DO NO HARM: UNDERSTANDING RECIPROCITY IN UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

As higher education struggles to prove its ongoing relevance within the broader society in the face of increasing costs and little visible accountability, community engagement has emerged as one strategy to demonstrate that relevance. Such engagement is difficult and often messy, however, and structural differences among universities and the communities they serve may make reciprocal relationships difficult to achieve. The purpose of this study was to understand how reciprocity is constructed in university-community partnerships and to determine whether that reciprocity is necessary for effective engagement. Implications for faculty, students and community partners who promote and engage in these relationships were also examined. Data were gathered from 42 participants through semi-structured interviews, survey results, and document analysis. The study found that when benefits outweigh risks and harm, when participants are both teaching and learning, and if the relationship is characterized by clear expectations, good communication and consistency, then partnerships are reciprocal. Harm was an outcome in only one case; even that case was reciprocal despite that outcome. Success, while obtained in every case studied, was a simpler calculus: if the mission and goals of the organization or individual were met, if positive relationships were built, if expected services were provided, and if some learning occurred, partnerships were considered successful.

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APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation, Do No Harm: Understanding Reciprocity in University-Community Partnerships, has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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To Francis, whose support means everything, and to Evalina and Francesco, who will always be my best work.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

As it enters the second decade of the 21st century, American higher education is struggling to prove its ongoing relevance within the broader society. This problem is largely a result of rapidly rising costs, little visible accountability related to its traditional goals of knowledge production and student learning, and an increasing focus on market imperatives and individual gain that raise questions about its commitment to the public good (Bok, 2006; Hollander & Hartley, 2000; Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt, 2005; Sullivan, 2003). Amid this debate, levels of community engagement are increasing as one strategy institutions use to demonstrate their social relevance (Campus Compact, 2010).

Defined by the Carnegie Corporation for the Advancement of Teaching (hereafter Carnegie) as "the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, state/regional, national, and global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39), community engagement takes the work of higher education and places it squarely in the community. Including but not limited to direct service (volunteering), service-learning, and community-based research (CBR), the largely positive outcomes for institutions, students, and the local, national and global communities who participate in such partnerships (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001) suggest that community engagement may indeed be an effective way for the academy to improve student learning outcomes and answer questions of relevance within the broader community.

While this work is full of potential, it is far more complex than is commonly understood, and in many ways higher education is not set up to do it well. Mistakes and inefficiencies are likely to result from a mismatch between institutional and engagement structures and priorities. This study investigated the hypothesis that such potential missteps risked doing harm to community partners and university interests through a close examination of reciprocity and its effect on perceptions of success in a partnership. Determining the potential for both benefit and harm in a university-community partnership is critical not only to an understanding of that relationship but to its ethical practice.

This study focused intentionally on community engagement, rather than on one or more of its many forms as does most of the scholarship in this area. Institutions interact with their communities in a variety of ways, and while distinctions exist among service-learning, volunteering, community-based research, and extension work, focusing on one or the other misses the overall picture of an institution's impact on its community. In making this choice, the study followed the assessment the Carnegie Foundation made in developing its voluntary "Community Engagement Classification" in 2008, that:

> The term *community engagement* was intentionally selected…to encompass the broadest conception of interactions between higher education and community and to promote inclusivity. The definition…also represents broad thinking about collaborations between higher education and the community and intentionally

encourages important qualities such as mutuality and reciprocity (Driscoll, 2009, p. 5).

Those institutions that first received the community engagement classification documented a wide range of activities as part of that work (Driscoll); it was developing understanding within that range that was the focus of this study.

This study focused on the meaning participants made of their experience of both the process and the product of the partnership, focusing on the role of each partner as well as the context of the partnership in capturing that meaning. To do so, this study took the partnership itself– the space between and among actors that contains development, implementation, evaluation, and reflection and where connections and conflicts bring to the fore the messy issues that can be transformational for one or more partners – as its unit of study, and it used participants' own words and descriptions of their understanding, the meaning-making of relationship, as its primary focus. The success of community engagement is best understood in the context of the partnership itself, rather than simply as a sum of outcomes on either side of an equation.

As is evident in the Carnegie (2008) definition, the literature argues that reciprocity is an (or perhaps the) antidote to the potential harm inherent in community engagement. A reciprocal relationship is one characterized by mutual benefit, shared risk, collaboration, and an acknowledgement that all parties are both serving and being served (Jacoby, 2003; Kendall, 1990; Stanton, 1990, 2007). In economic and anthropological conceptions of reciprocity, duty and obligation also obtain (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Mauss, 1954/2002). Morton (1997) and Ward and Wolf-Wendel (1997) argue that reciprocity distinguishes a charity orientation – doing *for* communities, which tends to reinforce rather than remove imbalances of power and privilege – from a social justice orientation – doing *with* communities. Cruz and Giles (2000) similarly insist that reciprocity requires an asset–based approach to engagement, rather than one based on addressing perceived deficits in communities.

Research on engagement, though, shows that there is a wide range of levels of both reciprocity and success – the latter usually conceptualized as sustainability—among university-community partnerships (Beere, 2009; Holland, 2000; Holland & Gelmon, 1998), and an analysis of the Carnegie data specifically shows that achieving reciprocity is among the biggest challenges for institutions (Driscoll, 2009). There is evidence that it is particularly hard for predominantly white institutions (PWIs), as compared to their historically black, tribal, and Hispanic-serving peers (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 1997) to do so. Practically, few engagement relationships are likely to be fully reciprocal and entirely successful, although such results should remain the goals of all partnership efforts. At the end of the day, engagement is messy, and such perfection is unlikely to exist.

So how good is good enough? When does difficulty cross the line and become harm? Does reciprocity in a relationship lead to a sustainable partnership that all parties value and to tangible benefits, as the literature suggests? Conversely, does a lack of reciprocity lead to dissatisfaction, discontinuity, and tangible harm? And finally, can a partnership be successful, yet still cause harm to someone in the partnership? This study sought answers to these questions.

Discussion of Terms

Success

A successful engagement partnership must be assessed holistically. Success in this sense was determined both by the outcomes to each participant (typically institutional actor[s], student actor[s]), and community actor[s]), by the depth of involvement of those partners in the process of the project, and by its persistence over time. In 1979, service-learning pioneer Robert Sigmon articulated three principles that are still widely recognized as guidelines for good engagement:

> Principle One: Those being served control the service(s) provided.
>
> Principle Two: Those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions.
>
> Principle Three: Those who serve also are learners. (in Kellogg, 1990, pp. 9-11)

Inherent in these guidelines are several components of reciprocity: shared power and control, mutual benefit, and the acknowledgement that all involved are both servers and learners. How those components were experienced and how that experience affected perceptions of success and harm depended largely on the meaning participants attached to one another's actions (or inactions). This study sought an understanding of those meanings through participants' own words and experiences.

Reciprocity

Scholars are consistent in insisting that the give and take of reciprocity is necessary for the work to be ethical (Boyte, 2008; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Harkavy, 2006; Jacoby, 2009; Rhoades, 1997; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999). Recognition that all parties are giving and receiving and teaching and learning in the partnership is important (Kendall, 1990), and research focusing on community partner perspectives indicates that the development of high-quality relationships is of primary importance to those partners (Sandy & Holland, 2006). Stanton (2007) emphasizes that reciprocity in engaged research is reflected in the degree of collaboration between the institutional and community partners from a project's inception through the distribution of results. Together with the aforementioned doing *with* and not *for* communities (Morton, 1997; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 1997), and approaching projects from the standpoint that communities have many assets to share with university partners, rather than simply problems to be solved by them (Cruz & Giles, 2000), these are critical components of reciprocal relationships, according to the literature.

Frankly, this literature sets forth that achieving full reciprocity is a high bar to meet. Many scholars argue that the institutional structures, values, and priorities of higher education, particularly within elite, research-intensive universities, create an environment where institutions almost inevitably control most of the activities and resources and where communities are treated more like available laboratories for faculty and students than as equal partners in knowledge creation (Enos & Morton, 2003; Maurasse, 2001; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). Very real power and resource imbalances and any history of negative impact from previous interactions between higher education institutions and their many communities complicate efforts to develop trusting partnerships (Butin, 2010; Cruz, 1990). Organizational limitations within most institutions include high levels of decentralization, strong disciplines, and weak support for the interdisciplinarity required by community engagement (Holland, 1999; Kezar & Rhoads, 2001; Maurasse, 2001; Ramaley, 2000). Funding is always a challenge, as the majority of community engagement work is supported by soft money rather than dedicated funds (Jacoby, 2003). Logistical incompatibilities such as scheduling and the rhythm of the academic year (versus calendar or fiscal years), communication styles, timelines for obtaining results, and methods of distributing them make even simple coordination of community engagement difficult.

While existing research on community engagement tends to focus on outcomes (e.g., Astin and Associates, 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1995), I argued in this study that in order to understand reciprocity and its role in effective community engagement, any assessment had to be holistic, meaning attempts to understand it had to take into account both process and product. If teaching and learning were central to reciprocal relationships, then understanding who was learning what from whom was an important measure to take. Reciprocity is also co-created, negotiated, changed, and redefined in the time between the urge to engage and when the relationship is ended, and in the human relationships that develop and change as the experience develops. Important things happen in the process of the partnership that might be missed if outcomes, even in the context of reciprocity, are all that are measured.

Under ideal conditions the impetus for, the participation in and the benefits of a partnership among institutional actors and community partners are shared in a bidirectional and dynamic relationship among all parties. However, it is unclear whether the conditions that produce reciprocity – purported to be necessary for effective community engagement – are likely to be consistently and systematically found in most university-community partnerships, particularly those at predominantly white, research-intensive institutions. This lack of clarity and the potential for harm it allows pose serious practical and ethical challenges for all partners involved in community engagement activities.

Harm

Reciprocal relationships require members of the partnership to understand and recognize what they hope to give and what they hope to receive, as well as how those goals may change in the course of a partnership. Such perspectives guard against what some scholars and practitioners see as potential harm that can be an outcome of university-community partnerships. In this context, harm can include physical and developmental safety issues for students and community partner clients; resource strain for institutions, faculty, and community agencies; professional risk for faculty whose research agenda includes community engagement but whose department, institution, or discipline may not consider it legitimate scholarship; and reputational and relational problems for institutions and community partners (Harkavy, 2006; Heyworth, 1991; Stanton, Giles & Cruz 1999).

Others (Cruz, 1990; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Harkavy, Pucket & Rohan, 2000; Hickey & Mohan, 2005; Illich, 1968/1990) warn of more philosophical and structural dangers. They point to the potential danger that poorly done engagement partnerships will create unequal or paternalistic relationships, maintain the status quo, or harbor an unwillingness to change existing power structures. For them, engagement must be transformational to be ethical. While this study was sympathetic to these more existential concerns, I believe they set unrealistic expectations for most engagement relationships. In addition, if adhered to religiously, they would disallow much work that may not be transformational but has significant benefits for all involved – throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. While settling this debate was beyond the scope of this study, it was clear that reciprocity was likely to be a key ingredient in guarding against a range of problems in the engagement relationship that can prevent the work from being considered good or effective. Partners needed to understand what risks they were incurring, as well as what risks were being taken on by their fellow participants, and each had to assess the outcomes at the end of the project in the context of those shifting understandings.

Persistence

Persistence, or the willingness of all parties to continue to participate in the relationship over time, can also be an indicator of success and is itself a desirable outcome. Indeed, *sustainability* is a common proxy for success in community engagement (Holland & Gelmon, 1998). However, using persistence as the sole indicator of good community engagement would have been limited. Knowing whether a partnership did or did not continue reveals little about the reasons related to persistence, and it is in the experience of a partnership that one learns about it and the participants. In addition, any examination that considered persistence as an indicator of success must take into account the power dynamic that always exists in relationships. A resource-strapped non-profit may continue to accept volunteers from the local university because it cannot afford, either organizationally or politically, to turn such offers down, but that alone does not indicate that the organization or its clients (or the institution, for that matter) are getting what they need; the converse could also be the case. Studying persistence as part of the partnership itself, rather than just the outcome – asking the question “why does a partnership persist (or not)” rather than “does it persist” –was likely to reveal far more about how reciprocity is constructed and renegotiated by the partners in a relationship than a simple focus on a single set of outcomes. Therefore, this study treated persistence as a starting point – necessary in that it allowed for the richer metrics to be examined, but limited on its own – by selecting projects for investigation that had been established for a minimum of two academic semesters and that had an expectation at the point of study that they would continue.

A comprehensive understanding of the engagement relationship acknowledges that effective community engagement occurs when all members of a partnership feel that the risks, benefits and control are shared to a roughly equal degree over time. When there was recognition among the partners that each had both given and received benefit within that experience, that was perceived as more reciprocal. Finally, a partnership was presumed to be effective when the partners agreed to continue the relationship as a result of that reciprocity, rather than in spite of its absence.

Research Purpose and Questions

This study explored the role of reciprocity in university-community partnerships, with a focus on understanding whether reciprocity was necessary for successful community engagement. It sought a better understanding of the nature of university-community partnerships through an investigation of how reciprocity was conceived by each group of actors throughout the course of such partnerships and how those conceptions affected the perceptions of harm and success (or failure) of the partnership. It was guided by the following research questions:

1. In what ways is reciprocity collectively constructed in university-community partnerships, and what factors influence its presence or absence?

a. In what ways does each actor (institution, faculty, students, community agencies, agency clients) perceive reciprocity being enacted (or not) in the partnership?
b. What are the levels of reciprocity in the partnership, as perceived by each actor?
c. What factors are associated with higher (and lower) perceived levels of reciprocity in a partnership?

2. In what ways, if any, is harm to one or more of the actors (institution, faculty, students, community agencies, agency clients) perceived to be a result of the partnership?
3. In what ways has the partnership been perceived as successful by the actors?
    a. Has the partnership persisted?
    b. In what ways are the actors satisfied and not satisfied with the partnership?
    c. Has the partnership produced results as defined and expected by the different actors?
4. What is the relationship between perceived levels of reciprocity within a partnership and perceptions of harm, perceptions of success (persistence, satisfaction, and results), and satisfaction of the partners?

Answers to these questions will be useful to faculty and administrators whose work includes community engagement, students who seek to incorporate service into their academic careers both inside and outside of the classroom, community partners who either seek or receive engagement requests from colleges and universities worldwide, and policymakers and funding agencies interested in facilitating effective partnerships between higher education and its many publics.

Rationale for the Study

Levels and forms of community engagement on college and university campuses are steadily increasing, and those forms are gaining legitimacy within higher education (Campus Compact Annual Survey, 2010; Jacoby, 2009). Carnegie's development of its community-engagement classification reflects this trend. Achieving this classification:

> affirms that a university or college has institutionalized community engagement in its identity, culture, and commitments. It also affirms that the practices of community engagement are aligned with the institution's identity and form an integral component of the institutional culture. Those practices may be focused in curricular engagement, outreach and partnerships, or both. (Elective Classification Documentation Framework, 2008, p. 1)

In 2010 Carnegie received 305 applications for this classification, resulting in 115 institutions that were so recognized (Clybourn, Saltmarsh, & Driscoll, 2011). This institutional recognition is a positive step. It provides a framework and definitions for what engagement is and how it should be done and offers some sense of the scope of the work nationwide. Even more useful, it motivates institutions to understand the full range of engagement projects occurring on their campuses and to better coordinate those efforts (Driscoll, 2008; Zuiches, 2008)

In many ways, however, this increase in community engagement has received too little critical attention. Empirical research on its conditions, rationale, and effects often focuses narrowly on individual outcomes for one group or another, rather than having the partnership itself be the unit of study. Take research on service-learning – one of the most prominent forms of community engagement that links service to learning outcomes in the classroom – as one example. Research suggests that service-learning facilitates change in a wide range of developmental outcomes for students, including critical thinking, identity, commitment to social change, cultural competency, and career choice, among others (Astin et al, 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Jones & Hill, 2001; Strage, 2004; Strain, 2005). Faculty report positive effects on classroom learning (Gelmon, Holland, & Shinnamon, 1998; Stanton, 1994; Ward, 2003), an improved sense of meaning in practice, and added opportunities to give voice to underrepresented groups in their work (Butin, 2007; Kezar & Rhoads, 2001; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1995). In general, communities think service-learning provides useful service and enhances university-community relations (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Vernon & Ward, 1999). While this is all important information, focusing just on outcomes for one group or another omits relevant data on the process and goals of the partnership itself.

In addition, not all of the outcomes of community engagement are positive. Lack of support in tenure and promotion for faculty who engage in it is an enormous challenge, particularly for junior faculty (Boyer, 1990; Euster & Weinbach, 1994; Kezar, 2004). Often, few resources are available to support engaged scholarship (Gray et al, 1998). Low levels of preparedness for student volunteers, weak links between class content and service experience, and scheduling difficulties pose challenges for students (Jacoby, 2003). For community partners, scheduling challenges, abrupt disruption of relationships with clients due to the semester timeframe, difficulty understanding student learning outcomes, low levels of workplace preparedness on the part of student volunteers, and a lack of understanding of the site on the part of faculty are all reported as drawbacks of engagement (Boyle-Baise, Epler, McCoy, Paulk, Clark, Slough & Truelock, 2001; Gelmon et al, 2001; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Vernon & Foster, 2002).

Of further concern, focus on community outcomes at either the individual or partnership level has really only occurred in the last decade, particularly by mainstream scholars (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Vernon & Ward, 1999; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). Attention to student and institutional outcomes has taken precedence in the research on community engagement as institutions struggle to justify outreach efforts to internal constituents using measures with academic currency such as student learning outcomes, pedagogical implications, and effects on faculty research and promotion (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Giles & Eyler, 1998; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001).

This imbalance could simply lead to less-than-ideal levels of information with no real ill effect. However, there are less benign possibilities: an emphasis on positive outcomes for students, for example, with insufficient attention paid to the effects on faculty rewards, community resources, or perceptions of the institution could be masking overall negative outcomes for partnerships that are not identified and can be causing real harm to those actors. It also makes systematic assessment of engagement as an institutional priority difficult. Indeed, it seems we have forged blithely ahead with the assumption that service is inherently good and thus should be encouraged in the higher education context. This study sought to problematize that assumption, so that we can understand the full range of risks and benefits to all participants in such partnerships.

Overview of Conceptual Framework

Community engagement is explicitly social and interactive. It encompasses the experiences and meanings that occur when two (or more) stakeholders decide to collaborate on a project with the goal of mutual benefit. When done best, it is also characterized by reciprocity, or the belief that the benefits of an engagement relationship will flow in both directions and be, on balance, equal (Stanton, 1990) and exhibit shared power and control (Kendall, 1990; Sigmon, 1990). Reciprocity also creates a sense of obligation in the recipient (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961). It consists of interconnectedness, mutuality, and responsibility to one another within the context of a bounded system called the community. In language that is only recently beginning to emerge, it involves doing *with* communities, rather than the paternalistic doing *for* (Morton, 1997; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). However, it is also practical: if the benefit ceases to accrue to one side or the other, over time the relationship will change and perhaps disappear (Emerson, 1976; Miron & Moely, 2006). These concepts are affected by the goals and approach that each partner brings to the engagement.

Because reciprocity is one of its central constructs, social exchange theory (SET) (Blau, 1964; Cook & Emerson, 1978; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Molm, 2000, 2003) provided an ideal theoretical framework that allowed conceptualization of the relationships in community engagement. SET allowed an examination of both the process and the product of an engagement relationship by breaking down what was exchanged (resources), how resources were exchanged, and what effect was produced as a result, all within a dynamic and historically bound context. Three foundational ideas give SET its explanatory power. They concern: a) rules and norms of exchange, b) resources exchanged, and c) relationships that emerge (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). This study examined the chosen community engagement relationships along each of these axes to get at the research questions – how was reciprocity constructed by partnership participants? Was harm a perceived outcome, and if so, under what circumstances? In what ways did the participants perceive the partnership to be successful, and how did those perceptions relate to perceptions of reciprocity and harm?

In applying SET to community engagement, this study followed Miron and Moely's (2006) use of the theory to study the connection between community participation (conceptualized in their study as community agency voice) and community perceptions of benefits (conceptualized as community agency benefit) of service-learning participation. Building from Emerson (1976), they conceptualized social exchange as "reciprocal action between individuals or groups of individuals that contributes toward building a relationship. Implied is a two-sided, mutually contingent, and mutually rewarding process involving exchange" (p. 28). This study built on that conception of social exchange, focusing on the factors that produced perceptions of reciprocity and at what levels within the exchange, and how those factors affected perceptions of harm and partnership success.

This framework was also consistent with Cruz and Giles' (2000) recommendation that the university-community partnership be the unit of analysis when studying service-learning. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Miron & Moley, 2006) predicts that without mutual benefit, conceived primarily as reciprocity, exchange relationships are unlikely to persist. This allowed testing of the hypothesis that reciprocity was a necessary component of successful engagement. If, as the community engagement literature argues, reciprocity is required for good practice, then studying the process of exchange within the partnership context would reveal what specific elements made up that construct (research questions 1a-b), how those affected its level (question 1c), how participants' experience of the harm or success of the project correlated with the level of reciprocity they experienced (question 4), and what conditions contributed to or took away from participants' experience of it (questions 2-4). Relevant factors included the sharing of resources, developing mutual trust, approaching the relationship with an expectation to share assets rather than to address deficits, the opportunity to direct work and provide feedback, sharing of control, benefiting from results, and the development of the research agenda itself. Evidence that all involved learned from the experience was also a key component, so an examination based on a set of learning outcomes was also necessary. SET provided a framework for understanding how those factors and others combined to create perceptions of reciprocity, either positive or negative, in participants' experiences and how they in turn affected perceptions of both harm and success. This was achieved specifically by asking the participants to describe their experience in their own words, to articulate the meanings they attributed to their own and others' actions and to make judgments thereon. This framework allowed a deeper understanding of what risks and benefits were at stake, how those changed and evolved in the course of the partnership, and how they were in the end characterized by partnership participants.

Studying the partnership as the unit of interest also allowed generalization across partnerships, consideration of the effect of short- versus long-term partnerships, and an opportunity to judge the effectiveness of the partnership according to the experiences of all four participant groups, thus preventing the "false positives" that can come when only one side of the proverbial stool is considered. In some cases, such imbalance in focus is merely unfortunate; in others, it is unethical or even criminal (Tuskegee being the classic example). This research provided rich descriptions of what reciprocity looked like to all four groups. Examining these relationships using social exchange theory provided a better understanding of the risks and benefits of multiple forms of community engagement in order to maximize their utility and limit their harm.

Methodology

Because I was interested in the meaning participants made of their community engagement experiences, a qualitative approach was appropriate (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Qualitative methods are also useful in developing causal explanations (Maxwell, 2005), and this study considered how participants' conceptions and experience of reciprocity within a partnership affected the success of and presence or absence of harm in community engagement programs.

In a social exchange theory framework, the partnership between the university and the community is conceptualized as a two-way, reciprocal relationship that requires a balance of benefits over the long term to be maintained. If either side finds after some time that their expectations are not being met, the relationship will change or cease. Conversely, if benefits flow in both directions in ways that meet or exceed expectations, the partnership will persist and deepen over time, all things being equal. This study examined how those relationships were built and maintained through an examination of participants' experiences.

Research Design and Case Selection

This study used a comparative case study design, also called a holistic multiple-case design (Yin, 2009) to address the research questions. As the unit of analysis was the university-community partnership, a comparative case study was appropriate because it allowed selection of cases across key dimensions of an engagement partnership for comparison (Yin). Using replication logic (Yin), wherein cases are selected that were likely to produce similar results (literal replication) and others that were likely to produce different results but for predictable reasons (theoretical replication), cases were selected that reflected both the range of engagement types in the chosen site as well as the range in quality – and thus expected reciprocity – as determined by principles of best practices in the literature.

Site. The chosen site was the University of Virginia, a mid-sized public research university with a strong tradition of service and commitment to undergraduate education. Hundreds of individual community engagement projects are typically in place with varying lengths, degrees of academic involvement, and success, which the literature indicates is typical (Campus Compact, 2010). In addition, the institution's approach to community engagement is decentralized, another common finding in the literature.

As with any single site, unique elements existed, and the chosen site provided a rich local context that may limit its generalizability to other sites. Students at the selected institution have an unusually strong sense of ownership of the student experience and display high levels of motivation to engage in service. In addition, many of the service experiences occur with little or no faculty/staff oversight. The popular program Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is a good example: over 600 students participate each year from this campus, as compared to an average of 100-200 at other schools across the country. Further, at U.Va. ASB functions as an independent student organization, whereas at peer institutions coordinating ASB trips is often a professional staff member's full-time job. Finally, the student body is wealthier, whiter, and more academically well-prepared than students at the average public university (2011 NSSE), which made careful examination of dynamics around race, class, and privilege important in the analysis.

In concert with case study methodology, data collection included semi-structured interviews, surveys, and document analysis (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). Interview protocols were designed using four frameworks cited in the literature and were adjusted to the particular culture of the institution in the course of data collection. Finally, document analysis was performed on materials related to the partnerships, including Web site information, evaluation and assessment tools, marketing materials, and student assignments related to the service partnership.

In qualitative inquiry, data collection and analysis occur simultaneously (Merriam, 1998).This study followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach of systematic data analysis, which Yin (2003) noted was a particularly useful tool for case study analysis. Using NVivo qualitative software to assist with storing, coding, and analysis of data, all interviews were audio taped and transcribed, and document analysis followed Miles and Huberman's approach.

Qualitative research assumes that reality is socially constructed and, therefore, discovery of an objective "truth" is not its goal (Merriam, 1998). Nevertheless, following precautions outlined by Yin (2003), threats to validity were addressed through triangulation by using multiple sources of evidence, through the establishment of a chain of evidence, and by having key participants review draft reports. Because researcher bias in qualitative analysis is a threat to validity, analytic memos, concept maps, and matrices were shared with my dissertation chair, individuals with expertise in community engagement who were both on campus and in the community, and fellow doctoral students. It should be noted that case studies produce conclusions that are generalizable to theories and not to populations; thus generalizing to other campuses and communities was not the goal.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument, complete with his or her subjectivity, beliefs, and agendas, and this study was no exception. However, I worked to identify and isolate these from the data, addressing such issues largely in my methodological journal and identity memos but also through member-checking and reviewing the data and my conclusions with my dissertation chair and experts in the field. Finally, the case study database provided an "audit trail" (Miles &Huberman, 1994) for other researchers to review the reliability of my conclusions.

Limitations in this study included the lack of generalizability to other populations and its focus on a single university with a very specific institutional history and culture, student body, and relationship with its community. However, selecting cases according to replication logic (Yin, 2009) strengthened confidence in the reliability of the findings. The potential for researcher effects inherent in qualitative research also limited reliability; however, I worked to mitigate these threats through careful attention to and statements of my assumptions, values and perceptions throughout the study, as noted above.

Summary

Community engagement is both promising and complex. It offers a chance to fulfill higher education's traditional mission of public service through innovative pedagogies and programs that simultaneously address social needs, reinvigorate teaching and learning, and open new avenues of scholarly research. However, structural, cultural, and philosophical differences between higher education and community engagement practice are likely to affect both institutional and community outcomes. Through an investigation of the research questions previously mentioned, I sought to understand the effects of those differences.

Definitions

The following were key terms and concepts that were central to this study.

The community: Generally, individuals and entities (agencies, schools, governments, etc) who live near, work near, receive care from, or interact in any way with institutions of higher education but who do not have a formal relationship (student, faculty, or staff) with those institutions. The community can be local, regional, national or international; who exactly comprises the community will be defined specifically in each case considered in this study.

Community-based research (CBR): "Research conducted *with* and *for*, not *on*, members of the community" (emphasis in original, Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003, p. xx).

Community engagement: "The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, state/regional, national, and global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39); "activities that are linked to the mission to create, transmit and apply knowledge to external constituencies" (Bringle, Games and Malloy, 1999, p. 5); and "the application of institutional resources to address and solve challenges facing communities through collaboration with these communities" (Commission on Community-Engaged Scholarship in the Health Professions, 2005).

Curricular engagement: "Describes the teaching, learning and scholarship that engages faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community identified needs, deepen students' civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution" (Stanton, 2007, p. 5)

Engaged scholarship: "Research in any field that partners university scholarly resources with those in the public and private sectors to enrich knowledge, address and help solve critical societal issues, and contribute to the public good" (Stanton, 2007, p. 5)

Harm: n, "a. Evil (physical or otherwise) as done to or suffered by some person or thing; hurt, injury, damage, mischief. ("Harm," n.d., Oxford English Dictionary); v, a. To do harm (to); to injure (physically or otherwise); to hurt, damage. Harm, v, n.d., Oxford English Dictionary)

Multiversity: Term coined by Clark Kerr in 1963 and updated by him as late as 2001 to describe the modern university as "a whole series of communities and activities held together by a common name, a common governing board, and related purposes….As a new type of institution, it is not really private and not really public; it is neither entirely of the world nor entirely apart from it. It is unique" (Kerr, 2001, p. 1).

Mutuality: Rhoads' (1997) definition is consistent with most of the community engagement literature: "the sense that an act of community service ought to involve not only the act of giving but the act of receiving as well" (p. 136). It is often used synonymously with reciprocity. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2010) definitions also apply: "**1. a.** The quality or state of being mutual; the sharing of or in an emotion, desire, aim, etc.; fellow feeling, community; interdependence; an instance of this.; **2.**In *pl.* Reciprocal acts of goodwill; intimacies; things that are held in common or shared by two or more parties" ("mutuality, n.," n.d., OED Online).

Outreach: "the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community" (Saltmarsh & Driscoll, n.d.)

Partnerships: "collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.)" (Saltmarsh & Driscoll).

Reciprocal: "a. Of the nature of, or relating to, a return (in kind); made, given, etc., in response; answering, corresponding; b. Existing on both sides; felt or shared by both parties; mutual" ("reciprocal", 2012, Oxford English Dictionary,).

Reciprocity: In general use: "1. The quality, state, or condition of being reciprocal; reciprocal action or relation, esp. reciprocation of cooperative or altruistic behaviour; an instance of this" ("reciprocity," 2012, Oxford English Dictionary). In community engagement literature: An equality of benefits and risks over time that flow to and from each of the partnership participants (Stanton, 1990); also "the exchange of both giving and receiving between the ‘server’ and the person or group ‘being served’” (Kendall, 1990, p. 21-22).

Service-learning: “A teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.” (“What is service-learning?,” n.d.).

NOTE: “The terms *community-based learning*, *academic service learning*, and other expressions are often used to denote service-learning courses.” Carnegie Classification Framework (Saltmarsh & Driscoll, 2011).

CHAPTER 2 – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is little debate that American higher education began with a civic mission at its heart (Bok, 1982; Boyer, 1987, 1990; Ehrlich, 2000; Jacoby, 2009; Rudolph, 1962), to "prepare citizens for active participation in a diverse democracy" (Checkoway, 2001). There is also little debate that this mission is under severe pressure in the modern American university (Bowen, Kurzweil, & Tobin, 2005; Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt, 2005; Sullivan, 2003). Examining why and how that civic mission was enacted in its multiple forms, as well as the pressures it faces, illuminates both the promise and the perils of community engagement.

Community Engagement – A Snapshot

As the first decade of the 21st century comes to a close, community engagement has come into its own in many ways (Butin, 2010; Ehrlich, 2009; Jacoby, 2009). Hundreds of institutions have expressed interest in the new voluntary Carnegie classification, with 115 earning the designation in 2010, joining the 196 institutions identified in 2006 and 2008 (Saltmarsh & Driscoll, 2011). A quick review of virtually any college or university Web site reveals loud and proud commitments to public service somewhere in their mission and marketing materials. These goals are achieved through service-learning courses, formal and informal campus-community partnerships, engaged scholarship, community-based research, mentoring and tutoring, study abroad programs – the list of specific forms is almost as numerous as are those who participate. (For a full catalogue of forms of engagement considered by the Carnegie classification, see the 2010 Documentation Framework, Appendix A).

Campus Compact, the national coalition of college and university presidents dedicated to campus-based civic engagement, has a membership of 1,100 campuses representing 6 million students (Campus Compact, n.d.). That organization's latest membership survey indicates that 35% of students on member campuses spend an average of 3.6 hours per week participating in some type of community engagement (volunteering, service-learning, civic engagement), making up 382 million hours of community service valued at $7.96 billion, on issues ranging from K-12 education to hunger and homelessness to environmental sustainability and health care (2010 Campus Compact Annual Membership Survey). Service programs range from one-day projects and alternative break trips to internships, academic service-learning courses, and community-based research. Programs are curricular and co-curricular and involve students, faculty, staff, and even alumni.

All of these forms of engagement are categorized by Carnegie's classification system as either "curricular" or as "outreach and partnerships." According to the 2010 Documentation Framework, curricular engagement "describes the teaching, learning and scholarship that engages faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community identified needs, deepen students' civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution" (p. 23). Outreach and partnerships are defined as:

> Two different but related approaches to community engagement. The first focuses on the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with

> benefits to both campus and community. The latter focuses on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.) (p. 31).

The sheer diversity in type, location, academic connection, and area of focus appears enormous; as the entire data set is not publicly available, it is difficult to capture precisely what is happening where. However, veteran engagement scholar Elizabeth Hollander identifies multiple ways she sees institutions engaging with communities:

> Among these efforts are community-based research, public scholarship, rediscovery of extension services, campus collaborations for urban revitalization, civic leadership programs, social entrepreneurship programs, fostering democratic deliberations, teaching political engagement, and interdisciplinary centers focused on pressing social problems such as global warming, school improvement, and family and community development. (in Butin, 2010, pp. xi-xii)

In the 2010 Carnegie classification, 163 public and 133 private not-for-profit institutions were engaged in both curricular and outreach and partnerships categories, two public institutions and four privates demonstrated engagement in curricular areas only, and eight publics and one private were engaged in outreach and partnerships only (Community Engagement Summary Tables, n.d.). It is important to note that for the 2010 administration, institutions were only classified if they could demonstrate engagement in both areas, illustrating the evolving belief among engagement scholars that a comprehensive approach is necessary for effective practice.

Beere (2009) provides a snapshot of the 2006 data, illustrating that partnerships vary along virtually every axis of analysis. She describes a partnership at the University of South Florida that involved one faculty and two students in the evaluation of a Web-based tool used by a community partner, all the way up to a collaboration among the University of Massachusetts-Boston, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and community agencies that involved four hundred faculty, over one hundred students, and a community agency representing over twenty member organizations (Beere, 2009, p. 58). In terms of area of focus, most institutions have programs focused on K-12 education (98%), but health and adult education are also broadly represented. Partners "ranged from A (arts organizations) to Z (zoos), with literally hundreds in between" (p. 58), and included the expected entities such as schools, nonprofits, and businesses, as well as "informal assemblages such as the local residents in specific neighborhoods" (p. 58). Partnership duration also ranged significantly, with many partnerships described as less than a year old and a small handful over 100; most, however, were in the range of two to ten years in duration (p. 59). Faculty participated in numbers between zero (some partnerships involve only staff) to five hundred, and student participation was zero to several thousand, with the larger numbers reflecting multi-year projects. Funding came from a variety of sources, including "state and federal grants, foundation and corporate grants, contracts, partner contributions, internal university grants, and base funding…[most with] at least some external funding" (p. 59). Interestingly, in coming up with this list of funding sources, Beere identified a "bias" in reported partnerships (institutions could only list twenty partnerships, and the assumption was that those listed were among their most successful examples), as she noted that “more typical partnerships involve faculty, community members and students providing their time ‘in-kind’ to achieve the goals of the partnership” (p. 59).

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in the 2006 data set is that, while institutions undoubtedly understand the importance of reciprocity (or mutuality – the terms are often used interchangeably in the literature, and were in this study), they struggle to document in a clear way how it is achieved in their community engagement partnerships (Driscoll, 2009). Methods to achieve mutuality include training programs for faculty, staff and community partners; policies emphasizing its importance; the maintenance of advisory or governing boards to provide oversight of the partnership; and periodic invited feedback mechanisms, both formal and informal (Beere, 2009). This comment from Amy Driscoll, one of the primary developers of the new classification, is telling:

> When institutions listed and described partnerships with community, they were asked about maintaining reciprocity and systematic feedback in those partnerships. Most institutions could describe only in vague generalities how reciprocity was achieved, and few examples of systematic feedback were found in the data. (p. 11)

Clearly, even among institutions demonstrating best practices of community engagement, achieving reciprocity remains a high bar. Importantly, this classification process – which is just that, classification, and is not intended to be research – does not address the question of potential harm that could be an outcome of this challenge. This study was intended to address this very issue: to improve our understanding of the ways in which reciprocity is constructed and experienced and what factors contribute to its presence in both positive and negative ways, and to identify any potential harm that may be caused by the many challenges to effective community engagement.

Harm

Ethical practice across virtually every profession is guided by Hippocrates' exhortation to "first, do no harm." Scholars and practitioners of community engagement are no different from their colleagues in medicine or law in that they strive to uphold this standard. This paper argues that efforts to ensure reciprocity within partnerships form the main guard against an array of potential harms to one or more participants. However, harm is not likely to be the first thing to come to mind when considering something as well-intentioned as community engagement, so it was important to understand how it had been understood to date.

Defining harm in the community engagement context is both simple and complex. A dictionary definition of harm cites "physical injury, mental damage; hurt" and "moral injury, evil, wrong" (harm, n.d.), and this is certainly a good starting place for categorizing behavior that causes damage in community engagement relationships. Harm can come in the form of actual damage to individuals, organizations, or relationships, but it can also come in the nature of relationships themselves. Are they additive or extractive? Does the work benefit all parties equally, or is one group set up to benefit more than the others? Identifying harm also pushes us to make some judgments on questions like, when does something annoying, disruptive, inconvenient, or messy become harmful? Just like any other construct, harm is a continuum with varying levels of seriousness, and without a single predictable point where a participant could say definitively "there, that's the point where harm began." That point also seems to vary widely among participants. But going back to the initial premise that engagement should at minimum leave a place, a person, and an organization unchanged rather than damaged, for the purposes of this study harm obtained when a partner perceived herself (or the organization or students or clients) as less well off than before participating in the partnership, or if there was documented injury of some sort that resulted from a partnership. This definition may not go far enough for some. However, as the question of harm was rarely asked in the literature, this could be considered a starting point in an understanding of harm's role in community engagement.

Modern conceptions of harm in engagement work are inextricably linked to two egregious examples of unethical conduct by the federal government, the "Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male" that occurred from 1932-1972 and, as just recently came to light, a similar study involving Guatemalan men and women (many who were prisoners or patients at a mental health facility) conducted between 1946-1948. In the Tuskegee case, African-American men already infected with syphilis were observed but not treated as the disease progressed, despite the availability of an effective cure (Reverby, 2011). In the Guatemalan case, subjects were both infected with and treated for the disease, although treatment did not meet standards for adequate care and its effectiveness is unknown (Reverby). Both cases involved deception on the part of the researchers and an absence of agency on the part of the participants; indeed, the Tuskegee case led Congress to create the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research and to the subsequent development of institutional review boards (IRB) for research that involves human subjects (Pritchard, 2006). The modern understanding of informed consent, a foundation of ethical research, arose directly from these massive failures.

Just as importantly, lasting distrust of institutions among minority populations can also be traced to the harm caused by Tuskegee and its ilk. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) go so far as to link research itself with colonization and racism, using it as a metaphor for the scientific quest to objectively "describe the dark-skinned Other to the White world" (p. 1). While this view is overly reductionist when it comes to considering broadly the effect of research on humanity, it does add to an understanding of the reluctance of many minority and marginalized communities to participate in research projects.

While Tuskegee and the Guatemalan cases involved medical research conducted by federal agencies rather than community engagement partnerships in higher education, both the lasting mistrust and the inherent power imbalances make them relevant to considerations of harm in the present study. Deception aside, the participants' lack of agency – their inability to understand completely and provide informed consent or, in layman's terms, the fact that all parties were not equal partners at the table – meant that reciprocity was impossible under those conditions. While there are now tools such as institutional review boards and guidelines for ethical research, much community engagement is not subject to review under those guidelines. Even when a project is reviewed by one or more IRBs, it is still often the institution and its faculty or community agency heads that are making the determination of what is allowable. This imbalance further complicates efforts to achieve reciprocity in engagement partnerships.

While there is no evidence that partnerships typical of community engagement involve anything near the level of harm of a Tuskegee or a Guatemala study, the literature indicates that problems and challenges do occur. Faculty who do engaged scholarship cite little or no support for such work in promotion and tenure policies, (Boyer, 1990; Euster & Weinbach, 1994; Kezar, 2004), which can clearly harm one's academic career. Vernon and Foster (2002) report community concern with the fact that students disappear in December or May, while the work of the agency continues; this is a particularly troubling outcome for relationships involving youth mentoring, in light of growing research indicating that short-term or unpredictable mentoring relationships can do more harm than good (Rhodes, Liang, & Spencer, 2009). Lack of faculty preparedness also creates difficulties, as community partners cite common instances of faculty creating illegal or inappropriate assignments because they do not understand the needs, rules or culture of a site (Sandy & Holland, 2006; Vernon & Foster). Challenges relating to scheduling are vexing to all involved, as the academic calendar and the rhythm of the community are often out of sync (Boyle-Baise, et al, 2001; Gelmon et al, 2001; Sandy & Holland; Vernon & Foster).

There are also hidden risks. Cruz (1990) tells of a mother who expressed frustration and anger over the tutoring program in which her child was participating. When Cruz asked why, the mother responded that only one of her three children had been recommended by a social worker for the program, causing conflict among the siblings. She also felt that as a single, working mother of color, she did not have the power to advocate for her family in the face of institutional structures imposed by the agency and the university. This example highlights the multiple layers of complexity introduced by community work, illustrating the need for careful, informed approaches to community engagement.

