

Engaged Scholarship and Collaborative Service-Learning in Refugee Resettlement: Potential and Challenges



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Scholarly Inspirations

- **Community Service Providers & Clients**
- Engaged Scholarship Literature: E. Boyer (1996); P. Freire (1970)
- Transformative Learning Theory: Mezirow (1991)
- Anthropology of Refugees: B. Harrell-Bond, E. Colson, D. Haines, J. Holtzman, M. Agier
- Service-Learning in Anthropology: A. Keene
- Personal: Bill Moyers; Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (2009) *The Third Chapter: Passion, Risk, and Adventure in the 25 Years After 50*.
- **My Students**



Cross-Cultural Experiential Learning



- Language
- Pop Culture
- Food*
- Dress
- Dance
- Religion
- Politics



Cross-Cultural Lessons in Social Justice



- The Refugee Experience
- Human Rights and Morality
- Ethnocentrism & Racism
- Kinship & Gender Relations
- Assimilation & Identity
- Political Negligence
- Inequality & Poverty

Community Service Activities



- Befriending; cultural brokering
- ELL and homework tutoring
- Health care assistance
- Capacity building: employment assistance; cultural adjustment; agency internships; material needs
- Community engagement
- Awareness raising; advocacy

Awareness and Advocacy



Illinois Coalition
for Immigrant and
Refugee Rights

- 661 blog posts; 285 comments
- Online educational videos
- Campus film & panel events (3)
- NIH Fellowship bed bug study
- Campus partnerships among affiliated social justice causes
- Linkages with immigrant and refugee rights organizations, & community service providers

HEARTLAND
ALLIANCE for Human Needs & Human Rights



USA FOR



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

refugeeONE



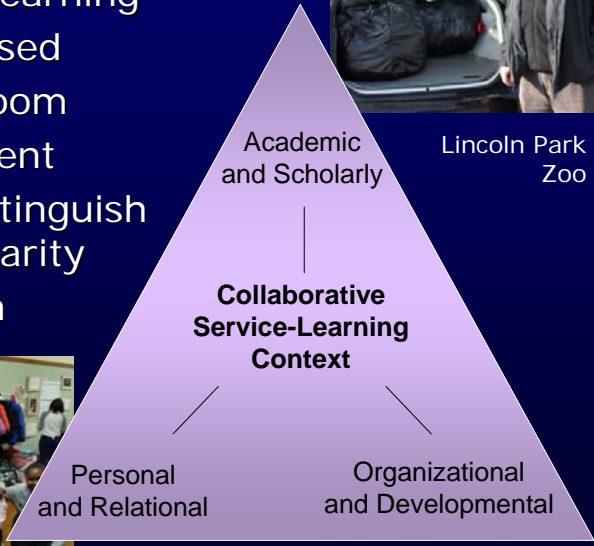
Community Events

- World Refugee Day
- Holiday party events
- Free Market events



Pedagogical Goals

- Collaborative Learning
- Community Based
- Beyond Classroom
- Civic Engagement
- Learning to distinguish justice from charity
- Transformation



Lincoln Park Zoo

Audubon Elementary School

How Is This Experience Transformative?

- Best and most effective way to learn about oneself is to learn about other cultures and ways they differ so much from ours. (1)
- Learning about ourselves is a movement toward personal growth and development. (2)
- Cross-cultural encounters provide the opportunity for personal growth because disorienting experiences must be embraced and surmounted in the process. (3)

