CHAPTER 3

EMBEDDING SERVICE-LEARNING IN SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH GOOD PRACTICES AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The South African government's focus on higher education community engagement is reflected, among other things, in the fact that it comprises one of the key areas of quality management in the Higher Education Quality Committee's *Framework for Institutional Audits* (2004) and *Criteria for Institutional Audits* (2004). This reaffirms the position of the Department of Education's Education White Paper No. 3 (1997), in which it is contended that higher-education institutions would be able to meet the national requirement for transformation in terms of broader participation, greater responsiveness to the challenges of society, and formation of partnerships with other constituencies by demonstrating their social responsibility through community engagement.

In recent years, there has been an increasing awareness in South Africa of the experiential pedagogy of service-learning as a (potentially) valuable form of community engagement that actively involves not only staff and students but also external partners. At this time, however, very few, if any, higher-education institutions have achieved a critical mass of service-learning supporters. Hence, advocates of this pedagogy should be cognizant of the criticism and skepticism of their colleagues, as well as the reasons for this attitude, and accept the challenge to provide convincing evidence of the exceptional value that they know service-learning holds for all stakeholders. This article will reflect on the role that an honest pursuit of good practices in service-learning can fulfill in embedding

the pedagogy in institutions of higher education. It will also underscore the importance of including service-learning in quality-management systems in such a way that the quality and outcomes of service-learning activities are monitored and evaluated collaboratively by all stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

Introduction

Since 2002 there has been a significant increase in the levels of interest within the South African higher-education (HE) sector in the experiential pedagogy of service-learning (SL), with much emphasis on the promise that it holds in terms of the apparent (or perceived) transformative qualities that it possesses. Practitioners working in the field of SL, however, are constantly confronted with the fact that SL is also a contentious and contested phenomenon, viewed with deep suspicion and skepticism by an academic cadre that rightfully values and treasures the discipline, rigor, and high standards that have been regarded as the hallmarks of scholarly work for many decades. Hence the problem statement posed in this chapter: What contribution can quality management of service-learning make toward embedding this educational approach firmly and deeply in academia? In this regard, the premise that is taken as the point of departure is that including SL in the quality-management systems of higher-education institutions in an appropriate, convincing manner would contribute to addressing much of the (often justified) criticism and skepticism with which SL is currently regarded in South Africa.

The line of argumentation followed in this article will include a contextualization in terms of the challenge facing higher education in South Africa to find a balance between the requirement to be competitive within a globalized knowledge society on the one hand and the even more urgent call from government to transform higher education with the intention of broadening democratic participation, responsiveness to societal challenges, and partnership-building on the other hand (see, for example, DoE, 1997). Whereas community engagement (CE) is regarded as a catalyst for such transformation, SL will be considered as a vehicle for embedding CE in academic work through teaching and learning. The current reluctance of many academics to embrace SL will be considered, with specific reference to various reasons for the skepticism experienced by academics and the criticism that they have expressed in this regard.

I will argue that advocates of SL should respond constructively to the need to convince the academic rank and file that SL is governed by the same core values

and requirements as other forms of teaching and learning, albeit with additional demands pertaining to the collaborative-partnership context and approach that SL requires. I regard continuous quality-management of SL as a crucial component of embedding SL firmly and deeply into the future of South African students, academics, communities, and other partners with whom HE institutions engage. Suggestions as to how this could be achieved will be put forward, with specific reference to the role of the publication *A Good Practice Guide and Self-Evaluation Instruments for Managing the Quality of Service-Learning* (HEQC/JET, 2006), henceforth referred to as the *Good Practice Guide*.

Democratization, Transformation, and Quality Assurance—A Balancing Act in South African Higher Education

The era of Apartheid created a segregated HE system in South Africa that was fraught with inequalities. After the restructuring process, 21 HE institutions (compared to 36 previously) were formed (cf. DoE, 2002, pp. 1–6). Most of these institutions are currently still struggling to find a way through the structural, programmatic, philosophical, and political chaos of the new hybrid entities that came into being. In addition to the restructuring process, and to further pursue its transformation goals (DoE, 1997), the Department of Education (DoE) also resolved to place a high premium on quality assurance. One of the explicit purposes of transforming higher education, which is particularly relevant to the arguments put forward in this chapter, is the development of a system that will "contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, and in particular address the diverse problems and demands of the local, national, southern African and African contexts, and uphold rigorous standards of academic quality" (DoE, 1997, p. 11, 1.14).