Some identify more systemic threats that lay within both the process and the context of engagement work. Cruz (1990) warns of inherent "intractable issues" in the notion of service-learning that make reciprocal learning challenging at best. She argues that emphasizing *service,* rather than focusing on *learning*, which she sees as a more asset-based approach to engagement, can make reciprocity impossible to achieve due to the social imbalances and history of subordination often present between student and community. For example, she argues that, in her native Philippines, the history of U.S. colonialism makes it impossible for U.S. students to do service there without reinforcing notions of "manifest destiny" on their part and "colonial mentality" on the part of those being served. She argues that the historical dominance of one race, gender, or group imbues "service" with racist overtones even when intentions are good. In an address titled "To Hell with Good Intentions," Ivan Illich (1968/1990) rejects outright the possibility of reciprocity in U.S. volunteers' experience in poor Latin American countries, calling a group of students assembled in preparation for a summer of volunteer work in Mexico "vacationing salesmen for the American Middle Class" (p. 316). He goes on to characterize what he sees as the likely effects of their time in Mexico: "In your 'community development' spirit you might create just enough problems to get someone shot after your vacation ends and you rush back to your middle-class neighborhoods where your friends make jokes about 'spics' and 'wetbacks'" (p. 318). Community engagement can get messy indeed.

To be sure, Illich's (1968/1990) wholesale rejection of the possibility of good in community engagement has been proven wrong by the many well-documented reports of community benefit in the literature that have already been outlined in this paper.

However, the very real concerns he, Cruz (1990), and others raise need careful consideration to prevent the harms that can accompany engagement done poorly. Reciprocity, taking a "doing with" rather than a "doing for" approach (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000) avoids (or makes chances better to avoid) a charity orientation that emphasizes a position of privilege relative to local communities rather than a perspective of service that emphasizes collaboration and mutuality (Morton, 1997). Ward and Wolf-Wendel point out that scholars must challenge the traditional perspective of the academy, where "higher education institutions have the answers and solutions and that communities are passive beneficiaries of these remedies" (p. 767).

The problems inherent in community engagement range from the egregious to the merely annoying. But at what point does problematic become harmful? This question has not yet been directly addressed in the literature; this study aimed to fill that gap.

Cultural and Structural Challenges to Reciprocal Engagement

Historical sources of mission conflict. The reciprocity that the literature deems necessary for effective engagement relationships is difficult to achieve in part because of contradictions caused by historical challenges of "fit" between the culture of the academy and the practice of community engagement. Shifting levels of financial support and public expectations of higher education also complicate the picture. These challenges are a result of the multiple and conflicting missions of American higher education that have resulted from almost four centuries of growth and development (Altbach, 1991; Bringle, Games & Malloy, 1999; Kerr, 2001; Ward, 2003).

Since Harvard's founding as the first colonial college in 1636, there has been a steady expansion in mission and purpose for U.S. institutions which lead to substantial variance in the ways the academy serves society. The handful of schools founded in the 17th and 18th century that form the foundation of American higher education were designed to train religious and civic leaders (Rudolph, 1962; Geiger, 2005). Going to college in these early years of the republic was supposed to impart a sense of civic duty on society's future leaders (virtually all white, wealthy men), to be an "insurance policy" to ensure that the elites – who were going to hold power in their communities whether they went to college or not – were imbued with a sense of public service to accompany that leadership (Thelin, 2004). This education was achieved through a thoroughly classical curriculum, and there was no expectation that anyone other than a small slice of society would participate (Geiger; Kerr, 2001; Thelin).

As the nation expanded however, so did higher education (Maurasse, 2001). The number of institutions in the U.S. grew dramatically from 25 in 1800 to 241 by 1860 (Thelin, 2004). As well, the purpose of the enterprise expanded and diversified. Private denominational colleges were established that were designed to train leaders within particular religious traditions, such as the Lutheran Gettysburg College. Secular "hilltop" colleges like Williams in Massachusetts were dedicated to John Henry Newman's (1852/1982) liberal arts ideal of educating the whole student and pursuing knowledge for its own sake. The expansion was geographical as well, as schools spread beyond the northeastern United States into the south and west, many of which were comprehensive institutions (Berdahl, Altbach, &Gumport, 2005; Geiger, 2005). This growth and diversification – while still limited largely to white men of some means – meant that in addition to imbuing the firstborn son of a wealthy family with a sense of duty to his fellow man, the second and third sons, whose prospects of inheriting the family farm or business were slight, might gain the skills and contacts to build a living on their own (Rudolph, 1962).

This period was also the setting for the last throes of the battle for a classical education, as summed up in the 1828 Yale Report, which Clark Kerr called “a ringing endorsement to do nothing” (2001, p. 10). That Report argued forcefully for a classical curriculum that was designed to discipline the mind – memorization and recitation were central, content was purely secondary, and practical training was left to other institutions (Geiger, 2005). But those other institutions described above began to flourish as a growing nation needed more teachers, preachers, and merchants to serve its needs. Leaving a narrow conception of higher education behind broadened significantly who was being served and to what ends.

To this point, while the public purpose of higher education was relatively clear, public accountability had yet to emerge as an issue. Little government funding of higher education and relatively low attendance that was largely limited to the social elite meant that the public – taxpayers, parents, potential students, alumni – did not scrutinize closely the operations of these early colleges and universities (Behrdahl, Altbach, &Gumport, 2005). However, changes that began in the 19th century and saw their full realization in the 20th brought that level of autonomy to a permanent end.

The Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, also known as the Land-Grant Acts, were the prime examples of the public recognition that the nation’s expanding needs could be addressed through higher education (Kellogg, 2000; Kerr, 2001). The 1862 Act directed the sale of public land for colleges that would “teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts… in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life" (Transcript of Morrill Act, n.d.). The 1890 Act added funding, creating what are now known as extension sites, and required that institutions created with those funds not discriminate based on race in admissions, effectively creating many of what are now known as the historically black agricultural and mechanical (A&M) colleges and universities (Kellogg).

The Morrill Acts served to cement the concept that the nation's colleges and universities should serve the public good, and they had both practical and theoretical aims related to the mission of higher education. Practically, the Act of 1863 had the express intention to train the skilled workers needed in an expanding country (Alperovitz, Dubb, & Howard, 2008). Theoretical aims were lofty: father of the land-grant movement Justin Morrill said, "I would have learning more widely disseminated" as he worked to achieve President Lincoln's aspiration that public higher education be "built on behalf of the people, who have invested in these public institutions their hopes, their support, and their confidence" and to make state institutions "the public's universities" (as quoted in the *Kellogg Report*, 2000, p. 1). This perception has endured; Lou Anna Kimsey Simon, president of Michigan State University, calls the land-grant movement a "democratizing force" designed to make higher education institutions "instruments of advancement for the nation's well-being." She goes on to note, "Of equal importance to its transformative power, the land-grant philosophy stressed the need to convey the findings and benefits of research-based knowledge directly to the public and to engage with those outside the academy as partners in the creation and implementation of knowledge" (2009, p. 3).

While this legacy is solid, it is worthwhile to note that several scholars argue that the Morrill Acts' transformative power has perhaps been overstated (Geiger, 2005; Thelin, 2004). While those who supported the Acts collectively intended to elevate the "laboring classes," improve agricultural practice through science, and make academic knowledge "useful" through practical application to public problems, their role as a democratizing force driven by public demand was rather limited (Bowen, Kurzweil, & Tobin, 2004; Geiger, 2000). In reality, the Acts were more a matter of land use than higher education policy (Thelin). They were limited by weak student pipelines (Bowen et al), and the powerful system in place today that educates a large proportion of the nation's students was haltingly built in a series of starts and stops, mergers with existing institutions (e.g., Cornell), and competition with existing state colleges and universities that were also struggling for support and students (e.g., University of Michigan and Michigan State University) (Thelin). Even the progressive goals of the 1890 Act were muted by the social and cultural realities of the time. While it expanded access to land-grant schools to blacks, it did so without challenging the segregated educational system that was soon to be (but had not yet been) upheld through *Plessy v Ferguson* and by underfunding all HBCUs (Thelin).

Despite these limitations, there is no doubt that the land-grant movement diversified higher education's purpose and participants in a way that still has resonance in modern universities (Boyer, 1990). It led to "the diversification of higher education institutions, a larger and more heterogeneous student body, higher state costs, and the notion of university public service" (Berdahl, Altbach, & Gumport, 2005, p.4). Thelin (2004) also notes that it was within the land-grant legislation that the Departments of

Agriculture, Interior and War became involved in the business of higher education, bringing with them both resources and expectations of accountability. This trend was magnified in the next important development in American higher education: the rise of the modern research university.

The final development of this period linking public concern and higher education is the emergence of the American research university (Behrdal, Altbach & Gumport, 2005; Kerr, 2001; Thelin, 2004). If the land-grant movement was essentially democratic, the research university was unabashedly elitist. It was built upon the German innovation wherein research rather than teaching was at the heart of the enterprise and science supplanted moral philosophy as the central institutional purpose (Kerr; Rudolph, 1962). Exemplified by Johns Hopkins University (founded in 1876), the University of Chicago (founded in 1891), and eventually Harvard under President Charles Eliot's leadership at the turn of the century, this new model focused primarily on faculty, graduate work, and the disciplines, elevating those elements of the institution and effectively inverting the previous perception that faculty were there to serve and teach the students (Kerr, Thelin).

In addition to this focus on faculty and graduate students, the research university created what are now rungs of the academic ladder: departmental hierarchies, disciplinary associations, scholarly journals and presses, and research institutes (Geiger, Kerr). Particularly relevant to the debate over community engagement's place in the academy, it is important to note that this trend marked the beginning of the strong hold science and its positivist approach would have on these hierarchies. Indeed, Driscoll (2009) invokes this history in discussing the expectations of higher education relative to community engagement: "These levels of involvement with community clearly demand new understandings, new skills, and even a new way of conceptualizing community….This is another area in which tradition may be blocking progress, as institutions of higher education shed the long-standing ivory tower image and, sometimes, reality" (p. 11).

Building on the legacy of the land-grant movement, three key phenomena in the 20th century transformed and strengthened the connections between higher education and its public. First came the University of Wisconsin's "Wisconsin Idea," which placed faculty and university resources in locations throughout communities and brought expertise, training, and resources to teachers, businesses, and local leaders (Chambers, 2005). Next came the massive investments of federal dollars in higher education that were a direct result of both World War II and the Sputink crisis. The provision of direct student aid, largely through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, or the GI Bill, nearly doubled the college-going population: 1.1 million returning GIs enrolled in school beginning in 1945, as compared with the 1.3 million total students before the war (Geiger, 2005, p. 61). While significant distinctions among institutions remained, this shift cemented in the public mind the concept that higher education in general should be open to most or all Americans.

Then came the massive investment in scientific research, largely for defense purposes, with the creation of agencies such as the National Science Foundation, NASA, and the National Institutes of Health, among other funding vehicles (Kerr, Thelin, Geiger, 1993). These entities recognized the central role of science and technology, generated by universities, on both "economic growth and military strength" (Berdahl, Altbach, & Gumport, 2005, p. 4). While the number of institutions receiving funding from these agencies is small (Geiger, 2004), the effect on higher education generally is broad: the

U.S. government remains the largest funder of campus-based research, providing more than $22 billion in 2001 (Gladieux, King, & Corrigan, 2005). These investments transformed the public's perception of higher education's purpose, permanently linking its success to that of the public at large.

Higher education as a mature industry. The six or eight colonial colleges founded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had evolved into the tremendously diversified and complex 21st century system that would be barely recognizable to those early educators. It is now made up of over 4,000 schools that are public and private, religiously affiliated and non-denominational, elite and open access, for profit and not for profit and that are dominated by the enormously large and complex research universities, or "multiversities" (Kerr, 2001). The American system now serves a multitude of constituents and works to educate virtually any person who seeks a post-secondary degree, making figuring out who and what the system is designed to serve quite a complex endeavor.

The current amalgamation of institutions requires more than 20 levels of distinction within the Carnegie Foundation classification system (Carnegie Classifications, 2010). In 2001 Clark Kerr revisited his 1963 coinage of the term "multiversity"– which he also sardonically called "a series of individual faculty entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance over parking" (p. 15): he noted that rather than Flexner's conception of the university as an "organism," where the parts and the whole are bound together, the multiversity was more a mechanism, "a series of processes producing a series of results…held together by administrative rules and powered by money" (p. 15). Both the multiversities and the myriad other types of modern colleges and universities were simultaneously working to educate students, to produce knowledge, and to be both global institutions and a positive force in the communities in which they had often sprung up overnight and with whom they always had complicated relationships (Bok, 1982; Ehrenberg, 2000; Scott, 2006). As this transformation occurred, expectations for who should be served and to what purpose multiplied exponentially.

This explosion of size and scope signaled that higher education had become a "mature industry" rather than a "growing sector" (Sullivan, 2000). It is characterized by tremendous diversification of type and function, in addition to the sheer number of institutions that make it up (Bok, 2006; Ehrlich 2000). Small liberal arts institutions and technical colleges function within the same system as schools whose size and complexity cause them to resemble small cities – some even with their own zip codes. For large institutions, the multiple and diverse functions contained within the modern multiversity – from hospitals and top-secret scientific labs to day care centers and food service operations – are in competition with the traditional functions of teaching, research, and service.

Another force affecting institutions' identities is what some see as a creeping consumerism in how key stakeholders view higher education. Commentators and faculty alike decry the trend to perceive students as consumers, to cast a college education in terms of "return on investment," and to market institutions in a way that seems to imply that single rooms and luxury workout facilities are more important to students' college-going decisions than the quality of the faculty. National survey data indicate that becoming "very well off financially" is now the most important goal students have for going to college, while "developing a meaningful philosophy of life" continues to decrease in importance (Pryor, Hurtado, DeAngelo, Palucki, Blake & Tran, 2009).

However, those same data indicate that volunteering among entering freshmen is up, and "helping others" is among students' top five goals for college. Together with the findings that costs, financial aid availability, and job and graduate school placement are among the most influential reasons students are choosing their colleges, these data illustrate that while students' intentions are good, they are approaching college as a time of skills preparation and a path to employment rather than as an opportunity to become engaged citizens in a democratic society. These shifts pose both logistical and philosophical challenges to faculty and administrators whose goals for higher education remain firmly rooted in the life of the mind, a mismatch that further complicates the environment for effective community engagement.

This mission of service is not just goodwill on the part of higher education. It is also a source of its legitimacy as a public good (Bowen, Tobin & Kurzweil, 2005; Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt, 2005). Bringle, Games, and Malloy (1999), for example, speak of colleges and universities as "citizens," and Astin (1999) describes engagement as "institutional citizenship" whose characteristics area determined by 1) how the university relates to the local community where it happens to be located; 2) how it relates to the larger community of higher education institutions, of which it is a member; and 3) how it connects to the larger society in general (p. 32). Universities exist in a compact with communities that requires them to operate in ways that preserve their legitimacy (Chambers, 2005). Due to differing missions, levels of power, and resources, these relationships can be contested. Decisions about enrollment size and housing policy, athletics and land use all have implications that can engage communities, for better or for worse.

Arguably, a broader sense of service to the public remains critical as institutions work to justify their privileged tax-exempt status, a key component of several high-profile agreements that have recently restructured the relationships between public systems of higher education and their state legislatures (Breneman & Kneedler, 2006). For example, in 2006, Virginia's public colleges and universities restructured their relationship with the Commonwealth of Virginia, as precipitously declining state revenues and volatile fluctuations in state appropriations put untenable pressure on institutional budgets and long-range planning capability (Breneman &Kneedler). Begun as a focus on individual institutional effectiveness, the restructuring agreement instead ended up defining a public agenda for how the state and its colleges and universities would meet 21st century challenges (Blake, 2006). In exchange for increased autonomy in key financial and operational areas such as setting tuition, managing capital projects and vendor relationships, schools committed to both access and affordability, developed articulation agreements with state community colleges that outlined steps to guaranteed admission to the four-year institutions, and agreed to meet strict financial and administrative management standards (Blake). Importantly, it also was the first time that the state articulated and made part of a formal agreement the expectations of its higher education institutions (Breneman & Kneedler). A complex political and economic process, the restructuring agreements embodied the many ways that service to the public was both understood and contested in higher education at the time of the study.

Community Engagement as Institutional Renewal

The historical commitment to public service, and to higher education as a public rather than private good, is in flux in the midst of all of this diversification and is in danger of being lost. Community engagement could be an effective antidote. Indeed, legendary scholar Ernest Boyer (1987, 1990) called on his colleagues in the academy to reconsider education as a “seamless web,” of which student and institutional citizenship are fundamental parts. He laid out his vision here:

> At one level the scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems....Campuses should be viewed by both students and professors not as isolated islands but as staging grounds for action…as a special climate in which the academic and civil cultures communicate more continuously and creatively with each other. (1996, pp. 32-33)

While Boyer’s words were powerful, he began “reconsidering scholarship” over 20 years ago and, despite changes around the edges, today’s academic culture looks much the same as it did before his death in 1995. Indeed, some (Saltmarsh, Hartley & Clayton, 2009) call the movement to make engagement central to the academy “stalled,” arguing that it is hampered by public apathy over higher education’s obligation to develop civic agency, inadequate and conflicting conceptions of democratic education, high levels of fragmentation and compartmentalization within the community engagement movement, general avoidance of the political dimension of civic engagement, and “a dominant epistemology in the academy that runs counter to the civic engagement agenda” (p. 5).

Despite these challenges, efforts have been made to strengthen and coordinate community engagement in higher education. The new Carnegie classification is the most visible example, but the Kellogg Commission's (2000) statement on the future of land-grant institutions articulates similar goals, and in 2007 a group of college presidents put forth a "declaration on the civic responsibility of higher education" that "challenges higher education to re-examine its public purposes and its commitments to the democratic ideal" (President's Declaration, p. 1). Many see this as a positive trend that will help to renew higher education's social contract with the public by applying its tremendous resources (some gotten through tax-exempt status and other public subsidies) to solving major social problems that need attention the industry is uniquely positioned to provide. Maurasse (2001) points out that some institutions have always focused their work thusly; he notes that urban universities like the University of Chicago were designed with the needs of the community in mind, and both community colleges and HBCUs place those needs at the center of their missions. Longstanding collaborative partnerships such as those between the University of Pennsylvania and Boston College and their local public school systems illustrate that this strand of engagement is still alive despite significant obstacles.

In light of these challenging conditions, advocates for engaged pedagogies like service-learning and community-based research argue that their true potential in the higher education landscape lies in improving the research and teaching components of institutional work. Some argue that these pedagogies offer ways to deepen scholarship, to bridge the relevance gap, and to reinvigorate outmoded teaching strategies that are ineffective with modern students (Zlotkowsi, 1995; Stanton, Giles & Cruz; 1999). Butin

(2007, 2010) identifies multiple “ideal types” of community engagement that make it adaptable to different disciplines: a technical approach focuses on “pedagogical effectiveness,” a cultural approach considers the “meanings of the practice,” a political conception focuses on the inclusion of voices and groups typically excluded from academic discourse, and an anti-foundational approach calls assumptions into question (2007, p. 36). While each of these perspectives is compelling, no consensus yet exists on whether and how to solve the organizational and philosophical riddle presented by the scholarship of engagement.

Indeed, embrace of community engagement as central to the academic enterprise is far from universal. Some argue that public service, of which community engagement is but one of many forms, distracts from the academy’s true work of developing basic knowledge and teaching the disciplines (Duderstadt, 2007; Fish, 2003, 2008). They argue that developing the analytical skills to create and communicate new knowledge and the expertise that comes with that knowledge should be the single focus of the academy; fostering respect for differences and developing civic capacities is both ethically suspect and practically impossible. Memorably, Fish (2003) calls efforts to “educate students for lives of moral responsibility,” which is the title and stated purpose of a book (cited in this paper) by Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Stevens and Shulman (2003), as “at once too vague and too left-by-the-numbers and too ambitious…[not only] a bad idea…but an unworkable one” (paragraph 15). More radical perspectives such as those of right-wing scholars David Horowitz and Dinesh D’Souza decry “activist intrusions” into the supposedly objective arena of knowledge production and dissemination; addressing social problems in direct ways as part of academic study is not considered good scholarship by this faction but rather “activism for credit” (Horowitz, 2010). While determining who is right in this debate was outside the scope of this study, exploring its contours offers explanation for both the risks and the benefits of community engagement.

The debate over mission and approach in higher education is not just one of organizational evolution and consumer demand. In a decidedly global 21st century world, contested conceptions of knowledge, knowledge production, and authority are challenging many of the core assumptions within the academy. Even what counts for knowledge is an unsettled question, and what and how students are taught is in significant flux. A traditional understanding of the knowledge production mission privileges pure research over applied, insists on academic neutrality, eschews advocacy and situates the university as the sole, or at least primary, source of expertise (Heyworth, 1991). However, the positivist assumptions that underpin this traditional approach to knowledge are beginning to be questioned, first by philosophers (Putnam, 2002; Rorty, 1999) and more recently by action researchers (Hickey & Mohan, 2005; Weiss & Fine, 2004). Already reviewed are the arguments that higher education needs to stick with teaching the disciplines, first because that is its purpose and second because incorporating anything else into the picture begins to become indoctrination rather than a search for the truth, which faulty are both not supposed to and not trained to do (Fish, 2003, 2008; Horowitz, 2010). But others (Benson, Harkavy & Puckett, 2000; Kezar, 2004; Rhoads, 1997) hearken back to Dewey (1938/1997) in arguing that educating for civic participation and to make the world a better place is the whole purpose of education. Many see engaged scholarship as a way to reinvigorate the professoriate and break through the disciplinary stagnation they feel has taken hold in the academy (Boyer, 1990;

Sullivan, 2003). Kezar and Rhoads (2001) call for a Deweyan approach that rejects the traditional separation between experiential and theoretical approaches, as well as the distinctions that categorize applied work more as service than scholarship.

Tied into this debate are questions about exactly what – content vs. civic skills – and how – sage on the stage or “active learning” pedagogies such as community engagement – to teach. Boyte and Mehaffy (2008) argue for the reframing of scholarship and teaching as craft, which they claim would make room for knowing coming from doing in addition to theoretical knowledge. What learning outcomes are the “right” ones is also a central question (Rhoads & Howard, 1998). These uncertainties about fundamental tasks and approaches within the academy both complicate and make room for innovative but messy pedagogies like community engagement. In addition, they make it difficult to include community partners (or students for that matter) on an equal footing with faculty in key aspects of an engagement relationship, such as the formulation of the problem to be addressed, the research design, and the evaluation and distribution of results.

Reciprocity itself calls many academic assumptions about knowledge into question (Zlotkowski, 1999). In its expectation of a dynamic two-way flow of learning and benefit (not to mention power and control), it challenges the academy’s traditional claims to preeminence and gives value to experience in addition to theory. The two-way nature of community engagement pushes universities to see themselves as one source of, rather than the center of, expertise; they have to “learn how to listen and exchange knowledge, not just reach out and transfer knowledge” (Walshok, 1999, p. 87). These are seismic shifts in the academy’s perception of itself that are hard to enact.

Another challenge of reciprocity that is particular to engagement is the interchangeable roles in a reciprocal service relationship. Partners in an exchange have each to acknowledge that they are both teachers and learners in the relationship. Note that this is a shuffling of traditional faculty roles, as learning from one's students or research participants is typically described as a happy accident rather than as an expected outcome of a project. It also assumes students can both acknowledge and overcome their privilege to recognize that they have much to learn from community members as well as faculty (Jones & Hill, 2001), and it requires them to give value and voice to their own knowledge and expertise. Community members have to be able to assert their needs in an environment where the privilege, power, and resource balance often tips away from them and where the design of projects often focuses on goals only tangential to their own, e.g., learning outcomes for students or data-gathering on an unknown or irrelevant construct. For community partner clients, these connections can be even more tenuous and the power imbalance even more daunting. Reciprocity requires the sharing of resources, power, control, risks and benefits, all of which have to happen in an environment where everyone is being asked to do more with less. It is not a stretch to argue that these conditions are unlikely to exist in any consistent way, despite everyone's best intentions.

Existing parameters for faculty roles and rewards pose challenges to effective community engagement. Particularly in research universities where a positivist epistemology still holds sway (Schön, 1983; Sullivan, 2003), there is scant support for engagement as a legitimate form of scholarship (Boyer, 1990); instead it is typically considered service, rather than the more valued research and teaching (Bringle, Games &

Malloy, 1999; Enos & Morton, 2003; Heyworth, 1991; Holland, 1999; Kezar & Rhoads, 2001; Ramaley, 2000). This devaluation is a result of what has been called the separation thesis in education (Freeman, 1994), wherein the academy erroneously treats disciplinary theory and content as separate from and superior in importance to the value considerations inherent in their instantiation in practice. Freeman argues that scholars must reject this mistaken dualism, also called the separation fallacy, in order to avoid the persistent failures of the modern academy.

The separation thesis accounts for many of the current challenges in higher education: institutional research agendas and academic cultures that over-privilege basic science and starve scholarship with practical application; students who are ill-equipped to solve world-class problems because their preparation offers them few opportunities to apply their knowledge; reinforcement of authority as the domain of the elite, a view that is inimical to effective community engagement and is currently being proven wrong by phenomena like crowd sourcing; and reinforcement of the privileged status of institutional partners and devaluing of both knowledge and authority of community partners. In business, this separation leads to fundamental miscalculations about the necessary role for ethics in decision making and, many argue, financial disasters such as the 2008 collapse of the U.S. economy (Natale & Sora, 2010). Several major higher education scholars predict a similar disaster for the academy without reform that bridges the basic-applied divide. Boyer (1987; 1990) argues that such separation leads to overly narrow and limited conceptions of scholarship that devalue the teaching mission and public purpose of higher education. Schön (1983) warns against the positivist view of knowledge he called technical rationality, arguing that it is a failed approach, despite its continued favored position. He calls instead for “reflective practice,” a process that takes context into account, encourages the framing of issues to better understand messy questions, and sees accountability as the ultimate metric, rather than perfectly successful application of standards to a situation (1983; 1987).

Schön is not alone in calling for a less positivist approach to educating students. Sullivan (2003) bemoans the loss of what he calls the “natural reciprocity” between the academy and the public that comes when the “market” is made up of those who “respect the contribution higher education makes to the society through promoting intellectual activity and making it more available to citizens generally” (p. 7). He links this turn away from public mandate to an effect of the positivist underpinnings of the current notion of individualism, one that argues that knowledge and facts can be separated from value and all subjectivity and that ethical and moral components can and should be divorced from pure knowledge (an educator’s description of the separation thesis, without a doubt). Benson, Harkavy, and Puckett (2000) call for a “democratic devolution revolution,” where the fact/value dichotomy (Putnam, 2002) underlying the academic-practitioner divide is rejected. Further, Kezar and Rhoads (2001) remind scholars and practitioners that educational reformer John Dewey (1916) calls for useful scholarship that combined thinking and doing for effective practice.

Additional challenges to the development of reciprocal community engagement relationships can be found in the structures that order the university itself. The interdisciplinary nature of community engagement does not fit well with the specialization of faculty culture (Vortruba, 1996). Universities are also loosely coupled (Enos & Morton, 2003); autonomous units have multiple missions and goals, as well as levels and sources of accountability that make seamless interaction with community partners across an institution difficult. Competition among units for resources and the isolation caused by disciplinary and administrative silos are also barriers to collaboration. For such institutions, this decentralization means that engagement is likely to remain marginalized rather than becoming systemic.

Students themselves pose a challenge to effective community engagement. Practically, their time and focus are fractured: work, family obligations, meetings, study groups, and athletics jostle for time and attention in students' daily lives. This limited focus means that they might struggle to prioritize community engagement in ways that produce effective partnerships. Developmental research indicates that, particularly in their first few years of college, traditional-aged students have limited intellectual readiness to make sense of problems with high levels of ambiguity (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; King & Kitchener, 1994; Perry, 1968) and to engage with diverse others (Jones & Hill, 2001; Tatum, 1992). Yet they expect (and need) preparation to live as citizens in an increasingly global world (Astin et al, 2000; Colby et al, 2003; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Sax, 2004). While these challenges are not insurmountable, they need to be taken into account when designing community engagement projects to guard against the potential drawbacks they might produce.

Even defining "the community" in relation to an institution, its students, and its obligations for partnership development is difficult. It can take the form of the people, agencies, and institutions that share a geographic location with a school, it can be conceived of as national and international sites whose opportunities and challenges are well matched with the goals of a particular educational program, and it can have an almost infinite number of permutations in between. While such a wide range of potential communities with whom to partner offers tremendous opportunities for study and learning, it can make a systematic institutional approach difficult to achieve.

Community engagement is good but hard. The split between theory and practice, between fact and value, between "objective" inquiry and inquiry in context, as well as the limiting of the sources and direction of knowledge flow, are all established characteristics of the academy that make reciprocity difficult to achieve. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that faculty struggle to adopt community engagement's pedagogies: they take a long time, they encourage multiple authorship and publication in accessible places rather than a heavy emphasis on peer-reviewed journals; deans and chairs see it as service work rather than research and/or pedagogies that produce positive outcomes for students; it is not rewarded by promotion and tenure committees; and ceding power and authority to community members or students can feel threatening to members of the academy. Community engagement is more work initially and is often foreign to students, which can make them resistant to taking courses with those pedagogies, although once they take them they often love them and seek out similar opportunities.

Done well, community engagement challenges some unexamined beliefs in concepts like meritocracy and uncovers for students (and faculty) their privilege. Community members also have to stretch their typically practical approaches to see value in both theory and research and to be patient with and value the different timeline of the academy, as only with time does good research occur. That understanding also has to extend to the constraints institutions face. All in all, only by rejecting the separation thesis can community engagement be successful; this requires some paradigm shifts for faculty and community, as well as some willingness on the part of students to be uncomfortable as they grow.

While all of the issues discussed affect the success of community engagement, no study had yet attempted to determine what factors led to the presence of reciprocity in a partnership, particularly as defined by the actors themselves, and how the presence of reciprocity affected the quality – a broad spectrum with opposite ends of success and failure but certainly many stops along the way – and thus the sustainability of a partnership. Nor had harm as an outcome of community engagement relationships been a focus of research in this area. This study attempted to fill those empirical gaps.

Conceptual Framework

This study sought to understand if and how reciprocity was constructed in the course of community engagement partnerships and what the effects of that presence (or absence) were on those relationships. In the literature on community engagement, reciprocity involves mutual benefit, shared risk, an acknowledgement that all parties are both serving and being served, and recognition that mutual learning is occurring (Stanton, 1990; Jacoby, 2003; Kendall, 1990). Theoretical considerations of reciprocity define it as the giving of benefits to another in exchange for benefits received (Molm, Schaeffer, & Collett, 2007). Arising largely from ethnographic work in anthropology and sociology, a common metaphor for reciprocity is gift-giving: something is given, something is received, and the act of exchange engenders an obligation on behalf of the receiver to reciprocate, but the nature of that obligation is unspecified (Blau, 1964, Emerson 1976; Goldner, 1960; Mauss, 1954/2002)

Community engagement partnerships are simultaneously concrete and fluid, where expectations are stated and unstated and outcomes are known and unknown. Most begin with a transaction, with a simple but clear understanding of everyone's role in the experience. In a volunteering partnership, a student is providing a service (e.g., tutoring, elder companionship, athletics coaching) to a community agency that needs manpower, that agency is providing the student with an opportunity to get experience in an area of interest or to pursue a passion, and partner clients both receive the service and often teach the student valuable lessons about how best to work with specific populations. This is repeated in innumerable permutations across the many types of engagement, including service-learning, engaged scholarship, community-based research, and outreach.

However, both the rhetoric and the empirical evidence illustrate that the goals of engagement reach beyond simple transactions of previously agreed-upon goods and services and into the more symbolic realm, where the resources exchanged are often undefined or intangible and where their meaning or worth goes beyond simple economic value. For example, in many cases, students learn and grow developmentally (Astin et al, 2000), organizations increase their capacity beyond the benefit of a specific service provision (Eyler & Giles, 1999), and faculty transform their scholarship (Zlotkowski, 1999) through this work, not to mention attaining the broader social change that is the aim of much engagement with an action or activist focus (Butin, 2010, Cruz & Giles, 2000). Other less tangible effects of the partnership also include positive community perceptions of an institution and its students, feelings of connectedness among students to the community outside the institutional "bubble," or the satisfaction that comes from engagement in issues that have personal resonance for faculty. These intangible benefits are every bit as real and important to perceptions of the partnership as those that are more concrete, and they have to be considered to understand a partnership in a comprehensive way.

Each of these dimensions also has a negative side. Students can make mistakes or fail to perform the work they are expected to provide, agencies can be disorganized and unable to provide experiences students and faculty expect; faculty can ask community partners to do or allow things that do not fit with their needs or regulations. The exchanges in the partnership can fail to meet both concrete and symbolic expectations or be done in such a way that harm or insult is a result of the interaction. It is important to account for each of these dimensions and both their positive and negative possibilities. Exchange relationships are also often asymmetrical, meaning the benefits and risks do not balance neatly on opposite sides of the partnership equation. Any effort to understand the holistic nature of such partnerships has to account for this asymmetry. There is no doubt that goals and expectations are both concrete and fluid, that what is exchanged among partners in an engagement relationship is both tangible and symbolic, and that such relationships are in a constant state of change and co-creation among the partners where perfect equality is a rare state.

Social Exchange Theory – Origins and Concepts

Social exchange theory (SET) is one of the major theoretical frameworks in social psychology (Cook & Rice, 2006) and is an ideal tool for understanding community engagement relationships in a holistic way. The theory is concerned with those series of interactions among individuals that generate obligations (Emerson, 1976) and are interdependent and contingent on the actions of another person (Blau, 1964). Such interactions also have the potential to create "high-quality" relationships: one of the basic tenets of SET is that those relationships "evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments" (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005, p. 874-5. See also Molm, 1994, 2003). The question of interdependence is also important, as it assumes "mutual and complementary arrangements" between partners (Molm, 1994). Conversely, social exchange theory predicts that the interaction will only continue if, in the long term, both partners feel they are receiving valued resources in return (Emerson; Miron & Moley, 2006), also a reasonable assumption in engagement relationships.

This study analyzed the selected community engagement partnerships using this framework in order to: a) identify interactions (exchanges) among partners; b) characterize the nature of those interactions; and c) assess the nature and quality of the relationship that resulted from those interactions over the course of the partnership. Each of the key tenets of social exchange theory – that the relations in a partnership depend upon and respond to the actions of the individuals involved and that the relation can strengthen into a highly successful, trusting commitment as a result of those interactions – are also fundamental assumptions inherent in community engagement. Recall the Carnegie definition that community engagement is "a collaboration…for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39).

SET's central conceptual unit is the relation between exchange partners– the give and take of relationship – and it is concerned with actions that require rewarding actions from others to continue (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Cropanzano & Mitchell). As causality is implied here – certain behaviors cause certain other behaviors –

understanding the meaning participants make of one another's actions that make up that give and take, as well as the effect of that meaning on perceptions of harm and success, was critical and thus was the central focus of this study.

Reciprocity as an Exchange Rule.

Reciprocity is built, developed, and created in the interactions between people and the meanings they attach to those interactions. It occurs in the context of a partnership that comes with a set of expectations, norms, actions and reactions. In social exchange theory, the process of exchange is guided by certain rules, or guidelines to which each participant adheres (Emerson, 1976; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Those rules frame the relationship, and each participant is expected to abide by them in order for the partnership to be successful.

Reciprocity is among the most common exchange rules; although different traditions define reciprocity slightly differently (Cook & Rice, 2006; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Goldner, 1960; Mauss, 1954/2002), in each case the assumption is that something is given and something is returned in exchange. Reciprocity is at times direct – A gives to B and B gives to A – or indirect, where each actor gives and eventually receives, but not from the person to whom s/he originally gave something (Molm, Schaefer, & Collett, 2007). An important distinction between purely economic and reciprocal exchange involves the fact that not just goods and services are exchanged but also resources that are less tangible. The value of an exchange in a reciprocal relationship necessarily can be both instrumental (also called utilitarian), where the basic value to the recipient is of the good or service exchanged, or symbolic (also called communicative), where "value [is]conveyed by the reciprocal act itself, above and beyond its instrumental value" (p. 200). This study took each of these dimensions of reciprocity—direct and indirect, instrumental and symbolic—into account in its analysis of the selected engagement partnerships.

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) identify three primary types of reciprocity: a) reciprocity as a transactional pattern of interdependent exchanges, b) reciprocity as a folk belief that people get what they deserve over the long term (Gouldner, 1960) and c) reciprocity as a moral norm, where those who do not comply should be punished (Mauss, 1954/2002). Because community engagement relationships tend to be transactional (Enos & Morton, 2003) and occur among partners whose cultural norms and expectations often differ (Sandy & Holland, 2006), it was expected that the first understanding of reciprocity would be most applicable in this study, as it is centered around the concept of interdependence where outcomes are based not on individual effort but on a combination of actions of all parties involved (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961). Molm (1994) notes that this interdependence is a defining characteristic of social exchange, which by definition requires that something be given and something received. However, attention was paid to ensure that occurrences of reciprocity as a folk belief and as a moral norm were also considered.

Among exchange rules, reciprocity is most often associated with the development of high-quality relationships (Molm, Takahashi, & Peterson, 2000), something that was strongly supported by the study's findings. It is also, as argued throughout this paper, cited as the prime conceptual protection against a host of harms potentially inherent in community engagement; participants' perceptions strongly supported this prediction. However, SET also allows for other exchange rules such as negotiated ones that involve more explicit and quid-pro-quo exchanges among partners (Cook & Emerson, 1978; Cook, Emerson & Gilmore, 1983). Interestingly, much work has been done comparing reciprocal and negotiated rules (see Molm, 2000, 2003): that work indicates that reciprocity tends to lead to the development of both trust and commitment (Molm et al, 2000), while negotiation produces more negative use of power and less equality (Molm, 1997; Molm et al, 1999).

While a focus on reciprocity made sense based on its prominence in the engagement literature, it would be prudent to heed Cropanzano and Mitchell's (2005) caution that other exchange rules more common in sociology and anthropology such as altruism, group gain, rank equilibrium, and competition (Meeker, 1971) be considered as well. Once we have put a much finer point on our understanding of reciprocity's role in community engagement, this would be an interesting avenue for future research.

Resources Exchanged

Understanding what resources are exchanged, as well as in what ways and with what meanings, is an important component of social exchange theory. This study applied Foa and Foa's (1974, 1980) model of resource classes to be exchanged. These included:

- **love** (an expression of affectionate regard), status (an expression of evaluative judgment that conveys high or low prestige, regard, or esteem);
- **information** (advice, opinions, instruction, or enlightenment, excluding those behaviors which could be classed as love or status);
- **money** (any coin, currency, or token which has some standard unity of exchange value);
- **goods** (tangible products, objects, or materials); and

- **services** (activities on the body or belongings of a person which often constitute labor for another) (Foa & Foa, 1980, p. 79).

The exchange of these resources also has economic or symbolic value, or some degree of both (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Malinowski, 1922; Mauss, 1954/2002). This framework was used to identify what types of resources were exchanged in each community engagement partnership and helped characterize participants' perceptions of those resources.

In applying SET to community engagement, this study followed Miron and Moley's (2006) examination of how community members' participation in the planning and evaluation of university-community partnerships affected their perceptions of success. Their findings illustrated that there was much fruitful research to be done on engagement using this framework. Beyond its extensive application to conceptions of reciprocity, one of SET's most widespread uses was to understand the relationship between exchange and power (Bienenstock & Bonachich, 1997; Blau, 1964, Cook & Emerson, 1978; Emerson, 1962, 1972; Friedkin, 1999; Markovsky, Skvoretz, Willer, Lovaglia, & Erger, 1993; Molm, Peterson & Takahashi, 1999), with recent applications focused on understanding the way social structures created by exchange relations "constrain and enable actors to exercise power and influence in their daily lives" (Cook & Rice, 2006, p. 53). Fairness (Blau, 1964; Cook & Emerson, 1978; Homans, 1961; Jasso, 2001; Masterson, Lewis, Goldman & Taylor, 2000; Molm, Quist & Wisely, 1994) and emotion (Lawler & Yoon, 1993, 1996; Lawler, Thye, & Yoon, 2000; Molm, Peterson & Takahashi, 1999, Molm, Takahashi, & Peterson, 2000) have also received close attention. Each of these concepts has significance within community engagement and, once a stronger understanding of reciprocity in engagement is established, would yield fruitful areas of research.

As with any research focus, social exchange theory is not the only theoretical framework that might have facilitated a better understanding of community engagement. Participatory or action research is often suggested as the ideal perspective (Cruz & Giles, 2000), and other approaches include negotiated order (Dorado & Giles, 2004), interpersonal relations (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002) and transactional and transformational leadership (Enos & Morton, 2003). Each of these has utility. However, I sought to understand the nature of the partnerships in their current form, as my goal was to develop and adapt current practice. While much of the rhetoric inherent in community engagement calls for transformational efforts in university-community partnerships (Butin, 2010; Boyte, 2008; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Harkavy, 1999; Heyworth, 1991), most practitioners acknowledge that service projects tended to be transactional (Enos & Morton, 2003). While I, too, approach this work from an aspirational perspective, those aspirations are meaningless without an understanding of the shape of the current context. Otherwise, transformational engagement can only be achieved through happy accident.

The literature argues that reciprocal relationships will continue and improve over time, and nonreciprocal ones – which may or may not be causing harm – will wither and fail. This study tested that hypothesis. This study also tested the hypothesis that non-reciprocal relationships led to harm, investigated what forms that harm could take, and examined its effect on the success of a relationship. Results inform partnership work in several ways: by providing a clearer understanding of how reciprocity is constructed among partners, what components of a partnership serve to improve or weaken that construct, what the relationship is between those levels and any harm experienced in a partnership, and what effect the levels of perceived reciprocity have on the success of the partnership. Taken together, this research hoped to shed some light on the following questions: is community engagement worth it, and if so, under what conditions? Under what conditions is it unethical to proceed, even if one side benefits? What does this say about ethical practice if we proceed anyway? What are the costs of not doing engagement, if we say that we cannot do it well? While answers to these questions may be both difficult to achieve and incomplete, they must be sought. Such was the ambition of this study.

