



# Practicing What We Preach in Service-Learning:

## Reflective Evaluation That Bridges Theory and Practice 2005

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# Key Questions

- ◆ How can **Reflection** be integrated into **Evaluation**?
- ◆ How might reflective evaluation impact a faculty member?
- ◆ What does focus group reflective evaluation look like?
- ◆ How can we implement focus groups as part of our evaluation?

# Reflection: Essential Part of Service-Learning Definition

“A course-based credit bearing educational experience in which students ....

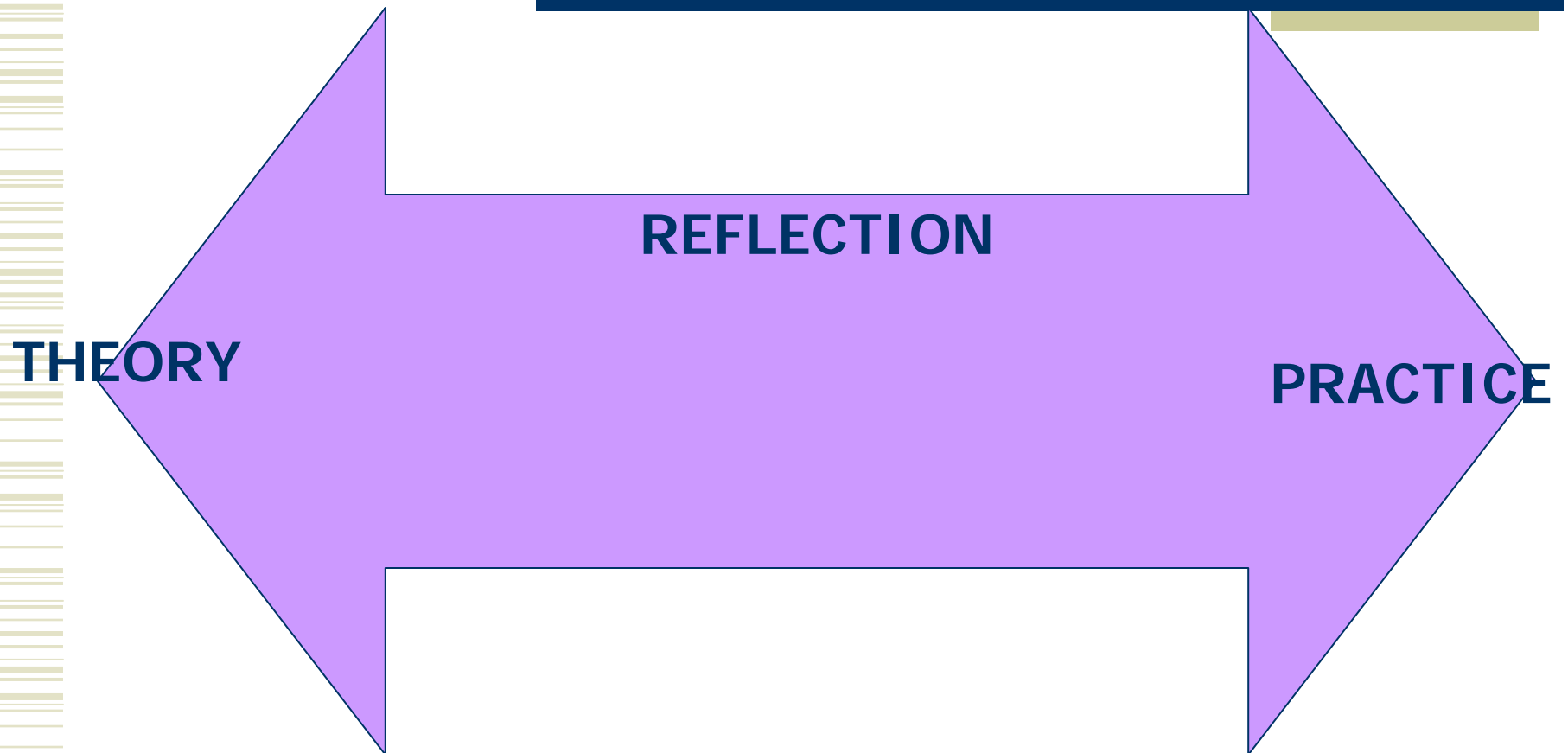
- (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and
- (b) **reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.”**

**adapted from Bringle and Hatcher 99**

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# Reflective Evaluation Bridges Theory and Practice for **ALL** Stakeholders

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# What does service-learning look like at LSU?