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE; cf. http://www.che.ac.za) was created to steer and oversee the above quality-management process on an ongoing basis, its mandate being to (1) promote quality assurance in higher education, (2) audit the quality-assurance mechanisms of HE institutions, and (3) accredit programs of higher education. In its mission statement, the HEQC's central objective is described as ensuring that HE institutions "offer education, training, research and community engagement which are of high quality and which produce socially useful and enriching knowledge as well as a relevant range of graduate skills and competencies necessary for social and economic progress" (CHE, 2002; emphasis added by author). The specific significance of the

Good Practice Guide (HEQC/JET, 2006), on which a later section of this chapter will focus, is that it was developed under the auspices of the HEQC and is thus imbued with all the authority and "staying power" that such a body brings to a process.

What HE institutions find particularly challenging is the need to balance all the (apparently) diverse demands that they are facing. An example close to home of the kind of balancing act that HE institutions are embarking on is reflected in the vision of the University of the Free State (UFS; cf. http://www.ufs.ac.za), which refers to the institution's commitment "to be an excellent, equitable and innovative university." In his inauguration speech, the former Rector and Vice-Chancellor (F. C. v. N. Fourie, 2003) eloquently pointed out that the challenge is to find ways to embrace a broad variety of goals and ideals, allowing them to coexist in a situation of creative tension, as different sides of the same coin, and not as destructive, opposing forces. Many concerned parties at the UFS are convinced that CE has the potential to be a catalyst in this regard; what the UFS should do exceptionally well, they believe, is engage with regional stakeholders to jointly search for and find innovative solutions to unique regional challenges. Successes will serve as examples of how engagement and collaboration can lead to the generation of the kind of "socially useful and enriching knowledge" that is mentioned in the HEQC's central objective (CHE, 2002—cf. above).

Within the quality-management context, the renewed emphasis on CE as a core function of HE is reflected in the *Founding Document* of the HEQC (2001), which identifies "knowledge-based community service" as one of the three areas—along with teaching/learning and research—for the accreditation and quality assurance of higher education. Subsequently, the HEQC incorporated CE and its SL component into its national quality-assurance systems. In South Africa, a philosophical and epistemological shift has taken place from the traditional, rather vaguely defined notion of "community service" toward a conceptualization of CE that emphasizes its integration with academic work. In the Glossary of the HEQC's (2004a) *Framework for Institutional Audits*, the link with teaching and research is made explicit in the definition of CE as

Initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the higher education institution in the areas of teaching and research is applied to address issues relevant to its community. Community engagement typically finds expression in a variety of forms, ranging from informal and relatively unstructured activities to formal and structured academic programmes addressed at particular community needs (service-learning programmes) (p. 15).

The national policy drivers and motivational factors behind the renewed emphasis on CE are distinctly, and understandably, political in nature and are meant to serve what some disgruntled scholars refer to as the "ideology of transformation." The contention is that, by demonstrating their social responsibility through CE, HE institutions will be able to meet the national requirements for transformation in terms of broader participation, greater responsiveness to the challenges of society, and the formation of partnerships with other constituencies. In this context, the "fitness of purpose" of individual HE institutions is based on national and regional goals, priorities, and targets. What is also relevant here, as argued by Subotzky (2000), is the notion of Mode 2 knowledge production (introduced by Michael Gibbons and colleagues) that is more open, inclusive, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial, in collaboration with external constituencies. In a recent contribution to the knowledge-production debate, Gibbons (2005, p.1) takes this argument further, contending persuasively that "the challenge for universities is to become sites for the production of socially robust knowledge," requiring conceptualizations of CE that are determined by "a new social contract between society and science."

Another policy driver is the dire need to prepare students for a rapidly changing globalized world (by enabling them to "think globally"), while also developing the knowledge, skills, and special dispositions needed to be able to "act locally" in the highly uncertain, challenging environment of a developing country. In a recent article, I (Erasmus, 2007a) have argued that effective SL prepares students for a Mode 2 society, as "a future generation of scientists and professional practitioners who will know, understand and be able to participate in the public spaces where socially robust knowledge can be produced in collaboration with triple-helix and community partners" (p. 29). It is evident that academic programs geared toward preparing students for a Mode 2 society would have to include, among other things, the following mandatory Critical Cross-field and Developmental Outcomes: development of a macro-vision of the world as a set of related systems, identification and solution of problems, effective team work, effective communication, cultural sensitivity, and most importantly, "participat[ion] as responsible citizens in the lives of local, national and global communities" (CHE, 2002). This goes hand in hand with a renewed commitment to increasing the relevance and contextualization of academic programs and curricula. Some people are convinced that the achievement of this objective can best be facilitated through the real-world experiences that lecturers and students are confronted with in curriculum-based forms of CE such as SL. At this time, however,

very few, if any, HE institutions in South Africa have achieved a "critical mass" of SL supporters. The following section will focus on the conceptualization of SL and on the importance of managing the quality of this educational approach.