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand how reciprocity is constructed in university-community partnerships and to determine whether that reciprocity is necessary for effective engagement. In social exchange theory, the engagement partnership is conceived as a two-way reciprocal relationship that relies on a balance of risks and benefits to persist and deepen; absent that balance, the relationship will deteriorate and perhaps cease. This study examined the process of creating and maintaining university-community engagement relationships through the lens of the participants' experiences. To reiterate, the following research questions guided the inquiry:

1. In what ways is reciprocity collectively constructed in university-community partnerships, and what factors influence its presence or absence?
   a. In what ways does each actor (institution, faculty, students, community agencies, agency clients) perceive reciprocity being enacted (or not) in the partnership?
   b. What are the levels of reciprocity in the partnership, as perceived by each actor?
   c. What factors are associated with higher (and lower) perceived levels of reciprocity in a partnership?
2. In what ways, if any, is harm to one or more of the actors (institution, faculty, students, community agencies, agency clients) perceived to be a result of the partnership?

3. In what ways has the partnership been perceived as successful by the actors?
    a. Has the partnership persisted?
    b. In what ways are the actors satisfied and not satisfied with the partnership?
    c. Has the partnership produced results as defined and expected by the different actors?
4. What is the relationship between perceived levels of reciprocity within a partnership and perceptions of harm, perceptions of success (persistence, satisfaction, and results), and satisfaction of the partners?

These questions grew out of the author's experience of community engagement relationships, concern over perceived variance in levels of reciprocity and the potential for harm in those relationships, the absence of a clear understanding in the literature of how reciprocity is achieved in university-community partnerships, and debate over engagement's role in renewing the public purpose and relevancy of higher education. They were also informed by a thorough review of the empirical and theoretical research in this area.

A Qualitative Approach

The literature reviewed in the previous chapter illustrates that reciprocity – the give and take that is the lifeblood of exchange – is central to prevailing conceptions of effective community engagement (Carnegie, 2010; Kendall, 1990; Stanton, 2007). Scholars also argue that it acts as a safeguard against the potential harms inherent in those relationships by establishing a "doing with" rather than "doing for" approach (Butin, 2010; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Morton, 1997). At the same time, there exist many logistical, structural, cultural, and pedagogical challenges to developing university-community partnerships that are truly reciprocal, that share equally in the risks and benefits, and that acknowledge each actor's dual role as teacher and learner (Bringle, Games & Malloy, 1999; Enos & Morton, 2003, Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). An acknowledged weakness of the current scholarship on community engagement is the dearth of substantive information on how reciprocity is formed and maintained among partners (Driscoll, 2009). Understanding how reciprocity was experienced by participants within those partnerships through the meaning they made of their experiences was the primary goal of this study, making a qualitative approach appropriate. Qualitative researchers seek to understand how people make sense of their world and their experiences in it through investigation in naturalistic settings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Merriam, 2009).

Participants exchanged multiple types of resources in the course of the university-community engagement partnerships studied. Those resources were sometimes concrete, such as service to a community agency or provision of data for a research study. They were also symbolic in nature, including things like friendship with an elder community member or public support for an organization's objectives (Foa & Foa, 1980). Faculty, students, community partners and agency clients attached meaning to those resources and to a project's development and implementation, to how it was carried out, to what they gave and what they received, to how they treated and were treated by one another. Social exchange theory predicted that this meaning ultimately would affect the sustainability of an engagement relationship and the quality of its outcomes; specifically, that when perceptions of reciprocity were higher, overall perceptions of success would be better. This expectation was realized in the study, particularly in terms of building relationships.

As building those relationships was fluid rather than static, it was important to capture the ups and downs that were always part of that process. Qualitative methods were well-suited to such inquiry in that they allowed the participants to describe and reflect on their experiences and interpret the meaning they attached to those experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

In the realm of higher education, little empirical evidence exists to explain how reciprocity is constructed (Driscoll, 2009), and no studies were identified that examined the effect of reciprocity on participants' perceptions of harm and success in community engagement partnerships. As causal explanations and in-depth understanding of a phenomenon were sought, qualitative inquiry was useful (Maxwell, 2005); this study sought to understand the effect of participants' experiences of reciprocity (or the lack thereof) on perceptions of harm and success in the partnership.

Research Design

As a reminder, this study used a comparative or holistic multiple-case design (Yin, 2009) to address the research questions. This approach was appropriate as case studies are used to explain causal links that are too complex for survey or experimental approaches (Yin). The historical and logistical complexities that accompany community engagement created just such an environment. Case study methodology was particularly well-suited for such circumstances.

Site

The chosen site was the University of Virginia, a mid-sized, highly selective public research university in the South. It is the state's flagship institution and has a major hospital. It is predominantly white and approximately one-quarter of the population identifies as students of color. There are more women than men and 70% of students are from in-state. There is a small international student population. The undergraduate community is traditionally aged (18-24) and residential, with almost half of students living in university housing. Just less than half of undergraduate students receive some type of financial aid; however, fully one-quarter have family incomes of $200,000 or more, compared with 12.8% at public institutions generally (2007 CIRP Survey Freshman Profile). Students at the institution do service at a high rate – 81% have participated in some form of public service by their fourth year (2011 NSSE), and high percentages of graduates enter the Peace Corps and Teach for America upon graduation.

In the ten years leading up to the study period, community engagement has enjoyed increased attention at U.Va. The most recent Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) identifies public service as an important focus for the institution. Additionally, following a two-year planning process conducted by a presidentially appointed group, a recent report identifies five areas of emphasis, one of which is public service. Out of that report came several major recommendations that were funded by the institution's governing board. The most prominent was the creation in 2009 of the Jefferson Public Citizens program, a "comprehensive academic public service program that integrates students' research and service experiences throughout their time at the University" ("Jefferson Public Citizens Program," n.d.). Additionally, the Provost's Office created several funding opportunities for faculty interested in developing community engagement courses, known as Academic Community Engagement (ACE) grants, which were designed "to encourage student learning and foster innovative academically-based public service university-wide" ("Academic Community Engagement Course Information," n.d.). These initiatives were funded by the Board of Visitors (governing body for the institution) and reflected the institution's desire to provide more structure and support for public service and to strengthen the links between service and academic work.

While the JPC and ACE programs focus on academic community engagement, direct service has been a part of U.Va. student life for decades. For over 40 years students at U.Va have been volunteering via a non-profit organization separate from the university called Madison House. Madison House is a unique and influential component of community engagement. It is designed to provide volunteering and leadership opportunities to U.Va. students and volunteer resources to community agencies in the local area. Employing a "student-run, staff-supported" model, a professional staff of six employs a "train the trainer" model where 200 student leaders train over 3,000 student volunteers to engage in weekly service throughout the academic year. Averaging about 110,000 hours each year, in 2011 that service was estimated to be worth over $2 million to the local community. Partner agencies estimate that Madison House volunteers affect the lives of over 17,000 of their clients each year ("Madison House: Our Model", n.d.). Partnerships between Madison House and agencies are "planned for effective and strategic purposes" ("Madison House: Community Partnerships," n.d.).

Madison House is separate from the University of Virginia, but everyone who volunteers through it is a U.Va. student. In 2011-2012 there were 19 programs that involved 90 community agencies in the area. Data indicate that over half of U.Va. students volunteer at least once with Madison House during their tenure. Programs encompass a wide range of agencies and activities, including youth and elder programs, athletics, financial literacy, and animal care, and are grouped accordingly. Each of the 19 Madison House programs is lead by a Head Program Director (Head PD), a university student who oversees the program directors (PD) for each site within that program (e.g., tutoring has one Head PD for the program, and a PD for each separate school that participates). The Head PD works directly with the community partner (CP), who can serve in one of many roles with a community agency, including teacher, assistant principal, volunteer coordinator or executive director. In all Madison House cases the program director and community partner sign a "partner agreement" at the beginning of the year that lays out expectations with regard to goals for the year, communication, and how to manage any issues that might arise. Student volunteers sign up through the Madison House recruitment process prior to and at the beginning of each semester. At the midpoint and end of each semester, program directors send out evaluations of each program, which include feedback from students and community partners.

Selection of Cases

In a multiple-case study design, selection of 6-10 cases is appropriate (Yin, 2009). Eight cases were included in this study. A comparative-case design allowed selection of those cases according to characteristics the theoretical framework suggested were important. The study began with the selection of three typical or representative projects, ones that were expected to "capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation" (Yin, 2009, p. 48) and where literal replication (wherein selected cases were likely to produce similar results) was expected. Five additional cases were then selected that displayed different project leadership (faculty or student) and service type (volunteering, service-learning or community-based research), as well as different levels of community input and methods of evaluation. According to the literature, each of these distinctions was a potential factor in the effectiveness of engagement projects (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Miron & Moley, 2006; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000), thus allowing for the possibility of theoretical replication. Selection processes applied are described in more detail below. These profile and quality distinctions were considered while still focusing specifically on the development and effect of reciprocity in each relationship.

In order to identify partnerships that met the required criteria, over 70 individual students, faculty and staff were contacted via email just prior to the start of the 2011-2012 academic year, inviting them to participate in a survey about university-community partnerships. Contact followed Dillman's (2007) procedure for electronic surveys. (See Appendix B for the instrument.) The survey was developed based on the project and quality profiles described below and designed to facilitate the comparative case study employing replication logic (Yin, 2009). The email introduced the study and included a link to the web-based survey. Data from the surveys were analyzed to gather descriptive statistics that assisted in characterizing each project prior to selection.

Participants were identified using multiple avenues. They included faculty and students identified in the course and award listings over the past three years for Academic Community Engagement (ACE), Jefferson Public Citizens (JPC), and Community-based Undergraduate Research Grants (CBURG) awards, as well as individual faculty members involved in academic community engagement at the institution. Invitations were sent to the 19 head program directors at Madison House with a note from the executive director encouraging (but not requiring) students' participation. Informal student networks were also tapped, thus applying a snowball sampling (Creswell, 2003) technique as well; the invitation was sent to 10 students active in community engagement work at the University, with a request to forward widely to other students who might be willing to participate in the study. It is also likely that the survey was distributed to several student listservs, as that was something that was encouraged as well. This combination of sources ensured that both a breadth of type and information-rich cases were included (Patton, 2002).

Non-respondents received three additional invitations to participate in the period of one to eight weeks from the original invitation. Initial efforts garnered sufficient faculty-led and Madison House projects, as well as two that received Jefferson Public Citizens program (JPC) funding, all of which satisfied several requirements of the research design. A targeted effort was made to contact non-respondents from one particular student organization, Alpha Phi Omega (APO), to allow for comparison between it and Madison House, two types of student-run projects that were well-established at the site but that had differences relevant to the theoretical frame.

All partnerships needed to satisfy a common set of criteria based on the theoretical frame to be included. As this study treated the persistence of projects as a starting point and not simply an outcome, all projects selected had to have been in place for at least two semesters prior to the study period. As well, effort was made to select projects with varying lengths, as such variance is a typical finding in the literature. Including projects that received funding through JPC or CBURG was important due to their connection to prominent institutional strategic planning initiatives. As the study sought a holistic understanding of each partnership that took into account multiple perspectives, each partnership had to have an institutional lead (student, staff or faculty), an agency or organization lead, (community partner), a student volunteer (not the leader) and a community agency client who were willing to be interviewed for the study. This requirement disqualified all of the student-led service-learning and community-based research projects identified through the survey, a finding explored further in Chapter 5.

Selection was also limited to the local area. Reasons for this choice were both practical and philosophical. The research design relied on interviewing and, later, member-checking, methods that are most easily implemented in person or following face-to-face interaction. In philosophical terms, I was particularly interested in investigating the dynamic at play between the institution and its local community. I wanted to examine the multiple lenses through which local residents, students, and university faculty and staff viewed one another and the institution that was both literally and figuratively in their midst. In other contexts students reported that service got them "out of the college bubble" and opened their eyes to the existence of issues of poverty, public health disparities, school quality, mental health and affordable housing that played out mere steps from their homes and classrooms. That proximity can be a powerful component of service experience, and I was interested in learning how the participants interpreted one another's engagement in this sometimes charged environment. Finally, my experience indicated that it is often more difficult with service to dismiss the challenges that come up as the fault of local systems when one is part of those very systems.

Once these baseline criteria were met, the projects were categorized according to two levels of analysis: a) type of service and project leadership, or "project profile" for the purposes of this study; and b) community input and use of formal feedback mechanisms, or "quality profile." While in the messy world of community engagement there are many ways projects can go wrong, the first few rounds of Carnegie data (Driscoll, 2009) indicated that two major weaknesses related to establishing reciprocity included levels of community input, particularly in the planning and development stages, and infrequent use of formal feedback mechanisms, particularly those that included student and community input in meaningful ways. Thus, these two dimensions were considered as well when selecting appropriate cases.

A total of 38 responses to the survey were received. Of those, 19 provided enough information for responses to be analyzed according to the project and quality profiles. From those responses, 11 were invited to participate in the full study, with 8 cases eventually selected. Survey data allowed cases to be categorized according to the following project profile matrix.

Figure 1 – Project Profile

	Project type		
Led by	Direct Service/Volunteer	Service-Learning or Community-Based Research	Community-Based Research
Students	• MH Cavs in the Classroom • MH Adopt-A-Grandparent • MH ESOL – LHS • Greek Councils Neighborhood Community Center • APO Books Behind Bars		
Faculty/staff		• Day in the Life	• ecoMOD • LEAP • Day in the Life

The first level of analysis based on survey results was the type of service (direct service/volunteering, service-learning, or community-based research). While each of these forms of community engagement was included in the Carnegie definition (Driscoll, 2008), there is substantial coverage in the literature treating each as a distinct form of service in the university setting (e.g., Jacoby, 2003). In particular, some scholars argue that service-learning and community-based research are more likely to be characterized by reciprocity than volunteering (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Morton, 1997). However, other research has shown significant positive outcomes, including shared teaching and learning and mutual benefit that result from volunteering (Astin et al, 2000). Therefore, it was worthwhile to insure representation of each type in the study. Additionally, all three forms of service were typically found at the chosen site, with volunteering being most prevalent, so this selection strategy allowed for an examination of the breadth of engagement projects in place.

The second set of criteria determining the project profile reflected its leadership. It is well-established in the literature that being involved in the inception, planning, development and oversight of a project is important to feeling invested in the project (Butin, 2010; Holland, 2000; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000), which leads to the creation of reciprocity. In addition, there were two clear types of projects at this site: those led by faculty or administrators, and those led by students. Here the selection of cases by leadership also reflected a unique quality of the chosen site: the undergraduate student experience there is characterized by a strong tradition of student autonomy, empowerment and responsibility, which translates to an unusually high number of student-led projects and activities of all sorts. Therefore, looking specifically at student-led projects in this context was important. Efforts were made to include student-led service-learning and community-based research projects (empty cells in Figure 1), but none of those cases satisfied participant access requirements (available participants serving as institutional lead, community agency lead, student volunteer, and agency client), perhaps reflecting a difference in reach of those projects. Student-led community-based research projects, in particular, tended not to involve agency clients directly in the work.

A note about community leadership is warranted here. No solely community-led projects were identified, as was expected. Importantly, though, in two of the selected cases the community partner specifically reached out to the student organization (Madison House) for a partnership and thus had responsibility for the initiation and development of the partnership, although at the point of study they had intentionally and enthusiastically turned the day-to-day running of the program over to the students.

Following the type and leadership selections and using the information provided in the survey data on level of community input and use of formal feedback mechanisms – the "quality profile" – projects were categorized as higher or lower along those two dimensions.

Figure 2 – Quality Profile

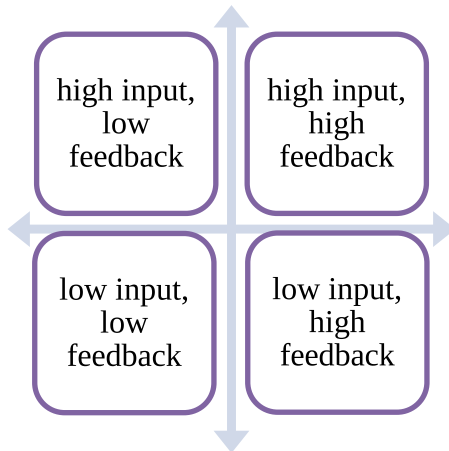

Figure 2 illustrates this concept: the x-axis represents the level of community input in the development and implementation of a project, and the y-axis represents the level of formal feedback or evaluation from each group of program participants incorporated into the project design. For example, if community partners were actively involved in the design, training and implementation of a project, but there was little to no feedback gathered, or if students were omitted from any feedback sought, that partnership would be categorized as "high input, low feedback." Similarly, if community partners were excluded from the development of the project but were asked to provide input on its effectiveness or success during or after a partnership experience, that partnership would be categorizes as "low input, high feedback." This strategy allowed selection of cases where an inattention to community input or inadequate opportunities for feedback could mean that conditions to develop reciprocal relationships may not have been in place. It also allowed for selection of cases where the structure of the project seemed ideal in terms of structure, input and feedback mechanisms. The following table illustrates how cases were categorized according to these criteria.

Table 1: Quality Profile Case Selection

High Input, Low Feedback	High Input, High Feedback
• LEAP	• MH Cavs in the Classroom • MH Adopt-A-Grandparent • MH ESOL – LHS • Day in the Life • ecoMOD
• Greek Councils Neighborhood Community Center • APO Books Behind Bars	
Low Input, Low Feedback	**Low Input, High Feedback**

Survey data provided information about level of community input during the planning and execution of a partnership, which was used to make these characterizations. As the table demonstrates, most cases were characterized by their institutional lead as "high input/high feedback," which the literature argues is the ideal set of circumstances for facilitating reciprocity. Two cases were characterized as "low input/low feedback" and thus were expected to return lower levels of reciprocity. One case was characterized as "high input/low feedback," with outcomes expected to fall between the other two categories. The replication logic model applied here assumed that similar cases would return similar results, and those that differed in key areas would return results that different in predictable ways; results expected based on that logic were mixed here, in that both expected and unexpected results were found. These findings are discussed in depth in Chapter 5.

Overall, the eight cases were selected to provide a range of type, leadership, and levels of collaborative planning and assessment among the partnerships with usable responses. The combination of cases across project type and quality profiles, as well as the inclusion of information-rich cases, strengthened confidence in the research findings. A description of each case follows.

Use of Replication Logic

In the final selection, the three "high input/high feedback" Madison House cases were selected as typical because that term aptly described their status within the University: most community engagement partnerships lasting more than two semesters occur through Madison House (over 90 partnerships each year) with over half of U.Va. students participating with them during their tenure. They were also student-run, which was typical of projects at this site. In addition, a majority of respondents to the survey were from Madison House programs, reflecting their prevalence in the site. One of these cases is discussed in depth in Chapter 4 to provide a benchmark for what was considered "typical" in the analysis. Following the comparative design, cases were then selected in which conditions indicated the possibility of theoretical replication, useful here as it allowed testing of several different conditions likely to be present in community engagement partnerships. One exemplary case is also discussed in Chapter 4 to highlight significant findings.

Cases

The Madison House Cavs in the Classroom partnership with Local Elementary School[1](MH Cavs) is a student-run direct service partnership identified as "high involvement/high feedback" on the quality profile. LES is one of 13 elementary schools in the local area participating in the program, in which over 300 U.Va. students

[1] Pseudonym

volunteer at least one hour per week “to give a boost to the classrooms of Charlottesville and help children adapt and improve in school” (“Cavs in the classroom.” (n.d.). About two dozen students participate in the MH Cavs program at LES. Time is spent in the classroom assisting teachers, often reading, leading literacy lessons, listening to or helping children read, making flashcards, and assisting with writing or facilitating other small group work. Because the activity takes place in the classroom (rather than in an afterschool setting) the program recruits heavily from the university’s school of education.

As with all Madison House programs, MH Cavs is led by a program director, who served as the institutional lead in this case. She works directly with the community partner (CP), who is an administrator at this site; CPs at MH Cavs sites include assistant principals, school counselor sand occasionally head principals as well. As indicated before, the PD and CP sign a “partner agreement” at the beginning of the year that lays out specific expectations with regard to goals for the year, communication, and how to manage any issues that might arise. Student volunteers signup through the Madison House recruitment process prior to and at the beginning of the semester. Children involved are identified by their classroom teacher, and volunteers work with them both one-on-one and in groups.

Most of the logistical structure of the program is provided by Madison House, while most of the actual volunteering work is directed by the community partner and classroom teachers. Students and staff from Madison House conduct one training session at the beginning of the semester, to which community partners are invited. They administer evaluations via email to volunteers and CPs at the mid-point and end of the semester, and informally through communication among the PDs, CP, volunteers, and teachers. Madison House provides all funding, and scheduling is handled by the PD and the CP. The program runs on a semesterly basis, but many students volunteer both semesters for an academic-year long commitment. LES was also the site for another project in this study, Day in the Life; however, those projects did not share any participants.

The **Madison House English Speakers of Other Languages partnership with a Local School[2] (MH ESOL)** is a student-run direct service partnership identified as "high input/high feedback." The program places over 100 students in seven sites in the local area, including LS. MH ESOL sites include middle and high schools, an adult learning center, and a church. At LS, around 20 student volunteers from U.Va. spend about an hour each week in the "newcomers" group ESOL class, which is the first class in the ESOL curricular sequence. The volunteers work in groups of 1-3 students to help them improve their written and spoken English. Volunteers follow the direction of the teacher, helping with homework and implementing the lesson.

Like with the Cavs program, the logistics for the MH ESOL partnership are managed by the student program director, and the volunteer work is directed by the community partner. The community partner is one of the ESOL teachers at the school and has been serving as a community partner for "a long time." As with MH Cavs, the PD and CP sign a partnership agreement outlining goals and objectives and identifying expectations for dealing with any issues that might arise during the semester. Scheduling

[2] Pseudonym

and troubleshooting are handled by the PD. Communication between the two during the study period occurred on a daily to weekly basis. All students in the class participate with MH volunteers on a weekly basis. Volunteers sign up through the Madison House registration system.

Funding is provided by Madison House as well as the city and county governments. Training includes one group meeting led by Madison House students and staff for student volunteers before they entered their sites, to which the community partners are invited. The community partner for the chosen site noted she "tries to go to that" but when she is not available she sends "a list of just the first tips of things to bear in mind." She also noted that little training is actually needed since she directs all the activities within the classroom. Evaluations are administered by Madison House at mid-semester and at the end of the year and include feedback from the community partner, program directors, and student volunteers.

Relevant to understanding this case, Charlottesville is an International Rescue Committee (IRC) refugee resettlement community. According to the director of the IRC in Charlottesville, "this year [2012], Charlottesville will open its arms to 200 new refugees, predominantly from Iraq, Burma, Bhutan, Congo and Afghanistan" (Khur, 2012). The presence of this program has a large influence on the schools, as many of those resettled are children who enter the school system bringing widely varying levels of literacy in both their native languages and English. Most – but not all – of the ESOL students in the studied class were in Charlottesville as part of this program. Students in the class came from several African countries, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Tibet.

The **Madison House Adopt-a-Grandparent Program partnership with the JABA Mary Williams Community Center (MH/MWC AAGP)** is a student-run direct service program characterized as "high input/high feedback." The Mary Williams Center (MWC) is one of 13 sites involving 150 students in weekly service; about seven students volunteer on a weekly basis at MWC. The AAGP sites are diverse, ranging from independent living communities to full-care facilities and Alzheimer's specialists. Part of the Jefferson Area Board for the Aging, or JABA, Mary Williams is a day center that serves a low-income and largely African-American population, and at the time of the study it had been part of the MH AAGP for two years. Time is spent with elders playing games, sharing meals, reading, talking, exercising and doing other activities. Volunteers sign up to spend an hour a week at their sites; in most other AAGP sites students are matched with a specific grandparent, but at MWC there is more mingling among the group.

As with the other Madison House cases, while the overall logistical structure is managed by that organization, the activities of the partnership within the site are directed almost entirely by the community partner, in this case the program director of the MWC. She works with both the PD and the volunteers to schedule and direct their activities. Volunteers sign up through Madison House's registration system and the center is close enough to the university that most students walk or bike there. "Grandparents" participate by choosing to interact with the volunteers when they come; the student volunteer and the MWC member interviewed for this study developed an unusually strong bond, one that resembled the relationships developed at the "paired" AAGP sites.

Training, while structured similarly to the other MH programs, includes topics specific to the AAGP population, particularly death and dying. Funding and evaluation are provided by Madison House, with the same opportunities for community partner and volunteer input as the previous Madison House programs.

The **Alpha Phi Omega (APO) partnership with Books Behind Bars (APO BBB)** is a student-led direct service program characterized as "low input/low feedback." APO is a co-ed service fraternity that, unlike Madison House, has no faculty or staff oversight. Books Behind Bars is a non-profit organization run by a local bookseller that provides free books to prisoners. Through the APO BBB program, approximately 15-30 volunteers spend one to fivehours each week processing book requests from incarcerated individuals who write to the program from Virginia's 43 prisons as well as some from outside the Commonwealth. The BBB program had been around for 20 years at the time of the study, and APO had been involved for about five.

As an APO project, the BBB partnership is directed by a student "leader." The community partner is the founder and owner of BBB, which is part of a local non-profit. Early in the partnership the community partner trained volunteers on the very strict procedures required by the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC) for book provision to inmates; at the time of the study that process was well-known to the APO leaders and they managed that training themselves. All volunteer coordination is handled by the leader, in communication with the community partner. The community partner and student leader in this case share a particularly close relationship; they speak on the phone almost every day. Inmates participate by sending requests for books – up to three at a time – through the DOC. Student volunteers participate by signing up for a "midweek" or one- to two-hour commitment to the program during the week, or a “Saturday” project where volunteers come for upwards of three hours to process book requests. BBB is the most popular project among APO’s “midweeks” and is therefore the only one to be held twice a week.

According to the community partner, the project runs entirely on private donations of books and funds. Mailing alone can cost upwards of $400-500 per month and is sometimes in the thousands. While the study’s survey data indicated that there was no formal or informal evaluation of the program, interviews and member-checking revealed informal evaluation in the form of ongoing communication with the community partner and weekly discussions held among all APO brothers[3], as mandated by their national organization. The leader, the community partner, and the student volunteer all noted as well that the strict requirements of the DOC served as a form of evaluation, as any mistakes meant that book deliveries were rejected before ever reaching the inmates that requested them and could possibly shut the program down, as happened in 2009. Just to note, while APO was involved with the program when that shut-down occurred (due to the inclusion of a CD in a shipment to an inmate; CDs are not permitted in those shipments per DOC regulations) there is no indication that APO volunteers were responsible for the mistake.

The **Greek Councils partnership with the Neighborhood Community Center**[4] **(GC NCC)** is a student-led direct-service project characterized as “low input/low

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[3] All APO members are referred to as “brothers” even though the organization is co-ed.

[4] Pseudonym

feedback." Student members of the four coordinating councils (the Intra-Fraternity Council, Intra-Sorority Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Multicultural Greek Council) overseeing Greek-letter organizations at the university assisted with play activities on Friday afternoons for children who attend the NCC's afterschool program. Occasional larger events such as carnivals and holiday dinners are also part of the project. While there is no set schedule, an average of about a dozen Greek Council students volunteer about twice a month on Friday afternoons from 3-5. Some of those students were regular volunteers, but there was less regularity in attendance than with the other direct-service programs. There was some variation in reports of when the project began, but the iteration in place during the study period began in academic year 2010-2011 and continued through 2011-2012.

At the time of the study, the project was led by one student member of the Greek Council who took a particular interest in both the service project itself and the mission of bringing students from the Greek community together. The community partner is the executive director of the NCC, who works with the student leader to coordinate scheduling and oversee activities. Student volunteers are members of one of the 55 Greek letter organizations at the university who are recruited through chapter-wide invitations to participate. The children involved are enrolled at the NCC and all in attendance on Fridays participated with the students.

Unlike the other direct-service partnerships, there is no formal organizational structure to this partnership. The site was selected based on volunteer relationships that several Greek Council members had with that site, as well as its proximity to campus. The student lead worked with the community partner to determine which days and activities would be most useful. Both she and the community partner noted that, in addition to the regular Friday volunteering, the two of them had a strong relationship and the student would regularly assist with computer work and other tasks that the community partner did not have either the time or skills to do. The community partner reported that other students would also contact her occasionally to offer time when they had a break in their schedules. This project has no training prior to students arriving on site, and the community partner oversees the activities. The partnership receives no funding and no evaluation is conducted.

The **Day in the Life partnership with Local Elementary School[5] (DITL)**is a staff-led direct service and service-learning project characterized as "high input/high feedback." The program places students in 22 sites, including schools, community centers and churches in the local area. Students provide tutoring help in classroom and afterschool settings. The program began in 2002 and since then over 1,700 students have provided 50,000 hours of mentoring and tutoring assistance to 3,200 local youth ("Day in the Life, n.d.). The site included in this study, LES, also hosts the Madison House Cavs program. In fact, at the time of the study there were at least four separate tutoring programs in place at LES and other local elementary schools, some of which drew on non-university volunteers.

The institutional leaders on this project are a team of three professional staff members charged with managing the DITL program. Community partners – called site supervisors in this program – include teachers, assistant and head principals, and

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[5] Pseudonym

afterschool program leaders. As a service-learning project, most student volunteers sign up for the program through classes that have a community service requirement. However, a few participate without coming through a particular course. Children participating are identified by teachers in the school settings and parents in the faith- and community-based settings.

The structural direction of the program is shared by the DITL staff and the site supervisors. DITL staff coordinate signups with the participating classes and work with site supervisors to determine the numbers needed at each site, but all scheduling and oversight is handled by the schools. DITL staff run a training at the beginning of the year for all site supervisors and provide them with a manual for administering the program. This project has received funding from a wide variety of sources, including the ACE and CPB grants from the Provost's Office, J&E Heritage Foundation, Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, AmeriCorps,University of Virginia Public Affairs, Dave Mathews Band' Bama Works, Congregation Beth Israel Foundation, UVA Jefferson Trust Foundation, and WalMart/Sam's Club Foundation. Unlike Madison House or APO's requirement for weekly service throughout the semester, there is no programmatic requirement for number of hours or length of volunteer commitment, although it appears that most students volunteering in classrooms come in for one hour per week for some portion of a semester. Students participating through a class have their requirements dictated by faculty teaching those courses. The DITL staff administer an evaluation at the end of the semester that gathers information from volunteers and community partners.

The DITL program grew out of tension between the University of Virginia and surrounding neighborhoods, what one staff member called "some disruption in the neighborhoods" and the perception that U.Va. was not doing enough "to help the neighborhoods." The incidents had racial and class overtones. Staff noted that the tensions revealed were not unique to U.Va. and Charlottesville.

The partnership between **engineering classes and the Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP)** is a faculty-led service-learning and community-based research project characterized as "high input/low feedback." LEAP is a local non-profit organization that "coordinates energy efficiency improvements on the home" ("Who we are," n.d., para. 1). According to staff, it helps "homeowners, and contractors, and lenders to promote energy efficiency in buildings in the Charlottesville area." Students working with a professor in the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS)work with LEAP staff on a variety of projects requested by the organization. At the time of the study students accompanied staff on residential energy audits for local homeowners and analyzed usage data from homes that had received LEAP services to determine the effect of those services, compiling their analyses into reports prepared for both LEAP and the homeowners. All of this work is done under the joint supervision of the SEAS faculty member and the LEAP staff, and both students included in the study had received Jefferson Public Citizens funding for portions of their work.

The institutional lead is a professor of electrical engineering. He had been on the faculty for over 20 years at the time of the study and also served as a founding member of LEAP's Board of Directors. The community partners on this project are two of a total of six staff at the organization and are the staff who have the most contact with the students. The student volunteers participate in the project through two avenues: taking a course taught by the faculty lead or working with him as faculty advisor on a JPC grant for research that built upon work completed in that class. Homeowners participate by signing up for one of LEAP's home energy services.

Because this partnership involves coursework as well as independent research, structure is provided by the faculty member. Course expectations are set by him through the course syllabus. The LEAP staff serve as instructors and study advisors throughout the course of the partnership and coordinate scheduling of on-site work with individual homeowners or at the LEAP building. However, particularly with the delivery of reports – for both in-class and JPC projects – the schedule is determined by the faculty and students. Compared to the direct service partnerships already discussed, both roles and participation in the LEAP partnership are more fluid and sporadic. In addition to the JPC funding already mentioned, Dominion Virginia Power has also provided funding. Evaluation consists of the grades students earn, which are determined exclusively by the faculty member. Informal feedback comes in the form of ongoing discussion among the faculty and LEAP staff in particular, but they are not formally included in the grading process.

The **ecoMOD partnership with Habitat for Humanity (ecoMOD)** was a faculty-led service-learning and community based research project characterized as "high input/high feedback." It was one phase of an ongoing course called "ecoMOD" wherein faculty and students from the Schools of Architecture (SARC) and Engineering and

Applied Science (SEAS)[6]designed and assisted with construction of a "green" Habitat for Humanity home for a partner family in the local area. According to the faculty lead, EcoMOD's mission is "design, build, evaluate," a three-phase process designed to teach students important building design techniques and approaches. According to the executive director, Habitat's mission is "to build simple, decent, affordable homes" in partnership with low income families. It saw an opportunity to stretch its understanding of what "decent" could mean in terms of sustainable building practices by partnering with ecoMOD. The home built for this project incorporated several components not typically included in Habitat homes, including a geothermal heat pump system, solar, and monitoring capabilities to determine system performance and energy savings.

The project was led by a faculty member in the School of Architecture. The community partner was the executive director of the local Habitat chapter. The students participated by signing up for the course and, in some cases, by securing Jefferson Public Citizens funding for research studies related to the project. The homeowner became involved once she agreed to purchase this rather unusual and innovative Habitat home.

Like LEAP, ecoMOD largely took its structure from the organization of the academic coursework. However, the "design-build-evaluate" scope of the project was large enough that it spanned several academic years as it moved from design to construction to occupancy and monitoring. As Habitat experienced significant staff

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[6]The faculty lead in the LEAP project served as the engineering faculty lead on this project as well, but because the architects developed the primary relationship with the community partner in this case, that is where participant selection focused.

turnover during the course of this partnership (unrelated to the partnership itself), this also meant that the project involved three executive directors as community partners. All training came as part of the course content overseen entirely by the faculty member. Evaluation came in the form of grades for the students, as well as the “evaluate” phase of the projects; the faculty lead notes that informal evaluation was constantly gathered through conversations with representatives from the non-profits with whom they worked and homeowners in target areas.

Analytical Focus

The case selection logic applied in this study suggested several interesting areas for analysis. The two faculty-led partnerships, ecoMOD and LEAP, differed from the Madison House programs not only in leadership but also in terms of the nature and scope of work involved in the partnerships. The Day in the Life partnership offered interesting possibilities for comparison with Madison House cases, as the work was quite similar but the leadership and structure were different. The APO BBB and the Greek Councils NCC partnerships were student-led but fell in different quadrants on the quality profile and thus provided additional opportunity to examine how those differences affected participants’ perceptions of reciprocity, harm and success.

Participants

As there were many different potential interview participants in each partnership, the study focused on key participants whose experiences were likely to inform the research questions in order to make the data collection manageable. Recalling the research design, four participant roles were included: institutional lead; community partner; student volunteer; and agency client. In addition, two administrators with leadership over the two major community engagement programs (Madison House and the Jefferson Public Citizens program) were interviewed to provide information on the context of the study. These were in-depth interviews (Yin, 2009), which allowed me to ask both about fact and opinion so that I could first construct a clear picture of the partnership and then investigate the meaning participants attached to the project and its component interactions. Early questions in the interview focused on descriptions of the partnerships and the exchange of resources, which addressed questions 1a-d. The latter part of the interviews focused specifically on perceptions of harm and success, which allowed me to address research questions 2 through 4. Informed consent was secured from every participant, and in some cases their parents, in order to outline the purpose of the study, assure participants about the confidentiality of the data if they chose to remain anonymous, outline the limited risks to participants, and stress the voluntary nature of their participation. During this process some participants chose to have their names and/or identities revealed, while others chose to have that information kept confidential.

All survey respondents served as the institutional lead in their partnerships. When those participants agreed to have their projects included in the study, they were contacted via email to coordinate interviews and document collection. Interviews began with the institutional lead in each case. Following that interview, those participants were asked to provide contact information for the community partner and student volunteers. In all cases, community partners provided contact information for the agency client participants and, in the cases where those participants were minors or elders, assisted in obtaining informed consent.

A total of 42 individuals were interviewed as part of the study. The table below illustrates the demographic profiles of participants.

Table 2: Participant Demographic Summary

Gender	28 women	14 men	
Race/Ethnicity	8 African-American	3 Asian American	30 White

The table below illustrates the demographic breakdown by role.

Table 3: Participant Demographic Profile Summary By Role

Gender	Of 10 ILs, 6 were female, 4 were male.
	Of 9CPs, 7 were female and 2 were male. Both men were in the same project and were joined by a third CP who was female.
	Of 11 SV, 6 were female, 5 were male.
	Of 10 CL, 7 were female and 3 were male.
Race/ethnicity	Of 10 IL, 9 were white, 1 was African-American
	Of 9 CPs, 8were white, 1 was African-American
	Of 11 SV, 10 were white and 1 was Asian.
	Of 10 CL, 6 were African-American, 2 were Asian, and 2 were white.
	Both administrative participants were white women.

Key: IL = Institutional Lead; CP=Community Partner; SV=Student Volunteer; CL=Agency Client

These distributions largely reflected national trends (Jacoby, 2003): that those involved in community engagement overall tended to be female and white, and that people of color of all genders were represented far more as agency clients than in any other role. There was slightly more male representation across participants than is typical either at the site or nationally. Among student volunteers, there was more balance than is typical with an almost even split of men and women.

Data Collection

This study used semi-structured, in-depth interviews, surveys, and document analysis to gather data, three common techniques in case study methodology (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2009). Specifically, the "semi-structured life world interview" was the primary tool: "an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 3). This approach allowed me to understand how each partner in an engagement project experienced and interpreted that partnership using his or her own words, impressions, names and characterizations. Following Kvale and Brinkmann's understanding of a qualitative interview, I attempted to understand the world according to the participant; the goal of each interview was to create new knowledge through an examination of both facts and meanings. It also allowed me to collect data from multiple sources about the same situation or phenomenon, in this case four participants with different roles in each project. Such triangulation strengthened the validity of my findings (Yin). Survey data were used to identify cases whose characteristics varied in ways the literature suggested would affect the levels of reciprocity, as described earlier.

Interviews

I conducted a total of 42 interviews. Thirty-one of those interviews were one-on-one conversations, 28 in person either in an office or a neutral location, and three over the phone. Five conversations were focus groups with between two and three participants in addition to the primary investigator, resulting in 12 focus group participants. The choice to use a focus group versus an individual interview with the adults was determined by several factors. When more than one community partner interacted regularly with student volunteers, those participants chose to be interviewed in a focus group rather than individual setting, which saved time while providing access to the richest data. In the cases of student volunteers, schedules and availability determined whether an interview or focus group was used. For client participants, I offered community partners the choice for me to interview them individually or in groups, and convenience was the determining factor in that decision. Looking across the data gathered using both methods, I have no reason to believe there were substantive differences based on which method was used. All participants were interviewed during or shortly after the partnership period, with the exception of the agency client in the APO BBB case; due to the logistical challenge of access to currently incarcerated individuals, the CP recommended a former inmate who had participated in the program several years prior. Because that case had no direct student-client contact, and there had been no major changes to the program in the intervening years, this was an acceptable accommodation and the participant was able to speak directly to the study questions without issue.

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Following each interview, I wrote a contact memo in the form of field notes; I then combined these notes into the transcription to form the complete record of each conversation. All interviews were dated, coded, analyzed and stored in NVivo.

Interview Protocols

My first three research questions were each best answered through interviews. While a survey design would have allowed me to gather data on more projects and from more participants, thus increasing the generalizability of my research findings, that approach would have offered few opportunities for the participants to describe their experiences in their own words and no opportunities to investigate components of the partnership in depth, particularly those that were surprising or unexpected. It would also have limited the flexibility of the design, foreclosing any opportunity to follow important developments that arose in the course of the partnership period, a critical element of the chosen approach.

In order to get at the key aspects and components that, in a social exchange theory framework, were likely to answer these questions, I developed separate but related interview protocols according to principles of good practice in the literature for institutional partners (faculty, administrators or students), student volunteers, community agency leads, and community agency clients. Four frameworks in the literature provided structure for each protocol: the 2010 Carnegie Engagement Classification Documentation Framework (Appendix A); Miron and Moley's (2006) survey examining the role of community voice and benefit in the context of engagement partnerships (Appendix C); Sigmon's (1970) three principles for effective partnerships (Principle One: Those being served control the service(s) provided; Principle Two: Those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions; Principle Three: Those who serve also are learners); and Porter Honnet and Poulson's (1989) principles for good practice in combining service and learning, also known as the "Wingspread principles" (Appendix D). Together, these frameworks allowed me to build on what was already known from previous studies while extending the relevant knowledge further into new territory. In addition, the questions followed Cruz and Giles's (2000) argument that good engagement takes an asset-based approach to the community. See Appendices E, F, G, and H respectively, for the protocols.

First, I used the 2010 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification Documentation Framework to design questions that address each of the institutional areas of emphasis. This tool was particularly helpful in that it identified those areas scholars considered to be critical to effective engagement, which placed the study design within a larger national context. The documentation framework was particularly relevant to the protocol for institutional partners, as it established best practices in engagement according to the major voice in higher education classification in this area. However, gathering community and student perception of these areas was useful as well.

Next, Miron and Moley's (2006) survey examining community voice and benefit was adapted for use as an interview protocol. While their approach was quantitative and they focused specifically on two components of reciprocal partnerships, as the first study in the area to use the social exchange theory framework their questions served as a useful starting point. The questions were also well suited to a qualitative approach, as follow-up prompts in the course of an interview allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the issues raised, such as shared power and control, race and privilege, and the community partner role.

The final two frameworks came from established principles of good practice in the community engagement field. Sigmon's (1979) "three principles" and the Wingspread principles (Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1989) outlined the expectation that effective and sustained partnerships were characterized by shared control, community empowerment, and recognition of each partner's dual role as teacher and learner. The Wingspread guidelines also advocated for careful design, implementation and evaluation of each project, with clear goals and expectations articulated for each partner in a project.

