Collin County Community College District
APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

Instructions
Please complete this application by responding to all items. Attach requested documentation (in the order requested) and secure the appropriate signatures prior to submitting the application to the chair of the Sabbatical Leave Committee. Please submit the original and 10 copies.

Name Jennifer L. O'Loughlin-Brooks
CWID __________________________
Title Professor of Psychology
Division Social Sciences

Have you ever been granted a sabbatical? _yes_ If yes: Date: ____________________________

Please provide a brief description of your previous sabbatical project:

<table>
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<th>Sabbatical Leave Period Being Requested</th>
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<td>Dates: Beginning Date August 2011 Ending Date December 2011</td>
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<td>Length: One semester [ ] Two semesters [ ] Other ____________________________</td>
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Applicant’s Agreement

ABSTRACT
Please give a summary description of the project and its significance in a language that can be readily understood by persons in areas of expertise other than your own. PLEASE DO NOT EXCEED SPACE PROVIDED BELOW.

The purpose of my sabbatical leave will be to conduct extensive research on prevailing service-learning models, and from this research to construct a comprehensive model (quasi concept map) specific to service-learning in psychology. This type of model would provide faculty and students with a strong visual to understand the dynamics of service-learning in psychology. Supporting the Collin Mission Statement; Creativity and Innovation will come from the creation of this model, while the outcome of my research, interviews and model construction will enhance service and involvement in my courses and hopefully extend to my colleagues at Collin and into the academic community at large.

I plan to conduct a thorough review of the literature with regard to service-learning models/diagrams/concept maps and also to interview psychology faculty from diverse institutions who actively integrate service-learning into the classroom structure. From these interviews, I will ask (volunteers) faculty to construct complete concept maps (I will provide the template) which represent their individual experiences; from construction of the course to implementation. Engaging faculty from around the country should open doors for future collaborative partnerships.

Infusing examples and information gained from the literature and personal interviews will provide needed insight to create a comprehensive current model. The research will also enhance my pedagogy by providing new directions and ideas for the integration of service-learning in the classroom. I also plan to collaborate with Terry Heckenbrough, Collin CSCE Director, on ways to improve the Service-Learning Program (Social Sciences area) with a focus on increasing the reach into underrepresented disciplines.
Fall 2011 Sabbatical Proposal

Jennifer L. O’Loughlin-Brooks

Professor of Psychology

Collin College
Exploring Service-Learning Models: A Need for Creating a Comprehensive Model Specific to Service-Learning in Psychology

I. Purpose

- To construct a comprehensive model (quasi concept map) specific to service-learning in psychology based principally on field research. This type of model would provide faculty and students with a strong visual to conceptualize the dynamics of service-learning in psychology.

- An inclusive model of service-learning in psychology would provide faculty and students “a quick understanding of the entire process.” Visual models illustrate hierarchy of ideas, allow for quick interpretation and aid in visualizing outcomes. Ideas can often be grasped much more rapidly with a visual model than by “reading them in an article or book.”

Objectives

- Conduct extensive research on prevailing service-learning models.

- Interview psychology faculty from various institutions who actively integrate service-learning into their classroom structures. From these interviews, have (volunteers) faculty construct complete concept maps (I will provide the template) which represent their individual unique experiences; from construction of the course to implementation.

- Engaging service-learning faculty from around the country in order to learn from them will hopefully open doors for future service-learning collaborative partnerships.

- Support the Collin Mission Statement; Creativity and Innovation which will come from the creation of this model.

- Serve as a resource for faculty at Collin and the academic community at large with regard to service-learning in psychology.

II. Introduction & Rationale

“Psychology and service are about people,” (Ozorak, 2003) which makes psychology a discipline well-positioned to reap the benefits of service-learning. Student comprehension of psychological concepts like personality theory, learning, cognition, emotion, social psychology, memory and others could be
facilitated by students serving in the community and meeting real needs like helping at-risk youth, tutoring, assisting with childcare programs, helping the elderly, etc. (Ozorak, 2003).

The main difference between service-learning and the typical classroom experience involves the benefits of applied learning. In the classroom, faculty attempt to create this with examples from personal experience, instructor’s manuals and ideas from colleagues. This often engages students on a basic level, but is a somewhat artificial experience when compared to a student making first-hand connections between an abstract concept and a concrete situation. This is the difference between familiarity with concepts and proficiency and mastery of such.

Using and modifying David Kolb’s (1984) framework for learning styles, one can capitalize on the affordances of the service learning pedagogical approach. Kolb specifies in his model’s four basic types of learning styles and how these may combine to form unique types of best opportunities for particular learners. Service learning advocates have adopted this model to show how various learners have benefitted from a service experience (Connors and Siefer, 2005).

While learning styles have held popular sway in education and psychology for several decades, there are some criticisms of this approach. Self-reports of a particular learning style may enhance a person’s perception of material as more pleasing or accessible, but conveying material in a particular style does not necessarily lead to improved outcomes in terms of content mastery (Pashley, McDaniel, Rohrer and Bjork, 2009). For this reason, Kolb’s model has been adapted and modified and is further clarified in this rationale.