- ◆ **Placements and Projects**
- ◆ **First Year to Grad School**

**Grants promoted growth from 3 sections in 1995 to.....**

**Over 2,400 students in  
144 sections/year in  
35 departments at LSU**



# Incentive Grants Process

## Types of Grants

- ◆ Faculty Incentive Grants
- ◆ Dept/Unit Grants
- ◆ Faculty Fellow

[www.ccell.lsu.edu](http://www.ccell.lsu.edu) >faculty  
information>grants

## Reflective Components

- Competitive Proposals
- Collaborative Workshops
- Focus Groups
- Panel Discussions
- Final Reports

# How Reflective Evaluation Has Impacted Process

- ◆ **More opportunities for reflection (Faculty hungry for interaction!)**
- ◆ **More training**
- ◆ **More incentives**
- ◆ **Departmental focus**
- ◆ **Scholarship**
- ◆ **The “Our students/faculty/partners say....” Effect**
- ◆ **Extended learning for all participants**

# A SL Fellow's Reflection

**Arrived at LSU July,  
1998 to teach  
Community Nutrition  
and direct the  
Dietetics Program**

**I set about finding  
community agencies  
for them to work in**



# A SL Fellow's Reflection

**A movement afoot...**

**SL council in 2001**

**Ongoing discussions = course  
development program ... up to \$3000**

**Incentive grants for individuals,  
curricular**

**List-serv**

**Fellows program**



# A SL Fellow's Reflection

- ◆ **Grants**
- ◆ **Interaction with other service-learning faculty**
- ◆ **A new level of scholarship for service-learning**
- ◆ **Thinking about service-learning in terms of teaching, research, and service**



# A SL Fellow's Reflection

**Develop a set of goals**

**Work closely with CCELL and CELT to develop and present workshops and to evaluate the Service-Learning Program**

**Serve on the Service-Learning Council**

**Provide leadership for theoretical and practical aspects of the scholarship of engagement...**



# A SL Fellow's Reflection

- ◆ **Fellows' workshop**
- ◆ **Met with Honors College Dean to help develop a workshop for SL in Honors**
- ◆ **Mentored junior faculty and graduate students**
- ◆ **Institutionalized SL in nutrition curriculum**



# A SL Fellow's Reflection

- ◆ **Article on SL with graduate student**
- ◆ **SL presentations at professional meetings**
- ◆ **Evaluation of SL courses and faculty**



# A SL Fellow's Reflection

**Expanded teaching repertoire of SL courses**



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# A SL Fellow's Reflection

- ◆ **Involvement with CELT**
- ◆ **Better understanding of SL at the university level**





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# Elements of the S-L Focus Group Process

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- ◆ Purpose—what you want to know
- ◆ Protocol
- ◆ Drawing participants
- ◆ Conducting the focus groups
- ◆ Analyzing the data
- ◆ Reporting the data/Using the findings

# Some Findings from FG Assessment w Students & Faculty

- ◆ Service-learning required greater investment of time for faculty and students
- ◆ The investment was well worth it to both groups
- ◆ Almost all faculty choose to continue with s-l pedagogy despite the additional work
- ◆ S-L faculty would support a service-learning requirement for all students, though they recognized that it is not always politically feasible in some departments.
- ◆ Most students and almost all faculty describe enhanced learning through service-learning



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## Findings, cont.

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- ◆ The experience is most successful when the relationship with the community partner is well-developed and sustained for both faculty and students. However, even problematic relationships may provide valuable learning experiences.
- ◆ Greatest learning occurs when there is full integration of learning goals with community needs and when learning is properly assessed.

# Resources

**Bringle, Robert G. and Julie A. Hatcher.** “Implementing Service Learning in Higher Education.” *Journal of Higher Education*. 67(2), 1996, 221-239.

**Gelmon, Sherril B. Barbara Holland, Amy Driscoll, Amy Spring, and Seanna Kerrigan.** *Assessing Service-Learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and Techniques*. Providence, RI: Campus Compact, 2001.

**Krueger, Richard A.** *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994.

**Zlotkowski, Edward. Ed.** *Successful Service-Learning Programs: New Models of Excellence in Higher Education*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing, 1998.

**[www.ccell.lsu.edu](http://www.ccell.lsu.edu) >faculty information>grants**



# Let's Reflect/Evaluate Now!



- ◆ What is most significant realization you had today? (**What?**)
- ◆ Why is this discussion important? (**So what?**)
- ◆ How would you like to integrate collaborative reflection into your program? (**Now what?**)