Properly executed, those goals should lead to a reciprocal relationship, where resources are exchanged equally over the life of the partnership and the relationship deepens and strengthens over time.

Throughout data collection I adapted the protocols based both on the usefulness of the data they were generating and in response to participant feedback. In particular, I was able to shorten the protocols to those questions that were generating the most relevant data, eliminating some redundancy that existed in the earliest interviews and deepening inquiry in areas most closely tied to the conceptual framework. In some cases I incorporated information offered by participants in other interviews: for example, while I did not originally ask for a numerical rating of reciprocity, one participant offered the structure of “on a scale from one to 10” when I asked for a rating of the partnership’s reciprocity, a construction which proved to be quite useful in analysis. In member-checking I was also able to ask participants to reflect back on the partnership and confirm or change their original rating, further strengthening confidence in the findings.

Document Analysis

Document analysis provided yet another source of evidence about the ways in which reciprocity was constructed in engagement relationships and further strengthened the study. For each selected partnership, I gathered documentation from the Web and requests to participants for analysis. Materials included: Web sites relating to projects and organizations; training and program manuals; news coverage and marketing materials; written assignments from students; and one book. Planning documents outlining the role of community engagement in the broader institutional context, information on public service and its place within the priorities and practices of the university were also used to enrich the understanding of the study's context. Information was gathered from web sites for all projects with a web presence. Finally, when available, I collected evaluations and compared them to interview data.

Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis are not separate processes in qualitative inquiry, but rather are intertwined (Merriam, 1995) as information is gathered to form "thick" descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of phenomena in real-life situations. Together with the comparative analysis established in the multiple-case design, this study followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach of systematic data analysis, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Yin (2003) notes that their described methods for manipulating the data are particularly useful in case studies where the quantity and type of data can be copious.

Social exchange theory framed the inquiry and established some expected outcomes from the outset, focusing on *what* was exchanged in university-community partnerships, *how* resources were exchanged, and what *meaning* participants attached to both the resources and the process of exchange. Best practices in engagement such as Sigmon (1979) and the Wingspread principles (Porter Honnet & Pouslon, 1989) identify likely components of and approaches to successful partnerships; I used these guidelines as my analytical frame (Yin, 2009) to answer the question of whether and how participants co-create reciprocity in each relationship. While these principles suggested that certain factors (e.g., shared power and control, involvement of all parties from beginning to end, use of formal evaluation mechanisms) were likely to influence perceived levels of reciprocity, the use of interviews allowed the participants to define in their own words and using their own standards what makes a partnership both reciprocal and successful. Interview questions allowed me to identify any harm that participants experienced (research question 2) as well as what made a partnership successful to those participants (research question 3).

Data Reduction and Display

The theoretical frame and literature provided an initial list of start codes for analysis (Miles &Huberman, 1994), but as qualitative inquiry is iterative (Yin, 2009), other terms, themes and concepts emerged from the data and became themes for the study's findings. Developing a case-study database is important to conducting high-quality case studies (Yin, 2009), and I used NVivo software to help make the storing, coding and analysis more manageable and to create an auditable database. I audio recorded and transcribed all interviews, and stored them in the password-protected and secure database. After each interaction I wrote a contact summary (Miles &Huberman, 1994) to begin the analytical process and to organize my data. All data were then dated and linked thematically, so that another researcher could follow my analytical path to understand how I arrived at my conclusions (Yin), which increased the reliability of my conclusions. After each interview, I wrote field notes using the transcriptions that formed an auditable record of events and experiences; summarized the themes and concepts in the data; and included initial analyses regarding possible explanations, alternative perspectives, and new questions generated from the data.

As a rich description of each partnership began to develop through the thoughts, words and described experiences of the participants, I used a series of analytic tools suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) to illustrate that emerging form. After I had conducted about five interviews, I began using analytic memos (Erikson, 1986),to organize and make sense of the data. Initially they were used to begin early analysis of the data, allowing me to identify gaps that needed to be filled and to investigate rival hypotheses, both important steps in the early stages of data collection and analysis (Miles &Huberman, 1994). In them I also identified patterns and linkages in the data, which were then combined to form emerging conclusions that could be tested through additional data collection and analysis. All of the themes through which the findings are presented were originally explored as memos, allowing me to test them and explore their multiple dimensions. Memos were also used to develop propositions, to identify possible rival explanations, and to chronicle any potential researcher effects I was identifying.

Matrices (Miles &Huberman, 1994) were also central to the analysis. NVivo allows matrix coding queries which were extraordinarily helpful in identifying linkages, displaying information relative to the key constructs in the project, and looking across both cases and roles. These tools allowed me to graphically describe the partnerships, themes and linkages that led to answers to my research questions. They also allowed me to consider rival cases, using them to adjust any working hypotheses in order to answer the research questions and allowing future interviews to focus more specifically on the lines of inquiry that had generated the most useful data. Using these tools I developed descriptions of each case, including information on the who, what, where, when and why of each university-community partnership but also making assertions about the role of reciprocity in those partnerships.

The descriptions and explanations of phenomena according to the participants were generated specifically in terms of the levels of reciprocity and harm, two key constructs at issue in this study. These tools allowed me to answer my first research question – how was reciprocity co-created among partners – by allowing me to break down the components of each relationship, to identify how participants interpreted the meaning of those components, and then to understand how reciprocity developed (or did not) from those meanings. Pattern-matching (Miles &Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009) was also useful as I categorized the resources exchanged according to Foa & Foa's (1974, 1980) model of resource classes to be exchanged and built explanations for causal linkages that emerged in those patterns.

Validity

Miles & Huberman (1994) captured best the challenge of validity in qualitative research: "Qualitative analyses can be evocative, illuminating, masterful – and wrong" (p. 262). While in qualitative research the goal is not a search for an objective truth (Maxwell, 2005), conclusions must be credible and supported by the available evidence. To insure these important tasks were accomplished, this study employed multiple strategies to address threats to the validity of its findings. While many of these strategies have been outlined as part of my overall analytical approach, they are worth repeating here.

Concern over spurious conclusions and researcher bias threaten the validity of qualitative research, so at each step of the analysis I sought rival explanations (Yin, 2009) and insured that I had accounted for all discrepant evidence (Erickson, 1986), which increased confidence in my conclusions. My case database provided an auditable record of the chain of evidence that allowed other researchers to follow my analytical process, identified important data that led to my conclusions, and illustrated that all the data, including any disconfirming evidence, had been considered in developing the final conclusions. This investigation allowed room for inclusion of new or different cases in the study or adjustment of the research questions. Accounting for such possibilities was a critical component of the overall quality of this study.

Member-checking

For each case, in-depth descriptions were written and provided to all participants except for children for review. Participants were also provided with drafts of chapters for review of conclusions related to their cases, increasing the validity of the research findings as part of the triangulation strategy. Participant comments were helpful in further refining understanding and description of cases.

I used triangulation in each case to address threats to the study's construct validity (Miles &Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). Triangulating my data sources allowed me to base my findings on information gathered from different perspectives that corroborated a set of facts about a project or a phenomenon and that converged into a common set of conclusions. By gathering data from different individuals with different roles within each partnership, I was able to ask about the same interactions or experiences multiple times and be assured that, if reciprocity or harm was identified, it was not due to chance but was rather an observed phenomenon. Documentary evidence provided yet another diverse set of sources.

All protocols were adjusted to fit the setting. I was explicit about my own biases and reflexivity, laying bare the methods and the values that I brought to those methods. Critical data was included in the final write-up so that a reader could see explicitly how I drew my conclusions.

Reactivity – or the influence of the researcher on the naturalistic setting -- was a threat to the validity of my findings (Maxwell, 2005). Also called *reflexivity* (Hammersly and Atkinson, 1995), this issue was particularly important because of the heavy reliance on interviews in this design, as well as my personal investment in the activity being studied. Eliminating researcher bias was both impossible and not a goal of qualitative research (Maxwell); instead, the goal was to be transparent about what attitudes, beliefs and perceptions I brought with me and what effects this may have had on my conclusions. One strategy in the interview setting was to avoid leading questions, and the protocol reflected this approach. Maxwell noted that gathering "rich" data available through transcripts of interviews is one way to address validity threats; that was clearly part of my approach.

Two strategies built into the design of this study also increased confidence in its findings. Because concern over spurious effects is a serious threat to validity in explanatory case studies (Yin, 2009), the use of replication logic in the selection of cases is particularly important. Certain outcomes were expected in this study, based on what the literature and the theory said should be the case; whether those patterns held true in the initial analysis provided information right away about whether the theory was robust in this case. This was important because case studies generalize not to samples or populations, as in survey designs, but rather to the broader theory. Conclusions available from this study can be generalized not to every campus or project but rather to circumstances, contexts and relationships in which social exchange theory is expected to be useful.

Comparison was a second important tool in addressing validity threats that was explicitly built into this research design. Opportunity to address the counterfactual – what if reciprocity was not present; what then was the effect on the success of the partnership and the presence of harm? – was presented by selecting cases that displayed characteristics the theory and the literature predicted would be less successful. Laying the cases side by side and focusing on the same phenomena – reciprocity, harm, success – in different settings added confidence in my findings about how those phenomena functioned in university-community partnerships.

Researcher as Instrument

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument, which allows for rich description of observed phenomena. I have already discussed the steps in the data collection and analysis processes taken to account for the effect of researcher bias. However it is important to know the philosophical and experiential assumptions I bring to this work. These are a combination of interpretive (Merriam, 1998, 2002) and pragmatic (Putnam, 1990; Rorty, 1990) perspectives, both traditions that reject the ontological possibility of a verifiable, observable "truth" for a view of reality that is local, socially constructed, and always occurs in a particular historical, political and historical context. Putnam and Rorty are eloquent here: we should give up seeking a "God's eye view" because it is "irrelevant to our needs and practices" (Rorty, p. 2). In epistemological terms, I believe that what we know is transactional and subjective. Specific to this study, what we know is something that was created among myself and the participants with whom I conducted this study. Because I believed that participants had much to teach me, this was a particularly important component of my paradigmatic stance. I also proceeded with the pragmatic assumption that this knowledge was “a historical and social product” (House, 1991, p. 3) and it was most important that the knowledge created in this process be useful rather than “true” according to some elusive, objective standard. What works best now is what is most important to we pragmatists (Rorty) – whether it is true always and everywhere is an irrelevant and unanswerable question.

Interpretive research is conducted in naturalistic settings (Merriam, 1998) that employ dialogical methods where participants can describe their life worlds and the meaning they derive from that context in their own words. Indeed, separating “text and context” (Rorty, 1990) was neither possible nor preferable in this study. The interviews asked participants to describe experiences and interactions as those participants perceived they happened and individuals as they were, squarely situated within the partnership and in the context of a very specific university and community setting. The nuance contained therein contributed to rather than distracted from the authenticity of the study; this aligned with the interpretative approach wherein credibility relies not on statistical methodology but on the trustworthiness and confirmability of the conclusions (Merriam).

I brought with me to this work substantial familiarity with some of the students, faculty and community members who participated in this study, and even more experience with the two broader communities that formed the context for the study, U.Va. and Charlottesville. I have been doing and studying public service throughout my personal and professional life, and I believe passionately that it is a critical component of higher education, particularly public higher education. I entered this study inhabiting several different identities with relevance to the study: student, staff member, and local resident. Each of these identities was also intersected for the study by my role as primary investigator. Further, just before data collection started, my professional responsibilities shifted to include community engagement in a formal way. These identities each created a different lens through which I understood and interpreted the data I gathered.

One activity that began during data collection had a profound impact on the way I experienced my role as a researcher and as a professional. Early in the fall semester I started volunteering and coordinating student volunteers for an afterschool program for underserved children, an activity with which I remain involved. The children all attend Local Elementary School[7], the site for two of the eight cases studied (Madison House Cavs and Day in the Life) and the same school that my two children attend. Poignantly, the program takes place in a public housing project created to house the former residents of Vinegar Hill, who were displaced as part of the gentrification project (described later in this paper by participants) whose legacy still so powerfully shapes many social, economic and cultural aspects of the African-American community today.

As I developed relationships with the children, some of their parents, and the many community member volunteers who were invested in their success, the responsibility to honor and recognize their agency was a powerful, visceral presence for me every day. As a middle class white woman and parent, I was very aware of my own privilege and outsider status in this community. I felt strongly the duty to listen carefully, to educate myself as much as possible about the perspective of the members of the community – including the diversity in that perspective – in order to tell their story in the research with integrity. I still question my ability to effectively tell the story of so many

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[7] Pseudonym

of the participants who did not tend to have power in society; there, I must acknowledge that this study tells but part of a story, and it is through being profoundly thankful and aware of my own limitations here that I can move forward into completion with some level of comfort with that limitation. Without the extraordinary grace of many members, particularly of the African-American community, this study would have been impossible, or worse, inaccurate. I remain deeply involved in this community and am profoundly grateful for the many lessons its members, young and old, teach me every day.

Rather than try futilely to separate all of this from my study, I made extensive use of researcher identity memos (Maxwell, 2005) to identify and examine my goals, assumptions and biases as they related to this research, therefore allowing others to determine for themselves what effect these perspectives had on the study's conclusions. Finally, it is worth noting that two of my four dissertation committee members are actively engaged in academic community engagement and the other two members have incorporated public service into the very fabric of their academic identities, thus all are likely to bring their own perspectives and assumptions to this study.

Limitations

As with any study, there were limitations to the chosen approach. All partnerships took place within a single institution and a single community setting, limiting its generalizability to other campuses or contexts. While I gathered significant amounts of data on each case, I was not able to interview every participant in each project, nor did I gather longitudinal data that would allow comparison from year to year. I relied on participants' willingness to be interviewed, and several of the student volunteers and client participants were suggested by the institutional leads and community partners, respectively. Each of these selection methods allowed for the possibility that those who chose not to participate had more negative experiences than what was reported. Efforts to mitigate these challenges and account for the limitations have already been described.

As the study sought a holistic understanding of each partnership that took into account multiple perspectives, each partnership had to have an institutional lead (student, staff or faculty), an agency or organization lead, (community partner), a student volunteer (not the leader) and a community agency client who were willing to be interviewed for the study. This requirement disqualified all of the student-led service-learning and community-based research projects identified through the survey, a finding explored further in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS AND INTERPREATION OF THE DATA

Reciprocity: A Balance of Give and Take

Mutual benefit, shared risk, teaching and learning, serving and being served – the reciprocity produced when these factors combine stands as the primary defense against potential harm in university-community partnerships (Kendall, 1990; Stanton, 2007; Stanton, Giles & Cruz 1999). Further, reciprocal partnerships are more likely to be successful partnerships (Molm, Takahashi & Peterson, 2000). Reciprocity depends on balance – in relationship, in input, in outcome – and differences in purpose and power among universities and the students and communities they serve complicate that equilibrium (Butin, 2010; Cruz, 1990). Harm is an explicit possibility resident in that complexity (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Harkavy, 2006; Harkavy, Pucket & Rohan, 2000; Heyworth, 1991; Hickey & Mohan, 2005; Illich, 1968/1990; Stanton, Giles & Cruz).Yet each continues to enter into these partnerships, dedicating to them scarce resources of time, trust and treasure.

Why? Social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Miron & Moley, 2006) frames the question in terms of an exchange, relying on analysis in three areas: when the *rules and norms of exchange* are mutually established and followed, when the *flow of resources* reaches each partner in ways that meet their needs, and when strong *relationships* emerge, partnerships are more likely to be reciprocal and successful. Such partnerships can even withstand harm in some cases, provided it is limited. When the rules are unclear or unequally established and applied, when the exchange of resources is lopsided or needs go unmet, and when relationships are weak or damaged, reciprocity and success are less likely and harm is more likely to be found in such partnerships. I set out to examine these assertions through the lens of participants' experience of university-community partnerships.

This study found that reciprocity obtained when the benefits of a partnership outweighed the risks, when participants felt they were both teaching and learning, when each felt they were both serving and being served, and when strong relationships were built in the course of the partnership. To be strong those relationships needed to be characterized by clear expectations, consistency, and good communication overall. If these conditions were present, even when harm was an outcome, participants felt the relationship was reciprocal.

Partnerships that were reciprocal were also defined as successful, although the criteria for success were more limited than for reciprocity. When a partnership allowed participants to accomplish the mission and goals of an organization or activity, when an expected service or product was provided or delivered, when learning occurred (in cases where that was expected), and when relationships were built, participants felt the partnership was successful. As such, success was more limited in scope than reciprocity and had fewer components; put another way, the bar for success was somewhat lower than for reciprocity. While these findings were expected based on existing literature, not every case conformed to the standard assumptions about project organization, training, and assessment. Further, while many scholars argue that academic community engagement is more likely to be reciprocal than direct service (Eyler & Giles, 1999;

Jacoby, 2003), findings in this study call that conclusion into question. When partnerships are well-run and relationships among participants are strong, leadership and type of service were not deciding factors in these cases.

A Typical and an Exemplary Case

As this study used replication logic (Yin, 2009) in the case selection and analysis, I thought it would be helpful to present both a typical and an exemplary case as way to introduce the key themes that emerged from the data. As discussed in Chapter 3, the typical case represents a combination of characteristics common in other partnerships at the site and that conform to many common findings in the literature. Those are noted in the description. The exemplary case stands out as having particularly good outcomes relative to the other cases studied, some of which were predictable according to the literature and some of which were surprising.

As a reminder, in addition to the three Madison House cases that were expected to return similar results (literal replication, Yin, 2003), results from the remaining five cases were then expected to vary based on the ways they differed from those cases, as defined by the frame: the Alpha Phi Omega/Books Behind Bars (APO BBB) and Greek Councils/Neighborhood Community Center (GC NCC) were also student-run but lacked the formalized structure and feedback mechanisms provided by Madison House, as reflected in their categorization as "low input/low feedback"; Day in the Life (DITL), LEAP, and ecoMOD each had academic components that were absent in the direct service partnerships, and they varied in both leadership (DITL was staff- rather than faculty-led) and level of assessment (LEAP was categorized as "high input/low feedback" while the other two were "high input/high feedback"). In order to understand the effect, if any, of these variations, the focus of the cross-case analysis was on the perceptions of reciprocity, the types of resources exchanged and the nature of that exchange, associated risk and harm, and resultant perceptions of success.

Madison House's English Speakers of Other Languages partnership with Local School[8], (MH ESOL) represents a *typical* case in this study. It is a student-led direct service program, which is the most common type of university-community partnership found at the site. The mission of the program is to "assist teachers within an ESOL classroom with tasks associated with reading and speaking the English Language" ("English speakers of other languages," n.d.). The program places students in seven sites in the local area, including Local School (LS). Sites include middle schools, high schools, an adult learning center, and a church.

Approximately 20 U.Va. students volunteer on a weekly basis at LS. It features the Madison House student leader model of Head Program Director and Program Directors who work with Community Partners to administer the program (see pp. 97-98 for a complete description of this model). The program runs on a semesterly basis, but many students volunteer both semesters for an academic-year long commitment. Best practices in the literature (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1999; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999) recommend this type of extended commitment when possible, rather than episodic or one-time engagement. Further, the partnership with this particular site has been in place for several years, another positive sign. Participants rated

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[8] The school and all participants have been assigned pseudonyms and some details have been omitted to preserve confidentiality.

its level of reciprocity as generally high, around a 7 or an 8 on a 10-point scale. This reflects the overall success of the partnership as well as the room for some improvement.

The participants in this case include Sarah[9], Program Director for this site, who served as the "institutional lead" in this case and is an undergraduate in the College of Arts and Sciences. She also volunteers at the site. The agency lead is Christine Rodriguez[10]. She has been serving as the community partner for the Madison House ESOL program at LS for "many" years. She is one of several ESOL teachers at the school, but she reports that she uses volunteers more than any of her peers, as it suits her teaching style best. Two student volunteers were interviewed for this case: Jack [11], a student in the McIntire School of Commerce, is volunteering to fulfill requirements for entrance into the Peace Corps and Emily[12], a student in the College, wanted to continue ESOL teaching she started during a study abroad experience in Spain. The student participant is Abdul[13], an enthusiastic and outgoing young man who recently moved to the U.S. from Afghanistan as part of the IRC Refugee Resettlement program.

The structure of the MH ESOL partnership is a defining characteristic. Roles are clear, laid out as in all Madison House programs in the partner agreements signed between the Program Director (PD) and the Community Partner (CP) at the beginning of the year. These agreements lay out expectations, goals for the year, communication

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[9] Pseudonym

[10] Pseudonym

[11] Pseudonym

[12] Pseudonym

[13] Pseudonym

strategies, and procedures to manage any issues that might arise.The students, in particular, refer to this structure often when they describe how they do their work, indicating that they both understand its importance and rely on it for the smooth functioning of the project. Porter Honnet and Poulson (1998) recommend such clarity and planning to ensure partners' expectations and needs are clear and communication avenues are laid out before any issues develop.

PDs and CPs meet before the volunteering begins, and the CPs are invited to participate in a mandatory training for all volunteers that takes place just before volunteering begins. Christine, the CP in this case, comments that she goes to the training when she can, but that often she just sends materials. She notes that volunteers need little preparation, because in the classroom she directs all work, and the volunteers follow her instruction.

Sarah, the PD, takes responsibility for communication with both the CP and the volunteers, functioning as the "middle man" in the relationship between Madison House and the school. Her approach to that relationship demonstrates her respect for the CP and the sense of obligation she brings to it:

> I feel like that's more my responsibility than [Ms. Rodriguez's] to make sure that everything's going smoothly. Because we're the ones that are coming in. We're the ones that are—not intruding, because she values our help, but – I want her to know that we're there *for* her, not just coming in and taking over.

This respect characterizes each of the volunteers' perceptions of Christine: they see her as an authority, as the person in charge in the room, and as someone from whom they have much to learn. In turn, Christine appreciates the students, their energy, attention and the time they take to work with her and her students.

Volunteers make a one hour commitment per week for an entire semester, and they are assigned to a particular classroom. Currently there is a particularly large contingent of Nepali students. Christine describes the classroom as "always multicultural" and notes that concentrations from one particular area can be challenging, as the temptation to speak to one another in their native language is strong. Literacy levels range widely among students, as some arrive demonstrating proficiency in reading and writing their native language, while others have little understanding of the Latin alphabet. Christine tackles this issue through differentiation, or breaking the students into small groups so they can each work at their own pace. She asks for "as many [volunteers] as possible" from Madison House and likes it best when the students come three or four or five at a time. She accounts for volunteers in her lesson plans, which means when they do not show – which happens occasionally – it can be disruptive. Oral skills are particularly affected by having volunteers in the classroom, as it encourages the students to speak more. "As a general rule, they're going to be more reluctant to actually produce language in the early stages. And by being in a small group with three people, it's a lot lower risk." She notes "having this partnership with Madison House has really helped me do [small group work]."

Knowing enough about the purpose of an organization and its work to be useful is an important component of effective partnerships (Sandy & Holland, 1998; Ward & Wolf-Wendel,1997), and in this case the student volunteers understood the purpose of the program and their role in it. When asked about the purpose of the program, Sarah notes there are multiple objectives:

> To help students learn English. And to help…Not only just to learn, but to adapt…Not adapt, but acclimate, I would say…And sort of learn the different social norms of our culture. I would say that's a big one. And Ms. Rodriguez does a great job doing that.

Jack comments that he sees himself and his fellow volunteers as "someone who will take the time to make sure that [the students] understand what is being taught…and who will be patient as they try to produce thoughts." When asked what happens with the U.Va. students, Abdul says "I've come for help and I also work with them…if I need help I show and he show me, 'do like that' and how to spell and do my homework." This understanding indicates that participants had invested sufficient time and attention to be effective in the partnership.

Reciprocity relies on the exchange of resources (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), and participants reported myriad benefits in this case. To begin with, there were those benefits that were expected in this type of partnership. The community partner got reliable volunteers that related well with her students. Those volunteers came in numbers that allowed a high level of differentiation in the classroom, allowing her to better meet her objective of English instruction. The Local School students learned more English because they had increased opportunities to speak in the small group format that was most effective. Volunteers got the opportunity to develop a skill – ESOL tutoring – which they felt would be valuable to their academic and career plans; for Jack specifically, this time was qualifying him to apply to the Peace Corps. Because they spent at least a semester in the classroom, volunteers were able to observe the progress students made, and they felt they shared a little in that success. Christine has noticed this benefit, observing:

> I think there is something magical about helping someone out. You know, [the volunteers] will tell me, "[The students] are speaking so much more English now, I can't believe it." And I think there's a part of it that says, "Wow. You know, I had a part in that."

Relationships built in this partnership were important, although they functioned differently from those built in the APO/BBB partnership, described in the next section. Student volunteers, one of whom was a transfer student, pointed out that getting involved with a program like MH ESOL helped them to feel connected to both U.Va. and the community. They appreciated that Christine trusted them to come into her classroom, and they felt they learned classroom management as well as specific teaching techniques from her. Abdul appreciated that the volunteers came each week. He liked that he got to work with all of them, not just one, and he noted, "It seems like they come to help. I like that."

For Christine, while it was clear she valued the partnership and the individual student volunteers, to her the relationships built were somewhat utilitarian. She notes, "Because of the structure, it's ok if we're not building deep, lasting relationships." While she appreciates the U.Va.students and values the added benefits they bring because they are young and energetic and can often relate well with the students, to achieve her purpose she will take "any adult who speaks English."

However, this does not seem to have diminished the positive outcomes for participants overall. Indeed, the relationships between the student volunteers themselves were strong, and those volunteers demonstrated admiration and respect for their community partner. This community partner trusted the students and appreciated the energy and connections they brought into her classroom, despite their relatively workman-like relationships. Similarly, the relationships built between the student volunteers and the Local School student were positive but not overly close. Without these relationships, the partnership would have suffered, but they were not the deciding factor when it came to determining its overall success or failure.

Developing leadership skills was a major benefit for all the U.Va. students. This was particularly true for the Program Director. As PD, Sarah described learning to hold her peers accountable: "I'm learning how to become a better leader and sort of knowing when to be friend … and when to be a semi-authority. And I guess just learning how to articulate what I need from my volunteers." She also reported learning to communicate with adults in a professional setting, and to be in charge of a program with many moving parts. Since developing student leaders is an explicit goal of Madison House and a defining characteristic of the study site, this outcome was not surprising, but the strength of the experience speaks to the effectiveness of the model.

The Local School students also received important benefits beyond the progress they made in their English language skills. They developed relationships with college students who were interested in them and their success, and with whom they could share their personal stories. The children could ask about slang, music, and other aspects of American youth culture. In addition to the content help, because the volunteers were college students, they embodied the idea that these young people could go to college. Often the volunteers were international or shared other identities with the students, which helped those children relate. Christine commented on the relatively high number of international volunteers:

> It’s nice when the students see someone who might look a little more like them….Every once in a while you might have someone from the same region…or even the same country…but just the fact that they don’t all look like the teacher….And then [the students] are all excited. You know, they can see a little bit of, “oh, you’re like me. You came here and went through this and now you’re at U.Va.

Conversely, stepping outside of “the U.Va. bubble” had a powerful effect on all three student volunteers. They pointed to the benefits of getting away from U.Va., of shifting pace and perspective as they entered the Local School environment. This shift relieved stress and helped them manage their own challenges more effectively, which they appreciated and felt made them better students overall.

Even more important, though, was the opportunity to intentionally step away from what was familiar. Sarah noted:

> I looked into tutoring [another Madison House Program], but it didn’t look as…it just seemed a little boring, to be honest. I wanted something a little bit different. Sort of outside of my comfort zone. I know at my high school, we never had any ESOL classes. It was just a very straight-forward population…Not straight-forward, just a very white population. And I didn’t have much exposure to that. And so I saw the ESOL program…Well, first I saw ESOL, and I didn’t know

> what it stood for. I just had no idea. And then I looked inside the binder, and I was like, "I mean, this looks like something I'd be interested in." And then I signed up for it. And I loved it my first year.

Her decision-making process here reveals the power and importance of providing environments that go beyond what students already know, something community engagement does quite well (Astin et al, 1999; Jones & Hill, 2001). The volunteers were exposed to young people whose life stories were fascinating, and they reported learning from the ways these students were both similar to and different from themselves and the other students their age. Abdul recalled sharing part of his own story with one of the volunteers:

> He ask me where are you from, and I say I am from Afghanistan, and he say "why you come here?" and about why I say my country have a lot of war, not too much peace, about why I do come here.

Such stories made an impression on the volunteers and increased both their respect for the kids and their awareness of their own privilege, a dynamic explored more fully below. One of the volunteers learned that her conception of who would be in an ESOL class – thinking that it would be mostly Spanish-speakers – was out of date. This perspective-shifting is an important benefit of community engagement (Eyler et al, 2001; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Volunteers also described becoming aware of their own privilege as a result of this shift in perspective (Jones & Hill, 2001). Sarah's description here reflects both the learning and the complexity inherent in this particular benefit:

> I love U.Va. – I love it – but it's not all that there is while we're here [in Charlottesville]. Like, I know students kind of get isolated from [the community]. And I think it's nice that they get a chance to just go and remember that there is something that goes on outside. And that they can see that not everything is as beautiful and dandy as it is on Grounds….There are people out there that do struggle and that do need help. And also that the community around Charlottesville isn't all like UVA. And I think that's a good perspective for [the volunteers]. And for actually teaching the [U.Va.] students, I think it's a good reminder of how much we take for granted….We grew up in this environment, and…it's easy…not necessarily easy – I don't know the backgrounds of all my volunteers – but I …I hope that it gives them a different perspective on looking at the world or looking at the United States, and our culture from a different…from the other side. Just looking at it from a different perspective.

James and Emily similarly reported that volunteering with the MH ESOL program had caused them to see themselves and the world around them differently, becoming aware of the benefits of being native English speakers or the power of the opportunity to study at a world-class institution. Such a shift is an important part of students' development (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; Jones & Hill, 2001; King & Kitchner, 1994; Perry, 1968; Tatum, 1992).

Given that this increase in awareness of privilege is a logical and desired outcome of a partnership in diverse environments, participants in this case reported surprisingly few opportunities to discuss the topic as part of the partnership experience. When asked directly whether they had a chance to discuss race, class or privilege in the course of the partnership, none of the participants could point to specific times or places where these topics were raised. Christine noted that those topics were "present in everything we do" but could not recall direct discussions with volunteers or students about them. Jack wished opportunities to have those discussions were part of the program. He commented:

> I have not had those conversations with others involved in the program. At times, I've definitely wished that we would have had that opportunity….Basically, the support that we get from Madison House is, "If you ever need anything, let us know" – that sort of thing. But I really would have liked to have that kind of conversation. Especially after the first couple times when I tutored – and, of course I came in in the middle of the semester, so … I don't know if this was different at the beginning of the semester, if there were meetings to discuss things that you saw or anything like that – but there have been really no conversations about that.…The things that I notice basically stay with me, and I don't really get to share that with anyone, and I don't get to learn from anyone else's observations.

His desire for more processing is predictable (Jones & Hill, 2001) and the research shows that students benefit from guided reflection about the identity and privilege issues they tend to confront in such situations (Eyler & Giles, 1999; King & Kitchner, 1994). This gap is worthy of additional attention on the part of partnership leaders and is discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

Reciprocity is a balance of benefits and risks, and the risks were few in this partnership. Logistics were the biggest challenge: volunteers not showing up as planned, problems with carpools, and coordinating schedules were mentioned by the PD, the student volunteers, and the CP as the biggest risks in the program. Christine noted:

> If I'm counting on a group coming in …and I set up a little bit more elaborate lesson that … my students couldn't do on their own, but in those groups, they could…. and then the driver gets sick that day. And I have, you know, no notice. That's when I see that there's a little risk.

She went on to note, though, that such instances were rare and this area was something that Madison House had actually improved on in recent years.

Sarah echoed that concern and attention, noting that consistency and communication were major topics in her work with the volunteers:

> We try to emphasize that it's a semester commitment, and that it's not a whenever-you-want-to-show-up-and-volunteer-you-do-it. It's more of a: if you're going to sign up for this, then we want to know that you are going to be committed and that you are going to want to…not necessarily want, but you *will* go when it's your shift…It's sort of like a class in that way.

Dress is a regular issue – sometimes the students forget that the styles and expectations of dress are different outside of U.Va. than in it. Christine noted that her kids take a risk in engaging with the volunteers – one she chooses for them, but she recognizes it can be hard.

The threat of volunteers coming in and having a negative influence is always present, but most of the participants felt it was very minor. Christine described one volunteer whose "bravado" and style of dress could be distracting and required slightly more of her attention, but she also noted that that volunteer did very good work with students. Abdul did not identify any risks or difficult aspects of the partnership at all. If issues arise – mostly theoretical – the PD meets with the CP and involves whomever is necessary, be it the volunteer, the teacher or both. These communication and problem-solving channels are worked out ahead of time as part of the partner agreements, which again aligns the MH ESOL program with best practice recommendations. On this metric Madison House programs are exemplary rather than typical, as their programs tend to have superb clarity on expectations and communication within a partnership.

Formal assessment is important to good practice in engagement (Driscoll, 2009; Jacoby, 2003, 2009; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998; Stanton, 2007). With the MH ESOL program, leaders evaluate the program through two surveys (mid-semester and end of semester) and continuous informal feedback. Students and community partners participate in that assessment, although I was not able to identify a formal or informal method of gathering LS students' feedback. On this metric, the MH ESOL program is both good and typical. It included community partners and student volunteers in the assessment, which is recommended and many good programs do, but as with many programs the "recipients" of the service – children in this case – were not formally included in that assessment. Rather, program leaders depended on the informal assessments of teachers and volunteers to understand children's experiences. While this is not ideal, it is typical, as the literature reveals few projects where agency clients are formally included in program assessment.

Overall, the timing and structure of the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the Madison House/Local School ESOL partnership are recommended in the literature to increase reciprocity as it engages institutional leads, student volunteers and community partners in the planning of the program from the outset through assessment (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Jacoby, 2003; Stanton, 2007). Across all cases in this study, Madison House programs involved the most consistent level and expectation for training, and their positive outcomes are likely due in part to this focus on preparation (Jacoby) and community partner engagement (Stanton). Their emphasis on the importance of the CP, and the relationship student leaders and staff work to build with that partner, demonstrates an asset-based approach (Cruz & Giles, 2000). Indeed, Sarah comments on what she has learned from Madison House specifically:

> I guess there's just a perpetuating the feeling of… we're helping, but at the same time, we're not the saviors of the group. We're learning from them, just as much as they're learning… It's mutually beneficial, I guess, is all I'm trying to say.

It is clear from the data that Madison House staff and volunteers see the community partners and the clients as experts, as important members of the community, and as sources of important lessons for students. This is a major component of their success.

While the approach to this training-through-evaluation activity is solid, the content and consistency of the actual implementation is somewhat varied. Some volunteers reported that they did not attend training, or they only attended prior to their first placement. The training focused on logistics, a good idea given that neglect in that area is a common path to failure in university-community partnerships (Jacoby, 2003).

What seemed to be missing, however, was richer content on the context into which the volunteers were entering, e.g., more information on the schools, the children, anything unique about the site such as what the IRC was and how it might affect the schools in the areas. This information would have been important to contextualize and deepen volunteers' interaction with the students. This lighter-than-ideal treatment is likely a function of time – program directors all commented on the difficulty in getting volunteers to come to training, and practically they could only require one relatively short session. As noted, community partners also have limited time and may not prioritize time spent in training. Interestingly, here too this case (and the other Madison House cases studied) conformed to the literature – while there is substantial evidence that scholars think training is important (Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1989), there is less direction for length of time and content to be covered. Again, this dynamic represents a typical finding in the literature – while it is best practice to incorporate community partners into program training, logistical challenges and differences in focus often make that a difficult goal to achieve. This finding is explored more fully in Chapter 5.

Success for this partnership was defined by its persistence, positive outcomes for those involved, and the learning and growth that took place in the course of the project. Overall, this partnership was both reciprocal and successful, risk was low, and harm was not an outcome for any participant. Each partner was able to describe what benefits they received, what they learned and what they taught, and to reflect on the effect on others in the partnership. Relationships were positive, but the success of this partnership rested more on its structure and clear expectations than on the strength of the relationships developed.

Exemplary Program

The APO Books Behind Bars (APO BBB) project stood out as exemplary. Its distinction rests in part on its positive outcomes for all participants and perceptions of high levels of reciprocity – both the community partner and the agency client rated it extremely highly, and student engagement was superb. Further, though, this case defied expectations about the need for structure and formal assessment to facilitate those positive outcomes, as those components were much more fluid than in other cases studied. Finally, this case demonstrated the power of strong relationships in university-community relationships: more than any other factor, the relationship between the students in APO and the project and its people affected the outcomes for all involved.

Reciprocity ratings for this case demonstrated an interesting pattern: the community members rated the partnership quite highly (9.5 and 10 out of a 10-point scale), reflecting their overall satisfaction, but the students, particularly the student lead, rated it somewhat lower (6 to 7 for the institutional lead and 7-8 for the volunteer). Interview data, however, reveals that instead of feeling that the partnership was not successful, those lower scores reflected the expectations to which these students held themselves – they were critical of their own ability to fully meet the needs of their partnerships, despite ample evidence of excellence on this metric elsewhere in the study. This inversion of scores was identified in other partnerships and is examined closely in Chapter 5.

Like the MH ESOL program, APO BBB is a student-led direct service partnership, which again is the most common type of university-community partnership found at the site. Student volunteers come once or twice a week, usually spending upwards of five hours each week, to read letters sent by prisoners requesting books and to fulfill those requests made to Books Behind Bars (for a full description see pp. 97-99). As outlined in Chapter 3, APO is a co-ed service fraternity of between 80-100 brothers who conduct service on a weekly basis throughout the academic year. In this program, incarcerated individuals from prisons and jails across Virginia and beyond write to BBB to request up to three books at a time. Upon receipt of those letters, the community partner or the volunteers read them and try to fill the requests.

Volunteers must follow the very strict Department of Corrections (DOC) regulations covering the condition of books allowed into prisons and jails: no writing of any sort, including underlining, is permitted, nor are compact disks, paper clips, or bookmarks, to name just a few restrictions. The volunteers take these regulations very seriously, and reasonably so: in 2009 the BBB program was shut down by the DOC because paper clips and a CD were accidentally left in books that got shipped. The incident received national attention and with the assistance of local First Amendment experts the program was allowed to restart. While there is no way to tell who was responsible for the mistake – APO was one of several volunteer groups working with BBB at that time – student volunteers take the threat of additional slip ups very seriously. Once the books are identified and checked for condition, they are carefully packaged with DOC paperwork and sent back to the institution. In addition to this processing, volunteers work to inventory and organize donated and purchased books. BBB is held three times a week, the only "midweek" (APO service project occurring during the week) popular enough for two days.

The institutional lead is College of Arts and Sciences student Gracie Burger. She has been involved with the program for three years. In addition to her APO connection, she has a personal and academic interest in prisoners' rights that drives her involvement.

The community agency lead is Kathryn Smith[14], founder and owner of the private, non-profit educational corporation that runs Books Behind Bars. She has spent 20 years building this program following the first request received from an inmate to purchase "a book to call his own." The student volunteer is James Maxwell[15], also a student in the College, who has been volunteering with BBB for two years. The client is Evans Hopkins, a former inmate who wrote to Kathryn and the BBB program to receive books while serving a life sentence. He was released from prison in 2004 and wrote a book about his experiences, *Life After Life: A Story of Rage and Redemption.* He became involved as "an avid reader, researcher and a writer in prison." He notes that BBB helped him get books for his research and writing. He did not know that students were participating in the process but is thankful and impressed that they are. Interestingly, he has another connection with U.Va.; his uncle, Gregory Swanson, was the first African-American to attend U.Va. Law School after suing for admission in 1950 ("First African-American to enter U.Va. Law School," n.d.)

Structure for this partnership is considerably more fluid than the Madison House ESOL case. No formal, written agreements exist between APO and BBB. Logistical requirements imposed by APO's service structure – the requirement that all brothers do a certain amount of service each week –provide some general expectations, but there are no set requirements for what APO is expected to provide the BBB program. Kathryn notes that the students are "a very big part" of the work of the organization, but she never

[14] Pseudonym

[15] Pseudonym

described expectations or requirements that she has for the volunteers. This is highly unusual; in most partnerships, there is at least some form of written agreement or expectations, but here both the U.Va. and BBB participants simply take as a given that students would show up and process books. No additional structure is necessary.

Instead, the strength of the relationship created its own structure. Gracie notes:

> [BBB] is kind of one of those projects where you're close to the project as well as the people who are in it. Like, the SPCA you can just kind of come and go, but [BBB], we all know Kathryn very well.

Coordination of volunteers, transportation, and scheduling is all handled by the student lead. Kathryn and the volunteers communicate regularly, although the work of the volunteers is somewhat more independent than for other partnerships in the study, as Kathryn does not oversee volunteers' daily work in the same way that Christine does in the MS ESOL case, for example. James notes that they "talk to Kathryn on a regular basis to kind of figure out what she wants to happen" and points out that she is constantly back and forth between BBB and her bookstore. This informal structure seems to be working well at this point, but its dependence on the relationship between Kathryn and Gracie means that should one of them leave the partnership a new structure would be needed.

As with the Madison House ESOL partnership, benefits exchanged among participants were many. Beginning again with the expected outcomes, regular volunteer help provided by APO meant BBB was able to process inmates' requests for books quickly and accurately, thus doing the work of the organization. Inmates in the program receive their own books, something that those on the outside take for granted. Kathryn notes “the reason we do all this extra work, rather than sending just a box of books to a library, is that they have those books then to call their own.” That was important work, as reflected in Evans’ comments here:

> Providing prisoners with their own books….That’s one of the more important parts of what the program does, because your books are so severely limited [in prison]…I…was able to partake of the program and be enriched by the program from inside—intellectually enriched. And then also to have the books sent into prison after I became an author and to actually be in communication with friends of mine, prisoners who were able to get the book through Books Behind Bars. I was able to see a full circle there in which my book was able to be read by those in prison.