Managing the Quality of SL—A Collaborative Enterprise

In recent years, there has been increasing support in certain quarters of South African higher education for the pedagogy of SL as a valuable form of CE involving active participation of higher-education staff, students, and external stakeholders. The growing support largely came about as a result of the national Community–Higher Education–Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative of the Joint Education Trust (which later became the JET Education Services section of the Trust). The CHESP initiative was launched in 1999 in partnership with the Ford Foundation and the WK Kellogg Foundation (cf. http://www.chesp.org.za). CHESP's strong link to donor organizations and universities of the USA naturally resulted in the introduction into the South African agenda of SL (also referred to in the USA as "academic service-learning") as a well-established mechanism for integrating service with the learning programs of students, and also as a preferred form of what is termed "civic engagement" in the USA.

So, why all the current hype about SL in South Africa? One might argue that, among the myriad possibilities relating to how CE could be effectuated, SL appeared on the South African horizon as a well-defined, well-considered pedagogy with committed advocates from the USA who were flown in regularly with U.S. donor funding through the CHESP initiative. All along, these experts have been able and willing to guide South African colleagues in exploring, investigating, and investing in SL.

Currently, there is a growing awareness that the quality and outcomes of SL activities should be monitored and evaluated thoroughly and that the quality management should entail a collaborative effort on the part of all stakeholders. This emphasis on joint quality management has been receiving due attention in the USA for several years now, and the importance of collaboration in this regard is also recognized within the South African HE sector, particularly in light of the special emphasis that the HEQC has been placing on quality arrangements in respect to CE and SL.

It will not serve the purpose of this chapter to embark on a typology of the forms of CE found in South African higher education (cf. HEQC/JET, 2006, pp. 13–15 for a typology of student engagement). Suffice it to say that even though the value of extracurricular, voluntary community service is acknowledged, the main emphasis is on academically integrated forms of community service such as community-based

research and SL. For obvious reasons, quality management of SL in South Africa will have to be based on the specific conceptualization of the notion for the South African context. The following is a continuously evolving definition of SL (also referred to as "community service-learning" at the UFS) that is revisited every three years as part of the Community Service policy revision process. For the purposes of delineating the parameters within which we work, SL is currently defined in the Community Service policy of the UFS (2006) as:

An educational approach involving curriculum-based, credit-bearing learning experiences in which students (a) participate in contextualised, well-structured and organised service activities aimed at addressing identified service needs in a community, and (b) reflect on the service experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the linkage between curriculum content and community dynamics, as well as to achieve personal growth and a sense of social responsibility. It requires a collaborative partnership context that enhances mutual, reciprocal teaching and learning among all members of the partnership (lecturers and students, members of the communities and representatives of the service sector). (Parenthesis added by the author.)

As indicated above, many concerned persons at the UFS and other HE institutions in South Africa believe that the South African situation requires a triad partnership more often than would be the case in a "developed" country or state because the mediating role of the service sector (public and private) becomes crucial where well-established community-based organizations are lacking. Direct partnerships with vaguely defined "community" groupings often suffer from insurmountable power imbalances, unrealistic expectations, a lack of proven representativity, and various kinds of political tensions. In South Africa, however, the service sector more often than not also suffers from what is broadly referred to as a "lack of capacity," which may imply, among other things, being understaffed, not having the required expertise among staff members, and being so caught up in internal power struggles that little enthusiasm remains for providing a service to society. The resulting complexity of SL partnerships adds considerably to the challenges inherent in developing quality-management systems for SL that allow for ongoing collaborative monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of SL activities by all stakeholders.

The next section of this chapter will comprise reflections on current reasons for skepticism within the HE sector, with some suggestions as to how to respond to the challenge of providing convincing evidence of the exceptional value that SL potentially holds for all involved.