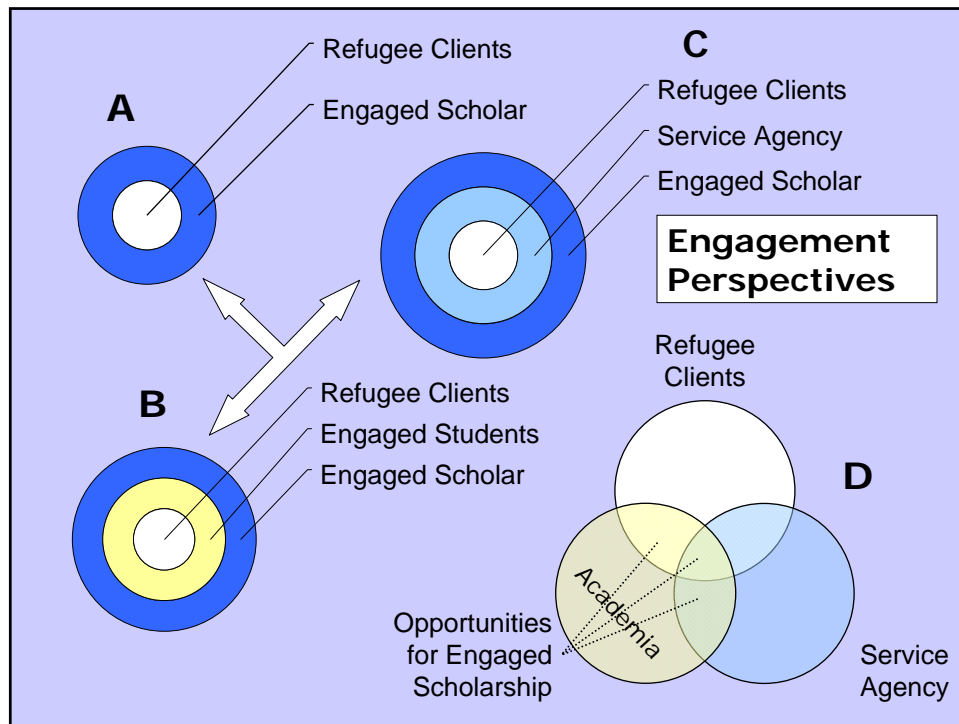
(1) Hall, E. (1992) *An Anthropology of Everyday Life*. Doubleday, NY

(2) Adler, P. (1975) The Transitional Experience: An Alternative View of Culture Shock. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 15:13-23.

(3) Montuori, A. and U. Fahim (2004) Cross-Cultural Encounter as an Opportunity for Personal Growth. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 44:243-265.

Mechanisms of Transformation

- Need for practical application of concepts: culture, cultural relativity, ethnocentrism.
- Partner and group collaborations.
- Exposure to cultural alternatives:
 - Focus on relationship vs. task
 - Focus on collective vs. individual
 - Polychronic, nonlinear view of time
 - Subtle, indirect means of expression
 - Concern with harmony & saving face



Vetting Collaborative Scholarship

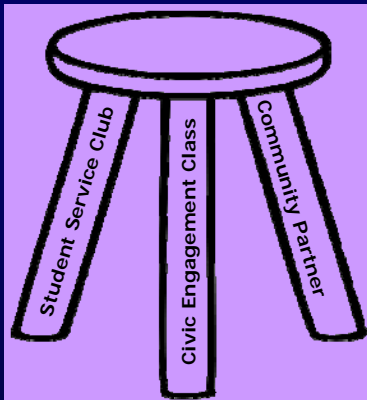
- *igNation* Refugee Outreach Blog
- Central States Anthropological Society
- Chicago Area Undergrad Research Symposium
- Loyola Undergrad Research Symposium
- Loyola Focus on Teaching
- National Refugee and Immigrant Conference
- Loyola Community Engagement Symposium
- Society for Applied Anthropology
- International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement



Main Challenges



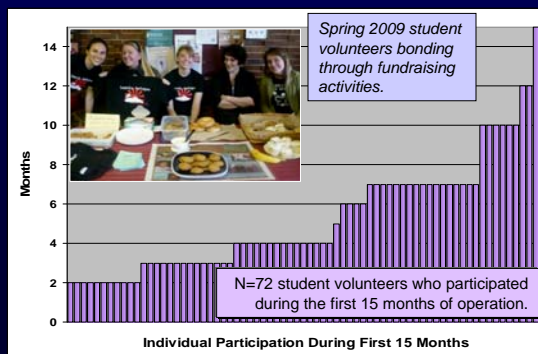
- Linkage with pedagogy
- Topic interdisciplinarity
- Academic cycles limit program development
- Communication barriers
- Health and safety concerns
- Emotional connections
- Demanding clients
- Personality/Cultural conflicts
- Learning to distinguish justice versus charity



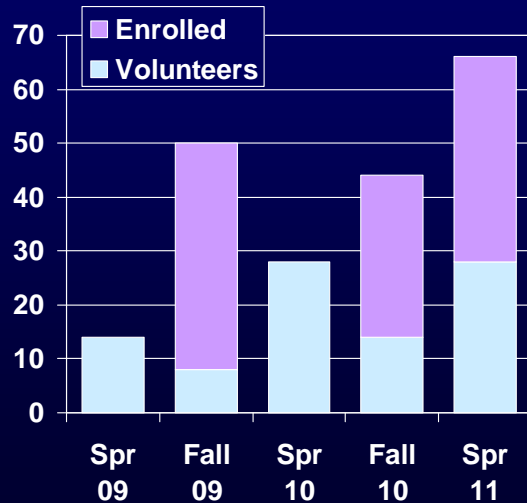
Seeking Sustainability

- Responsible action
- Dependence on faculty
- Monitoring student engagement

65%	Exceed 3 mos.
38%	Exceed 6 mos.
14%	Exceed 9 mos.