The individuals writing to request or give thanks for books also get to tell their stories to caring people on the other end who were willing to take the time to read those stories and words of thanks. This was described as a powerful opportunity; even though there was no direct contact, the act of writing and the act of reading the letters had profound effects on participants. James comments:

> Reading the letters a lot of the times there’ll be very long letters, people telling their story and why they want books. It's just very touching and really eye-opening to still hear all these different people's stories, and they’re all so nice, and thank you so much for these books. And, to me, thinking, “oh, a book,” which is no big deal to me, it actually means something really big to someone. So it's definitely beeneye-opening and a learning experience to me.

Evans describes books as “his lifeline” inside and points out that through the BBB program he made connections with Kathryn that helped him establish himself as a writer post-incarceration.

All participants understood the purpose of the program deeply and could describe its benefits and purpose in detail. It is clearly part of Kathryn’s life’s work, and Gracie can tell its creation story in great detail. James too knew all about the program and was able to describe its purpose with detail, accuracy and passion. Evans was articulate in describing its lifesaving role in the stifling prison system. Each also took an asset-based approach to the work and those it touched: the value placed on the program, the inmates and the community partner was reflected in almost every word spoken by the participants. This level of connection to the purpose of a partnership is extraordinary and contributed significantly to the overwhelmingly positive outcomes described by participants.

The types of resources exchanged varied between the concrete and the intangible (Foa & Foa, 1980). James noted that volunteers are able to do “the legwork, the more tedious stuff” so that Kathryn can “make the big decisions.” APO and the students got a service project that was consistent and appealing to brothers, helping them meet their mission of service. The students provide new energy and passion for a project that began before most of them were born. When the program needed to move, volunteers not only helped move and reestablish the warehouse, but Gracie assisted with the search and negotiations for new space. Students learn to manage a complicated and exacting process, and because of the autonomy they are given they feel they “have a very big hand in affecting or influencing” the partnership.

Education about the prison system in the US is a major benefit, allowing students to make important connections between their extracurricular service and what many of them were learning in school. Such connections are often cited as important components of community engagement (Eyler et al, 2001; Eyler & Giles, 1999). For Gracie, the partnership provided an environment where she was able to connect academics and her passion in a very hands-on, satisfying way. She notes of her involvement:

> I'm getting so much out of it; it's adding to my experience for the future—I want to go to law school, I know I want to work on penal law and that kind of thing, so it's definitely going to like look good on my resume. This is something that I care so deeply about.

To be clear, this is not a resume-padding experience for her: she has worked and studied in prisons in Uganda and on legal aid in Charlottesville, in addition to her BBB work, and easily expounds on the problems in the prison systems, their sources and potential remedies. She undoubtedly sees herself as part of that solution.

Beyond the personal growth of a single participant (no matter how powerful), the partnership has a direct impact not only on inmates but also on those around them who will need open minds and understanding for them to be successful upon return to society. Kathryn recognizes this, noting that through the partnership she is teaching students "how to be concerned for others….and that it's good to work hard." Gracie describes what she sees as a teaching and learning opportunity:

> I just really care about the prisoners' rights movement, and this is so close to home….It's why I care so much about prisoners, teaching respect to the students that help out for people who are – we can't see them and we'll never see them…

> they deserve their Constitutional rights but they also deserve to be treated like humans….I just think it's so great to see how [the volunteers'] perspective could have been changed just a little bit…And they won't be part of the majority of the people who say oh, you were in prison, you're a bad person.

Further, Kathryn notes that "it's educational for me to understand what these young people are thinking and how they're thinking, because it's a whole different generation."

The relationship between the institutional lead (Gracie) and the community partner (Kathryn) in this partnership is extraordinary, and it is central to the success of this partnership. Gracie sees Kathryn three to five times a week and talks to her every day. She describes her involvement here:

> So I'm basically in charge of organizing the whole warehouse, which involves unpacking the books and cleaning them off, but also the sections, because we have them alphabetically distributed but by genre, so African-American authors, and then fiction, ABC order. And then I'm in charge of checking all of the books to make sure that they meet the regulations that we have because I don't know if you heard, but two years ago we got in trouble with DOC [Department of Corrections]—and then packaging, I weigh the books and then check them again, and then sending them out. So I'm just kind of overseeing the whole process. I volunteer and help out as well, and then Kathryn comes and is the head overseer, obviously.

In addition to spending hours far above what was required by APO, Gracie is intimately involved with program operations, including identifying new space, negotiating with landlords for reduced rent, and coordinating multiple moves. She speaks as if she is either an owner or a partner in the business, in a way that does not come off negatively. She is also able to tell the organization's creation story in great detail. When she talks about the program, she always uses the second person plural – prisoners "write to us directly" and "we" fulfill those and "our" friends support the effort. I was deeply struck by that level of commitment. Grace also displays deep knowledge of prisoner's rights issues and is passionate in her drive to learn more and educate more about the topic. Of particular relevance to the BBB program, she pointed to the scarce resources across the country dedicated to prisoner education, resources which she noted were necessary to lead to reductions in recidivism as well as "to improve their quality of life, because they're still humans and deserve to not sit all day in a cell and let their brains rot." She argues that programs like BBB work to fill that deficit.

Kathryn's descriptions of the close relationship between her, her organization, and the individual students in APO – especially Gracie – align closely with Gracie's. Kathryn described APO as "very, very involved in BBB." She noted, "we could not do this without their help." She reports they come three times a week, an hour on Tuesday and Friday and 4-5 hours on Saturday:

> That's a tremendous help. I'm always pleased with watching the students as they read the letters and say 'Oh look. We've got this book; this is just what he wanted' and 'Has anybody seen such-and-such a book? This fellow wants this.' So they get really involved in the emotions of the writers. They forget that these are maybe murderers or thieves sitting in prison. And they understand that they are just people like them. Just another human being yearning for information.

She described engaging the volunteers in reflection about the prisoners, their situations, and what books mean to people in that environment. She commented on their enthusiasm and opined, “They are excited to come and work….And for them it’s a real sense of accomplishment, it’s a sense of really feeling deeply for another person. And it’s beautiful to watch them and listen to their interaction.” Her words here echo those of Christine in the MH ESOL case and reflect what the literature tells us (Eyler et al, 2001; Sandy & Holland, 2006); being involved in college students’ learning and growth process is a powerful and positive experience for community partners.

As is the case in each partnership in the study, leadership and stepping out of the regular routine of college life were central benefits to students in this case. Gracie and James described learning to organize, manage, motivate peer volunteers and problem solve, all within the context of coordinating this partnership. Both students reported learning to respect the incarcerated individuals from whom they heard, to honor their experiences, requests and humanity, and to empathize with a stigmatized and isolated population. They also felt connected to a cause that was larger than them as individuals.

James appreciated the opportunity to get outside the U.Va bubble. He described volunteering with Books Behind Bars as “the anchor of my week. For me [BBB] has become the center, kind of keeps me in check. It’s the thing I look forward to in the week. If I don't go, I kind of feel out of whack.” These are common outcomes for students involved in community engagement (Astin et al, 2000; Eyler & Giles,1999; Sax, 2004).

The APO BBB case was also particularly illustrative of the opportunities available when participants were exposed to different others. In the course of that project

U.Va.students learned or were reminded that inmates read in prison, and they developed more awareness of them as human beings with intellects, desires and needs as expressed through their letters and requests for books. Gracie commented:

> They [U.Va. volunteers] may not realize it now, but they won't go out into the world saying, "oh you know that person is in prison and they are evil" or something…because their minds will have changed. They'll have talked to these people through these letters. They'll have heard their words, because that is very life-changing.

Students developed more awareness of the conditions in prisons, which for some affected the way they interpreted policy or news about criminality. The letters generally affected volunteers strongly – both the requests and the thank yous.

However it was not just the students who were learning and being affected by different others: former inmate and author Evans Hopkins noted that programs like BBB stand as evidence for some in prison that "there's some good white folks in this world." Like the realization the student volunteer had that ESOL students in the U.S. no longer hailed just from Spanish-speaking nations, students' perceptions and perspectives were changed by their exposure to environments and individuals that differed greatly from their personal experience.

Evidence on discussion about race, class and privilege was mixed. The students felt that the letters generated regular conversations about race, class and privilege in the context of what is and is not allowed in the prisons, as they start to see the reality of living on the inside and hear the stories of how people are being treated or how they got there. Kathryn on the other hand did not feel that it came up – "not a lot of time for that" she noted, when questioned directly. While Evans did not have direct knowledge of the students' experience, he comments on the potential of programs like this:

> I mean the fact that U.Va students are engaged—it's very important as far as dealing with civic engagement on the campuses. Because many of the students come from a background where they don't exactly encounter working in the community or working at situations where people are relatively disadvantaged. And they may be hindered by not even understanding that—how much people read inside, you know. They might have thought that everybody inside is illiterate. So I think it helps university students in that way.

James reported talking about it with Gracie, but it appears there was no regular, structured reflection on this important component. As with the MH ESOL program, such processing seems to be missing regularly in partnerships at this site, a phenomenon considered more closely in Chapter 5.

Risk took on a rather limited conception in this partnership. All involved were highly aware of the potential for mistakes that would allow banned items into a shipment and thus stop the program again. The students were very aware of the risk Kathryn took in trusting them to understand and properly apply DOC regulations; James notes "She's definitely taking a risk because she's not there, she's not checking everything, and she trusts us to make our best judgment call." Students were very aware that their mistakes could cost the program and inmates' opportunity to get books. They took this very seriously. The inmates also risked not getting a book they want, as the program relied on donations and not all titles were available. Evans pointed to "the risk to [the students] might be to their psyches in terms of seeing how plodding and mechanical and sometimes inimical the prison system can be and how crushing it can be." Students were also aware that their schedules could be challenging to Kathryn. Interestingly, Kathryn firmly dismissed the idea that she or the students took on any risk in this partnership, and Evans similarly quickly dismissed the idea that harm was an outcome. Both seemed somewhat defensive about the very idea that there could be bad outcomes, a dynamic not unique to this case and examined more fully in Chapter 5.

While this partnership lacked the structure and clear expectations of the typical case, the APO BBB partnership had the most extensive training of any of the direct service partnerships. Indeed, APO required higher levels of training for the BBB project than it did of any of its other midweek projects, and the training reported exceeded that of any of the other partnerships considered in this study. Here the community partnerdid take the time to come in and give the story of BBB to the whole brotherhood, which put the project in context and built commitment to it and its mission. Gracie noted:

> We actually had Kathryn come and speak to the whole brotherhood…and she told kind of her life story, how she came to be involved in Books Behind Bars, the evolution of it, and then where it is today and why it still means so much to her and the community, what service means to her. You know, we don't do that with other midweeks, so this is very much the one that we are the longest invested in the community and the most deeply invested in, just because it means so much to Kathryn but it also means so much to thousands of people that we'll never meet.

Participation was also restricted to brothers who were beyond their first semester to be sure they "know about the project and why it means so much," are invested in it, and understand that "carelessness is an issue," according to Gracie.

This focus on collaboration and providing context for participants stands out, particularly among the student-run projects. It builds understanding of the project and the people served, develops deeper connections among those involved, and creates commitment to the partnership, as noted in the students' earlier comments. The closest similarity in enthusiasm, participation and expertise was expressed by the student lead on the Madison House Adopt-a-Grandparent program, which also demonstrated high levels of reciprocity and satisfaction. Clearly, attention in this area might provide the margin of excellence for good partnerships looking to achieve excellence.

This partnership had no formal assessment, making its success all the more surprising given the importance of that feature in effective community engagement (Driscoll, 2009; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998; Stanton, 2007). Due to the strength of the relationships, particularly that between Gracie and Kathryn, the sheer quantity of communication likely provided significant informal assessment since they were constantly in touch about the workings of the program. APO also reported some informal assessment through weekly reviews required by their national organization. Further, Gracie pointed out that in some ways the strict DOC regulations provided feedback as well, since any mistakes would once again shut down the project.Other factors that may explain stronger outcomes with APO include the fact that expectations and communication were exceptionally clear and strong in that partnership, as well as its longevity and the extraordinarily strong relationship between the student lead and community partner.

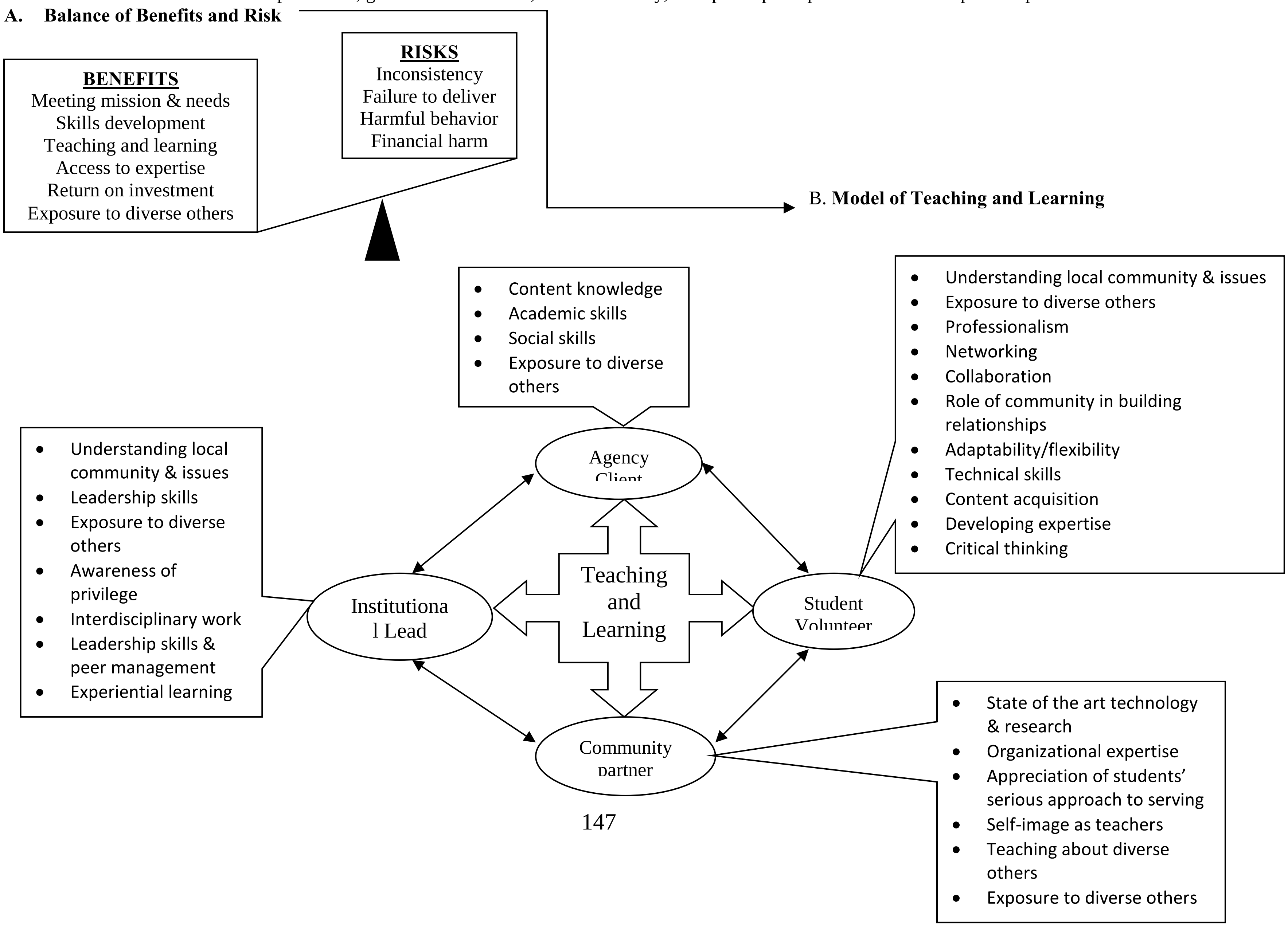
High quality relationships, the opportunity to connect service work to major social issues, abundant leadership opportunities and the exposure to individuals with different life experiences all combined to produce high levels of reciprocity and a clear sense of success in this partnership. Risks were defined and carefully managed, and harm was not identified. These positive outcomes lead to very strong perceptions of success across participants. This case stands out not only because of this demonstrated effectiveness of the partnership, but because it achieved such good results in the near-absence of two allegedly critical components: a clearly defined structure that sets out roles, goals, expectations and communication prior to engagement; and formal assessment that ensures feedback from all participants is gathered and applied to the ongoing implementation of the project. Further, while important questions of race, class and privilege were raised by the work of the partnership, few formal opportunities for reflection were provided. Extensive training that incorporated the community partner and that provided sufficient context for the work likely mitigated some of those omissions. Taken as a whole, then, this case offers some exciting lessons about the power of relationships and suggests that reciprocity and success in university-community partnerships should not be considered static concepts.

Reciprocity

The descriptions of the typical and exemplary case offer a narrative description of the forms reciprocity can take in university-community partnerships. The purpose of this study was to provide an overall picture, a sense of how reciprocity is co-created by partners and what tangible and symbolic components contributed to or subtracted from that sense. Figure 3 illustrates how reciprocity was constructed for participants across the eight cases considered in this study.

Figure 3: Model of a Reciprocal University-Community Partnership

If a) benefits outweigh risks and harm, if b) participants are both teaching and learning, and if the relationship is characterized by clear expectations, good communication, and consistency, then participants perceive relationship as reciprocal.



Understanding this phenomenon was at the heart of this study. Here a reciprocal relationship was defined as one where the risks and the benefits of a university-community engagement partnership were shared and where the benefits for all actors outweighed the risks; it also included a vibrant and dynamic learning environment where each partner was learning from the others and where learning outcomes were diverse and plentiful. Overall, participants identified far more benefits (228 references) than harm (56), and felt those benefits outweighed the risks (156) significantly. Teaching and learning occurred in every partnership andwere relatively balanced, with a slight tip toward the sense that most participants felt they were learning more than they were teaching. Some learning outcomes were specific to a population (e.g., leading peers) and others were shared among participant roles (e.g., exposure to diverse others, flexibility). Specific elements of this model are investigated in further detail later in this chapter.

In general, participants felt reciprocity was being enacted in a relationship when they were able to: build relationships; meet identified needs; be exposed to those different from themselves; receive or provide individualized attention; receive or provide content help; develop leadership skills; make a difference; feel other partners understood and appreciated the partnership; develop trust; fulfill the mission of an organization or the purpose of a class; and make academic connections. For some participants, the effects of belief in the mission of an organization strengthened the perception of reciprocity – this was particularly evident in the APO Books Behind Bars, Madison House/JABA Mary Williams Center Adopt-a-Grandparent and LEAP partnerships. Duty (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961) was also an outcome of reciprocal relationships. It was expressed most often in terms of relationships, and commitment – to show up when expected, to be prepared, to engage. Finally, persistence was an indicator – when teachers continued to sign up for volunteers, students continued to want to volunteer, or grandparents continued to want grandchildren, then partnershipswere seen as more reciprocal.

Snapshots of the Data: Reciprocity by Case and Role

The table below displays answers given by participants when asked "how would you rate this partnership's level of reciprocity?"[16] The figure following the table presents the numerical data in such a way that both overall levels and assessments by role and case can be seen at a glance. For roles with multiple participants, if the ratings differed both scores are given.

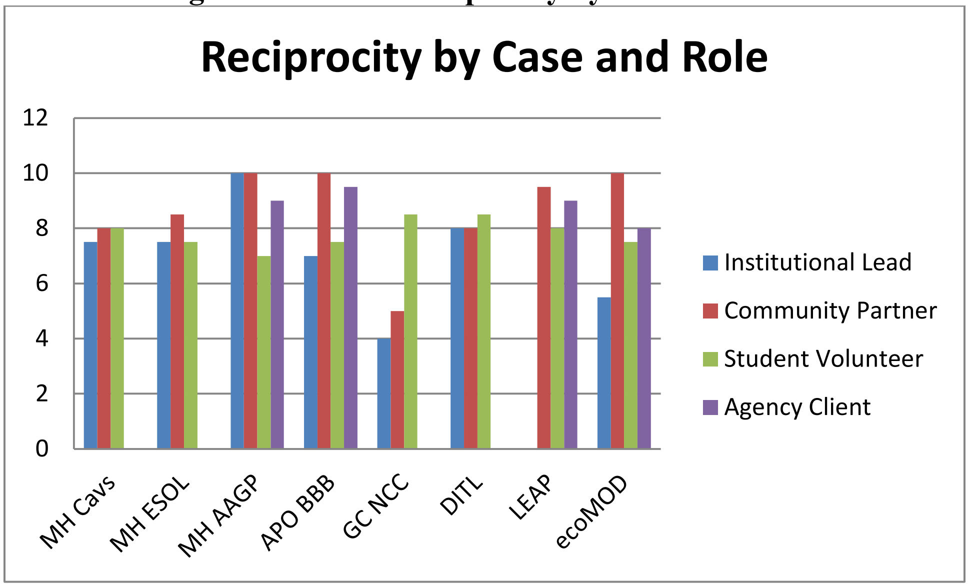
Table 4: Reciprocity Ratings by Case and Role – Responses

	Case	MH Cavs	MH ESOL	MH AAGP	APO BBB	GC NCC	DITL	LEAP	ecoMOD
Role	Institutional Lead	7/8	7/8	10	6/7* 7/8 **	4	8	"very tight integration"	5/6
	Community Partner	8	8/9	10	10	"in the middle"	8	9/10	10
	Student Volunteer	8	7 & 8	7	7/8	8 & 9	8/9	"strong"	8*** 7****
	Agency Client	--	--	"yes"	9.5	--	---	9	8

*Between APO and BBB **Between APO and inmates ***Between U.Va and Habitat
****Between U.Va. and the Client

[16] In my third interview one participant offered a "1 to 10" categorization for reciprocity levels, with one being low and 10 being high, which I felt worked so well that I incorporated it into future interviews. In addition, all participants were provided the opportunity to either revise their rating or provide a specific number if one was not originally given. Not all participants chose a number over a description, and in those cases the phrases used are included in Table 4.

Figure 4: Overall Reciprocity by Case and Role



Overall, participants felt that the partnerships were more reciprocal than not, with most scores coming in the 7-9 range. The exception to that trend was the Greek Council/Neighborhood Community Center, where both the institutional lead (student) and community partner reported lower levels of reciprocity (4 and "in the middle," respectively). Looking across roles, community partners rated the partnerships most highly, with four of eight rating the partnerships a perfect ten and only one rating below an 8 (GC NCC). Institutional leads (both students and faculty/staff) and student volunteers tended to rate the partnerships most critically, with scores ranging closer to 7 or 8, and two in the midrange (4 and 5/6). Of the four clients able to respond effectively to the question[17], three were 9s or "yes"; one client felt the true partnership was among other participants but still rated the partnership's reciprocity at eight.

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[17] The others were children whose language skills were not strong enough to understand and rate the concept of reciprocity.

Looking across cases, again ratings were high overall, with the exception of GC NCC. As expected, the three Madison House programs were similar and fell mostly in the average range, demonstrating the accuracy of their designation as “typical” cases in the research design (Yin, 2003). The Adopt-a-Grandparent program received slightly higher ratings across all roles than the other two, owing largely to the strength of relationships developed in that case. From this cross-case perspective, both APO BBB and DITL differed little from the Madison House cases, despite the differences in their leadership structures and types of service.

The Madison House Cavs in the Classroom (MH Cavs) and DITL partnerships, interesting to compare because they took place at the same site doing similar work albeit with different participants, returned virtually identical scores, with the DITL partnership leaning slightly higher. These projects had different leadership (student- versus staff-run) and were of different types (direct service versus service-learning), although they shared the same quality profile. In the GC NCC partnership, however, both the student lead and community partner gave comparatively lower ratings, including the lowest rating of all participants at 4, signaling that there might have been challenges with this partnership.

Interestingly, the other case characterized as “low input/low feedback,” APO BBB, received much higher reciprocity ratings, including the highest community partner and agency client ratings in the study; reasons for this distinction were discussed in the earlier description of this case. Assessments for LEAP were uniformly high and were among the highest across all eight partnerships. EcoMOD displayed mixed returns, with the faculty institutional lead assigning a much lower rating (5/6) than the student volunteer (8 for between U.Va. and Habitat and 7 between U.Va. and the homeowner), the community partner (10), or the homeowner (8).

Four of five direct service partnerships (MH Cavs, MH ESOL, MH/MWC AAGP, APO BBB) demonstrated relatively similar reciprocity scores, while the academic partnerships (DITL, LEAP, ecoMOD) displayed more variance. The DITL partnership in particular was significantly more closely matched with the direct service partnerships than those that were also service-learning and community-based research. GC NCC was again the outlier with midrange scores from both the institutional lead (student) and the community partner.

These ratings give a snapshot, an overall sense of how participants felt about the cases, and an initial way to compare them to one another. While participants were all given the same definition of reciprocity, each person applied that definition to their experience in their own way. Those nuances were revealed in the way participants described the partnerships, and those descriptive data illustrate that some of these participants "graded" themselves more harshly than others. This dynamic is examined in more depth in Chapter 5. Therefore, it is important to remember that while numerical ratings provide an overall assessment from each participant that is useful particularly to get a sense of what they thought of the partnership as a whole, the stories of both the individual cases and the perspectives of the individual roles are more nuanced.

Tipping the Scales: Benefits of University-Community Partnerships

The exchange of benefits was the centerpiece of participants' perceptions of reciprocity, demonstrating the utility of social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Miron & Moley, 2006) in explaining how university-community partnerships work. In addition to reporting what resources were exchanged and with whom, participants typically saw these resources as the primary benefits of the relationships. Examining the resources exchanged and the effects of that exchange was also useful in revealing important distinctions among the cases. The figure below uses Foa and Foa's (1980) model to illustrate what types of resources (using their labels of love, status, information, services, goods, money) were exchanged in each case, as well as a those resources' characterization along the continuum of symbolic to concrete.

Figure 5: Resources Exchanged by Type and Level

symbolic ←——————————————→ concrete

Type	Love	Status	Information	Services	Goods	Money
Partnerships found in	MH AAGP	MH Cavs	MH Cavs	MH Cavs	LEAP	DITL
	APO BBB	MH ESOL	MH ESOL	MH ESOL	ecoMOD	LEAP
		MH AAGP	MH AAGP	MH AAGP		ecoMOD
		APO BBB	APO BBB	APO BBB		MH ESOL
		GC NCC	GC NCC	GC NCC		
		DITL	DITL	DITL		
		LEAP	LEAP	LEAP		
		ecoMOD	ecoMOD	ecoMOD		
Articulated as	Love, admiration, dependence	Trust, partnership, fellowship	Info about clients, community, university resources. expertise on community issues	Design services; computer help; data analysis; content help; companionship; organizational tasks	Reports; designs	Payment; course credit; time

Key: Direct service; service-learning/CBR

Resource types exchanged most often in these university-community partnerships tended to be status, information, and services. Of the eight cases, six identified resources that fell into at least four categories, indicating that the benefits of those partnerships were somewhat diverse. Resources exchanged as part of academic partnerships tended to be more concrete than those that were direct service, and in only two cases – both of which were direct service – were resources exchanged at the most symbolic end of the spectrum, love. Taking one of these resources, trust, as an example to illustrate how they were experienced by participants: students in Madison House programs and APO BBB felt that community partners gave them their trust; the homeowner in the ecoMOD partnership commented that others thought it was surprising that she would trust students, but she actually had faith in their abilities and the oversight of the faculty in charge to ensure all was done right; Head PDs trusted PDs to get work done across Madison House programs. The community partner in the MH ESOL partnership allowed volunteers access to her students based on her trust in their capabilities and good intent. The community partner in the APO BBB project trusted the students to accurately fill the requests of the inmates. Examining the exchange of like resources across different participant roles provided robust pictures of those resources and how they functioned in the development of reciprocity in each partnership.

The *exchange of expertise* was central to almost all of the partnerships. University partners sought to learn from community partners' deep knowledge about their populations and local issues, including issues of aging, K-12 teaching, buildings and home energy issues, prisoners' rights and affordable housing. Community partners learned state-of the art techniques from faculty and students in both LEAP and ecoMOD, and organizational expertise from Madison House. Community partners also experienced an increased sense of responsibility for teaching students, seeing them as current and future members of the community who need certain knowledge and perspectives to be successful. There was a clear sense on all sides that the exchange of expertise was a central goal of each partnership.

Some benefits were *tangible*. Those included things like free books, community service hours for course requirements, sites to place students to fulfill course requirements, and "real life" experience, especially that which could be applied in the work context. For the architecture and engineering students, the opportunity to engage not only in the process of design and construction but also to interact with clients in a "real world" way was an important benefit:

> With the [homeowner] family, that was a really interesting experience for a few reasons. One, it was definitely an incredible experience for students to be able to work with a real client, and to be able to actually talk to them, talk to a real person about what they needed, what kind of difficulties they had, how they lived, and that was pretty fantastic.

Other tangible benefits included developing leadership skills and experience; services, products and reports; identifying interns; doing work that was a weakness for staff; and giving time and expertise not resident in the university or an organization. Meeting a need included things like providing books, doing the work of the organization, and offering one-on one attention in a classroom. For community partners in particular, reciprocity was perceived in part as a return on investment:

> I'm very grateful for what we've got, but again, we have to make sure that we're getting out of it what we're putting into it at least. I mean, one of the things that we are really trying to look at as an organization is— because we are a very small staff trying to achieve a lot—are we spending our time wisely? Are we getting the return on investment that we should from the amount of time that we're putting into something?

This participant thought carefully about this calculus before deciding to engage in the partnership with the university, and continued to make it throughout; access to expertise formed a significant return on investment for this non-profit.

Many benefits were more *intangible*. Those included developing relationships, knowing someone cared, making a difference and giving back. For example, changing one's mindset was identified by both students and the community partner in APO BBB – "they forget that these are maybe murderers or thieves and sitting in prison, and they understand that they are just people like them." Watching others learn about and become emotionally involved in something important was identified as a benefit, as was sharing enthusiasm for a topic, a group of individuals, or a type of work. As mentioned previously, getting students out of the U.Va. bubble was an important benefit. Students, both those who served as the institutional lead and as volunteers, reported being perceived positively by others was a benefit of their partnerships. Student participants working with children described the dynamic of serving as a role model while having fun as reciprocal. Providing positive role models, whether as a math lover in DITL or a college-going person in the GC NCC or MH ESOL was seen as an important benefit by both university students and community partners.

For the student lead in GC NCC, having student volunteers see themselves as members of a particular community, as neighbors with responsibilities to educate themselves about the community in which they lived, was critical: "This is your community. This is not just, you're not just living from JPA to Fourteenth Street, Wertland—there's more to Charlottesville. There's not just, you know, a void between here and downtown." More than one participant talked about "bridging the gap" between the community and U.Va. These factors were all perceived as benefits in some way – to participants themselves or to the people with whom they worked or to whom they were responsible (e.g., students, children, elders). Sometimes these were benefits flowing from a participant, sometimes flowing to, and that bidirectional flow was important to participants' perceptions of reciprocity.

If a participant felt things were unbalanced, that took away from their sense of reciprocity. For example, the student volunteer in the ecoMOD case noted that the level of reciprocity among students and faculty was higher with the partner organization than with the homeowner, in part because he perceived the homeowner as being "left out" of some parts of the process. The homeowner expressed the same sense, although she also pointed out she did not expect the relationship to be as strong between her and the students as much of their work occurred before her family was brought into the project. This example is demonstrative of an interesting phenomenon: in the areas where participants felt the balance of benefits and risks was off, they typically felt that they were personally getting more than they were giving. This other-focus likely had a positive effect on the overall perceptions of reciprocity in the partnerships.

Exposure to diverse others was seen as both a tangible and intangible benefit that led to stronger perceptions of reciprocity. In all partnerships participants were exposed to some degree to people who were different from them, and in many cases that exposure was an explicit goal of a partnership. This was most often the case in the direct service partnerships. Those were the partnerships in which students had the most contact with agency clients who were as a group the most widely varied along multiple demographics, which is likely to explain this distinction. This is consonant with the literature that indicates that exposure to and developing understanding of diverse cultures and communities is often both a goal and an outcome of community engagement (Astin et al, 2000; Colby, et al, 2003; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Sax, 2004).

The types of differences ranged broadly, from age, gender and race to class, educational level, and language. They also included exposure to those with tremendously different life experience, regardless of difference or similarity across demographic categories. Participants largely understood that there were both benefits and risks associated with that exposure. There was also consensus that much learning happened for all involved in these exchanges.

The exposure was multidirectional. In every case the U.Va.student participants were seeking engagement with people they did not typically encounter on campus. University faculty and staff simultaneously sought to engage their students with diverse others in the community and worked to recruit a diverse group of students into their projects. Community partners, especially in the projects involving school-age children, actively sought the students as role models for college-going and examples of positive attitudes toward education. They were particularly interested in engaging this type of difference in students when those students shared race, ethnicity, background, language or experience with the children with whom they were working. One of the staff from DITL, who also serves as a community partner in that project, put it well:

> What we do is we try to let these kids see that these are normal, everyday people who, for the most part, a lot of these U.Va. students, African-Americans, they've gone through some trials and tribulations just like these kids have.

Thus, embedded in the search for different types of exposure for clients, community partners were also seeking similarities they believed would strengthen the effectiveness of that exposure. In another example from the same partnership, staff were able to place Arabic-speaking volunteers in classrooms with pre-kindergarten Arabic speakers, which was a huge benefit to all involved. They reported that the teacher noted "You wouldn't believe it. Those two kids light up when she comes in because there's someone who looks like them and speaks their language. Their whole countenance has changed because they had someone to speak for them."

Being exposed to those different from oneself created understanding and opportunities that participants– both volunteers and clients – felt were unavailable to them in other venues. The student volunteer in the Madison House/JABA Mary Williams Center AAGP partnership commented on what she was looking for by participating:

> Just learning more about like what's out there, and the different lives that people live – a lot of us here, or at least the people I know, are very privileged or are privileged enough to be able to go to college and get a really, really good education, so learning from people who didn't have those same opportunities in life didn't, didn't live the same life.

Later in the interview she was articulate and thankful when talking about this: "I've learned a lot from [her grandparent]….We come from very different backgrounds…a different way of life, a different time of life….So I think I've benefitted from…getting someone else's perspective that I would not have been able to get."

This volunteer was very aware of her privilege and actively sought out experiences that put her out of her comfort zone because she wanted to learn from them.

One such example was described by the community partner: one day there was “a buzz” in the room about the construction of the new African-American cultural center being built in the city, into which the JABA Mary Williams Center was scheduled to be moved. As the members were talking about the significance of this project, they told the volunteers there that day about Vinegar Hill, a powerful story well-known in the African-American community but largely unknown or ignored by many white local residents, a story of urban renewal and consequential destruction of the African-American business, social and cultural district from which the community has not yet quite recovered.

Many of the JABA MWC members had been Vinegar Hill residents and were still dealing with the consequences of dislocation and disenfranchisement that that story has come to represent. The community partner put this history into even more context for this site when she discussed how MWC was named and came to be:

> Mary Williams’ granddaughter was a nurse and a member here. And they were threatening at the time to take away this center and just have everybody just go over to Pepsi Place [location of another JABA community center], and everybody would just be in one spot; it'd be fine. And apparently—this is what I'm told, I have never found the actual record—she went down to City Hall and was like, "You are not making us go to a center with people we used to wait on. Get it?" You know, "We need our own space," and that's how we actually got our house, where we were for 10 years.

These stories, told by those who actually lived through them, provide rich learning opportunities for students in ways that are unavailable through the traditional classroom.

Exposure of one's own privilege was often an outcome, particularly for the U.Va. students, supporting Jones and Hill's (2001) conclusions about the effectiveness of community engagement on this metric. The executive director of Madison House noted:

> I think that there's a lot of learning that students have about privilege… I've seen them have aha moments. You know, wow, I had no idea that someone in Charlottesville would live in a house that looks like that. Or would be concerned about, you know, where they're going to eat dinner, or what shoes, if they're going to have shoes to wear when it gets cold. And that comes from a place of I never have to worry about if I'm going to have shoes or if I'm going to have dinner. So I see a lot of moments like that happen and just stories that are shared. And then while they're sharing and teaching about the university the children or recipients are teaching them about Charlottesville and the community.

She noted that issues of race and privilege often come up in situations where there is little supervision. For example, students have recognized there can be mistrust from participants just because of the color of their skin or the cars they drive. To address this, those programs spend more time talking about the issues in training and in ongoing check-ins, and any incidents that come up get processed through training, reflection, and interaction with a community partner if one is available.

Despite some of the limits on reciprocity already identified in the Greek Councils/Neighborhood Community Center project, some of the most interesting discussion with regard to race, power and privilege occurred in the course of this partnership. The physical location of the center played a very strong role in both the motivation and the learning that took place, for students especially. It was situated in a historically African-American part of the city that had more than its share of negative social and economic indicators; however the very next set of streets over was one of the most populous student neighborhoods in the city and had few such challenges. The community partner noted that many of the parents in the neighborhood had had a "negative experience with school," particularly the local elementary school that was desegregated in 1959 as a result of a court order following Virginia's Massive Resistance response to the *Brown v Board* decision (Lassiter & Lewis, 1998). She noted that exposing the children to U.Va. students was an intentional attempt to provide alternative perspectives to that experience. She also told the students the story she told here so that they would understand the context into which they were stepping:

> I continue to share the history of this community and the fence right here [chain link separating the center from athletic fields behind the adjacent elementary school]. That fence was put there many, many years ago. African-Americans were not allowed on the field there and the gentlemen in this—I get cold chills—the gentlemen in this community would actually climb the trees and watch the white boys play football. When we actually purchased this property six years ago, the day that we purchased it there was a board… that made a ramp up the fence and the kids would drop their backpacks over, go up the ramp, and jump so they didn't have to walk two blocks around to school. We petitioned the city to cut an entranceway into the fence. And we fought for that for quite a period. So that fence there, as hard as we try not to make it a racial barrier, it's a reminder to those that have deep wounds. It's—it's a true reminder.

The student volunteers noted that they recognized the contrast between the neighborhood around the center and the “rainbows and sunshine” inside. One noted that before she started volunteering at NCC she did not even know the center was there – she just used the area as a cut-through to other places. Students reported that they talked mostly to one another about these issues. If this partnership had more of a traditional structure, it is possible that information could have been processed as part of reflection or evaluation of the experience; however, analysis laid out earlier in this chapter indicates that intentional processing of these issues is an area of weakness across most of the cases studied.

For the student leading the GC NCC project, her own awareness of the contrasts in privilege in the living areas surrounding the university was motivation for exposing her peers to that reality. She commented:

> I think for me—and I think when I say this I can say I speak for a lot of U.Va. students— you know it’s there. You know these problems are there, but you don’t know how close they are. Physically close. How literally it’s a street over. And it’s very easy to forget about them. So, for me it was definitely I would say a galvanizing topic for me to be able to process this and say, okay, this is important. This needs to—this is something that I can do. This is something I can help with, you know, in our own small way. We’re not saving the community. That’s not our mission, to go out and change this community from A to B. But it was definitely an eye-opener, I would say, for how close it is and how you can literally reach out and touch people in the street over. And then I tried to, in my messages to all of my volunteers and trying to get people to help, I tried to impart some of

> that, especially in the, this is our own backyard. It was definitely a message that I said a lot.

She noted that her perspective on race, power and privilege did not really change as these were conversations she grew up having, but leading this project gave her a way to put those discussions into action.

As was discussed in the typical and exemplary cases, despite the fact that all partnerships involved issues of race, power and privilege in some way, few participants discussed them explicitly in the context of the partnership. Volunteers and students reported that it came up most often among other students, as they were encountering those issues in the course of a partnership and then working through them. James, the student volunteer in the APO BBB partnership, commented:

> There'll be a letter [from an inmate] that comes up, or a rule that I'll have to remind people of and [they'll say] "really we can't send that?" … And then just like having a conversation about the restrictions and the rules and then the privilege we have, not having to worry about stuff like that comes up pretty frequently.

He linked this to "remember[ing] why we're doing stuff, that it is worth it to be here, and it's doing something good." Many students described these benefits as among the most important they experienced in the course of the partnerships.

To some extent participants in the academic projects reported less engagement with race, power and privilege than did participants in the direct service projects. This was in part attributable to the fact that the students in these projects had less direct contact with agency clients. They were also focused on more technical projects, often without much discussion about the context in which those projects were taking place. This raises interesting questions that are examined below and in Chapter 5.

The ecoMOD case revealed some interesting complexity with regard to race, class and privilege when the participants reflected on it. Both the faculty lead and the student volunteer noted that their role in delivering a product required a level of distance that would not have been necessary in a direct service project. However, when asked whether race, power or privilege was ever discussed in the context of the partnership, this student's response was revealing:

> I have a serious, serious beef with this. It's not something that's really emphasized in the architecture school, and it's not really something that's that emphasized at U.Va.… You know, U.Va. kind of exists in a bubble. I feel like it's very easy to ignore those issues while you're there. During the partnership, I don't think it really came up. I mean…we knew we were working with Habitat for Humanity and we kind of knew the types of clients that they worked with. In the end, we were really just trying to understand. I mean that's actually, for better or for worse, one thing that architects are pretty good at is just kind of stripping somebody down and just understanding them as somebody that, you know, eats, sleeps and goes to the bathroom, and does those things at varying levels…. It has no bearing on your income status or privilege or power or whatnot – everybody sort of has the same bare necessities. But definitely after the project, just looking back on it and seeing, you know, that my kind of trying to analyze and understand and process my relationship with the school, and my relationship with Habitat, and the school's relationship with the family and the school's relationship with

> Habitat, you kind of—it's hard to actually really understand what an incredible process it was, this mega university partnering with this mega organization to offer services to this single family.

He is one of about a half dozen student volunteers who expressed, upon reflection, the desire to discuss these issues in the context of the projects themselves at greater length. Best practice in community engagement supports this desire: reflection is the critical step that helps students process what they are experiencing in community settings and learn from those experiences (Eyler& Giles, 1999; Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998) and these opportunities were clearly lacking in many partnerships in this study.

In the LEAP project, participants reported they did not have direct conversations about race, but sensitivity around class came up for faculty and student participants with regard to being careful when they went into people's homes. Both student volunteers commented that they were careful to phrase their suggestions carefully so as to not offend a homeowner, and they were very aware that they were representing both the University and LEAP in those situations. In addition the faculty member actively tried to recruit diverse teams to these projects. When asked whether these were ever topics of conversation among project participants, one community partner said "it never even dawned on me," and the other noted that "maybe we made an assumption" that because the participants were U.Va. students they would not need to address these issues. From these data it is clear that faculty and community partners might also benefit from increased reflection around these challenging topics.