Reluctance and Skepticism Regarding Community Service and SL

The notion of community service has featured in the mission statements of HE institutions in South Africa for many years. The vagueness of the term has rendered it rather nonthreatening, because any activity that could be regarded as comprising some form of service to any constituency could be cited as "evidence" of service being rendered to a community. References to community service in policy documents have become increasingly more specific, however, often linking community service to the notion of the transformation of higher education. For example, terms such as "community service programs" are being used more often, and in the course of time, new pedagogies such as community-based education and SL have become more prominent. In accordance herewith, it has become necessary to bring about shifts in philosophical and epistemological thinking and to embrace paradigms in which new forms of knowledge production come more strongly to the fore. It would appear, however, that the majority of South African academics are still very skeptical about these changes, and many seem bound to remain so. Some of the most prominent reasons for this that have emerged at the UFS (most of which will be familiar to all those who work in the field of CE) are mentioned below as they relate to (1) philosophical, epistemological, and paradigmatic issues; (2) pragmatic policy and management issues; and (3) issues of quality and scholarship.

1. Philosophical, Epistemological, and Paradigmatic Issues

In an interview with a younger colleague, a senior academic staff member on the UFS campus stated categorically that community service could not be regarded as a task of the university, and that he regarded SL as a "fad" about which people are "bright-eyed and bushy tailed" but that that will soon pass. Another UFS scholar also voiced his resistance in no uncertain terms in the UFS-based academic journal of which the senior staff member quoted above is the editor-in-chief: Visagie (2005) saw fit to appeal to no less an authority than Jacques Derrida to affirm and confirm his "deconstruction" of community service as a form of "ideological colonisation" of the university.

Those who are convinced that CE should still be regarded as a *raison d'être* for higher education might be tempted to take an oppositional stance when faced with such opinions. It would be more constructive and helpful, however, to inquire into the reasoning behind these opinions, and to examine the ways in which concepts such as "community service" and "service-learning" are presented in discourses on and off campus.

Butin (2006) questions the limits of SL in the USA in a thought-provoking paper, pointing out, among other things, the tendency among advocates to position SL "*as a politics* to transform higher education and society," leading to the creation of nothing less than a grand narrative for "higher-education-as-service-learning" (p. 478). Several of Butin's warnings should be heeded timeously by South African scholars in the field who are faced with the challenge of not becoming overzealous, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of convincing HE leadership that what Butin refers to as the fundamental gap between the rhetoric and reality of SL aspirations (p. 474) has to be bridged.

In some instances, academic staff regard their fields or subfields as basic (versus applied) fields, and on that basis, they wish to be exempted from having to engage in real-world situations in which their students will be able to "learn and serve in partnerships for sustainable development" (as specified in the community service slogan of the UFS). In response to this, one might refer colleagues to the requirement of ensuring that all students fulfill the Critical Cross-field and Developmental Outcomes mentioned above.

Regarding the work of those academic staff members who have already embarked on the implementation of SL modules (or: courses), the question has been asked as to whether their work has led to any real paradigmatic or epistemological shifts as yet (cf. M. Fourie, 2003, who pointed out that, by the end of 2002, no evidence was available that SL at the UFS had tapped into local epistemologies). A systematic inquiry into this matter needs to be undertaken, building on the seminal work done by McMillan (2002), who focuses on "knowledge reproduction processes in service-learning," and O'Brien (2005), who argues for the specific grounding of SL in the South African context. Such an investigation should build on the notion that the knowledge society is currently infused with "possibilities to explore alternative, innovative knowledge flows in order to enable the political empowerment of communities to foster their entry into the knowledge era on their own terms, as knowledge producers and users," as Bawa (2003, p. 50) puts it.

2. Pragmatic Policy and Management Issues

Other, more pragmatic reasons for the apparent lack of enthusiasm for SL at most HE institutions include factors such as a general resistance to more change, along with other issues that need to be addressed through institutional commitments in respect of policy and practice, such as:

- Under-staffing in academic departments, resulting in pressing time constraints

- Financial constraints and uncertainty regarding sustained funding
- Insufficient rewards and recognition in terms of performance appraisal and promotion criteria[1]
- The need for the management of various security risks, ranging from muggings, hijacking, rape, and other forms of violent crime. Even though students are exposed to all of these risks wherever they are in any case, lecturers are nervous as a result of the fact that any disasters in this regard would have implications for themselves and the institution if the events were to occur during official SL time.

