Resources for Reflection in Service-Learning

Volumes have been written about critical reflection, as it is one of the central pillars of service-learning. A few key resources that we have found useful are described here, with a discussion of what purpose the reading or resource might serve, and what audiences might find it helpful.

- Pigza, Jennifer (2010). [Developing Your Ability to Foster Student Learning and Development through Reflection](#). In Jacoby, Barbara and Mutascio, Pamela, eds. *Looking In, Reaching Out: A reflective guide for community service-learning professionals.* Boston: Campus Compact.

  This article is an excellent overview of critical reflection in service-learning, situating it in the context of student development and experiential learning theories. It includes a sample overarching rubric, offers reflective questions for instructors, and provides some detailed descriptions of example assignments and formats for (primarily written) critical reflection (Worksheet 5-3). It is our favorite reading for faculty and SLTAs.

- Ash, Sarah and Clayton, Patti (2009). [Introduction to Critical Reflection](#). Ch 2 in *Learning Through Critical Reflection: A Tutorial for Service-Learning Students (Student Version).* (self published).

  This article is a deep dive into critical reflection for students. It is practical, in that it gives clear explanations of how to write reflectively, with examples from student reflections in service-learning. It would probably be best used as a handout or assignment in a course where students were regularly keeping reflective journals, or doing quite a bit of reflective writing. It emphasizes three key points:
    1. "everything is reflection-worthy"
    2. rigorous reflection on an experience can yield multiple types of learning (the authors emphasize academic, civic and personal learning)
    3. reflective writing differs from academic writing in that it is a <u>vehicle</u> for learning, particularly developing one's own ideas and insights.
  This article could also be an excellent basis for a mini-lecture in an SL course, or portions of it could be assigned or shown as stand-alone information.

- [Critical Thinking Standards](#): This handout showcases the typical critical thinking standards – with questions and examples based on service-learning reflection. This could be a very useful handout for students, especially for getting them to reflect on their reflections before handing them in.

- [Bloom's Taxonomy of Reflection](#): an adapted Bloom's Taxonomy; could be used to guide the design of reflection assignments to progress through the taxonomy.

- Stephen Brookfield, *[The Skillful Teacher](#), ch 7 & 8: Preparing Students for Discussion, & ch 8: Getting Students to Participate in Discussion*.

Hands down the best discussion of discussion we've read. Excellent techniques for building honest and participatory discussions.

Racism in Service-Learning Design and Reflection

- Mitchell, T., Donahue, D., & Young-Law, C. (2012). [Service Learning as a Pedagogy of Whiteness](). *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45*(4), 612-629.

    This article should be read by anyone doing service-learning; it asks instructors to seriously consider the role of race in SL design, implementation and in the practice of critical reflection. The authors provide a cringe-worthy scenario which elegantly illustrates the ways that unaddressed racism results in negative experiences for students of color in the service context, as well as reinforce racialized assumptions for white students. The argument can easily be extended in relationship to social class or other social justice issues.

Resources for Reciprocity in Service-Learning

While it's relatively easy to talk about reciprocal partnerships in service-learning, creating them takes a great deal of time and intention. Any short list of resources would be necessarily incomplete, but these illustrate a few key points of consideration when building (and sustaining) reciprocity in SL projects.

- Martin, A., SeBlonka K., and Tryon, E. (2009). [The Challenge of Short-Term Service-Learning](). Ch. 4 in Stoecker, R., and Tryon, E., eds. *The Unheard Voices: Community organizations and Service Learning.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

    This article outlines some of the inherent challenges that arise from the mismatch of academic/student schedules with those of their community partners. It frames reciprocity in terms of how even short-term efforts might contribute to the long-term mission or goals of an organization, and partnership as a commitment that begins before and extends beyond the scope of a single course or academic year.

- Harrison, B., and Clayton, P. (2012). [Reciprocity as a Threshold Concept for Faculty Who Are Learning to Teach with Service-Learning](). *The Journal of Faculty Development*, *26*(3), 29-33.

    This article examines the theory of threshold concepts — and the transformative, troublesome, and liminal elements contained therein — as it applies to reciprocity in service-learning. It emphasizes the necessity of recognizing and balancing power dynamics, sharing responsibility, and working *with* instead of *for* the community.

- Tinkler, A., Tinkler, B., Hausman, E., and Tufo Strouse, G. (2014). Key Elements of Effective Service-Learning Partnerships from the Perspective of Community Partners. *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning & Civic Engagement, 5*(2), 137-152.

  Written by UVM professors and their local community partners, this article focuses on six key features of effective community partners as identified by the partners themselves. Most applicable for direct service model SL projects, but concepts can be broadly applied to reciprocal partnerships generally.

- Mitchell, T., Donahue, D., & Young-Law, C. (2012). Service Learning as a Pedagogy of Whiteness. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45*(4), 612-629.

  See above.