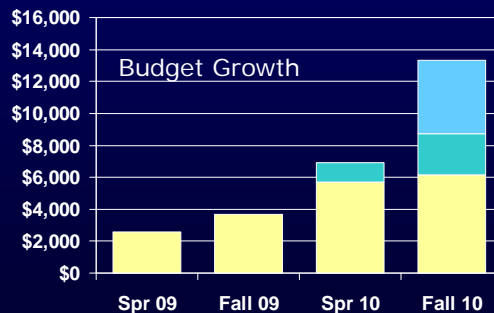
Growth in Program Participation



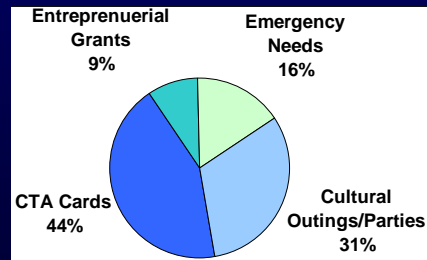
- 152 students
- 84 families
- 10 internships
- Agency Volunteer Coordinator
- honors thesis
- Collaborative faculty/student research

Building a Micro-Nonprofit

- In-kind donations can assist Matching Grant cases
- 1000 hrs average per class (3 @ \$13/hr = \$39,000)
- Material donation values = \$55,018 (estimated)
- Total financial revenue = \$26,507 (2009-2010)



■ Jesuit Conference Grant
■ Student Activities Fund
■ Fundraising/Donations



2009 expenditures; LRO formation in 2010 allowed increase in CTA expenditures.

Estimates on used items based on the Salvation Army Donation Value Guide

\$26,800	Winter Clothing Drives (3) (coats, sweaters, hats, gloves)
\$18,300	Household Items (furniture, welcome packs)
\$5,925	Health Supplies (500 hygiene kits, OTC meds)
\$2,404	418 CTA Passes (one-day passes @ \$5.75)
\$1,200	Community Events on Campus (seasonal holiday parties)
\$389	ELL Tutoring Resources (workbooks, picture dictionaries)

Organizational Challenges



- Effects of shifting gov't policies & VolAg resources.
- Dependence on faculty/staff availability.
- Lack of campus space for program activities.
- Structural organization.
- Communication: free agents; free riders; club members vs. enrolled students; Center for Experiential Learning.



Family Partner Program (FPP) Self-Study

- Assessment of befriending/mentoring component of this larger program.
- Ethnographic interviews of students, agency staff, and refugee clients.
- Goal: improvement of program delivery and effectiveness.

Resettlement Agency Perspective

- Good Agreement with FPP Participants:
 - How volunteers can play advocacy roles unavailable to the agency.
 - What kinds of activities should be conducted.
- Internal Disagreements:
 - How and what clients are told about the FPP.
 - What role the Volunteer Coordinator plays.
 - How volunteers are prepared for the experience.





Client Perspectives

- Value of program as a form of relocation adjustment.
- Critical role as ELL tutors.
- Length & frequency of visits.
- Duration of the program.
- Activities and roles that volunteers should play.
- Which family members should receive the most attention.



Student Perspectives

- Feelings of inadequacy in their role.
- Challenged by need for flexibility in their role in response to individual client needs.
- Problems dealing with relationship boundary negotiations & transgressions.
- Concerns about "structural negligence" in refugee services & social injustices.



Instructor's Perspective

- Opportunity to integrate service, pedagogy, and scholarly research.
- Challenge of cultivating students with sufficient capacity with detachment needed to facilitate an accurate critical perspective.
- Challenging students to see the relationship of research to service.
- Increased demands of engaged scholarship.



Self-Study Conclusions

- Agency and university would benefit from more investment in program.
- Regular volunteer training is needed.
- Faculty and students need better understanding of locally available resources for refugees.
- Routine monitoring and assessment of student volunteers is needed.
- Family partnerships would benefit from making matches closer to time of arrival and for longer durations.