What is important to note at this stage is that the DoE has been reluctant to adopt a CE policy until now, which implies that it is not yet obliged to provide financial support for CE endeavors. Such endeavors have proved to be quite costly in terms of staff time and because of additional expenses for transport and supporting the development agendas of external partners. The implication is that HE administrators will have to be sufficiently convinced of the value of CE initiatives to be induced to (1) make provision for such initiatives in the central institutional budget, (2) include CE in performance appraisal and conditions of employment, and (3) enter into partnerships that would link HE academic programs with government skills-development initiatives, which would also open up new sources of revenue.

3. Issues of Quality and Scholarship

There is a prevalent attitude of skepticism in many quarters regarding the quality of the work, for example, in terms of the degree of rigor that can actually be achieved, in the context of CE, from the point of view of scholarship and research. In a nutshell: the question has arisen as to whether we can clearly define the academic, development (cf. M. Fourie, 2003), and/or partnership (cf. Marais & Botes, 2005) goals that we are pursuing by means of CE and SL. What, exactly, would constitute a "scholarship of engagement"? At this stage, it is still essential to focus on establishing the various aspects of SL as valid sources of and avenues to scholarly investigation, requiring those who follow this approach to integrate and link SL with research in such a way that their work also contributes to the scholarships of discovery and application through CE.

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1   Cf. Erasmus (2007b) for the results of a service-learning staff survey, which underscore these concerns.

With reference to the South African context within which SL is currently taking root, Hay (2003, p. 190) points out that even though this pedagogy could undeniably be an effective means of contributing to the alleviation of the harsh realities experienced by South African communities while also providing a powerful way to educate students and HE institutions toward becoming more responsive, it should not be viewed as "a panacea for the deep-rooted socio-economic and educational problems of communities." Hay's (pp. 189–190) call for thorough assessment and evaluation of the outcomes of SL resonates well with the line of argumentation followed in the present chapter. I agree that, to tap into the full potential of SL, evaluation of outcomes for a variety of interested role-players at various levels is required; an honest pursuit of good practices in SL will necessarily underscore the importance of including SL in quality-management systems in such a way that the quality and outcomes of SL activities are monitored and evaluated collaboratively by all stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

South African advocates of SL as a means to increase the relevance and contextualization of the teaching, learning, and research activities of HE institutions need to take up the challenge of providing ongoing evidence that quality-management is regarded as a vital element of the work. The many examples to be found in this regard in the work of colleagues from the USA and, to a lesser extent, in that of colleagues from other countries, provide us with useful models for benchmarking purposes. The *Good Practice Guide* (HEQC/JET, 2006), a quality-management instrument developed by South African academics for and within the South African SL context, will be discussed next, with specific reference to its potential contribution to local benchmarking and quality enhancement.

Embedding SL through Good Practices and Continuous Improvement

Several examples exist, mostly from the USA, of indicators of and self-assessment tools for CE and SL, some of which are useful for providing a broader perspective on "scholarship of engagement." Brukardt, Holland, Percy, and Zimpher (2006) address the question "What's next for university engagement?" in a manner that clearly constitutes an attempt to move decisively beyond "calls to action" toward a recognition that, for engagement to be effective, "institution-wide effort, deep commitment at all levels, and leadership by both campus and community" are required (p. 244). The authors identify and discuss six promising practices (pp. 244–245), providing provocative arguments about what it would require to take CE to its logical conclusion. Two of the

"promising practices" that are particularly thought-provoking deal, respectively, with the forging of partnerships "as the overarching framework for engagement" and with the creation of "radical institutional change."

The "Institutional Self-Assessment Tool" for "Building Capacity for Community Engagement" that was developed by Gelmon, Seifer, Kauper-Brown, and Mikkelson (2005) has been chosen as the framework for the development of a tool to be utilized in a national survey of higher-education CE in South Africa. This initiative, again jointly undertaken by JET Education Services (CHESP), the HEQC, and representatives from various HE institutions, under the guidance of Sherril Gelmon of Portland State University, promises to provide the means through which longitudinal studies of CE in South Africa could be undertaken for benchmarking purposes in the future.