Figure 1. A Model of Student Engagement through Kolb’s Styles as Process in Service Learning

A model of student engagement
Service learning challenges students on multiple levels in a manner that conventional classroom instruction does not. By providing students a forum to explore their environment via a reasonably safe, institutionally-constructed service experience, faculty can facilitate a student’s ability to make meaningful connections between what sometimes may seem like arcane theories and definitions to events that occur in their local community that may conversely seem of more immediate import. Through the concrete experience of service, students engage in active experimentation, application of abstract concepts and reflective thought to better understand the relevance of not only course material, but of being a part of an educated citizenry.

When undertaking a service project, there are a number of concrete elements for the learner. First, students are introduced to definitions, concepts and models that require some degree of memorization. While it is a goal to move beyond that level of rote learning, it is generally an early step, from being able to label the lobes of the brain to being able to define measures of central tendency. The actual service is in some ways a similarly concrete experience. The student encounters real people in real time with life situations that require remediation or assistance with real consequences. This is no longer a classroom exercise on shaping, but a child with question, an elder in need of cognitive stimulation or an infant seeking contact comfort.

In order to meet the needs of those with whom they work, students engage, whether they are aware of it or not, in active experimentation. They must analyze situations and test, through mental manipulations, the optimal courses of action. This process of analysis, decision and commitment fosters the development of critical thinking skills. They do this under the guided direction of faculty and community mentors to ensure the safety of themselves and those they serve, but they nevertheless are prompted to engage in hypothetical deductive reasoning and are, in essence, probing their abilities for scientific thinking through experimentation. For example, students often initially make largely harmless, missteps when working with a special needs child, such as patting the back of a child with autism without making appropriate contact first. They quickly learn “what they know” may be limited to personal experience that does not apply across contexts, developing an appreciation not only for diversity, but for learning, particularly of psychology course material.

Often during the service process, students are required to keep a journal, chronicling their experiences and how they make sense of them. In these journals, service-learners are expected to make connections between the discussions from class and the adventures they have encountered at their service agencies. Theoretical perspectives can often appear beyond the grasp of undergraduate students, but the concrete application can sometimes accelerate understanding. This affords the student a tremendous opportunity to attempt to
discern which theories are most appropriate to the day's events and often come to the realization that it may actually be an eclectic blend that best helps explain what they faced. Reflective observation also frequently brings students to the hoped-for conclusion that they received more than they gave during their service experience. (Smith & O'Loughlin-Brooks e-chapter on Service Learning, 2010)

Although Kolb's Model and others may be adequate visual examples to describe the student engagement experience, discipline specific models (Venn diagrams, concept maps) based on field research could provide a great benefit to faculty and students embarking on the service-learning experience.

For example, psychology service learning enthusiasts could view the hierarchy of the experience; depicting service learning from the development of relationships with specific community partners to applying critical thinking skills and academic knowledge to reflection. Practical experience (see below) might be expressed via examples such as: working with behavioral and emotional disorders, developmental and learning disabilities, homelessness, domestic violence, and substance abuse, etc...

![Diagram of service learning models](www.whitworth.edu/.../Faculty.htm)

### III. Methods of Procedure

- First, I will be conducting a complete review of the literature as it relates to service-learning models. This research will require obtaining information from service-learning journals, for example; The Journal for Civic Commitment,
In order to acquire information not yielded from available literature, I will be utilizing the “survey method,” and will be interviewing (by phone and online) psychology faculty from around the country representing various institutions in order to better understand how service-learning is implemented in the “real” classroom environment. Utilizing the National Campus Compact website and working with the Collin CSCE, faculty actively engaging in service-learning will be selected. Through the interview process, I will provide a “concept map” template for selected faculty to use in order to better understand conceptually how they view course construction and implementation. Examples of the possible type of concept map I might employ are represented below.

IV. Previous research and subsequent publications provided the impetus for the current sabbatical request.


V. Benefits

- Faculty and students will benefit from a strong visual in order to conceptualize the dynamics of service-learning in psychology.

- Personal Enrichment and Dissemination of Knowledge in the classroom and beyond (conferences, publications).

- Engaging faculty from around the country should open doors for future collaborative partnerships.

- Providing new directions and ideas for the integration of service-learning in psychology.

VI. Timetable for accomplishing this project:

August 2011

- Begin research and attend any service-learning conferences/workshops that will augment the study. This month will be devoted to a complete review of the literature pertaining to models in service-learning and also to psychology service-learning courses.

September/October 2011

- Interview psychology faculty from institutions across the country who participate in service-learning (working with the Collin CSCE and the National Campus Compact).

- Provide concept map templates to volunteer faculty in order to obtain information on how they conceptualize their course construction and implementation.

- Pull concept maps that will be used when constructing the service-learning model in psychology.

November/December 2011

- Complete construction of the comprehensive model for service-learning in psychology and have faculty colleague’s review.
• Make any suggested changes to the model

• Finish research paper (APA format) and prepare for presentation at regional/national psychology conferences

VII. Bibliography


http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Edward_C._Tolman


Learning With Concept and Knowledge Maps: A Meta-Analysis.
http://rer.sagepub.com/content/76/3/413.abstract.


**Books**


**Reflection & Service Learning**

**Articles**


Reed, J. & Koliba, C. *Facilitating reflection: A manual for leaders and educators*.

Books

