Occurs in basic methods course, about  │
│   half-way through TE sequence           │
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│ Phase III: Practice                      │
│ • Goal: To allow student teachers to carry │
│   out a SL lesson                        │
│ • Occurs during student teaching         │
│   placement, at the end of the TE sequence │
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Figure 1: Model for Developing SL Knowledge Base and Methodology in Pre-service Teacher Education Students

Phase II: Skill Building will take place in Creating Learning Environments (CLE), our basic methods course. It is in this course that we introduce and practice teaching methods and strategies. This phase involves more direct instruction about service-learning as a teaching and learning methodology and requires some personal application of various approaches. (An excellent video tape entitled Service-Learning: Transforming Education (Spies, 1995) reviews key SL concepts and illustrates SL in K-12 school settings.) Students in CLE typically engage in a second fieldwork placement at this time, and it is in this fieldwork placement that they must carry out their application of teaching methods. These projects would typically be very short lessons, which can make full implementation of a SL project very difficult.

Phase III: Practice will occur during the student teaching or internship experience. Students would be required to design and implement a service-learning experience with their K-12 students (as appropriate) and/or be involved in service-learning at the student teaching site. Of course, written reflection, interaction with the supervisor, and small group reflection are also part of Phase III.

Phase I of this model for infusion has been designed and was implemented in the spring semester, 1995. The other phases will be implemented during the 1995-96 school year. This work requires the involvement of those individuals who teach these classes and best

understand how to produce effective learning experiences within the parameters of those courses.

Evaluation activities administered by our Community Service-Learning Office are distributed at the end of each course in which SL is offered. These surveys are promptly tabulated and returned to each instructor within several weeks of the end of the course. Several critical issues are examined: appropriateness of the community sites, success of SL activities used in this course (e.g., appropriate training and orientation, adequate reflection activities). The community SL coordinator initiates several review sessions with interested faculty in order to analyze the aggregate findings from these surveys. These meetings also afford faculty the opportunity to compare experiences and share solutions to common problems.

Part II: Roadblocks to Successful Implementation

<u>What are the Factors We Face?</u>: When we attempt to integrate SL into a school program, we are most likely engaging in a substantial attempt at institutional change. This change has the potential to impact many areas of the school environment (Toole, et al., 1992). There are multiple issues to consider when planning a program of implementing change in schools. One list includes the following concerns:

1. Different social and cultural milieus;
2. Different school organizational structures;
3. Age and background of student population;
4. Pedagogic demands of students and teachers;
5. Curricular requirements;
6. Multiplicity of learning tasks;
7. Lack of consensus about the best teaching methods and learning strategies;
8. Lack of economic resources; and
9. Institutional inertia to change (Sancho Gil, 1994).

While there are many bibliographic resources which can help in clarifying these issues and making the case for inclusion of SL in a school's curriculum (see e.g., Batchelder & Root, 1994; Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Furco, 1994; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1994; Covey, 1994; *Equity and Excellence in Education,* 1993, Vol. 26; Jones, 1992; Howard, 1993; Kendall & Associates, 1990), any one of these issues alone can sink one's well-intentioned plans. In this regard, we can only recommend bringing as large a group together as you can to develop some broad ownership for the problem. This community-building process is slow (it has taken us 3 years just to get this far) and not particularly efficient, but it protects you from being a "lone ranger" with an agenda who can be easily marginalized and outflanked by shallow critics.

<u>No "Help" Please</u>: During the past three years, we have worked to build ownership in order to combat marginalization and the "helpful" colleague syndrome. By "helpful" we mean the syndrome by which someone offers to "help" you with *your* work. One doesn't help with one's *own* work (just like you don't "babysit" your own children). We wanted a majority of the department's faculty to see SL integration as their work, not someone else's work with which they might help. How did we attempt this? By giving away as much of the project as we could, making others responsible for key features for which they would be more responsible than anyone else.

For example, if your course was targeted for SL integration, why should someone else develop the programming for you? You have the most at stake, therefore you should take most of the responsibility. If a faculty member were to develop a plan and attempt to

impose or influence another faculty member to do it their way, both could waste a lot of valuable energy dancing around power and control issues. Instead, we believe it is better (if not more efficient) to empower the new faculty member to take the job and make it their own.

Influencing someone else to take on this sort of ownership is not a quick and efficient path to SL integration. We have found it takes a great deal of time and patience. It should also be noted that we have the benefit a a very favorable campus climate in support of SL. Nevertheless, we believe this "giving it away" method is the best strategy to avoid half-hearted (and short-lived) commitments from "helpful" faculty.

Not Enough SL Trained Teacher Supervisors: One of the apparent frustrations with innovating in this area is that sometimes we train and motivate students in the theory and practice of SL only to let them down when they are unable to practice SL with the full support of the schools in which they teach. Originally we thought we should make a resource list of all K-12 teachers in Minneapolis practicing SL so we could call on these practioners for student teaching placements. The problem was, of course, that we did not have enough K-12 practioners—even in Minneapolis where most public schools have service-learning projects and funding. We are now strategizing about ways to assist student teachers who are placed with non-SL teachers, in the hope that if we are clear with the cooperating teacher up front that a SL project is part of the package, they will at least not hinder the student teacher's attempts to use SL. We are intrigued by the possibility that our student teachers may be a means by which SL becomes more deeply entrenched in our community. It can also be a positive experience for the student teacher to be in the position of being an pedagogical "expert" vis-á-vis their supervising teacher.

Too Much of a Good Thing?: While our work focuses on the infusion of SL into the mandatory TE curriculum, it does not preclude the use of SL in other TE courses. We currently have at least four other course titles in our program (including Educational Psychology, Human Relations, Children's Literature and Techniques of Teaching Reading) in which SL is employed as a pedagogical choice by individual instructors. This could create problems if a particular student were fortunate (or unfortunate!) enough to have three or four SL-enhanced courses during the same academic term. (In the case of three semester-long courses, the amount of combined fieldwork time could exceed 100 hours.) At Augsburg, each instructor is given the option of allowing fieldwork placements to be combined with others: either other SL course placements, or with other pre-student teaching fieldwork. When more than one education department course is involved, this combining of SL placements is relatively easy. It may be much more difficult if the student was attempting to combine SL placements from very different academic disciplines.

One suggestion we are discussing is having a pre-determined ratio established for scaling-down excessive placement hours for students taking 3 or 4 SL-enhanced courses, e.g., students might do 75% of the required course hours when they take 3 courses with SL, and 50% of the hours if they have 4 SL courses.

How Do We Change Anyway?: Another issue in attempting to implement change in educational institutions might be the weakness of our models for change. Typical linear change models might not be sufficient to account for the complex institutional and personal dynamics within schools (Fullan, 1994). Most models for change predict a straight-line path between where you are and where you're going (ironically, see our Figure 1). But these sorts of linear models are major simplifications. They do not account for the social and personal factors which can make or break a particular initiative. They often don't account for the the complex organic nature of school communities. Once

again, our advice is the same: pull together a broad-based group of faculty, staff, students and community members to slowly develop unique initiatives for your community that respond authentically to your community's needs (by community, we mean your college/university community, your local schools, and the neighborhood).

Whether we're talking about infusing SL into TE programs or K-12 schools, it is hard to predict the kinds of factors which will inhibit or enhance our chances for success. In our case, we are helped by the fact that the institutional spirit of the times at Augsburg College is clearly in support of SL. We have spoken with members of other college and K-12 faculties who must be very careful what they say for fear that someone may ridicule them in a faculty meeting. Once again, the clear message is to organize yourself early, move slowly, and develop authentic community partnerships based on genuine reciprocity.

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