An informative perspective from Australia, by Steve Garlick (Regional Knowledge Works, University of the Sunshine Coast), is provided in a paper presented at the InsideOut Conference on Higher Education and Community Engagement (2003). Garlick's contribution is entitled "Benchmarking 'Good Practice' University-Region Engagement Efficiency." As the title indicates, the paper deals with designing a benchmarking regime for university-region engagement; the relevant phases are all conducted in a "collaborative learning exchange environment" (p. 7). The regional community focus of benchmarking, as proposed by Garlick, is particularly relevant to the South African situation, where HE institutions are constantly reminded of the need to take the perspective of external stakeholder interests into account in their engagement activities. Garlick (p. 9) further argues that the university and community partnering in an engagement-benchmarking exercise should "identify and define their own categories and agree on the contextual environment in which the category sits with respect to their own circumstances."

The South African SL agenda was largely influenced by those exponents from the USA who were directly involved through the CHESP initiative, such as Robert Bringle and Julie Hatcher (1995, 2005; Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis; cf. IUPUI Portfolio: Civic Engagement), Sherril Gelmon (Portland State University), and others. At the time when the Good Practice Guide was developed, however, the levels of emancipation and "empowerment" that had been achieved through our own experience and practice had already reached a point where we could also rely on our own experience in the field of SL, to a large extent.

The national HE quality assurance agenda holds the promise of continuous improvement through self-assessment, peer evaluation, and institutional audits at

various levels. The Good Practice Guide provides an example of how this objective could be achieved, regarding SL as one of the manifestations of CE. The very fact that CE features in the HEQC's Criteria for Institutional Audits (2004b) is already impacting the way in which HE institutions view the importance of this recently refocused core function:

Criterion 18

Quality-related arrangements for community engagement are formalised and integrated with those for teaching and learning, where appropriate, and are adequately resourced and monitored (p. 19).

The HEQC's SL priorities are evident from its Criteria for Institutional Audits (2004b) and Criteria for Programme Accreditation (2004c). In Criterion 7 of the Criteria for Institutional Audits, it is stipulated, under (iv), that the following expectations are applicable in the case of institutions with SL as part of their mission:

• Service-learning programmes which are integrated into institutional and academic planning, as part of the institution's mission and strategic goals;

• Adequate resources and enabling mechanisms (including incentives) to support the implementation of service-learning, including staff and student capacity development; and

• Review and monitoring arrangements to gauge the impact and outcomes of service-learning programmes on the institution, as well as on other participating constituencies (p. 11).

In response to these stipulations of the Criteria for Institutional Audits, a national project was launched by the CHESP initiative of JET Education Services in 2004 to develop a set of indicators that would represent the good SL practices that HE institutions in South Africa would aim to achieve. During the second half of 2005, I coordinated and managed the final stages of one section of this project, which by then was also being conducted in collaboration with the HEQC. As has been mentioned above, one of the outcomes of this collaboration is the publication of A Good Practice Guide and Self-evaluation Instruments for the Development and Management of the Quality of Service-learning (2006). Contributions were made over a period of time by lecturers from various HE institutions and their partners working in the field, and some of the indicators and reflective questions included in the Good Practice Guide were derived specifically from experience gained at the UFS.

The fact that the Good Practice Guide bears the hallmark of the HEQC is important, despite the following disclaimer:

It is important to note that the *Guide* is not a prescriptive checklist or an expansion of the HEQC's criteria, but should be adapted and applied in a way that is sensitive to institutional context and mission (p. 7).

To ensure that the *Good Practice Guide* would be comprehensive, the contributors decided that it should contain good practice guidelines (i.e., recommended indicators and arrangements for managing the quality of SL) relevant to the different levels at which SL functions within the institution: institutional; faculty and/or school; program or qualification; and module or course, making provision for the various entities and qualification structures used by institutions. Each of the instruments contains a management information section, a full set of indicators, appropriate reflective questions, and examples of evidence, with the explicit provision (and consolation) that all of these "can be adapted by institutions for self-review purposes" (HEQC/JET, 2006, p. 20).

For the purposes of aligning the *Good Practice Guide* with other documents published by the HEQC, it was decided to follow the same approach to quality management that HE staff had become accustomed to. Managing quality in the core functions of HE institutions involves four evaluative stages, namely (1) input, (2) process, (3) output and impact, and (4) review. These evaluative stages therefore also form the basis of the framework for managing the quality of SL:

INPUT with regard to the development of service-learning (i.e. mission statement and values; policies and regulations; structures; resources; and strategic and action plans);
PROCESS-related arrangements for the implementation of service-learning (i.e. management strategies; implementation support, capacity building, and partnership development);
Monitoring and evaluation to gauge the OUTPUT and IMPACT of service-learning; and
REVIEWING of service-learning modules/courses (HEQC/JET, 2006, p. 8).