Because each of the student participants in ecoMOD and LEAP had received Jefferson Public Citizens grants to support their work, understanding expectations around race, class and power issues with regard to that program was important. The director of the JPC program noted that she thought these topics came up regularly, especially when the students come back from doing their research:

> I think actually that's what they talk about constantly. They probably wouldn't say it quite in those terms but it kind of flies under this more benign phrase "cultural competency."When you read their articles or you hear them at welcome back receptions – that's what they talk about the most is struggling with cultural differences, economics, socio-economic differences. Because they get paid a fair amount to go and do this, but that's what it costs in the United States to do this kind of work. And so they've had challenges where they ended up in developing countries where their stipend could feed a family for an entire year. You know, and they've had to answer for that.

Finally, one student volunteer had an interesting perspective on power. For his program, ecoMOD, partners needed to sign many forms saying U.Va. was not responsible for anythingthat went wrong, that this was an academic exercise, etc; he noted that such requirements set up an unequal dynamic right away that was undeniably a part of this project. He commented,

> There's a kind of power struggle you know – here's U.Va. the biggest employer in the community. And we're doing something in Charlottesville, you know, there's this little player that's struggling to keep a staff together, and fund projects, and here's U.Va. that looks so wealthy, and all kinds of stuff.

Surprisingly, this case was really the only one in which participants identified power issues as important components of a partnership. Possible explanations for this are considered in Chapter 5.

Because preparation was an important element of good community engagement structure (Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998), the level and type of *training* included in partnerships was another dimension investigated across cases. The literature indicated it was one place where collaboration with a community partner was both a logical and important step (Stanton, 2007). Training levels varied widely across the direct service cases in this study, with most having one hour or less overall. Two of the three academic cases had training built into the coursework, so levels in those cases were therefore significantly higher. In addition, the academic programs had substantially more actual community partner participation in training than the direct service programs.

Here again the Day in the Life program more closely resembled the direct service partnerships than the other academic ones. Training for it, the three Madison House programs, and the APO BBB program training included a one-hour presentation led by the institutional lead (students in the MH and APO cases, staff in DITL) prior to volunteers entering the site. All then had a short orientation when students first arrived at their sites, including tours, meeting resources for the volunteers, and a review of the rules and expectations. Participants across three of the four roles (clients were largely unaware of training requirements) reported that in general training provided adequate preparation for the experience.

As additional context for Madison House programs beyond the three included in this study, levels of training for the 19 programs varied from one hour to an entire semester. All of the cases selected for this study, though, conformed to the typical one-time training session prior to the first day at the site. Students ran those trainings, which were focused largely on logistics and the type of work to be done in each site. The AAGP trainings included time spent on the topics of death and dying, as those were likely to be issues for which volunteers in that program needed preparation.

Having community partners involved with the planning and training of projects was one way to make partnerships more collaborative, a component the literature indicated was more likely to produce more reciprocal partnerships (Stanton, 2007). As explored in the exemplary case presented earlier in this chapter, APO BBB stood out as having outstanding success on this metric. Madison House's executive director estimated that 95% of community partners participated in their trainings, either through attendance or by providing information to include in training materials. For the MH cases included in this study, that participation came almost exclusively in the form of providing materials; the Cavs CP was even surprised to learn that they were invited to participate in person. This indicated a potential communication issue, as the student program director for Cavs had additional community partner involvement in the early stages of a partnership as a primary goal. She commented:

> That's why we're trying to encourage CPs to come to training. So we, I don't want to—I try to say I want them to have a bigger role in the program, but I don't want that to be inferred as I want them to have more responsibilities or give them more work to do. I just want them to have, you know, a bigger investment.

Despite the lack of communication here, the community partner did note that the training was adequate and appreciated that Madison House had been paying increased attention in training to issues she had brought up previously, such as consistency and retention of volunteers.

The lowest reported levels of training came in the GC NCC project. There was no want of enthusiasm on the part of the student lead, but the lack of structure seemed to limit effectiveness in this case. The student lead tried to have an orientation meeting prior to beginning the project but was unable to make that happen, so she communicated expectations through emails. After a negative incident where pledges came to volunteer wearing togas – some with little underneath – dress was emphasized in their communications. As volunteers arrived at the center, the executive director reviewed rules and expectations with them before they started. Students and the community partner felt this was adequate.

As noted earlier, the community-based research projects had training built into an academic class. Interestingly, despite significant time spent by all involved, including the community partners who served regularly as guest lecturers and provided additional material for review, students, faculty and community partners noted they wished they could do more to train and prepare. The faculty member in LEAP felt “it’s never adequate,” and the community partner struggled with the sheer number of students present during very technical discussions on site. He felt some students were not quite prepared to do the work, suggesting that attention and lack of proper tools (such as a standardized review form) limited their understanding here. The student volunteer in ecoMOD described the training as “more learn on the job.” The faculty member in ecoMOD noted the challenge of teaching those outside his discipline; thus he had built into the structure of his course that each student had to have an advisor from their own discipline working with them. Students participating in the JPC program received training on logistics and teamwork specific to that grant, and the director indicated that she expected the faculty to conduct site-specific training as well.

Resources exchanged formed the basis for participants' perceptions of reciprocity, but how that exchange occurred was also important. Participants' *affect* mattered. This was particularly true with regard to the student volunteers. The children from the NCC pointed to volunteers' "respectfulness" and "kindness" when asked about their interactions, and LEAP staff referred to students as "incredibly polite, helpful, reactive, responsible." There were no reports of negative outcomes in this area.

Engagement was identified as a component of reciprocity for some participants. Interest in a topic, organization or work that went beyond what was required, as well as evidence they continued to care or be engaged even after the partnership ended – these were identified as gratifying outcomes that contributed to participants' perceptions of reciprocity. *Usefulness* was important too: whether the volunteers did what they were supposed to do mattered to the perception of reciprocity, particularly for institutional leads and community partners.

Consistency was another important factor to participants' perceptions of reciprocity. One community partner sought a relationship with Madison House specifically to increase consistency for her clients. She noted, "That's great that kids come in and entertain us, but it's a whole different game when they come and stay and actually become part of their lives." It was important not only to the faculty and community partners, but also to students who valued the deepening of relationships that came with regular interaction and resented the negative impression left when students “ditched” their partners. One student volunteer described the deepening level of reciprocity this way: “Over time I’ve kind of taken to calling going to Mary Williams not volunteering anymore but just visiting.” This signaled a move away from counting hours and toward valuing the meaning in the relationship rather than the requirement.

Communication

Not surprisingly, when *communication* was good, participants saw a relationship as more reciprocal than when it was not. When community partners could say “this is what I need” and university participants could meet that need,that was important. Responding to concerns – making changes when necessary and having participants feeling like their voice was heard was seen as evidence of reciprocity. When adjustments to the partnership could be made and went smoothly – adjusting schedules for example – reciprocity was higher.

When communication was not as clear, participants expressed more reservation with the level of reciprocity. For example, the LEAP staff described challenges with knowing exactly what to expect from students in that partnership, when they would be around, when products would be delivered, as well as with students asking for information without sufficient time to respond in the case of a JPC application. The community partner in the Madison House ESOL case emphasized the need to communicate about scheduling. Ups and downs on this metric existed in each partnership at different times, and the overall sense had an effect on participants’ perceptions of reciprocity in the relationships.

Shared Power and Control

Most participants recognized that shared power and control were important to reciprocal relationships. The ecoMOD faculty lead noted:

> We were a little naïve in starting the project, and I think we thought we could define the problem for the client…and tell them what they needed....And the students definitely felt that….And you know deep in my heart I knew that wasn't how it was going to play out, but it was kind of perceived that way early on.

Indeed, this seemed to be one of the important lessons this faculty member was trying to teach students. Seeing others share that control was evidence of reciprocity; the community partner in that case commented, "I've never gotten a sense that John is trying to…win the relationship."

That sense of responsibility to the balance of roles was not limited to the faculty, however. Recall Sarah's concern in the MH ESOL case that volunteers not be seen as "taking over." Recognizing the balance – consciously rejecting the idea that U.Va. students can come in and be "saviors of the group" and the sense that both sides are learning from one another was important to one student volunteer. One student volunteer also reported that talking about the program in the interview made her realize the reciprocity was more balanced – she had come in thinking she was giving more than she was getting, but she changed that perception in the course of the interview.

Relationships

Building relationships was centrally important to the majority of participants. One faculty participant called the relationship between himself and the partner non-profit "kind of the core of it because the project wouldn't happen without that." A community partner distinguished between volunteers coming through other programs and the students participating in the MH AAG program: “So often we have people come in here who want to volunteer, which is great, and help those people, whereas these folks come in and want to meet and know these people. That’s such a different way to approach a place.”

Admiration for other partners was a common component of reciprocal relationships. Students described their community partners and the clients with whom they worked in glowing terms. Gracie, the student leader in the APO BBB project commented, “APO students care about our community partners. They care about maintaining those relationships and engaging in service relationships with the community a lot…and they care very much about Kathryn and the cause.” One community partner touted the way the children in her program responded to the volunteers, noting how the energy level skyrocketed whenever a volunteer walked into a classroom. A student leader noted that some volunteers chose to stay past their required time because they enjoyed the setting and relationships: “The ones that have stayed with it…they grow attached. They feel a certain connection with the program and with the different schools and different sites.” One client put it simply and beautifully: “And we would always separate [with] ‘I love you,’ and I’d say ‘I love you too.’”

Touching others’ lives, and having those same individuals touch one’s life was identified as evidence of reciprocity, articulated as an exchange of thanks, mutual admiration, respect, and kindness. One institutional lead, who also served in the role of community partner for a site, described the fellowship that was built over tutoring and sharing meals. Seeing student volunteers work as if “this would be their house” was very positive for one client. These intangible elements of relationship building were mentioned and returned to often in the course of the interviews, and that was the case across roles. When they were particularly strong, that materially affected the outcomes of a partnership. This finding is examined in depth in Chapter 5.

Balance of Roles

Some saw reciprocity in a balance of roles within the partnership. Participants in the ecoMOD partnership described their relationships as a team effort, not "us vs them" but "we're all one piece of the puzzle." Seeing themselves as equal partners, at least during the actual service time, was important. Another participant noted the importance of having each partner able to articulate their own needs and understand the nature of the other partners, which required an "enlightened client" in that particular relationship. This type of balance was most important in the academic cases, which tended to involve more complicated relationships and a longer timeline.

Many of the student participants recognized that this balance was limited to the period of the partnership, and that the agency heads and the clients did not often think about the U.Va students when they were not there. That did not necessarily take away from the reciprocity for those participants. For one student lead, having fun with the kids and having the kids teach them about their lives provided the balance she saw as reciprocal. For one institutional team, deflecting the recognition for work done from U.Va.and toward the community partner was an important component of this balance: "Pretty much the program is theirs….We just assist."

Reciprocity was in all cases perceived as something that was judged over the course of the partnership. Multiple participants in different cases commented on how the balance of reciprocity shifted at different times during the partnership. One faculty member put it well:

> In some instances maybe we are providing more to them than they are to us. In other instances maybe they're providing more to me in terms of providing experiences and opportunities for our students than they're likely to get back from it. But I think it balances out, I hope.

That participant later used the words "even exchange" to describe the overall balance of roles and outcomes to partners. This was a consistent sentiment described by virtually all participants (small children excepted).

Assessment

Assessment was also purported to be important in developing reciprocity by providing avenues for input and feedback from participants in different roles. In fact, formal opportunities for gathering feedback was the area found most wanting in the development of reciprocal relationships for the first round of Carnegie community engaged institutions (Driscoll, 2007). Four of the eight partnerships (MH/LES Cavs, MH/LS ESOL, MH/MWC AAGP, and DITL) included formal assessment in the form of periodic surveys to student volunteers and community partners. Each of those partnerships also reported informal assessment in the form of regular communication between volunteers and community partners. Neither APO BBB nor GC NCC had any formal assessment, although as noted earlier APO pointed to mandated brother discussions and the DOC regulations as informal assessment.

Both LEAP and ecoMOD reported that their primary method of assessment was student grades, although both also had technical assessment built into the structure of the research. EcoMOD had an entire phase of each project devoted to evaluation, which was focused on thetechnical and performance components of the design. That phase of a project lasted an academic year, but the faculty lead in that case also noted that regular informal assessment came throughout every part of the design-build-evaluate in the form of "many, long meetings" with community partners and students to see how the project was going. With the LEAP project, the faculty lead worked very hard to have excellent documentation of what had been done to date so the next group of students would be able to pick up where the last group left off, in recognition of the fact that student timelines were often shorter than the overall timeline of a project.

Madison House policy required every program to be evaluated through surveys twice a semester, as well as through a yearly evaluation by community partners that takes place over the summer. Those data were reviewed by program staff and if problems were identified they followed up with that site. Staff reported looking for ways to gather more data from clients, as they recognized this was an area of weakness.

All eight sites reported informal feedback in addition to that gathered through formal means. The institutional lead in all three Madison House cases commented that regular communication between the program directors and the community partners, as well as between the volunteers and the teachers, served as an important source of feedback that students acted on in the case of negative information. These established partnerships rely on "no news is good news" to some extent – staff and volunteers believed strongly that the trusting relationships they had with partners made it comfortable for them to raise concerns when they arose. In the DITL case the institutional lead solicited specific feedback about the types of volunteers they needed, timing issues, and the like, which was very much appreciated by the site supervisor. She noted: "Not only did she look at the needs of the students at U.Va., but she looked at our needs and she really worked hard to cater to them this semester. And I noticed that. You know, because she took the time to ask us." Institutional participants noted that they were seeking more outcomes data but that such information was hard to get.

Virtually all of the feedback gathered in these projects focused more on program evaluation and satisfaction than on outcomes. The exception was the reliance on grades in ecoMOD and LEAP. Institutional leads in the DITL, LEAP and ecoMOD cases noted that identifying effects of projects on the communities they served was a known weak spot, one they were each working to address, which is consistent with the literature on community impact (Driscoll, 2007; Sandy & Holland, 2006). The leaders of both Madison House and JPC noted this as well; the programs committee of the Madison House Board of Directors was looking into new tools on that front, and an initial outcomes study for JPC was planned for spring of 2012. Not surprisingly, those partnerships with formal assessment were often the ones wherein participants described robust senses of reciprocity, and those without tended to have more red flags. As noted earlier, APO BBB was the exception to this trend– it had the same quality profile as the GC NCC but participants felt it was very reciprocal, which was not as much the case with GCNCC.

Teaching and Learning

The definition of reciprocity in the literature required all participants to acknowledge that they were both teaching and learning (Kendall, 1990). This was largely realized in each partnership, and participants saw this as part of the benefits of a partnership, although precisely what was learned, from whom, and to what extent varied across cases. Every participant was able to answer the “what did you learn” question in the interviews; some had a harder time identifying what they taught to others. In all cases, the learning was multidirectional in that participants reported learning from each of the other participant roles – volunteers learned from community partners, community partners learned from institutional leads and so on. Figure 3 represents the flow of learning for participants, as well as what was being learned.

Students, serving in both institutional lead and volunteer roles, reported a variety of learning outcomes. These included: how to work with community partners; how to interact respectfully with people in the community who were often older and had more power or authority; how to network; the role of community in building relationships; learning to function in new environments; information that would make them more effective homeowners, citizens, adults; how to be a role model, especially with kids who lacked many positive role models in their lives; how to teach; non-profit management skills; and how to motivate other participants. Student volunteers reported that they learned the most from their community partners and clients, and in the two academic cases from their faculty. Learning to adapt communication styles to different people was also an outcome; for example, in the Madison House Cavs in the Classroom (MH Cavs) program the volunteers had to be effective in communicating not only with teachers but with the children, and these took different skill sets. Most of what students learned from one another came under the heading of leadership – things like peer to peer management, volunteer motivation and effective communication. Some students reported learning from the community partners and clients the importance of living a life of service, that service does not have to end when they graduate college.

Community partners reported learning from students' spirit of service and willingness to serve seriously and not just fulfill a requirement.Clients learned skills that would be useful to them, allowing them to better serve themselves. Client participants in partnerships involving children (MH Cavs, MH ESOL, GC NCC, and DITL) each reported learning about the subject matter being taught, as well as how to behave. The children involved identified concrete things they learned – how to make "gooey stuff" or math or reading skills – as well as more intangible things, like "how to be respectful" and teamwork. One community partner saw this as leading to improved outcomes in grades and behavior "definitely coming from the support of the U.Va. students."

When participants felt others were learning from them, they felt the partnership was reciprocal. When a student called a community partner to report on how he was looking at a house differently because of what he had learned, or when volunteers watched a child grow and learn, those experiences contributed to their sense of reciprocity. One student volunteer described the process this way: "it made me learn a lot and I think it even helped them learn a lot."

Academic outcomes were important benefits of a partnership. These included content acquisition, developing expertise, and critical thinking. This occurred most often in LEAP and ecoMOD, as was expected, but also came up in each of the direct service partnerships. The connection between the service in the APO BBB program and the student lead's interest in prisoners' rights was explored earlier in this chapter. In addition, in the MH AAGP program, the head PD was a nursing student, and the Cavs head PD noted that many of the volunteers were education students seeking in-classroom experience.

Lessons that were "real-world" and messy were particularly useful, highlighting the unique contribution community engagement can have in an academic curriculum (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Stanton, 2007). Having to present multiple solutions, managing rejection of many of those solutions, and meeting the needs of clients while also accomplishing the goals of a class were learning experiences for the student volunteer in ecoMOD. He noted that process was difficult but probably enhanced his learning:

> It wasn't until we actually started working with the family, and us understanding how they lived, and what were the types of things they thought were important that we found a turning point in understanding what was vital with the project. And I think everybody had the sense that it kind of defined their education path – [it] wasn't just about us creating things that were fun, different and new. It was actually teaching us about what people's needs are and how to address those. So that was, that was probably the biggest thing that I learned.

This was true as well with LEAP:

> I'm just learning as I go. You learn a lot more by just doing and like what's needed and you look up that conversion or something; it's not just all told to you. So I'm just learning I think in a slower process. I really probably could learn a lot more about building energy usage and stuff if I just took a course on it or something. But this is really hands on, so it's—I think it's more effective that way, where I just understand what goes into, I don't know, how a house functions and stuff.

This finding is significant: while students found these lessons messy, challenging, and sometimes frustrating, they also valued them more highly than the more rote content learning they got in a traditional classroom setting. The student in the LEAP partnership in particular is acknowledging that having to *do*, rather than just *take in*, was a deeper learning experience for her, although it might have meant that the total content covered may have been less. This is evidence that community engagement does indeed provide a learning environment distinct from – and often complementary with – classrooms.

Faculty on both the LEAP and ecoMOD projects noted the benefits of having interdisciplinary work among architects and engineers. Facilitating critical thinking was also a benefit, within what would become "their daily lives" when they become professionals. One faculty member noted:

> I think students sometimes come into the project thinking that they are going to learn about the latest strategies for increasing energy efficiency in a small scale building or how to reduce the environmental impact in materials as they get selected in the design process. And yes, they do learn about that, but that's kind of meaningless because whatever we tell them now five years from now will be irrelevant. What we're trying to do is teach them how to think about those things.

Both faculty members pointed out that the partnerships with community organizations allowed their students to factor in more than just the theoretical considerations of what they were studying.

> I came to this whole thing as an electrical engineer…so it seemed the natural next step to…how can we address this on a community level. Because one of the things that became apparent in building is technology is maybe half of the battle.

> Behavior is another half…both behavior in terms of operating the building [and]…behavior in terms of seeing what you should do to your building to make it energy efficient.

One faculty member commented on how students had to learn to work collaboratively on the project, not just with one another but with the client, the homeowner, and the faculty. He commented that this broadened their conception of the problems they were trying to solve – beyond a design or an affordable housing question: “it opens their worlds to things they didn’t know that they were interested in.”

There was also a balance to what was being taught and what was being delivered in ecoMOD and LEAP. The faculty lead on LEAP noted:

> But to be able toprovide this learning opportunity for the students, I'm aware that it has to also serve the needs of the clients. And a part of the education of the students is to learn just that—to learn to be sensitive to the clients' needs and to always be checking where you're going against where the client wants you to be going.

These were outcomes that were relevant to the subject matter and critical to successful completion of projects, yet were difficult to provide in a traditional classroom setting.

While this topic is covered in depth earlier in this chapter, it is worth recalling that participants reported that partnerships provided them the opportunity to learn from and about different others. When asked what he learned and from whom, Evans Hopkins’ first comment was “I learned that there are more good people in the world than ones with hate.” A student volunteer in the GC NCC partnership was reminded of the inherent goodness of children, regardless of their circumstances. These were often powerful experiences that participants perceived as both benefits and learning outcomes.

For the partnerships where the organization had a specific mission, that mission factored into the teaching and learning cycle for most participants. APO BBB was the exemplar here; all four participants spoke about the importance of teaching others about prisoners' rights. The community partner in ecoMOD noted:

> I think interaction with low income residents of the community is good…..Although there is quite a bit of diversity in a college environment, it's kind of silo-ed diversity….This gives students an opportunity to get to know the family…and learn a little about what brought them here and why they're in a situation where they need a hand up just to have simple, decent, affordable housing. I mean, that's good for them.

At the Neighborhood Community Center, the community partner shared the important story of the fence that borders the Center mentioned previously. Interestingly, as the Mary Williams Center (site of the MH AAGP case)was on the same property as NCC, the community partner for MH AAGP noted a similar lesson she and her members had for students:

> It's mostly young white girls we get who come in, and they're interacting with a 90-year old, mostly black population that's totally different to anything they've ever probably dealt with….And so just to watch 'em feel very uncomfortable on the first day and then go straight into just feeling comfortable, and realizing they can interact with people that are very much not like them and yet have so much in common.

The grandparent in that case described what she was teaching her "granddaughter":

> I would talk to her….I just talked to her like a mother would talk to a child. Because, about her being such a wonderful person, I didn't want to see her make no mistakes….You know, sometimes after you make a mistake, some mistakes there's no correction to.

Being engaged in the process of teaching others was a major component of participants' sense of reciprocity.

Student leaders described teaching their fellow students how to do the work of the partnerships, whether it was properly organizing books for APO BBB or best practices for working with ESOL students. Those leaders, however, were most articulate when talking about teaching others to take responsibility and accountability for the work they were doing. "You might come on Friday at 3 and you just got outta class and you're tired and once you walk into [Books Behind Bars] you have to realize that you have to be careful and know what you're doing." Some of that learning came in the form of learning to work together for the student lead in the Greek Councils/Neighborhood Community Center partnership:

> I'm trying to teach the concept of, you know, we're stronger when we're all doing this together, and we want all four councils to be together on this, and, you know, understand each other and like each other and not be so divided and so in the dark about what the other councils stand for.

As expected, participants working in structured settings described the content they were teaching: writing, reading and math skills, homework help, English. However, several student leaders and volunteers described being a role model as teaching;

community partners also saw that. For community partners in school settings, they felt their children were being taught to trust, to build relationships, "to see that getting help is not a negative and that taking risks and challenges is okay." Exposure to college students was in itself a teaching moment for all the community partners working with children. One community partner described the effect here: "All of a sudden they start realizing that, you know, their life is not Charlottesville…an island in the middle of nothing. There are other things going on around them."

In some cases, participants were unsure of what they were teaching others. Not surprisingly, the children struggled to really identify what they were teaching others in the partnership. The student volunteer in ecoMOD was unsure of whether he was teaching anything worthwhile; perhaps his role in pushing Habitat "out of the box" or an appreciation for good quality design, but he saw these things as very minor compared to what he was learning. LEAP students had a similar experience – they just felt they were helping rather than teaching. The student volunteer in MH/MWC AAG was very demure about this, but noted that perhaps she was teaching her grandparent that some young people care about their elders, although she very much felt she was learning more than teaching.

Risk and Harm

As is evident in the definition of reciprocity used in this study, university-community partnerships bring with them risks in addition to benefits. Not only is risk an integral part of engagement work, having participants acknowledge the risks involved for both them and their partners is an important component to the development of reciprocal relationships. This was a struggle for some participants, as they were more focused on the positive aspects of the relationships. All institutional leads understood and had taken into consideration the risks associated with the partnerships, but at least one other participant (community partner, student volunteer or client) in each case felt that the risks were minimal at best. For some participants, reciprocity meant each side "takes its fair share of the risks." As with the benefits, risks ranged from symbolic to concrete and included: schedule and timing issues between university and community partners; feelings of abandonment or deprivation when a volunteer did not show up or left early; miscommunication; inappropriate comments; inappropriate dress; mismatched partners; damaged relationships; a negative view of U.Va. and its students; and physical damage. Failure was also a risk mentioned in the context of the majority of cases.

As expected, risk brought on by timing and scheduling challenges were among the most commonly mentioned. Specifics included APO students leaving for break just as the Books Behind Bars project needed to get set up in new space; teachers preparing for students to be in classrooms and having them cancel or not show up; ongoing transportation challenges; and relationships being developed with vulnerable individuals (children, elders) that could be prematurely or unexpectedly stopped. Each of the student program directors for Madison House worried quite a lot about these issues – there was a clear concern that community partners and clients not feel "ditched" by students volunteering with the program.

Each role took on particular types of risk. Faculty worried that students might not learn what they were supposed to learn because of the messiness of the service component. Students risked time, energy, their own cars in the cases when students carpool, feelings of anxiety associated with entering an unknown community, and occasionally safety related to a particular area of town. The student leaders were assuming some additional risk by overseeing other students, taking responsibility for them and their actions.Some students riskedhaving their schedules becoming imbalanced with the time and effort. Agencies took risks having students of a certain age or maturity level come into their communities. For some, the time required to make use of the student volunteers had the potential to exceed those volunteers' usefulness to the organization. Each community partner working with children noted that their students took a risk in engaging with the volunteers in the classroom or afterschool setting.

Nefarious intent was a risk in each case involving vulnerable populations, but in no case was that risk ever realized. It was mitigated through training, screening processes, and oversight on the part of community partners and institutional leads. Interestingly, the majority of sites actually said they worried less about those issues because the volunteers were U.Va. students, and some did not screen those volunteers at all, assuming either that the student organization had done that work or that it was unnecessary because all volunteers were U.Va.-affiliated.

The more benign but related threat of volunteers coming in and having a negative influence was raised in each partnership, but most of the participants felt that risk was minor. Recall Christine's concern with the volunteer with a little too much swagger, who turned out in the end to be an effective volunteer. Appropriate dress was a regular concern for community partners, assometimes students forgot that the styles and expectations of dress are different outside of U.Va. than in it. All the teachers commented on the need to dress conservatively to avoid distraction.

The leaders of both the Jefferson Public Citizens program and Madison House worked to acknowledge and mitigate risk through structure, training and feedback mechanisms. The director of the JPC program acknowledged broad areas of risk within this work, including bridges being burned, relationships destroyed, or hurt feelings. These each needed to be mitigated through careful preparation, training, and a willingness to admit mistakes when they were made. For her, building strong relationships that could withstand the negative effects of inevitable mistakes was an important component of successful programs. Community partners mitigated risk through the rules and expectations they set for their sites.

Madison House relies on their model to reduce risk, only partnering with those groups whose needs fit with college students on an academic schedule. The executive director pointed out that the developmental stages of students also dictates what those studentscanand cannot be asked to do as well, which limits some of the populations with whom they can work. Those limitations were seen as reasonable and an effective way to reduce risk within the organization. Further, Madison House pays additional insurance and in some cases pays for background checks of the students; this cost is shared with agencies as they are required to have the same type of coverage. All of these components are addressed through the formal contracts that get signed at the beginning, in the "working it out" stages of the partnership.

For those cases where a product was promised, delivery of that product was important, and failure there risked relationships. Faculty members risked their reputations, and if they did not come through, an organization might not partner with them or the university again. Institutional leads on such cases noted the risk of having students make a mistake in that product and not bringing it to the attention of those in charge. In one partnership a student broke a window trying to take pictures for the project, but he told the faculty member about it and paid for it to get fixed. Even the students worried about that component: One student working on a LEAP JPC team commented how important accurate data was to the project, as LEAP planned to use that information to apply for additional funding.

While some risks were shared across partnerships, others were idiosyncratic to partnerships' work or structure. Participants in the Madison House Adopt-a-Grandparent program with JABA's Mary Williams Center demonstrated careful thought about risk: the community partner worried at first that there would be perceptions of favoritism among clients who interacted with volunteers, but that risk was not realized. The student lead noted the need for flexibility in making grandparent pairings in case participants did not get along, and to change those before harm became an outcome. Both the community partner and the student volunteer talked about the risk of students getting out of their comfort zones, how that could be a challenge if it was not done right. They noted, however, that the outcomes have been great across the board on that front. Participants in this case also recognized the risk on both sides of developing relationships that could end abruptly, as death was a risk in that program. All of these topics were addressed in training in order to mitigate the risk.

Emotional risk came up in a few cases. Recall Evans Hopkins' comment in n the APO BBB case that students were risking their psyches in seeing how "plodding and mechanical and sometimes inimical the prison system can be and how crushing it can be." The MH AAGP student lead described a situation where a student was having trouble committing to a grandparent in terms of balancing his time, and the grandparent passed away before he got to him that semester. Seeing neglect was also a risk in that program, although the student lead noted that was rare as the sites where they worked were of high quality. When volunteers did not show up, that was a risk for clients: children got excited to see a tutor or grandparents dressed up to see a volunteer, and when those partners did not show it could be tremendously sad.

Other cases had their own specific dynamics. The student in the ecoMOD case commented on the weight of responsibility that came with the complexity of the project he was working on:

> I think it's pretty intimidating, and I didn't realize how intimidating it was to be responsible for something that someone's going to live in, or stay a long time. It's going to have to function for a pretty significant length of time, through four seasons every year. So, that was definitely, I think, a huge risk that I took, and that everybody took in, kind of giving up that responsibility, which must have been incredibly scary for them. And just thinking about it now, I probably should have put myself in their shoes for a while until I understood what big risk they were taking in letting us have control of, or the some of the great control of the project.

That student had actually delayed his job search to complete the ecoMOD project, so that was an additional unique risk in this case. The community partner noted that there was a risk to the partner family should they need to move because the house was non-traditional; he also thought that such risk was remote as the house's unique qualities would likely make it more appealing to some buyers.

One faculty member felt on this front that local projects have a different level of risk. He noted:

> I don’t feel the same kind of potential for doing harm as in those projects where you're sending a bunch of young college kids who think they know everything and really know very little over with a sense of noblesse oblige that they're going to help these underdeveloped communities to solve their problems. You know, I've worked with some of those teams, some of those kids, and I think [a colleague who advises overseas projects] does a tremendous job in preparing them for the intercultural communication and everything like that. But again, in what we do, I don't feel the same sense of doing harm as in those situations.

While local projects are in many ways simpler and thus less risky than international ones, it would be a mistake to assume that intercultural challenges are absent in those partnerships. The distance between a university and its local community is often much wider than participants realize, with language and cultural barriers every bit as high, and care must be taken to prepare students properly to navigate these borders with empathy and humility. This dynamic is considered more fully in Chapter 5.

Failure was a risk suggested by several participants – failing to deliver on a promised project, failing to teach a student, failing by destroying a relationship. Institutional leads who were students felt they risked failure if their volunteers did not come through, ditched, made mistakes, or were not trained properly. In the APO BBB case, the student lead felt that “failing our recipients” was a major risk. For her making the inmates wait for requested books was also a risk . The community partner shared that concern but did not lay that risk at the partnership’s feet. The student volunteer felt the same responsibility for making sure things were done correctly. They felt this responsibility both to the inmates and to the community partner.

The LEAP students noted the potential for making insensitive comments; these students were quite tuned into this possibility and took responsibility for monitoring their peers in this regard:

> You know just one comment about, you know, "Oh, my God, like I can't believe that there's a huge hole in the floor of this room" instead of you know, going up to the homeowner and saying, "Oh, I think that this is an issue with home performance that I think has a lot of potential for improvement." You know, the way that you phrase it is just so key there.

LEAP staff also pointed out the need for students representing LEAP to do so well:

> That when they go out to somebody's house that they provide a good face for LEAP and they don't inadvertently do one of two things: They don't either tell somebody something that they shouldn't be telling them that [is] beyond their level of experience, or [they] should be telling them something that is common sense.

However, they made the point that while they knew these things could go wrong, the fact that they were working with U.Va. students gave them more confidence in the outcome. That assessment proved somewhat accurate in the case of the homeowner; he had a negative interaction with a LEAP volunteer who was not a U.Va. student in which that volunteer shared too much about a spotty past and made the homeowner's wife uncomfortable.

The fact that the students were not trained professionals was mentioned as a risk in those cases that were classroom partnerships, ecoMOD and LEAP. The community partner in DITL watched for miscommunication between the volunteer and teacher so a child was not put in the middle of any dispute, but she noted that this had not happened in her experience. In the ecoMOD case, the high-tech "green" features that were unique to that build were not working at the time of the interviews, and one feature had had major challenges throughout the project.

Giving up control was a risk for community partners and faculty in particular. Habitat gave up control of a project and relationship with a partner family in exchange for new ideas and recognition. They risked "pushing the envelope too hard" – their typical approach was to evolve, not make radical shifts. They risked getting pushback from funders who want them to focus solely on decent, affordable homes, which did not typically involve innovative techniques. "Out of the box" builds were also not as volunteer-friendly or efficient as a typical Habitat build, which relies on repetition to build efficiency into their volunteer model. In other cases though, such as the Madison House Cavs or APO Books Behind Bars programs, relinquishing control was seen as a benefit and not a risk. This was likely a function of the level of complexity of a program as well as the resources invested.

Overall, participants tended to recognize and acknowledge the risks they and their partners were taking. Institutional leads were most aware of these, and were most able to describe both the risks and the measures taken to mitigate them. It was necessary to ask most participants to speak specifically to risks taken on by each other role.

This study asked whether harm was ever an outcome of any of the partnerships. Harm was considered to be present when someone in the partnership was worse off than they were before they participated in it as a result of that participation. The table below provides answers given by participants when asked directly whether harm was an outcome of the partnership.

Table 5: Harm

	MH Cavs	MH ESOL	MH AAGP	APO BBB	GC NCC	DITL	LEAP	ecoMOD
IL	Not personally but yes if a teacher feels “ditched”	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
CP	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
SV	No	No	No	No	No	No	Qualified No	Yes
AC	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Don’t Know

Overall, there was very little harm identified in these partnerships. In each case participants were able to identify potential or theoretical harm, described most often as risk (investigated in depth in the previous section), but few had actual experience with such risks coming to fruition. Indeed, in some cases participants were very reluctant to talk about the risks and potential harm. They did not seem afraid but rather perplexed to be asked about those possibilities. There was no defensiveness, although some were quite adamant that harm was not at all an outcome. Interestingly, when asking about risk and harm, the more aware a participant was of those possibilities the more critically they judged themselves and the partnership. This finding is explored more fully in Chapter 5.

The single report of harm in the study camein the ecoMOD case, where three out of four participants answered yes to the harm question. In that case, the harm had both financial and relationship dimensions: a major component of the project was installed without clarity as to how it would be paid for, resulting in a dispute over several thousand dollars. There were also several other cost and timing issues that complicated the project. The participants who discussed this acknowledged that the harm was a result of factors largely outside of the partnership itself – unknown conditions in the donated site, changing staff, too little clarity in contracts, the number of players involved in the transaction, and the extended time over which it occurred, as well as plain old miscommunication. As discussed earlier, despite this finding of harm participants still felt overall that this partnership was more reciprocal than not, and a later section on success will indicate similar results on that metric.

It is worth remembering the 2009 shutdown of the Books Behind Bars program in the context of the discussion of harm. As a reminder, the program was suspended by the Virginia Department of Corrections because books with CDs and paperclips were accidentally shipped to a correctional facility, which was a violation of the strict regulations governing the provision of books to inmates. The shutdown lasted for over a month before a widely publicized effort convinced officials to relent. It was unclear who was responsible for the mistake, as multiple groups including APO were volunteering at the time (of the participants interviewed for this project, only the community partner was part of the program at that time). It was impossible to assign responsibility for this incident to APO, certainly, but its occurrence served as a serious reminder for all participants in that project of what was at stake.

Limits on Reciprocity

While most partnerships were perceived by participants as more reciprocal than not, certain challenges were limiting. Those included scheduling challenges, such as the predictable logistical difficulties between students and community members and academic and calendar cycles. Sometimes those issues affected more than just the flow of work: ecoMOD institutional lead John Quale cited limitations that included "challenges of schedules, time people have to participate in the real conversations that need to happen…unique situations [with multiple partners and no one single product to deliver," reflecting issues common across partnerships in the study. The higher the number of participants and the more varied they were, the more challenging it was to be reciprocal: John noted, "So the linkage from the student sitting at the computer to the actual person living in the house…there's just all sorts of things in between there." In some cases reciprocity was limited by uncertainty about other partners who were not yet identified. Varying levels of commitment to the partnership also reduced perceived levels of reciprocity.

Interestingly, several participants factored other volunteers' inconsistency into their own rating of reciprocity, in recognition that even if that individual was reliable, what others in the program did had an effect on everyone. Institutional leads, especially students, emphasized this in training and evaluating volunteers:the student lead in the Madison House Cavs in the Classroom partnership commented:

> We try to push [the volunteers] out there to say that like, these kids do know when you show up and they know when you're not there….We're also trying to drive home on applications, that when you give us your availability, you are

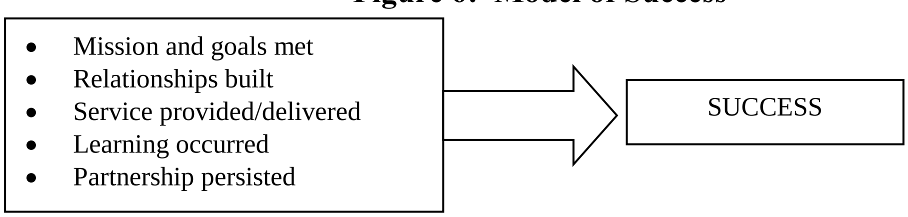
committing to those times and you're committing to the full semester….What we want to avoid at all cost, is having our teacher feel ditched

Reciprocity was not always perceived to be present equally among each participant in a partnership. Two participants in separate cases gave different reciprocity ratings for their relationships with the other partners in the project. One partner described how the tension in a relationship was part of the reciprocity – as each side advocated for their position, their goals, each learned and was pushed by the other, and this push-pull approximates real life relationships. This was evidence that a partnership can be a one-way street at times without removing reciprocity entirely.

Success

Understanding whether and how participants judged their partnership to be successful was a central question of this study. It was considered together with questions about reciprocity and harm, with the intention to understand how if at all participants felt these concepts were related. Figure 6 illustrates how it was constructed for participants in the study.

Figure 6: Model of Success



Success was related to but in many ways a simpler calculation than the construction of reciprocity in this study. If the items on the left obtained, the partnership was successful. In relation to one another, reciprocal relationships are by definition successful, but not all successful relationships are reciprocal. The bar for success is lower than that of success.

The table below represents participants' answers to the question: do you feel this partnership was successful?

Table 6: Perceptions of Success by Case and Role

	Cavs	ESOL	AAGP	APO	GC	DITL	LEAP	ecoMOD
IL	Yeah I do	I would call it a success.	yes	Yes very	As a program yes; as a structure I don't know	yes	Yes I think so	Educational – absolutely; delivery -- mostly
CP	I think so, yes.	Definitely	yes	Oh sure	yes	yes	Yeah I think so; I wouldn't say yet.	I think so, yeah
SV	Oh definitely	Yeah I think so absolutely; yes definitely a positive experience	yes	absolutely	yes	yeah	I think so yeah…it's frustrating because it's so hard to prioritize"	Yeah I do
AC	--	--	yes	"oh certainly"	--	--	yes	It was, yes it was

All but one participant felt the partnerships had been successful, with that single participant waiting for receipt of a report to determine the project's success. Persistence was the most commonly noted indicator of that success, with participants pointing to the popularity of programs and students' and community partners' willingness to continue to sign up as evidence. The student volunteer in APO Books Behind Bars commented:

> I mean we've been going thereway before I started in APO, and it's been a very consistent project, multiple times a week, for years and years. And you know [the community partner] still wants us to come back, so I think that is a big indicator…and there's still interest in going.

The student lead on the Madison House Cavs in the Classroom program cited the number of students signing up for the program as an indicator of success, and the community partner in the Day in the Life partnership commented that her main challenge was finding enough volunteers for the many teachers who wanted them. She also pointed to volunteers' tendency to continue volunteering past their required hours.

Many participants noted their satisfaction with the partnerships, indicating that they got what they wanted and expected from the experience, and they enjoyed both the work and the relationships developed. Community partners in the direct service cases noted that their clients looked forward to interacting with volunteers and that it improved outcomes such as engagement with reading or willingness to participate in scheduled activities. When volunteers told institutional leads and community partners that their time was being used wisely, that was seen as a mark of success. The student volunteer in the MH AAGP program thought that the JABA Mary Williams Center enjoyed being involved with Madison House, and she saw potential for future collaboration as well. That perception was confirmed by the community partner, who remarked that she felt she and Madison House were "on the same page" which was one of her primary goals.

When the work of organizations was getting done, partnerships were seen as successful. Here the metrics were much the same as those contributing to a strong sense of reciprocity: when students were actively engaged in the classroom, when book requests were being filled, when houses were getting built – these were all important metrics for participants. The DITL community partner noted that getting the community into the school was part of their strategic plan, and DITL helped accomplish that goal. The JABA Mary Williams Center's goals included intergenerational involvement, which the MH AAGP volunteers helped achieve. Students in the Local School ESOL class needed to learn English, which was made easier by the degree of differentiation enabled by regular and plentiful Madison House volunteers. Data on energy efficiency changes was gathered and analyzed by LEAP students, enabling that organization to assess the effectiveness of their programs and use those data to apply for additional funding. While just a few examples, these instances of allowing organizations to meet their missions should not be underestimated. Many community partner participants noted how important the volunteer help was to achieving these basic goals in environments of rapidly decreasing resources and rising expectations for accountability.