In line with the HEQC's expectations and procedures, it is advised that self-evaluation should comprise the primary mechanism for managing the quality of SL in the different functional units. Such self-evaluation should be complemented and validated by external peer evaluation. If necessary, this process must be followed by an improvement and development plan, outlining envisaged actions to address the gaps or weaknesses identified during the evaluation process (HEQC/JET, 2006, p. 9).

The pilot testing of the self-evaluation instruments of the *Good Practice Guide* was undertaken at the UFS and was also conducted in the context of two SL modules

of the Central University of Technology toward the end of 2005. The instruments were then refined, and the full *Good Practice Guide* was submitted for publication by the HEQC. It was released June 2006. At the UFS, the *Good Practice Guide* is made available to staff to serve as a tool for continuous self-improvement in SL.

In preparation for the institutional audit of the UFS that was conducted by the HEQC in October 2006, experience gained during the pilot testing of the instruments proved to be invaluable. Section 7 of the UFS Institutional Audit Report that was prepared for the HEQC audit team is devoted to "Quality arrangements for community service." The Institutional Self-evaluation Instrument of the *Good Practice Guide* was utilized as the framework for this section of the Report[2]. It is significant for those involved in SL at the UFS that the HEQC's Audit Panel responded by commending the UFS for its continued commitment and initiatives to establish CE as a credible core function, specifically mentioning the focus on reconceptualizing its activities in this area from a "community service" perspective to a community service-learning and research perspective—in an attempt to link the core functions in a cycle in which they inform each other. The fact is that SL constitutes a major element in these efforts of the university.

One example of how the *Good Practice Guide* was influenced by local experience relates to the special emphasis placed in the Guide on the requirement that the executive management of HE institutions should formalize overarching partnerships with the executive leadership bodies of provincial, regional, and local government and other sectors. Experience has shown that public statements by HE leadership about becoming an "engaged university" do not necessarily translate into high-level dialogue being undertaken by the leaders regarding the growth, development, and service priorities of those sectors with which we need to collaborate. This often leaves those staff members working at the coalface with the responsibility of engaging in cooperative relationships with external partners, without the sanctioning and relative safety of such overarching partnerships that would create a much more enabling environment for them to work in.

Indicator 5 (HEQC/JET, 2006, pp. 39–40) of the Institutional Level Self-evaluation Instrument specifically addresses the above issue: "Engagement, collaboration and partnerships are cornerstones of the institution's service-learning objectives." Under 5.1, the following is specified as an arrangement for managing quality in this

2 Section 7 of the Audit Report of the UFS, "Quality Arrangements for Community Service," is available at www.ufs.ac.za/servicelearning.

regard: "The institution has effective structures and processes for identification and formulation of regional engagement and collaboration."

One of the reflective questions that may guide self-evaluation in this instance is: "How are partnerships for SL aligned with regional priorities?" Three of the suggested examples of evidence in this regard are (1) documents stating regional priorities and alignment with those priorities; (2) descriptions of structures for negotiations, and their roles and responsibilities; and (3) examples of partnership agreements.

Although some have voiced the opinion that the *Good Practice Guide* tends to subject institutions and staff to a prescriptive and "technicist" approach to quality-management, in my experience it has tremendous value as a developmental tool that provides guidance through a veritable maze of aspects that have to be considered in the process of striving for good practices in the SL endeavor.

Factors that Are Likely to Determine the Future of SL in South Africa

The world is currently changing at a rate that requires a radical rethinking and reshaping of every sector of society on an ongoing basis. In 1899 John Dewey made the following comment, which is as valid now as it was then: "That this revolution should not affect education in other than formal and superficial fashion is inconceivable." William Plater's (1999) contention is that HE institutions should "change their habits of living" (i.e., be transformed) by "engaging the campus as citizen one scholar at a time," (p. 168) among other things, by ensuring that the measures of accountability become clearer and more useful in establishing and documenting actual accomplishments (Plater, 1999, p. 168). In South Africa, we might need to move faster and with more urgency than is necessary in developed countries. Our ability (or lack thereof) to provide convincing evidence of the commitment of HE institutions to achieving good practices in SL is likely to determine the future of this promising pedagogy in South Africa. Proving to local communities, service sector partners, and our own institutions that SL is worth the extra time, effort, and resources is a vital aspect in this regard, requiring strong partnerships, systematic data collection, and effective dissemination of the results of such joint investigations.