Smooth logistical function was a marker of success for many participants. For the student leads who were responsible for other volunteers, when those individuals showed up as expected and performed whatever service was required, that was a sign that the partnership was working. The MH Cavs student lead was particularly satisfied with how the "behind the scenes" work of matching, tracking in Volgistics, and things of that nature went this year. For the partnerships where delivery of a product was expected, achieving that expectation was a marker of success, even if the path getting there was challenged. This dynamic was particularly evident in LEAP and ecoMOD, which were the most complex of all partnerships studied.

Success had more nuance in LEAP and ecoMOD projects. Participants, particularly faculty, thought of success in terms of goals for students and goals for the community partners/clients. The faculty member in the ecoMOD case felt the educational goals had “absolutely” been met, and those around delivery “mostly” met. The faculty in LEAP commented:

> I can think of some places where it hasn't been as successful as I would have liked….I guess there's two ways of, of saying it's successful. One is of course, am I successful in educating the students? And two, is the project successful in delivering benefit to the community partner and the clients. So I feel that, on the whole, the, the project has been successful in that second part, that we are delivering a benefit. And I feel it's been successful, in the first part, in terms of education of the students, although perhaps not every student.

The students in the LEAP case felt it was successful but commented that they could have done more if they had fewer competing priorities for their time.

Community partners in the LEAP case also approached the metric of success from different angles. One participant noted:

> Well, LEAP thrives on leveraging our local community partners, and UVA has obviously been a huge partner. So, you know, having them volunteer time to help usrealizewhether we’re having an impactlike we think we areis huge. We’re a small staff. We don’t have time to do it ourselves. So, having them as another set of hands, eyes, ears, to be able to take the time to do this is enormous. And we’ll be able to take it to our grantors and to the Department of Energy and say, see, we’re doing what we set out to do. And then on the home energy review side, the

> thought is that they'll be bringing clients in. They'll be bringing people into the programso they'll help us increaseour numbers which—again, you know, lets the DOE know that this is a successful program.

The other community partner felt he could not yet determine whether the project had been successful because the students had not yet delivered the reports. In the process of member checking, this participant grew increasingly frustrated with the lack of delivery, to the point that in one later email he indicated that they would not be using students for client reports anymore because it was too difficult to obtain delivery of those reports. It is important to note, though, that students had delivered on other projects already so the overall sense was not one of failure. The homeowner in the LEAP case felt the project had been a success.

Even in the case where harm was an outcome, ecoMOD, all partners indicated that the partnership had been a success. Each participant stated that despite the challenges they ended up very satisfied with the project. The U.Va. participants noted that despite different perspectives and perhaps different objectives within this project – with some wanting to push the envelope on design and some wanting to stick with a traditional build – the fact that the local Habitat chapter was willing to consider new approaches was critical and without it success was "much less likely."

Success to the student in this case did not mean everything was done right, or that he would not have changed anything, but rather that even considering all of those things they were able to deliver a high quality product to the client:

> I think just being able to get a house on the ground and finished and the family moved in was a huge success….I mean the day they actually moved in was just

> like the biggest sigh of relief ever. And their toilets probably flushed when they moved in too, which was probably also relieving.

Innovation was also an important metric for participants in the ecoMOD project. Because no two ecoMOD builds were ever alike, what was learned on one project needed to be applicable in some way to the next one; here the faculty member noted that if he could bring knowledge about sustainable building to prefab construction, that will be major success and a primary reason those organizations partner with them. While Habitat was in some ways the opposite, in that they strove to keep projects quite standard for efficiency's sake, this partnership with ecoMOD allowed them to innovate within one of their guiding principles. Dan Rosensweig, the community partner explained:

> Our basic motto is that we build simple, decent, affordable homes, but to me decent is the one word in there that needs to have pressure put on itoccasionally. What I mean by that is that what constituted a decent home 20 years ago when we started, it's different now because there are new technologies, newtechniques for providing energy efficiency, for tighter homes, for cleaner homes, for homes that breathe better, etcetera, and unless we're keeping up with trends in safer, greener buildings, I don't think we're building to a decent standard anymore. So we're always looking to push the envelope a little bit, to measure what works in terms of green building, and then incorporate the elements of green building that have the biggest bang for the buck.

Despite relatively lower reciprocity scores, the Greek Councils Neighborhood Community Center case was also perceived to be successful by participants. Again, there were multiple dimensions of success considered. The student lead noted she felt they were successful because they “actually went and did the program” and “everyone was happy afterwards.” She also commented that it was mostly successful in bringing the councils together (they got 3 out of 4 to work together). She felt they were still “pushing toward the goals” of the project. Hers was the most nuanced assessment of this metric among all direct service partnerships.

Reciprocity was constructed in these cases through the exchange of resources that met the needs of participants and their organizations, that provided opportunities for teaching and learning, and that created an environment where participants wanted to continue in the partnerships. When the balance of benefits and risks was tipped in the positive direction, partnerships were both reciprocal and successful. Harm was rare and occurred in one case. Risk was mitigated largely through effective structures, good planning, and regular evaluation, and those components were strongly associated with positive outcomes. Relationships, however, were among the most powerful factors identified and could make up for limited structure and even mistakes that led to harm.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined the ways reciprocity was constructed in university-community partnerships, if and how harm was an outcome of any of those relationships, whether and how the chosen partnerships were perceived to be successful by participants, and what relationship, if any, existed among perceptions of reciprocity, harm and success within those partnerships. This chapter provides a summary of the most significant findings emerging from the data presented in Chapter 4, along with an exploration of key questions raised by those data. In addition, implications for practice and future research are discussed.

Summary of Results

This study was guided by four research questions. Data answering those questions are laid out in Chapter 4. The questions are answered individually below.

Research Question 1: Construction of Reciprocity

The first research question asked in what ways reciprocity was collectively constructed in university-community partnerships, and what factors influenced its presence or absence. Figure 3 outlines the model of a reciprocal relationship that emerged in this study. As described in Chapter 4, interview data gathered from four types of participants – institutional lead, community partner, student volunteer, and agency client – indicate that reciprocity in these partnerships was built through a balanced exchange of resources where each partner was both giving and receiving valued benefits, when those benefits outweighed the risks to participants both individually and across the partnership, and when participants felt that they were learning or teaching important outcomes as a result of the partnership. Reported levels of reciprocity were generally high this study, a surprising result in light of the challenges to building reciprocal relationships laid out in earlier chapters. Possible explanations for that finding are explored in the following sections.

Expectations. Several factors consistently led to higher perceptions of reciprocity. Clear expectations, good communication, and consistency were the foundation of reciprocal relationships. Expectations were the centerpiece of this set of rules of engagement: communication and consistency were judged relative to those expectations. Thus, when expectations for each actor were made clear and were satisfactorily met, when communication around meeting those expectations was good, and when efforts to meet those expectations were consistent, participants felt the relationships were reciprocal. When any part of that formula broke down, perceptions suffered accordingly. This finding accords with what is known about building effective university-community engagement partnerships (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999), as well as what was predicted by social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976; Molm, Takahashi & Peterson, 2000).

Involving multiple parties in setting those expectations early in the partnership was important, as was the opportunity for those parties to provide ongoing feedback during and after the partnership period. Follow through was absolutely key – if participants did what they said they were going to do, the partnership was likely to be reciprocal. The three Madison House programs were particularly good on this metric, but Day in the Life, APO Books Behind Bars, and ecoMOD also returned strong results. This finding that active involvement of multiple parties, particularly community partners, over the life of a partnership was important confirms Stanton's (2007) argument about its central role in the development of reciprocity.

Further, the ways community partners were included in highly rated partnerships – in planning, in training, in setting expectations, in controlling the work at the site, in evaluating both the student volunteers and the overall effectiveness of programs – reflected an asset-based approach to those partners and the communities with whom they worked (Cruz & Giles, 2000). University-side participants referred respectfully to community partners' expertise and autonomy and demonstrated their intent to use their time and talent efficiently, an approach noticed and appreciated by those community partners. One note of caution is warranted, however: Institutional leads and community partners tended to have the most involvement from beginning to end, with student volunteers engaging to a somewhat lesser extent and agency clients less still. Questions raised by this finding are explored later in this chapter.

Benefits. In addition to setting, meeting and communicating clear expectations, benefits must to flow to and from every participant as a result of the partnership for reciprocity to obtain. Those benefits are numerous and diverse, but can largely be rolled up into the following categories:

- meeting the mission & goals of an organization (including the university);
- skills development;
- opportunity to both teach and learn;

- access to expertise;
- return on investment; and
- exposure to diverse others.

Every participant was able to point to benefits they received from one or more of these categories, and while quantity had some effect – those able to identify multiple benefits tended to rate the partnerships highly in terms of reciprocity – a single benefit could make a partnership reciprocal if that benefit was important enough to a participant. Again, delivery had an effect here as well. If the nature of the interactions that produced the benefit – how a volunteer engaged with the child she was tutoring or a faculty member delivered information about a building project – was respectful, reciprocity was increased. This approach represents an orientation of doing *with* rather than doing *for*, which Morton (1997) argued was a most effective in community engagement partnerships. What was exchanged was indeed important, but how it was exchanged was almost equally so.

Benefits were typically conceived of as resources being exchanged (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Foa & Foa, 1980; Miron & Moley, 2006). Those resources were varied and often specific to the role one played in the partnership. For example, in a single partnership, a community agency can use student volunteers to provide differentiated instruction in the classroom and to bring the outside community into their school, both of which allowed them to accomplish overall agency goals. Clients (children) of that agency who interact with those students can build content knowledge and relationships with positive role models, making those individuals more able to serve themselves going forward. Student volunteers can build valuable workplace skills or become aware of their own privilege through interaction and reflection with people outside of the U.Va. sphere, thus strengthening their career preparation, deepening their learning, and facilitating their personal development. Faculty institutional leads can teach content and skills that are difficult to teach in a classroom context, thus reducing the disconnect caused by the separation theory in education. Student leads can interact in professional contexts through their own service and leadership of student volunteers, both of which strengthen the intellectual, social and professional development of the students involved.

These benefits, as well as the many more laid out in Chapter 4, flowed back and forth among the participants in a complementary rather than a strict quid-pro-quo exchange, which Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) note is characteristic of reciprocal exchange relationships. Different actors receive different benefits in reciprocal relationships, and that is not just acceptable but rather is ideal. This positive asymmetry reflects the power and potential of reciprocal relationships. While this important point is covered in the social exchange theory literature, it deserves more attention in the literature on community engagement.

Reciprocity also required that participants acknowledge what benefits or resources other participants were receiving, and the more they understood the fullness of this exchange the more sophisticated was their sense of reciprocity. As expected, the types of resources exchanged ranged from concrete to symbolic and were both direct and indirect (Foa & Foa, 1980, see Figure 5). Partnerships where more symbolic resources like love and trust were identified as significant benefits or characteristics tended to be the most reciprocal. Standout examples of this were the APO/Books Behind Bars and the

Madison House/JABA Mary Williams Center Adopt-a-Grandparent programs, where participants in multiple roles described the relationships developed among them as strong, close, loving, and dependent. This finding is consistent with Sandy and Holland (2006), who note that community partners in particular are concerned with developing high-quality relationships, and with Molm, Takahashi, & Peterson (2000), who note that among exchange rules, reciprocity is most often associated with the development of high-quality relationships.

Interestingly, in both of those cases, the importance of that close relationship was equally valued by the institutional leads and student volunteers, indicating that not only do community partners seek such connections through community engagement work, but that it is an important outcome for university participants as well. Participants saw the resources exchanged as the primary benefits of the partnerships. This was a function of expectations – they expected these benefits, they were part of what prompted them to enter into the partnership – but also of the relationship that grew from that exchange. The role of relationships is examined further later in this chapter.

Risk and Harm. Reciprocity requires that the benefits of a partnership outweigh its risks. As with benefits, participants identified multiple risks that can be combined into a few common categories:

- inconsistency;
- failure;
- reputational damage;
- harmful behavior; and
- financial harm.

Most of the findings here conform with the physical and reputational risks identified in the community engagement literature (Harkavy, 2006; Heyworth, 1991; Jacoby, 2003; Stanton, Giles & Cruz 1999) and were both concrete and theoretical. Logistical and communication issues – volunteers not showing up and leaving for the semester at inopportune times, community partners who were difficult to communicate with or unprepared to supervise properly -- remain the largest challenge to effective partnerships, and those were most likely to have been actually observed by participants. Failure was also a common threat: with the exception of agency clients, most participants in the other roles (institutional lead, community partner, and student volunteer) spent quite a lot of time thinking about ways the project could fail and creating protections against that possibility.

Here in the area of risk mitigation the common psychological and anthropological conception of duty as a product of reciprocity (Blau, 1964, Emerson 1976; Goldner, 1960; Mauss, 1954/2002) was most pronounced. Participants felt a strong sense of obligation to the other partners to avoid failure. Madison House's attention to consistency in their training and administration of programs is an example here: Program Director after Program Director emphasized the importance of showing up and meeting expectations, and conceived falling short of those goals as failure for the program. Faculty worried that the non-traditional learning environment might mean students failed to learn necessary content. Community partners weighed the risk of investing time, treasure and trust on faculty and students who might not deliver as promised. In this way, the risk of failure functioned as a clarifying and focusing dynamic for participants, particularly those with significant authority in a project. Perhaps as a result of the role of that authority, few agency clients were able to articulate significant risks to themselves or others in the projects.

How risk is calculated is in part a function of the perspective of the participant, and reveals a set of assumptions that deserve examination. One participant perceived local projects as having less risk than ones in developing nations, particularly when faculty are not on location with students. To be clear, I share this perspective and it is reflected in the research design choice to include only local projects in this study. Projects that take place in foreign lands raise questions of language, of cultural competence, of safety and of colonialism. Recall Illich's (1968/1990) scathing advice to American youth about to go work in Mexico:

> If you insist on working with the poor, if this is your vocation, then at least work among the poor who can tell you to go to hell. It is incredibly unfair for you to impose yourselves on a village where you are so linguistically deaf and dumb that you don't even understand what you are doing, or what people think of you. (p.320)

While again Illich's perspective leaves insufficient room for good work done in many contexts and on many continents, the dangers he raises are real and need to be addressed to be sure harm is not done. The faculty participant spoke with awareness of these issues, and a desire to manage the risk in his projects by keeping them local.

However, there may be assumptions at work that need examination. First, he may assume that, because he is participating in the project and can both witness and is developing relationships with some of the other partners too, he can identify and address issues that come up, something that is more difficult if he is not on location with students.

There might also be assumptions that faculty are better at noticing and mediating any problems that emerge. That is probably true in most cases, but the APO case indicates that sometimes students are the experts. Further, one cannot assume all faculty understand the context of areas best, as the literature notes that sometimes faculty ask for things that are harmful or illegal (Sandy & Holland, 2006; Vernon & Foster, 2002). There might also be an implication in this preference for local projects that noblesse oblige applies only in international contexts, which of course it does not. It can be just as much a danger in local contexts, although at least for the most part language is less of an issue and, as Illich says, community members can tell them to go to hell in a language they know. While I do not believe any of these assumptions were actually in play in the specific case of the faculty member making the comment, the discussion of potential assumptions is a worthwhile one.

The study's research design revealed an interesting angle that is worth exploring in future research: the risks taken on varied by role. While there were some commonalities of course, discussed above, there were some interesting differences in amount and level of risk the different parties were taking in a partnership. As well, asking participants to reflect on the risks others were taking was a useful exercise for them, one that might be important to include in training and reflection components of engagement projects.

Surprisingly, one of the biggest concerns driving this study – that one of the major risks of university-community engagement was that students would behave badly, or at minimum act with little awareness of their own privilege and make significant cultural blunders – was rarely mentioned as a risk. Only those participants who had been doing this work for a long time were able to recall actual instances that fell into this category, and newer participants did not mention the possibility without prompting.

Instead, there was almost an opposite dynamic at play. Many community partners noted that they trusted the students and were willing to invite them into their communities specifically *because* they were U.Va. students. Some sites did not even screen volunteers from U.Va. as a result of this trust. This was an unexpected finding and seems to indicate that interactions between members of the university and the local community are overwhelmingly positive on an individual level. Answers given by community members about their perceptions of U.Va. as an institution reveal more reservations, but their perceptions of the individual students who seek to engage in the community were extraordinarily positive.

Another surprising result was that, as noted in Chapter 4, participants needed some prompting to discuss risk in these partnerships. While around a third of the questions asked dealt with risk and harm (see Appendices E, F and G for instruments), answers to those questions tended to be shorter and less rich in description. Some participants seemed to view the partnership in largely positive terms, to see very little risk involved, and to perceive that any risk was well-managed. In general, taking into account the rest of the data, this tendency reflects an overall satisfaction with the partnerships and belief that they were generally well-planned, well-executed and effective.

Participants with some authority – mostly institutional leads and community partners – in their partnership were more likely to understand the questions about risk and have a ready reply, while those whose participation was more directed by others (student volunteers, agency clients) often seemed perplexed by the questions. I found myself assuring several participants that I was not trying to get them to "tell tales" on their fellow participants, or to disparage the partnership, but rather to understand it in its complexity. This phenomenon existed despite the fact that I introduced the questions with a reminder of the definition of reciprocal relationships as balancing risk and an acknowledgement that engagement can be messy even when everyone's intentions were good.

As indicated earlier, in large part this phenomenon was a result of partnerships that were largely positive and effective. However, I cannot entirely discount the possibility that my own status as a member of the U.Va. community had an effect here. It is possible that participants were reluctant to criticize the university, reflecting the power resulting from being such a large economic, social, cultural and political force in the community. As indicated by the data, several participants were also reliant on the people power that came with these partnerships to meet their goals and mission, so they might therefore have been wary of appearing ungrateful or critical.

I worked hard to mitigate these possibilities through the framing of the questions and the study, and in the interview protocols I reminded participants of the definition of reciprocity as necessarily accounting for likely risk and harm immediately before I began the section of questions about those topics, so as to normalize them and open the door for free sharing of any concerns. Early in the interviews I also shared my perspective from the outset that I felt the university had much room for improvement in this area. Each of these steps were intended specifically to encourage honest and open accounts of the partnerships, to include any negative experiences as well.

In most cases participants were able to acknowledge that risk and harm were potential outcomes of the partnerships, indicating that they were both aware of the potential and willing to recognize it publicly. Together with data indicating that most participants had rich and nuanced understandings of their partnerships, I am confident that in general participants provided honest assessments of their experience. However, it would be naïve to discount the effects of power entirely, so readers should take that into account when interpreting this study's results (Butin, 2010; Cruz, 1990).

Teaching and Learning. Kendall (1990) argues that, in order for partnerships to be reciprocal, participants need to acknowledge that they are both teaching and learning. This equalizing of roles was evident in this study, and Figure 3 illustrates the multidimensional nature of this flow of information. Learning outcomes in reciprocal partnerships varied and included content, skills and developmental tasks. Nowhere in the study was there a sense that what was available to be learned was flowing in one direction only, unless it was the students noting that they were learning much more from the community members and their faculty than those individuals were learning from the students. Faculty and student institutional leads made it clear that they sought out specific community organizations and members because of those entities' expertise, knowledge and wisdom. Students in particular spoke movingly and convincingly about the effectiveness of getting "outside the U.Va. bubble" to learn some of what was in front of them. While faculty fretted a bit about the challenge of mastering the content or technical skills required in a course using non-traditional pedagogy, they argued more forcefully for the value of those lessons available only in the messy context of community engagement. EcoMOD stands out here as using that context particularly effectively.

The graphic in Figure 3 shows that much teaching and learning is going on in these partnerships. What could be concerning, however, and what echoes some concerns about an overemphasis on student- and faculty-centric outcomes (Astin et al, 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1995), is the appearance that the university side benefits more on this metric, at least in terms of quantity. What only the participants can judge, however, is how much each component is worth. The balance – or imbalance – is also a reflection on how each side comes to the activity: university-side participants are coming to the work within the framework of an academic exercise, and even when the service is extra-curricular, it is still done in the academic context. Students would not be doing this work, at least in this way, if they were not students. Faculty would have different goals were this simply community engagement, rather than academic community engagement. While there are some aspects that are distinct for community partners and clients due to the fact that these interactions are with participants from the academy, their goals tended to be more aligned with their organizational mission of service provision or skills development – thus the existence, for example, of multiple tutoring programs using non-U.Va. volunteers at the Madison House Cavs site. Therefore, the imbalance shown needs to be recognized and analyzed, but it should only be changed if the participants feel it is detrimental. It reminds me of a common discussion of the concept of fairness: does fairness mean everyone gets the same thing, or rather does it mean everyone gets what they need? Here the weight of the evidence comes down in favor of the latter definition.

Reciprocity in university-community relationships is a function of clear expectations and communication, a balance of benefits and shared risks, and multidimensional teaching and learning flow. These factors exist within an established structure that facilitates high quality relationships. The stronger those relationships, the more likely the partnership with be reciprocal.

Research Question 2: Harm

The second research question asked whether harm to one or more of the actors was an outcome of any partnership studied. One instance of harm was found among the eight cases; that harm was a financial cost in the ecoMOD partnership where clarity on who was responsible for payment suffered due to staff changes and poor communication. Remedying it required negotiation and concessions on multiple partners' parts, and all involved reported that while the issue was unfortunate, it did not do long-term damage to any involved and the relationships among the partners survived. Further, all participants still considered the partnership both reciprocal and successful. While overall perceptions of reciprocity were not as high for this partnership than for other cases, that result was not due in large part to the presence of harm. Both the institutional lead, a faculty member in this case, and the community partner agreed that the cost misunderstanding was a result of staff changes, length of time, and complexity of the partnership, rather than any malicious or fraudulent intent on participants' parts. Indeed, the community partner gave the relationship a perfect 10 for reciprocity, indicating that the most vulnerable participant affected (the client was not involved) did not feel it had tarnished the relationship. Harm was not identified as an outcome in any of the remaining seven cases.

While it is clearly good that little harm resulted from the partnerships studied, the study does raise some interesting questions on this issue. The research argues that reciprocity protects against harm. Here is a relationship (ecoMOD) that is considered successful and largely reciprocal – very much so, according to some participants – yet harm still occurred. This suggests two things: one, that reciprocity helps to mitigate harm, but that it cannot prevent it entirely; and two, that reciprocity in partnerships can survive harm if other factors, like strength of relationship and the balance of benefits and risk/harm, are strong enough.

None of the more existential harm identified as potential outcomes in university-community partnerships (Butin, 2010; Cruz & Giles, 2000) came to pass in this study. Interestingly, none of the faculty interviewed mentioned professional harm to their scholarship or reputation; with the small number of faculty included no generalizations can be drawn here, but it is worth noting that both faculty are well-established in their careers and teach in professional schools where experiential learning is a more accepted pedagogical technique than in schools of arts and sciences. Even the logistical challenges that typically lead to the most common findings of harm (Rhodes, Liang, & Spencer, 2009; Sandy & Holland, 1998; Ward & Wolf-Wendell, 1997) such as feelings of abandonment or disruption to service delivery due to flaky volunteers and mismatched schedules were identified only as potential harm, things to be aware of and guarded against, but that were well managed enough in these cases to classify them as risks rather than harm. This implies that overall the cases studied were sufficiently organized and managed and that communication was strong enough to address any issues before they became serious problems.

For a research project titled "Do No Harm" the lack of widespread evidence of such gives some pause. I do not believe that harm was lurking and I did not uncover it; as noted earlier, I pushed some participants almost beyond their comfort zone in inquiring in this area. What it does tell me, then, is that harm functions more as a warning, an existential threat that sharpens the focus and hardens commitment, rather than as an active force in these university-community partnerships. This is a good thing, and it is an argument for not letting the great get in the way of the good. The fear of doing harm plays an important role, and the potential negative consequences are grave enough that it must be taken seriously every time. Since the primary focus of this study was on harm's main adversary, reciprocity, the lack of data to fill out the contours of that phenomenon is unsurprising. What it does urge, however, is for researchers to arm themselves with the new information learned about what makes reciprocity powerful and to next focus squarely on the question of harm in relationships. Given participants' reticence to discuss the topic, such research will need to be conducted with care.

Research Question Three: The Shape of Success

The third research question asked about the ways partnerships were perceived as successful, including measures of persistence, satisfaction, and expected results. Figure 6 demonstrates the components of success to study participants: success here was primarily a function of persistence and meeting expectations. If an organization's mission and goals were met, if relationships were built, if an expected service was provided, and if learning occurred, partnerships were considered successful. This definition is quite utilitarian and reflects the pragmatism of the study participants. They seemed willing to overlook problems in specific areas if overall they felt their needs had been met.

Persistence and popularity of a program were common factors cited as key markers of success. When student volunteers wanted to participate in high numbers, when community partners wanted to continue to participate and increase the number of volunteers, when clients sought out the experience, participants felt partnerships were successful. This finding is directly in line with the literature (Holland & Gelmon, 1998), wherein such persistence is often considered a proxy for success. Earlier in this paper I noted that persistence should be a starting point for measuring success but not considered the whole picture; while I still believe that, it is interesting that the case (Greek Councils NCC) with the weakest metrics – structure, training, reciprocity levels – is the only one of the eight cases that has not continued past the study period, even though that was the plan at the beginning. This indicates that, while a deeper understanding of quality markers in engagement partnerships is important, whether or not a project continues remains a powerful metric.

Answers to research questions 3b and c were closely related. After persistence, meeting expectations was the single most important factor in perceptions of a partnership's success. Success here was both a single assessment – overall did the partnership meet expectations – and judged on a continuum – how well were those expectations met, how did that look differently to different roles, was there a failing that limited the overall perception of success but did not damage it entirely? Enjoyment and productivity were also important factors in perceptions of success. Participants were satisfied with their partnerships when expectations were met, when the activity was enjoyable and productive, and when relationships were being built. The stronger those relationships, the higher the perceptions were of success; in some cases this success and relationship building prompted participants to want to deepen the commitment, as predicted by SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Specific to question 3c, when targeted work was being completed – content mastered in a university class, differentiated instruction provided in the K-12 setting, intergenerational engagement for JABA – partnerships were considered successful. Also as predicted by SET, this was an area of risk for partnerships: if a promised service or product was not delivered or did not meet expectations, the partnership risked being labeled unsuccessful. In the case of LEAP, one community partner did not feel comfortable assessing success, as the promised report had not yet been turned in. Success varied across roles in some cases, and that variance was particularly evident in the academic cases where delivery of a product was expected. These findings with regard to success are in line with the literature and confirm the utility of SET as a way to understand the complexity of a university-community engagement partnership.

While the definition of success given in Figure 6 reflects the perspectives of the participants, I believe that success at the end of the day is a more complicated picture. Take for example the case of the Greek Councils/ Neighborhood Community Center partnership. As indicated earlier, persistence is important to that definition, and that case did not persist past the study period. Combined with the low assessment of reciprocity, I would be tempted to label that one unsuccessful. But then again, several specific goals, set by the participants and not by me, were met: the community partner had volunteer help to come interact with her children; some of those students shared characteristics with the children and provided a bit of role modeling; U.Va. students living close to the NCC became aware of it and the community it served; and the students began to wrestle with their newly found awareness of their privilege and what that means in a context where a previously invisible community is now visible. In short, students learned important things and the kids were not harmed. This again begs the question of whether the lofty ideals of effective community engagement become a question of letting the great get in the way of the good. This study raises, but does not answer, that question.

Further, this analysis of results on success brings up questions of power and possible selection bias. Just like in the discussion about risk and harm, the power dynamics at play in these relationships could pressure participants to label partnerships successful, although controls to guard against this threat are the same as they were for risk. Further, while participants of all roles supported the projects and called them successful, information from agency clients as a group was "thinnest" in terms of description and detail. Would every client feel the same way as those that were interviewed? What about every student volunteer? While this study takes an important first step in including agency clients at all, a deeper examination of the experiences of participants with less authority and autonomy in these partnerships, as well as casting the net more widely to increase the number of voices, is required to develop a richer picture of what success looks like from these very important perspectives.

Research Question 4: The Relationship Among Reciprocity, Harm and Success

The final research question asked about the relationship between perceived reciprocity and perceptions of harm and success. The three concepts are related, and Figures 3 and 4 illustrate this relationship. Reciprocity is the most complex, and while it shares important factors with success such as meeting expectations, getting work done and building relationships, other criteria like acknowledging and balancing benefits and risks and teaching and learning are important as well. Harm is a factor for both reciprocity and success, but it does not automatically negate them, and it can be overcome particularly when high quality relationships are built. Partnerships can be both reciprocal and successful even when harm is an outcome. That is rare, though, and highly dependent on the type of harm.

Discussion

In addition to answering the research questions, several important issues and questions emerged from the data. They are considered here.

The Role of Relationships

This study found that strong relationships can be more important than any other factor in determining whether relationships are perceived to be reciprocal and successful. The literature points to structure as the most certain path to effective partnerships (Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet &Poulson, 1998; Stanton, 2007), and for the most part this study supported that conclusion. Good training, collaborative planning, and comprehensive assessment lead to stronger partnerships, as a rule. Indeed, the low scores in the Greek Councils/NCC partnership in comparison to the relative consistency among the other direct service partnerships indicates that some structure is necessary to make a partnership reciprocal. However, other than referring to logistics and using those structures to ensure follow through, participants did not name those components as being important to how they engaged in the partnership on a day-to-day basis.

More than written partner agreements, more than good training, more than formal assessment– those components were important and were more often than not found in good partnerships, but they alone could not ensure that relationships were effective.

Strong relationships, however, could trump other factors, even negative ones. For example, in the APO Books Behind Bars partnership, little external structure existed and there was no formal assessment of the program, yet the relationship between the community partner and student volunteers, particularly the student leader, was extraordinarily strong. This partnership had superb outcomes on many fronts, including being able to withstand disruptions in location and funding. Indeed, when those disruptions came, rather than leaving the partnership, APO brothers participated actively in finding solutions to the organization's problems, further expanding what they were learning and the skills they were developing through their participation.

Strong relationships can also lift a good program into being a great one. The Adopt-a-Grandparent program is the prime example here: the basic structure and solid practices of Madison House ensured that the program was good, in the 7-8 range for reciprocity – a typical finding – but the particular relationships between the student volunteer and both the community partner and her grandparent made that program stand out as superb.

Finally, strong relationships can also help a partnership withstand challenges. This includes harm, as was evident with ecoMOD. High quality relationships have the potential to produce high quality outcomes regardless of the type of engagement work being done, which also makes it applicable in diverse settings.

In some ways this finding is not surprising. According to social exchange theory, reciprocal exchanges are more likely to produce high quality relationships (Molm, Takahashi, & Peterson, 2000) and research shows that developing these relationships is the top priority for community partners (Sandy & Holland, 1998). It also makes sense structurally – good relationships are built by engaging with one another early in a project, staying engaged throughout its implementation and evaluation (Stanton, 2007), collectively working through problems that arise, communicating well, building trust (Ward & Wolf-Wendell, 1997), and making expectations clear (Jacoby, 2003; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998). Such relationships also build commitment to one another – which can also be thought of as duty or obligation (Blau, 1964, Emerson 1976; Goldner, 1960; Mauss, 1954/2002). As well, the respect and agency that are both inherent in and built through these high quality relationships signal an asset-based approach (Cruz & Giles, 2000). Therefore, if good outcomes are the goal, focusing on building strong relationships is the most efficient and effective way to do so.

Role of Best Practice Structure

Stanton (2007) emphasizes that reciprocity in engaged research is reflected in the degree of collaboration between the institutional and community partners from a project's inception "through the distribution of results." While differences between research and direct service make a direct comparison a little complicated here, for the most part these findings were borne out by the study's results. The Madison House projects featured high degrees of collaboration: long relationships between institution and community partner and partner participation in development of the project, setting of expectations, implementation, and evaluation. Perceptions of reciprocity were high in those cases. In the case with the least collaboration (GC KCC), perceptions were lower. However, LEAP and ecoMOD demonstrated that the more complex the project, the greater the pressure put on that collaboration.

Based on selections made by project type (see Figure 1), outcomes were expected to differ between the direct service partnerships and those that had an academic component. Distinctions were also expected to emerge among the cases displaying different quality profiles (see Table 2). While the expected organizational and task-specific outcomes were indeed different, perceptions of reciprocity and success did not vary substantially according to project type. Those distinctions were less pronounced than were expected. The "quality profile" construct in particular was not necessarily predictive of positive or negative outcomes and seemed to have little effect on perceptions of reciprocity, the central question of the study. These results reflect Stanton's (2007) findings that there are multiple types of partnerships that can be called both successful and reciprocal even when the levels of collaboration vary across the stages of a partnership. Finally, the single finding of harm came in a case that was characterized as community-based research and "high involvement/high assessment," another indication that structure alone is not sufficient to produce effective university-community engagement partnerships.

Reciprocity Scores in Context

Reciprocity data revealed an interesting dynamic at play in these partnerships. For a few participants, there was a sort of inversion in reciprocity scores – their descriptions of reciprocity and how they thought about the process of developing a partnership illustrated that their understanding and expectations for reciprocal relationships were high and deep. When participants had a particularly complex or sophisticated view of reciprocity, they tended to "grade" themselves and the partnership more strictly than did other participants.

For example, when interviewing John Quale, the faculty member in the ecoMOD case, he described extensive, in-depth efforts to involve and understand both the community partner and the client. His descriptions revealed substantial knowledge of the purpose and goals of the community partner organization, a nuanced understanding of the power dynamics between the university and that organization, a clear desire to equalize those dynamics and provide as much power and control to the organization and homeowner as possible – even when those two goals were in direct conflict because of the separate power dynamics at play between those participants – and a commitment to deliver on the promise made to the organization and the homeowner without overstepping the identified scope. His personal definition of reciprocity was culturally sensitive and asset-based: as he outlined these considerations, it was clear that he considered both the community partner and the homeowner family to be experts in their areas of influence; he expected his students to learn from both parties; each was worthy of respect, autonomy, and agency; and it was his obligation to act accordingly and hold his students accountable to those standards as well. Thus, in assigning a lower reciprocity score to the project (5/6 out of 10) he was "grading" himself and the overall project more harshly than other participants in the study, based on a comparison of their descriptions of the benefits, risks, harm, planning and accountability associated with each partnership.

Focusing specifically on participants' assessments of reciprocity in that partnership, it seems clear that some of the difference in scoring is a result of tougher grading rather than less overall reciprocity. Again considering the data gathered through the interview process next to the numerical reciprocity rating, this phenomenon explains lower scores given by the institutional lead and student volunteer in the APO Books

Behind Bars partnership, as well as the student volunteer in the Madison House/JABA Mary Williams Center Adopt-a-Grandparent case. Each of these participants had a nuanced understanding of reciprocity and high expectations and thus "graded" themselves and the partnerships more strictly than some of the others.

This is a good example of why numbers are unreliable as single measures of a phenomenon. Participants' descriptions of how they conceived of reciprocity provided the context necessary to interpret those numerical ratings. While numbers are definitely helpful in providing a snapshot or general sense of an item, they require the context that only qualitative data can provide in order to be accurately interpreted.

Looking across roles in the study, it is interesting to note that community partners rated the partnerships most highly across the board. There was only one score below an 8 (4 for the Greek Councils/Neighborhood Community Center) and four gave scores of a perfect 10. Considering the forgoing conversation on inversion of reciprocity scores, most of these community partners had sophisticated concepts of reciprocity, so it is unlikely that these ratings reflect a lack of depth on that front. When compared to institutional leads, their expectations were slightly lower – in general, if they got what they expected to get, if nothing went terribly wrong, and if good relationships resulted, they tended to see relationships as reciprocal; faculty and student leads tended to want more transformational outcomes in comparison.

Again, the ecoMOD case is illustrative here: Dan Rosensweig, the community partner in that case, demonstrated an in-depth and nuanced understanding of the benefits, risks, power dynamics and context of the partnership, and still he gave it a perfect 10. Considering other comments made by this participant about the challenges of working with the university and what he saw as negative outcomes of some of its other policies and practices, it is possible that this high rating reflected both the quality of the relationship itself and its distinction from other interactions this participant has had with the university. So if, as other cases indicate, reciprocity is in part a function of expectations, it is possible that his rating was a bit high due to his low expectations of reciprocity on the part of the university.

As outlined in Chapter 3, this study's research design intentionally incorporated agency client perspectives, in part because those data are rarely included in research on community engagement, but also because their perspectives on a partnership are important to understanding that partnership in its entirety. However, getting clarity on how clients perceived reciprocity in the partnerships was challenging. Several were children who were too young or whose English language skills were too weak to understand the concept or the word. One client felt the partnership was fine, but that the heart of the relationship was between the other partners. Other client participants provided a number rating but gave less context for what went into that rating. This was not true of all clients – Evans Hopkins, for example, was eloquent in his description of how he felt reciprocity was built among him, the Books Behind Bars owner, and the student volunteers.

On this metric, however, it is possible that the selection process had more chance of filtering out important information, particularly negative information, because the community partners decided whom would be interviewed from this population and they might have wanted to put a good face on the work being done. To be clear, no evidence of such bias exists, but because this population is the most vulnerable of the four, and because measuring outcomes related to the clients in many ways should be central to everyone's work in these projects, the question should be raised. This study shows, then, that despite the difficulty of gathering data directly from agency clients, doing so should be an important focus for scholars and practitioners going forward.

Diversity and Power – A Complex Picture

There were some significant learning outcomes related to race, class, and power that reflected the context of the study site. Because all eight partnerships took place within a single context – the University of Virginia and the City of Charlottesville – it is interesting to examine how these important and always contested forces acted on those partnerships. There were also some missed opportunities. In order to understand the full potential of these partnerships, both must be acknowledged.

Beginning with what worked well, among the several "buckets" of goals and learning outcomes mentioned in this study, those relating to diversity – being exposed to and learning from diverse others, examining one's own privilege, understanding historical, social, economic and political dynamics that affect communities and the university – provided powerful opportunities not only to become aware of new facts and perspectives but also to start to choose how to respond to this new information. Many participants spoke movingly about the effect of these topics on their experience, noting their importance exceeded the excitement of working in real-world situations or the benefits of "making a difference," for example. Race, class and privilege, in particular, came up often, whether it was in the care and notice taken by the student volunteer in the MH/MWC AAG case in her relationship with the elderly, African-American, low-income woman who was her "grandmother," or the acknowledgement by the student leader in the

MH ESOL/LS case that the children she was working with had simultaneously overcome language and cultural obstacles she herself could hardly imagine and yet were still in many ways “regular kids.”

These lessons were learned even when other aspects of a partnership were less successful. Despite otherwise mediocre results in terms of persistence and levels of reciprocity, in the Greek Councils/NCC partnership previously invisible communities were made visible to the student participants: note the comment one student made that before this partnership experience she merely used the neighborhood to “drive through to get to somewhere else,” and stories like the origin of the property’s fence provided them with a powerful metaphor for the persistent effects of racism that they may have otherwise believed was a relic of the past. That this awareness was a specific goal of the student leading this project demonstrates that indeed the partnership was successful in meeting that very important goal.

Being exposed to those who were different created understandings and opportunities that participants felt were unavailable to them in other settings. Faculty and students sought engagement beyond campus in ways that the traditional curriculum did not accommodate. It was not just the university side, though, who sought diverse interaction. The community participants were seeking both similarity and difference. This came into play most often with children, as community partners specifically sought college student volunteers because they embodied different possibilities than the children typically saw around them. Importantly, the volunteers were perceived as most effective when they shared some characteristics with the kids, particularly race, ethnicity or language. This is a major outcome of community engagement, and the fact that it was something both university and community participants wanted and identified as outcomes is significant.

However, the study revealed some important gaps as well, particularly a widespread absence of consistent and intentional discussions of race, class and power in university-community engagement partnerships. Students were quite articulate in describing the ways they had learned from others very different from themselves in terms of race, class, and life experience, and many of them noted that diverse interaction was both something they sought and something they were most appreciative of in the partnership. Yet when asked directly whether they had discussed race, class and power in the context of the partnerships, many of them could not recall any such conversations.

This disconnect is troubling. Several students mentioned in the course of the interviews that they found discussing those topics through the study's questions helpful, and they wished those topics were covered more in the training, or that they had additional opportunities to process and reflect on them with other participants. With Madison House partnerships, the topics were discussed glancingly in training and occasionally processed in some of the more intense programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters, but were not a primary focus otherwise. In the Jefferson Public Citizens projects, while students brought these issues up and the program leaders recognized their importance, responsibility for addressing them rested with the faculty.

The academic partnerships – Day in the Life, LEAP and ecoMOD – virtually ignored these topics in formal discussion. In DITL, despite the fact that the course the student was in dealt directly with diversity issues, the student volunteer reported that no connections were made in class between course content and the context of the volunteer work. They did not come up as part of LEAP, despite the fact that this program grew out of an initiative called SPARK, which was focused on energy improvements for low-income residents. With the exception of some background on Habitat for Humanity, no widespread discussion took place in the ecoMOD partnership about affordable housing or the conditions that gave rise to the need for organizations like Habitat. For both LEAP and ecoMOD, there was a sense that the technical content and tasks of the project were the focus, and that race, class and power were not really part of that curriculum.

None of the participants were actively insensitive to these difficult issues, and in fact most cared deeply about equity and worked to reduce racism and other prejudice in their personal and professional lives. However, this disconnect in both practice and in awareness on the students' part is evidence of the separation fallacy (Freeman, 1994), and the fact/value dichotomy (Putnam, 2007) raising their heads again: there is a sense that it is possible to focus on the facts or tasks, the components of these partnerships that are technical, accessible, and straightforward, without equally considering the value, or the contextual forces that act upon those technical tasks but that are often perceived to be external or not necessarily connected to solving the issue at hand. That disconnect, while not directly harmful in this study, allows for many missed opportunities that community engagement could otherwise so effectively provide. This suggests that engagement projects, regardless of topic or location, should affirmatively consider the dynamics around race, class and power in their very fabric. While students may resist at first because these can be difficult topics, evidence in this study shows they actually crave engagement with them. Additionally, there is the least access to these lessons in a traditional classroom, so we need to have the courage to address them here, at minimum.