When studying CE sources from "developed" countries, what becomes obvious is that the same issues are being addressed but that the sense of urgency that has taken root in the USA is not yet visible in South Africa. This is indicative of a prevailing tendency to deny the fact that, for HE institutions in developing countries, the need to engage with local communities and other stakeholders in new and robust ways is

of paramount importance. In this regard, the following statement by Gibbons (2005, p. 1) is of particular relevance for the current debates surrounding engagement and autonomy within higher education in South Africa: "Paradoxically, it is on this development [i.e., the challenge for universities to become sites for the production of socially robust knowledge] that the future of university autonomy depends."

I propose the following as a research question for the next phase of this investigation: How and to what extent does the introduction of a self-evaluation tool for SL assist in (1) continuously improving the work, (2) changing the general perceptions regarding the quality of CE, and thus (3) furthering the cause of embedding CE ("fixing it firmly and deeply") in academia and in society simultaneously, as a fully integrated core function of higher education, equal in status to teaching and research?

Embedding CE and SL in this way will require a multi-pronged approach, addressing all the factors causing resistance that have been mentioned above. Even if we do attend to all of these aspects in the multi-pronged approach, however, our endeavors may still not be as successful as we would hope. The fact of the matter is that engagement is difficult work (Brukardt et al., 2006, p. 244); therefore, those involved in engagement have to be constantly reminded of the need to be patient, resilient, hopeful, and committed. The key questions that remain are: "Is the HE sector in South Africa ready to commit to CE?" and "Do we really have a deep understanding of the fact that HE institutions in South Africa actually do not have a choice in this matter?"

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CHAPTER 4

BUILDING ON DEWEY AND ADAMS: CONTEMPORARY MODELS OF COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING

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Sociology

Abstract

Although many universities have adopted service-learning approaches as part of their curriculum, few comprehensive analyses of the historical roots of such approaches have been conducted. Indeed, some academics seem to think civic engagement is an entirely new approach in higher education. The present chapter looks at several of the important historical figures over the past century who have developed approaches to civic engagement. In the early 20th century, John Dewey and Jane Addams laid out two distinctive approaches to the involvement of scholars in the local community. Dewey's community schools approach has been identified as a relevant model for contemporary society and is best exemplified by the West Philadelphia–University of Pennsylvania partnership. In contrast, Jane Addams and Saul Alinsky provide the basis for the Community Building and Learning Model that has been implemented through the Southeast Neighborhoods–University of Indianapolis partnership.

Service–Learning
in Higher Education

Paradigms & Challenges

Mary Moore & Phylis Lan Lin

Editors

University of Indianapolis Press
2009

About the Artist

Bonnie Kwan Huo is an award-winning international artist who was born in China, raised in Hong Kong, and received her B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and Dip.Ed. from the University of Hong Kong. Her works are included in museums, corporate and private collections. She was a visiting artist at the University of Indianapolis in 2001 and now resides in Hong Kong.

About the Painting

The dreamlike cover image painted by renowned artist Bonnie Kwan Huo evokes a sense of promise and potential, suggesting an environment conducive to the exploration of possibilities. This is certainly in keeping with the goals of this book, which invites readers to investigate paradigms, benefit from the successes of others in the field, and meet the many challenges to be found in service-learning in higher education as we all work toward a future of greater civic engagement and growing partnerships.

Title: "Untitled"
Medium: Watercolor
Year of Creation: 2008

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EMERGING SERVICE-LEARNING PARADIGMS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Mary Moore

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University of Indianapolis
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Service-Learning Paradigms in Higher Education

The editors began to conceptualize possible paradigms for service-learning in higher education in response to trends perceived in the collection of papers for this book. Four paradigms are identified: Paradigm I, Community Engagement for Community Needs; Paradigm II, Community Involvement for Student Learning; Paradigm III, Integrated Ideal-Type; and Paradigm IV (Emerging Paradigm), International and/or Interdisciplinary. This introduction attempts to delineate, contrast, and integrate the paradigms and subsequently to connect the paradigms back to the chapters.

Several terms—including *community involvement, community engagement, civic engagement,* and *service-learning*—are used throughout this book to refer to the service provided by universities to external communities. The difference in terms can be seen as reflecting three paradigms for university-community partnerships. The first two paradigms are differentiated by whom is to be the primary beneficiary of the service—the university or the community. The first paradigm (discussed in Part I) is service-learning as *civic or community engagement for community needs,*