The high quality of student-led projects deserves mention here. Across every measure taken, the partnerships that were developed and led by students met expectations and produced important outcomes across several different dimensions. They were well-conceived and organized, all but one persisted from year to year, and they developed high quality relationships with other participants, including community members. They also provided opportunities for students to lead their peers and to problem-solve in ways that are simply unavailable when faculty or staff are in charge.

While I trust that talented students elsewhere would return similarly positive results given the opportunity, it is a particular strength of this site that students are not only given the opportunity to manage projects like these partnerships, but are expected to do so. Indeed, the work that most of the student leaders of these projects accomplished is typically managed by a professional staff or faculty member on most campuses. This implies that those professionals should back off their involvement and let the students take responsibility for projects on their own. This may be a challenge in the academic arena, and the added complexity of academic community engagement, particularly with regard to the number of moving parts and the length of time typically required, may make student leadership less workable in that context. However, faculty and staff should look for opportunities to allow students to take responsibility for individual parts of a project whenever workable.

Limitations

As with any study, there were limitations to these findings. First, because all eight cases involved a single institution in a single location, generalizations cannot be drawn to other universities and cities. In order to test whether reciprocity functions similarly in other contexts, the study would need to be replicated in those contexts.

While the study design worked to include multiple perspectives on each case, I relied heavily on the institutional lead and the community partner in identifying student volunteer and agency client participants. It is possible that those participants only named individuals who would reinforce their points of view. Given more time and resources, a study that included all participants in a partnership and had strong controls for confidentiality would perhaps uncover more negative experiences. In the cases where children were involved, it would also be worthwhile to include parents or guardians in the data collection, as they might be able to speak to the effect of the partnership on their children. If the focus of the study shifted somewhat from the participants' perspectives to an outside assessment of reciprocity, participant observation would provide another view as well.

As noted in Chapter 3, all student-led academic cases were disqualified from inclusion in the study because none included a community partner client in their structure. While this led to a selection distribution that was somewhat skewed – see Table 1 – there is no evidence that this significantly affected the findings. However, because of the positive outcomes for student-led projects identified in this study, facilitating such partnerships may be a worthwhile focus for faculty and staff at the site.

Through the study design I strove to identify representative cases at the site, but it is possible that the eight cases selected were aberrant. Each of the cases represented but one example of multiple partnerships; APO, Madison House and Day in the Life each sponsored multiple partnership sites and in each case it is possible that the cases studied were outliers. If understanding the nature of reciprocity throughout those programs was of interest, one might study each partnership within a particular organization to accomplish that goal.

Only two of the many academic disciplines that do community engagement were represented in the study. Others could have provided alternate perspectives, or uncovered extraordinarily good or bad outcomes that were specific to those disciplines. In order to generalize across academic areas, more needs to be known about how reciprocity might look different according to the intellectual frame in which it occurred.

Finally, this study's focus on the meaning participants made of their experience made a qualitative approach appropriate. A quantitative study would provide data that were more widely applicable to multiple cases and contexts and would allow for a larger number of participants to be included. Results from such a study would further expand our understanding of the construction of reciprocity in university-community partnerships.

In short, while extensive precautions were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the data in this study, its findings speak only to the nature of reciprocity in the specific cases studied and simply provide additional information about how that reciprocity was constructed. Because data in this area are limited, these findings are useful and add to the body of literature on the subject. Much more, however, needs to be done to understand the nuances of the phenomenon of reciprocity

Implications for Practice

In addition to those addressed above, several implications for practice emerge from this study's findings. To begin with, the research confirmed that myriad important outcomes for participants resulted from their participation in university-community partnerships (Eyler, Giles, Stenson & Gray, 2001). This finding argues for the continued inclusion of partnerships in the work of universities and community agencies alike, despite the challenges, costs and resistance that come with the work. In short, the benefits are worth the risk of such engagement. Institutional partners, students, and community partners should collaboratively identify funding and curricular approaches to shore up the role of university-community partnerships in the student experience.

In so doing, however, partners would do well to focus carefully on best practice structures for those relationships. As expected, the deliberative design of partnerships is an effective framework for creating reciprocal relationships within those partnerships (Molm, Takahashi & Peterson, 2000; Porter Honnet & Poulson, 1998; Sigmon, 1990; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999). This should include careful, collaborative planning, thoughtful execution characterized by continuous feedback and open communication, and some type of formal and informal assessment. Clear communication is central to this effort, and mechanisms to facilitate that communication need to be built into the partnership. These precautions will go a long ways toward developing reciprocal relationships among participants and should be taken into consideration for both university and community partners.

Almost as importantly, organizers should place relationship building at the center of community engagement work. This might mean that projects proceed somewhat more slowly in the beginning, with added meetings, trainings, and other teambuilding activities that perhaps might seem unrelated to the specific work at hand but that build a foundation of shared knowledge among participants. This research indicates that time invested in such a way is likely to pay dividends, because the outcome of stronger relationships is such a powerful factor in the success of a partnership. That foundation should be supported with good structures as described above, certainly, but if the bonds developed among participants are strong, they can withstand many challenges and they make the partnership more flexible and agile. This might be particularly useful for those partnerships developed under challenging circumstances or where resources are limited. University-community partnerships will often be awkward fits at first due to the differences in purpose, power and structure among the groups, and a focus on relationships is the most effective path to overcoming those differences in pursuit of successful partnerships.

This research also demonstrated that training has been somewhat of a neglected area of focus. Partners need to make sure that training is in place, that it is effective, that all participants attend, and that it addresses all relevant issues. Whenever possible, this training needs to include community partners at some point in the process; otherwise, organizers are missing an opportunity to enrich participants' understanding of the history, complexities, and the possibilities inherent in the individual context of a partnership. For those partnerships where the work itself is straightforward, such training is not necessary to facilitate the day-to-day work of the partnership as that is often well-covered in the weekly interaction; rather, it introduces students to the context of the service and serves to foreground community partners' expertise. This is a place where the foundation can be laid for students to understand any unique or unknown characteristics of the clients or the site, and where the community partner can contribute specialized knowledge. Further, training is an ideal spot where the failure that caused the need for the service itself can begin to be investigated.

This focus will deepen students' learning and make the connection between their extra-curricular and curricular lives evident. Making these connections is emerging as one of the most important skills for college students as they enter a difficult marketplace following graduation, where attributes like teamwork and communicating with multiple constituents are of primary interest to employers (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2012). Understanding how their various skills and experiences combine to prepare them for the world of work or graduate study will provide a significant competitive advantage. It might be effective to spread that training out over the course of the partnership, rather than concentrating it at the beginning of the project.

Practitioners need to include race, class and power as topics in preparation for and execution of university-community partnerships. These topics can be awkward and some may see them as not relevant to the course content at hard; those are straw men that diminish the effectiveness of partnerships and call their ethical practice into question. Students want and need to consider these ideas in the context of their engagement, and the developmental literature notes that they require guidance and reflection in so doing (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; Jones & Hill, 2001; King & Kitchner, 1994; Perry, 1968; Tatum, 1992). Further, the community deserves it; otherwise partnerships are in danger of replicating the age-old mistake of forcing the minority population to educate the majority. Those involved with academic community engagement need to make sure these topics are covered as well, even when the focus of the course lies in disciplinary content.

Without it students are left either to grapple with their observations on their own or, worse, allowed to avoid engaging the uncomfortable issues altogether.

Each of the preceding practical implications has focused on those currently involved in university-community partnerships, or poised to do so. The overwhelmingly positive outcomes identified in this study, however, speak to university leaders as well, to those with responsibility for strategic direction for their institutions. So many of the developmental and intellectual outcomes universities work to facilitate in their students can be met through this interdisciplinary, multidimensional pedagogical approach that neglect is quite unwise. This study demonstrates that many different formats and structures can work, and indeed that diversity can be a strength and a way for institutions to reflect the distinctiveness of their particular culture. Therefore, support for students and faculty wishing to do this work should be encouraged and enhanced.

Topics for Further Study

Several questions were raised, but not answered, in this project, and would make fruitful topics for future study. Perhaps most interesting was participants' reluctance to discuss risk and harm in the partnerships. Because power is such an influential component of these relationships, a study designed to investigate the intersection of power and reciprocity would be quite interesting and would expand our understanding of the relevant factors. It would need to be conducted with care and extraordinary levels of confidentiality or perhaps anonymity, in order to protect against some of the potential concerns raised earlier.

While participants reported multiple learning outcomes that resulted from the partnerships, the measures were indirect and did not speak to long-term effects on intellectual or identity development, college-going or career selection, citizenship or organizational outcomes. It would be interesting to investigate how if at all the development of reciprocal relationships affected participants' achievement over the long term in these areas.

At the time of the study there were at least four separate tutoring programs in place at LES and other local elementary schools, not all of which drew on university volunteers. Examining this apparent overlap might reveal areas of duplication or effective practice that would inform partnerships at that site.

The study revealed potential interesting distinctions in how reciprocity's construction may differ by role. Institutional leads and community partners naturally had more involvement with all aspects of a project than did student volunteers or community agency clients. That variation had an effect on how much participants had thought about issues such as training, assessment, risk and harm. However, in many cases volunteers and clients are the most vulnerable participants in a partnership, and so gaining a deeper understanding of how they conceive of these constructs would yield rich data. These data would broaden our overall conception of reciprocity in university-community engagement relationships

While this study provided rich data about the construction of reciprocity at one institution, subsequent comparison to the Carnegie national data set would be even more useful, given more time and resources. That comparison would help to determine whether the outcomes here were idiosyncratic to the site, as is certainly possible, or whether some shared outcomes exist. Further, the detail outlining reciprocity's construction revealed in this study could inform Carnegie's assessment tool, sharpening the data collection on this crucial metric going forward.

Summary

This study added a rich and nuanced description of the ways reciprocity is constructed in university-community partnerships to the body of literature on community engagement. It demonstrated that, with good planning and coordination, clear expectations and communication, and strong relationships this approach produces enormously positive outcomes on many metrics that are important to institutions and community partners alike. Students benefit tremendously from engaging in these partnerships, but so do faculty, agency leaders and clients. Importantly, many of these positive outcomes are more accessible through community engagement than through more traditional pedagogies or activity that remains within an institution's boundaries.

The study also demonstrated that this reciprocity did indeed serve as an effective antidote, in most cases, to harm, and that a careful consideration of the inherent risks was actually an integral component of that reciprocity. The commitment to one another and the partnership built through these relationships raised participants' sensitivity to potential negative outcomes and thus inspired them to work to insulate the partnership from their effects.

Strong relationships emerged as a key talisman against the many dangers inherent in the messy and difficult work that is university-community engagement. Identified as both goal and outcome for most participants, when relationships were strong partnerships were more elastic, more effective and provided much deeper learning outcomes for those involved. Here lay some of the students' most powerful experiences as well.

The university-community partnership picture, however, still has some blurriness that requires additional clarity for more generalized conclusions to be drawn. Even though the literature implies that reciprocity is difficult to achieve, seven out of eight partnerships in this study were defined as reciprocal by participants. This could mean that relationships between U.Va. and its community partners are exceptionally good. As appealing as that may be, historical context and broader concerns identified in this study suggest that is not the answer. It could mean that the perceived challenges are just that – perceived – or that scholars' expectations for reciprocity within community engagement partnerships are too high. Having listened to the participants describe their experiences, and having analyzed the multiple forms of data available on this question, I believe that this is a function of the pragmatism of the participants: while these partnerships are far from perfect, in general they are positive, produce good outcomes that have value to participants, pose little or manageable risk, rarely cause harm, and represent worthwhile work that in some cases cannot be achieved through other contexts. In particular, community partners value the relationship with U.Va. entities, regardless of their individual opinions on the institution, agency clients appreciate the exposure to U.Va. students, and students and faculty alike. In short, this study shows that while it's important to keep striving for transformational work, much work that is more mundane is doing quite a lot of good and should be encouraged through policy and institutional support.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

The Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement 2010 Documentation Reporting Form

Introduction

This documentation framework is intended to gather information on your institution's commitments and activities regarding community engagement.

Use of data: The information you provide will be used to determine your institution's community engagement classification. Only those institutions approved for classification will be identified. At the end of the survey, you will have an opportunity to authorize or prohibit the use of this information for other research purposes.

Please provide your contact information (for Carnegie Foundation use only):

Name:

Title:

Telephone:

Email:

City:

State:

Institution:

Institution President/Chancellor:

President/Chancellor's Mailing Address:

Quote the mission (vision):

I. Foundational Indicators

A. Institutional Identity and Culture Required Documentation (Complete all 5 of the following)

1. Does the institution indicate that community engagement is a priority in its mission statement (or vision)?

☐Yes

☐No

2. Does the institution formally recognize community engagement through campus-wide awards and celebrations?

☐Yes

☐No

Describe with examples:

3. a. Does the institution have mechanisms for systematic assessment of community perceptions of the institution's engagement with community?

Yes

No Describe the mechanisms:

2010 Documentation Framework Preview (For use as a reference and worksheet only – Do NOT Submit)

b. Does the institution aggregate and use the assessment data? Yes

No Describe how the data is used:

4. Is community engagement emphasized in the marketing materials (website, brochures, etc.) of the institution?
Yes
No
Describe the materials:
5. Does the executive leadership of the institution (President, Provost, Chancellor, Trustees, etc.) explicitly promote community engagement as a priority?
☐Yes
☐No
Describe examples such as annual address, published editorial, campus publications, etc.
2010 Documentation Framework Preview (For use as a reference and worksheet only – Do NOT Submit)

B. Institutional Commitment Required Documentation (Complete all 6 of the following)
1. Does the institution have a campus-wide coordinating infrastructure (center, office, etc.) to support and advance community engagement?
☐Yes
☐No Describe with purposes, staffing:
2. a. Are there internal budgetary allocations dedicated to supporting institutional engagement with community?
☐Yes
☐No
Describe (percentage or dollar amount), source, whether it is permanent, and how it is used, etc.
b. Is there external funding dedicated to supporting institutional engagement with community?
☐Yes
☐No Describe specific funding:
2010 Documentation Framework Preview (For use as a reference and worksheet only – Do NOT Submit)
c. Is there fundraising directed to community engagement? Yes
☐No Describe fundraising activities:
☐
3. a. Does the institution maintain systematic campus-wide tracking or documentation mechanisms to record and/or track engagement with the community?
Yes
No
Describe:
b. If yes, does the institution use the data from those mechanisms? Yes
No Describe:
c. Are there systematic campus-wide assessment mechanisms to measure the impact of institutional engagement?
Yes

No

d. If yes, indicate the focus of those mechanisms:

☐Impact on students Describe one key finding:

☐Impact on faculty Describe one key finding:

☐Impact on community Describe one key finding:

☐Impact on institution Describe one key finding:

e. Does the institution use the data from the assessment mechanisms? Yes

No Describe:

4. Is community engagement defined and planned for in the strategic plans of the institution?

☐Yes

☐No Describe and quote:

5. Does the institution provide professional development support for faculty and/or staff who engage with community?

Yes

No

Describe:

6. Does the community have a "voice" or role for input into institutional or departmental planning for community engagement?

Yes

No

Describe:

At this point, applicants are urged to review the responses to Foundation Indicators I A, 1 through 5 and I B, 1 through 6 on pages 1-17 and determine whether Community Engagement is "institutionalized." That is, whether all or most of the Foundational Indicators have been documented with specificity. If so, applicants are encouraged to continue with the application. If not, applicants are encouraged to withdraw from the process and apply in the next round in 2015.

Supplemental Documentation (Complete all of the following)

1. Does the institution have search/recruitment policies that encourage the hiring of faculty with expertise in and commitment to community engagement?

Yes

No

Describe:

2. a. Do the institutional policies for promotion and tenure reward the scholarship of community engagement?

Yes

No

Describe:

b. If yes, how does the institution classify community-engaged scholarship? (Service, Scholarship of Application, other)

Explain:

b (cont'd). If no, is there work in progress to revise promotion and tenure guidelines to reward the scholarship of community engagement?
Yes
No Describe:
3. Do students have a leadership role in community engagement? What kind of decisions do they influence (planning, implementation, assessment, or other)?
☐Yes
☐No
Examples:

2010 Documentation Framework Preview (For use as a reference and worksheet only – Do NOT Submit)
4. Is community engagement noted on student transcripts? Yes
No Describe:
5. Is there a faculty governance committee with responsibilities for community engagement?
Yes
No Describe:

II. Categories of Community Engagement

A. Curricular Engagement

Curricular Engagement describes the teaching, learning and scholarship that engages faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community identified needs, deepen students' civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution.
NOTE: The terms community-based learning, academic service learning, and other expressions are often used to denote service learning courses.
1. a. Does the institution have a definition and a process for identifying Service Learning courses?
☐Yes
☐No
Describe requirements:

How many formal for-credit Service Learning courses were offered in the most recent academic year? _____ What percentage of total courses? _____
How many departments are represented by those courses? _____ What percentage of total departments? _____
How many faculty taught Service Learning courses in the most recent academic year? _____ What percentage of faculty? _____
How many students participated in Service Learning courses in the most recent academic year? _____ What percentage of students? _____
2. a. Are there institutional (campus-wide) learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with community?
☐Yes
☐No

Provide specific learning outcome examples:
b. Are there departmental or disciplinary learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with community?
☐Yes
☐No

Core Courses Graduate Studies

First Year Sequence Capstone (Senior level project)

In the Majors General Education

Describe with examples:

Provide specific learning outcome examples:
2010 Documentation Framework Preview (For use as a reference and worksheet only – Do NOT Submit)
c. Are those outcomes systematically assessed? Yes
No Describe:
2010 Documentation Framework Preview (For use as a reference and worksheet only – Do NOT Submit)
d. If yes, how is the assessment data used? Describe:
3. a. Is community engagement integrated into the following curricular activities?
☐
☐
☐
☐
Student Research Student Leadership Internships/Co-ops Study Abroad
Describe with examples:
b. Has community engagement been integrated with curriculum on an institution-wide level?
Yes
No If yes, indicate where the integration exists:

4. Are there examples of faculty scholarship associated with their curricular engagement achievements (action research studies, conference presentations, pedagogy workshops, publications, etc.)?
☐Yes
☐No
Provide a minimum of five examples from different disciplines:

B. Outreach and Partnerships

Outreach and Partnerships describe two different but related approaches to community engagement. The first focuses on the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community. The latter focuses on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.

1. Indicate which outreach programs are developed for community:

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

learning centers tutoring extension programs non-credit courses evaluation support training programs professional development centers other (specify)

Describe with examples:

2. Which institutional resources are provided as outreach to the community?

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐co-curricular student service work/study student placements cultural offerings athletic offerings library services technology faculty consultation Describe with examples:

3. Describe representative partnerships (both institutional and departmental) that were in place during the most recent academic year (maximum 15 partnerships). Use the attached Excel file to provide descriptions of each partnership.

4. a. Does the institution or do the departments work to promote the mutuality and reciprocity of the partnerships?

☐Yes

☐No Describe the strategies:

b. Are there mechanisms to systematically provide feedback and assessment to community partners and to the institution?

Yes

No Describe the mechanisms:

5. Are there examples of faculty scholarship associated with their outreach and partnerships activities (technical reports, curriculum, research reports, policy reports, publications, etc.)?

☐Yes

☐No

Provide a minimum of five examples from varied disciplines:

III. Wrap-Up

1. (Optional) Use this space to elaborate on any short-answer item(s) for which you need more space. Please specify the corresponding section and item number(s).
2. (Optional) Is there any information that was not requested that you consider significant evidence of your institution's community engagement? If so, please provide the information in this space.
3. (Optional) Please provide any suggestions or comments you may have on the documentation process and online data collection.
4. May we use the information you have provided for research purposes beyond the determination of classification (for example, conference papers, journal articles, and research reports), <u>with the understanding that your institution's identity will not be disclosed without permission</u>? (Your answer will have no bearing on the classification decision.)

☐Yes

☐No

APPENDIX B

SURVEY TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CASES

Project Title:

Please briefly describe the project.

Where does it take place?
When does it happen?
What organizations and individuals are involved?
What happens?

Please mark your primary role as leader of this project:

UVA faculty   UVA staff/admin   UVA student   Community member

How did this project start? (Please be specific about who was involved and why it started.)

How long has it been going on?

Is it part of an academic course?

Do students get credit for participation?

Is this project part of a research effort? Put another way, do you or anyone else involved in the project plan to publish findings based on data gathered as part of this project?

Is there a formal evaluation in place?

If so, who provides input into that evaluation? Students (y/n) Faculty (y/n)
Community agency head (y/n) Community agency clients (y/n)
Please describe any additional feedback mechanisms, either formal or informal.
Please attach a copy of any evaluation, assessment, or other formal feedback tool.

Have you received any U.Va. funding (JPC, ACE, CBR grants, research awards, etc) for this project?

Do you expect the project to continue in some form beyond the current term?

Please attach any documents you have describing the project, or point me to applicable Web sites.
Thank you!

APPENDIX C

Miron & Moley (2006) Survey Instrument

1. What was the extent of your role in planning for the service-learner position?
2. How much contact did you have with the faculty member involved in the program?
3. How involved was the faculty member in the planning process?
4. How much contact did you have with the Office of Service Learning (OSL) representative?
5. When working with OSL, to what extent do you feel that your agency and the OSL were equal partners?
6. In planning the service learner's activities, how willing was the OSL staff to listen to you?
7. How willing was the OSL to take your suggestions?
8. How satisfied were you with the "job description" created for the service-learners' work?
9. How much did you contribute to that "job description"?
10. Overall, how would you characterize the planning for the service-learner's position?
11. To what extent did you find your service-learner(s) organized and prepared?
12. How directly related to the needs of your agency were the service-learner's responsibilities?
13. To what extent did you find your service-learner(s) effective in helping your organization meet its goals?
14. Did your service-learner(s) ever negatively affect your organization?
15. To what extent was your site's involvement with OSL a burden to you, your staff, or your clients?
16. To what extent did you gain any economic benefits or resources through your involvement with OSL?
17. To what extent did you gain any other benefits through your involvement with OSL?
18. What was your first impression upon meeting your service-learner(s)?
19. What did you perceive to be your service-learner's first impression of you, the staff, or clients of your site?
20. How would you characterize your interaction with your service-learner at the beginning of the semester?
21. How did your service-learner(s) interact with your agency's clients?
22. To what extent do you feel your service-learner(s) was sensitive to the needs and problems facing this particular community?
23. To what extent did your service-learner(s) display an interest in learning about your organization's missions and goals?
24. To what extent do you feel your service-learner(s) came to understand your organization's missions and goals?
25. To what extent did your service-learner(s) display an interest in learning about your organization's history within the context of the community?

26. To what extent do you feel your service-learner(s) came to understand your organization’s history within the context of the community?
27. From your perspective, how did your service-learner(s)’ perceptions/assumptions of site change over the course of the semester?
28. How would you characterize your interaction with your service-learner(s) at the end of the semester?
29. How did this relationship change over time?
30. What was your first impression upon meeting your service-learner(s)?
31. To what extent did you perceive that the student enjoyed working with people of a different race, social class, or culture?
32. To what extent did you perceive that the student valued working with people of a different race, social class, or culture?
33. To what extent did service-learner(s) cause any harm or discomfort to you or to any other agency members because of their insensitivity about race, social class, or cultural differences?
34. To what extent did site members cause any harm or discomfort to student(s) because of their insensitivity about race, social class, or cultural differences?
35. From your perspective, how did your service-learners’ perceptions/assumptions of site change over the course of the semester?
36. How would you characterize your interaction with your service-learner(s) at the end of the semester?
37. How did this relationship change over time?
38. To what extent do you feel that Tulane University (TU) is sensitive to the needs of the New Orleans community?
39. To what extent do you feel that TU is dedicated to a real involvement with the community?
40. To what extent did you find the operations of TU to be unsuitable to the operations of your organization?
41. What is your current perception of the university's relationship to the community?

APPENDIX D
(Porter Honnet & Poulsen, 1989)

Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning

1. An effective program engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
2. An effective program provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.
3. An effective program articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.
4. An effective program allows for those with needs to define those needs.
5. An effective program clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.
6. An effective program matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.
7. An effective program expects genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment.
8. An effective program includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.
9. An effective program insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved.
10. An effective program is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.

APPENDIX E

Faculty Partner Protocol

Hi, my name is Julie Caruccio and I am a graduate student at ___________. I am studying several community service projects here in town as part of my dissertation; in particular, I am studying reciprocity in community engagement partnerships. A reciprocal relationship is one characterized by mutual benefit, shared risk, and the acknowledgement that everyone in a partnership is serving and being served and that all involved are both teaching and learning. I am interested in your experience as a participant in [name of project]. I have a bunch of questions and I'll be taking notes as we talk. I will also record our conversation if it's ok with you so that I remember what we said, but know that I am the only one who will have access to those recordings. The information that you give me will be kept confidential, meaning no one will be able to identify you as the person who said it. Feel free to ask for clarification on anything; you can stop the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we start? Ok, let's begin.

1. Please describe your project for me.
a. volunteering? Service learning? CBR? Other?
b. who is the primary driver (students, fac/admin, community)?
c. length?
d. location?
e. type of class if applicable (capstone, core, major, etc)
f. academic credit?
g. goals?
h. transcript notation?
i. leadership program?
j. internship?
2. What's the major issue/challenge/need addressed by the partner organization?
3. How does this partnership affect that issue?
4. Please describe your relationship with (other partners in project).
5. Tell me how the partnership with [community partner] developed.
a. Why did you choose this community partner?
b. What was attractive about this community partner?
6. What resources does [insert cp name] have that are useful to you?
7. How much contact do/did you have with [community partner] during the project?
8. What was the extent of [community partner's] role in the project?
9. In what ways does the community partner's role differ from yours in this project?
10. In what ways is it the same?
11. How would you characterize the levels of involvement of you and your community partner?

Follow-up probe: Would you characterize yourselves as equal partners? If so why/how? If not, why not?

12. How do students become involved in the project?
13. How do clients become involved with the project?
14. What training or preparation do students receive before they enter the site?
o you feel that it is adequate? Why or why not?

15. What would you say are the formal outcomes of this project (publications, fundraising efforts, student credit/learning)?

What are the formal outcomes to community partner agencies

What are the formal outcomes to community partner clients?

ow, if at all, is participation in this partnership recognized in a formal way?

16. In what ways, if any, are the client participants better able to serve themselves as a result of this partnership?

17. What are you teaching in this partnership? To whom?

18. What are you learning in this partnership? From whom?

19. What are your expected learning outcomes for students?

20. What, if anything, do you feel [insert cp name] can teach your students?

21. What type of reflection is built into the partnership?

or whom? (who participates in the reflection)

22. How, if at all, are students involved in the planning of this project?

In the implementation?

n the assessment?

23. How is this project assessed or evaluated?

In what ways, if at all, are community partners included in that assessment?

n what ways are students included in that assessment?

24. What effect would you say the results of your assessment have on the project?

How are these data used?

What barriers, if any, exist in using or applying these data?

How does this project's assessment relate to campus-wide and agency-wide tracking?

hat part, if any, do these data play in your P&T?

25. What benefits do you feel you are receiving as a result of this partnership?

26. What benefits do you feel your students are receiving as a result of this partnership?

27. What benefits do you feel the community agency partners are receiving as a result of this partnership?

28. What benefits do you feel the client participants are receiving as a result of this partnership?

29. What are the benefits to the university arising from this partnership?

30. What impact does this partnership have on faculty?

31. What impact does this partnership have on students?

32. What impact does this partnership have on the institution?

33. In what ways, if at all, does this partnership make the community well-being stronger?

34. In what ways, if at all, is the learning students gain deeper than in other academic settings?

35. What effects, if any, has the partnership had on students' civic learning?

36. In what ways, if any, does this partnership contribute to the scholarship of the institution?

37. What risks do you feel you take on in the course of this partnership?

38. What risks do your partners take on?
39. How do you feel about those risks?
40. In what ways do your partners show you they understand the risks you are taking?
41. In what ways do you show them?
42. What do you give? What do you get?
43. Do you feel these are balanced? Why or why not?
44. Engagement is often messy. What happens when something needs to change? Who makes those decisions?
45. How often, if at all, do you have conversations with other participants in this project about issues of race, power or privilege in the partnership?

Tell me about those conversations.

How do you process the information raised in these conversations?

ow, if at all, have these conversations changed your perspective on race, power or privilege?

46. What are the drawbacks, if any, to the university from this relationship? (and the ask to you specifically, then to your students, then to any of the community partners)

47. Why do you think that is?

48. How, if at all, could those be avoided?

49. Would you call them harm? Why or why not?

50. How do you promote mutuality or reciprocity in this partnership?

51. How is feedback gathered? What is the effect of that feedback?

52. How would you rate this partnership's level of reciprocity?

53. What professional outcomes are you hoping will come of this work?

54. Does the university support your professional development with regard to community engagement? In what ways, specifically?

ow is your participation in c.e. characterized in the P&T process?

55. What role, if any, does community engagement play in your dept's recruitment & retainment strategies?

56. Is engagement with the community a priority for your department/school? If so, where does that show up?

57. In what ways, if at all, does the community have a voice in this planning?

58. What's your impression of the community partner agency & its clients?

What kinds of things made you feel that way?

Has it changed at all as a result of this project?

n what ways?

59. How would you characterize this work?

60. What do you like best about it?

61. What's your least favorite part?

62. After this project is over, in what ways, if any, to you think the clients/partner organization will be better able to [insert target here – e.g., live independently, read better, access health and affordable food, serve those who do, etc]?

63. From your perspective, has this project been successful? Why/not?

64. Is there anything else about the project that you want to talk about that hasn't come up yet?

Thanks so much for your participation in this project. That's all the questions I have.

APPENDIX F

Student Protocol

Hi, my name is Julie Caruccio and I am a graduate student at ___________. I am studying several community service projects here in town as part of my dissertation; in particular, I am studying reciprocity in community engagement partnerships. A reciprocal relationship is one characterized by mutual benefit, shared risk, the acknowledgement that everyone in a partnership is serving and being served, and that all involved are both teaching and learning. I am interested in your experience as a participant in [name of project]. I have a bunch of questions and I'll be taking notes as we talk. I will also record our conversation if it's ok with you so that I remember what we said, but know that I am the only one who will have access to those recordings. The information that you give me will be kept confidential, meaning no one will be able to identify you as the person who said it. Feel free to ask for clarification on anything and you can stop the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we start? Ok, let's begin.

1. Tell me about this project.
a. What is your role?
b. Please describe your relationship with (other partners in project).
c. If part of a class, what are the academic requirements?
2. What's the major issue/challenge/need addressed by the partner organization?
a. How does this partnership affect that issue?
3. How did you get involved?
a. What prompted you to join?
b. What was attractive about this project/partner?

[this section asked if student is a PD/lead on project]
4. Tell me how the partnership with [community partner] developed.
a. Why did you choose this community partner?
b. What was attractive about this community partner?
5. What resources does [insert cp name] have that are useful to you?
6. How much contact do/did you have with [community partner] during the project?
7. What was the extent of [community partner's] role in the project?
8. In what ways does the community partner's role differ from yours in this project?
9. In what ways is it the same?
10. How would you characterize the levels – were they equal partners?
11. How do students become involved in the project?
12. How do clients become involved with the project?
13. What training or preparation did you/do students receive before they enter the site?
    o you feel that it is adequate? Why or why not?

1. What are you learning in this partnership? From whom?
2. What are you teaching in this partnership? To whom?

16. What do you give? What do you get?
a. Tell me how you think you are benefiting from this relationship.

b. [If a PD] What benefits do you feel your volunteers are receiving as a result of this partnership?
c. What benefits do you feel the community agency partners are receiving as a result of this partnership?
d. What benefits do you feel the client participants are receiving as a result of this partnership?
e. What, if anything, do you feel [insert cp name] can teach the other volunteers?
f. What, if anything, do you feel [insert cp name] can teach you?
g. What are the benefits to the university arising from this partnership?
h. In what ways, if at all, does this partnership make the community well-being stronger?
i. In what ways, if at all, is the learning you are gaining deeper than in other academic settings?
j. What effects, if any, has the partnership had on your civic learning?
k. In what ways, if any, does this partnership contribute to the scholarship of the institution?

[next 4 questions asked only if student is lead on project]
1. What would you say are the formal outcomes of this project (publications, fundraising efforts, student credit/learning)?
2. What are the formal outcomes to community partner agencies
3. What are the formal outcomes to community partner clients?
4. How, if at all, is participation in this partnership recognized in a formal way?

6. How often, if at all, do you have conversations with other participants in this project about issues of race, power or privilege in the partnership?
a. Tell me about those conversations.
b. How do you process the information raised in these conversations?
c. How, if at all, have these conversations changed your perspective on race, power or privilege?

7. What risks do you feel you take on in the course of this partnership?
a. What risks do your partners take on?
b. How do you feel about those risks?
c. In what ways do your partners show you they understand the risks you are taking?
d. In what ways do you show them?

1. We've just discussed the benefits and risks involved in this partnership. Do you feel these are balanced? Why or why not?

. ngagement is often messy. What happens when something needs to change? Who makes those decisions?

10. What are the drawbacks, if any, to you that result from this relationship?
To the community agency?
To the clients?
To the community generally?
o faculty or the university?
11. Why do you think that is?
12. How, if at all, could those be avoided?

13. Would you call them harm? Why or why not?

14. How is this project assessed or evaluated?
a. how is feedback gathered? What is the effect of that feedback?
b. In what ways, if at all, are community partners included in that assessment?
c. In what ways are students included in that assessment?
d. What effect would you say the results of your assessment have on the project?
i. how are these data used?
e. what barriers, if any, exist in using or applying these data?
f. how does this project's assessment relate to campus-wide and agency-wide tracking?

1. In what ways, if any, are the client participants better able to serve themselves as a result of this partnership?
2. How would you rate this partnership's level of reciprocity?

1. What do you like best about it?
2. What's your least favorite part?

19. After this project is over, in what ways, if any, to you think the clients/partner organization will be better able to [insert target here – e.g., live independently, read better, access health and affordable food, serve those who do, etc]?
20. From your perspective, has this project been successful? Why/not?
21. Is there anything else about the project that you want to talk about that hasn't come up yet?

Thanks so much for your participation in this project. That's all the questions I have.

APPENDIX G

Community Agency Head Protocol

Hi, my name is Julie Caruccio and I am a graduate student at ___________. I am studying several community service projects here in town as part of my dissertation; in particular, I am studying reciprocity in community engagement partnerships. A reciprocal relationship is one characterized by mutual benefit, shared risk, the acknowledgement that everyone in a partnership is serving and being served, and that all involved are both teaching and learning. I am interested in your experience as a participant in [name of project]. I have a bunch of questions and I'll be taking notes as we talk. I will also record our conversation if it's ok with you so that I remember what we said, but know that I am the only one who will have access to those recordings. The information that you give me will be kept confidential, meaning no one will be able to identify you as the person who said it. Feel free to ask for clarification on anything and you can stop the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we start? Ok, let's begin.

1. Tell me about your participation in this project.
2. What's the major issue/challenge/need addressed by your organization?
3. How does this partnership affect that issue?
4. How did you get involved in this project?

a. In what ways were you involved in the planning of the project?
b. Who came to whom to initiate the project?
c. Did you make suggestions? Were they taken?
d. who gets to pick the participants (students)?

5. Overall, how would you characterize the planning of the project?

a. Has that changed over the course of the project?
b. What affects that change, would you say?

6. Can you describe your interactions with the students in this project?

a. What was your first impression of them?
b. What do you think was their first impression of you?
c. What do they do?
d. How do they act?
e. How, if at all, has your impression of them changed as a result of this project?
f. How directly related to your agency's needs were their responsibilities?

7. (ask same questions about faculty if applicable)

. In what ways were the students effective – or ineffective – in helping your agency fulfill its goals?

. o you feel like the students (& fac if applicable) are learning from you? What kinds of things are you teaching them?

. What, if anything, do you feel [the students/university] can teach you?

. What benefits do you feel you/your organization are receiving as a result of this partnership?

. What benefits do you feel your client participants are receiving as a result of this partnership?

. What benefits do you feel students are receiving as a result of this partnership?

.	What benefits do you feel the university/faculty members are receiving as a result of this partnership?

1. What risks do you feel you take on in the course of this partnership?
2. What risks do your partners take on?
3. How do you feel about those risks?
4. In what ways do your partners show you they understand the risks you are taking?
5. In what ways do you show them?

20. What impact does this partnership have on your organization?
21. What impact does this partnership have on your clients?
22. What impact does this partnership have on the community
23. What impact does this partnership have on students?
24. What impact does this partnership have on the institution?
25. What impact does this partnership have on faculty?
26. In what ways, if at all, does this partnership make the community well-being stronger?
27. What effects, if any, has the partnership had on students' civic learning?
28. In what ways, if any, does this partnership contribute to the knowledge base/resources of your organization?
29. How often, if at all, do you have conversations with other participants in this project about issues of race, power or privilege in the partnership?

Tell me about those conversations.

How do you process the information raised in these conversations?

ow, if at all, have these conversations changed your perspective on race, power or privilege?

30. Engagement is often messy. What happens when something needs to change? Who makes those decisions?

1. What would you say are the formal outcomes of this project (publications, fundraising efforts, student credit/learning)?
2. What are the formal outcomes to your organization?
3. What are the formal outcomes to your clients?
4. How, if at all, is participation in this partnership recognized in a formal way?

35. What are the drawbacks, if any, to your organization of this relationship?

.	hat parts of the project have been unsuitable to your organization, if any?

.	36. In what ways, if any, did the students cause harm to your organization or its clients?

.	37. In what ways, if any, did interaction with your organization or its clients cause harm to the students? (fac if applicable)?

.	38. Why do you think that is?

.	39. How, if at all, could those be avoided?

.	40. Would you call them harm? Why or why not?

.	41. How is feedback gathered? What is the effect of that feedback?

.	R: How is this project assessed or evaluated?

.	42. In what ways, if at all, are you included in that assessment?

.	43. In what ways are students included in that assessment?

.	44. What effect would you say the results of your assessment have on the project?

. 45. How are these data used?
. 46. What barriers, if any, exist in using or applying these data?
. 47. How does this project's assessment relate to agency-wide tracking?
. 48. What part, if any, do these data play in your performance evaluation?

49. Is engagement with the university a priority for your organization? If so, where does that show up?
50. In what ways, if at all, do you feel the community has a voice in the university's planning?
51. What's your current perception of the university's relationship to the community?
What informs that perception?
Has that perception changed as a result of this project?
n what ways?

1. How do you promote mutuality or reciprocity in this partnership?
2. How would you rate this partnership's level of reciprocity?

1. What do you like best about it?
2. What's your least favorite part?

56. After this project is over, in what ways, if any, to you think your clients/your organization will be better able to [insert target here – e.g., live independently, read better, access health and affordable food, serve those who do, etc]?
57. From your perspective, has this project been successful? Why/not?
58. Is there anything else about the project that you want to talk about that hasn't come up yet?

Thanks so much for your participation in this project. That's all the questions I have.

APPENDIX H

Community Partner Client Protocol

Hi, my name is Julie Caruccio and I am a graduate student at ___________. I am studying several community service projects here in town as part of my dissertation; in particular, I am studying reciprocity in community engagement partnerships. A reciprocal relationship is one characterized by mutual benefit, shared risk, the acknowledgement that everyone in a partnership is serving and being served, and that all involved are both teaching and learning. I am interested in your experience as a participant in [name of project]. I have a bunch of questions and I'll be taking notes as we talk. I will also record our conversation if it's ok with you so that I remember what we said, but know that I am the only one who will have access to those recordings. The information that you give me will be kept confidential, meaning no one will be able to identify you as the person who said it. Feel free to ask for clarification on anything and you can stop the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we start? Ok, let's begin.

Ok, do you have any questions? Now we'll shift to focus on [project title]. Remember, stop me any time you need clarification or want a break. Ready?
1. Tell me about your participation in this project.
2. How did you get involved in this project?
3. What do you like best about it?
4. What's your least favorite part?
5. Can you describe your interactions with the students in this project?
a. What was your first impression of them?
b. What do you think was their first impression of you?
c. What do they do?
d. How do they act?
e. How, if at all, has your impression of them changed as a result of this project?
6. (ask same question about faculty if applicable)
7. What's your impression of the university?
a. What kinds of things made you feel that way?
b. Has it changed at all as a result of this project?
c. In what ways?
8. What's the major issue/challenge/need addressed by this organization?
9. How does this partnership affect that issue?

10. What kinds of things do you feel like you're getting as part of this project?
. Tell me how you think you are benefiting from this relationship.
. What, if anything, do you feel [insert cp name] can teach your students?
. What, if anything, do you feel [the students/university] can teach you?
. hat are the benefits to the university arising from this partnership?
. 11. What risks do you feel you take on in the course of this partnership?
. a. What risks do your partners take on?
. b. How do you feel about those risks?
. c. In what ways do your partners show you they understand the risks you are taking?
. d. In what ways do you show them?

. 12. What, if anything, do you feel like you're learning?
. 13. Do you feel like the students (& fac if applicable) are learning from you? What kinds of things are you teaching them?
. What do you know that they don't?
. What do they do when you teach them about these things?
. id you know this about yourself before the project?
. 14. How often, if at all, do you have conversations with other participants in this project about issues of race, power or privilege in the partnership?
. Tell me about those conversations.
. How do you process the information raised in these conversations?
. ow, if at all, have these conversations changed your perspective on race, power or privilege?
. 15. What things are hard about this project, if anything?
. Why do you think that is?
. Do you feel like this project has caused you harm? Do you feel like you were better off in this way before the project? Can you explain?
. ave you told (name of agency head/faculty/student) about this? What was the reaction?
. 16. After this project is over, in what ways, if any, to you think you'll be better able to [insert target here – e.g., live independently, read better, access health and affordable food, etc]?
. 17. In what ways, if at all, does this partnership make the community well-being stronger?
. 18. From your perspective, has this project been successful? Why/not?
. 19. How would you rate this partnership's level of reciprocity?
. 20. Is there anything else about the project that you want to talk about that hasn't come up yet?

Thanks so much for your participation in this project. That's all the questions I have.