Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership 2016, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 3–24
http://dx.doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2016-V6-I1-7200

International Service Learning in Public and Nonprofit Management Education

Reflections From Multiple Stakeholders and Lessons Learned

Susan Appe
Nadia Rubaii
Kerry Stamp
Binghamton University

Abstract

In this paper, we address international service-learning (ISL) programs in public affairs and nonprofit management education. ISL programs are becoming increasingly popular offerings at universities as they strive to prepare graduates to become responsible and globally oriented citizens. However, little literature exists in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education about the pedagogy of ISL. To address this gap, we used perspectives of multiple stakeholders for systemic evaluation of ISL design and implementation. Systematic evaluations must be conducted to ensure that objectives for the full range of stakeholders are being met. Program-specific findings and broad recommendations are presented. The recommendations include (1) establish clear objectives and expectations for all stakeholders; (2) emphasize partnership and continued, sustained communication; and (3) include academic content and reflection about ethics and related values. Additionally, the results of our multistakeholder evaluation suggest the value of incorporating this methodology on an ongoing basis.

Keywords: *international service learning; service learning; multistakeholder evaluation; community partners; reciprocity*

Susan Appe is assistant professor, Department of Public Administration, Binghamton University. **Nadia Rubaii** is associate professor, Department of Public Administration, Binghamton University. **Kerry Stamp** is assistant director for study abroad, Office of International Programs, Binghamton University. Please send author correspondence to sappe@binghamton.edu

The notion that universities have a responsibility to prepare students for the world of work and their role as citizens is not new, nor is the idea that learning can, does, and should occur outside the classroom. This university responsibility has expanded to include international service learning (ISL) as an instructional pedagogy. Little literature exists in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education about the pedagogy of ISL. In fact, there is very little data collection on international programs of various kinds in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education, almost no analysis if data are collected, and an overreliance on anecdotal evidence (Rubaii, Appe, & Stamp, in press). In practice, we found that the seven ISL programs that do exist in the field have cited challenges with systematic evaluation of the pedagogy (Appe, Rubaii, & Stamp, in press). In this article, we present lessons learned from ISL programs in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education.

In our essay, we are compelled to go beyond student perspectives, which are the focus of many of the more traditional studies on service learning in the nonprofit management education literature (see Gillman & Penor Ceglian, 2012; Unger, Pribesh, Bol, & Dickerson, 2014; VanHorn & Elliott, 2010). Rather, we validate the need to incorporate key stakeholders in ongoing evaluations. We argue that with the potential growth of the ISL pedagogy in particular, systematic evaluations must be conducted to ensure that objectives for the full range of stakeholders are being met. In this article, we introduce the major debates in the ISL literature that have not been addressed in the public affairs and nonprofit management education literature and present recommendations for faculty and administrators about the design, implementation, and assessment of ISL programs based on our experiences.

In this reflective essay, we use multiple stakeholder perspectives to evaluate the design and implementation of an ISL program conducted by Binghamton University in southern Peru in 2013 through its Department of Public Administration (hereafter called the Peru Program). The program is open to students across the university, but is focused on local government and local nonprofit management in Peru. Given that the program was initiated in 2013 and we have conducted a multiple-stakeholder evaluation, this reflective essay is presented as a lessons learned to inform faculty and administrators in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education on the design and implementation of ISL programming. We begin by presenting a brief review of service learning (SL) and international service learning (ISL). Then we include a description of the Peru Program components and our multiple-stakeholder evaluation methodology. Based on our research, we identify opportunities for specific program improvements as well as general guidelines to advance ethical and responsible ISL in public affairs and nonprofit management education.

The Evolving Role of the University and the Path to International Service Learning

The role of universities in preparing socially responsible and globally oriented citizens and professionals has been well articulated. Although not referring explicitly to SL, UNESCO (1998) in its World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century stated, "Higher education should reinforce its role of service to society, especially its activities aimed at eliminating poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger, environmental degradation and disease, mainly through an interdisciplinary

and transdisciplinary approach in the analysis of problems and issues" ("Shaping a New Vision," Article 6, para. 2).

SL is one method of achieving the UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century. It is distinct from simple volunteering on the part of individuals or community engagement projects coordinated by university faculty or staff (Howard, 1993). SL is a type of experiential learning in which students are engaged in community activities as an integrated aspect of a course. SL is also different from practice-based education (e.g., residencies, internships, fieldwork, co-op programs) in which students are developing professional skills in that SL classes involve students in community activities linked to specific learning objectives of a course.

ISL is used as a pedagogy across several fields (Grusky, 2000; Moore McBride, Lough, & Sherraden, 2012). ISL is a structured academic experience for students in a country other than their own. In ISL programming, students

> (a) participate in organized service activity that addresses identified community needs; (b) learn from direct interaction and cross-cultural dialogue with others; and (c) reflect on the experience in such a way as to gain a deeper understanding of the global and intercultural issues, a broader appreciation of the host country and the discipline, and an enhanced sense of their own responsibilities as citizens, locally and globally. (Bringle & Hatcher, 2011, p. 19)

Evaluating International Service Learning and Its Challenges

The literature on ISL is small but growing (Crabtree, 2008), but studies of ISL are still largely absent from the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education (Appe et al., in press). In a 2013–2014 study of the nearly 300 master's-level programs in public affairs with membership in the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), only seven of the 140 survey respondents had ISL programs (Appe et al., in press). Questions about the measurement of outcomes and "success" (or lack thereof) are familiar to many education and community engagement programs. Short-term or limited student learning outcomes are often prioritized (for examples in nonprofit management education, see Gillman & Penor Ceglian, 2012; Unger et al., 2014; VanHorn & Elliot, 2011), but are still hard to measure because more long-term assessment is needed to gauge many intended outcomes. An example of long-term outcomes is the success of producing global citizens who remain civically engaged over the long term (Waldner, Roberts, Widener, & Sullivan, 2011). Kiely (2005) has written about student learning objectives and the transformative quality of SL. He and a growing number of other scholars are concerned about ISL stakeholders beyond students, particularly the service partners and communities where students are engaging in ISL activities.

A general assumption about ISL is that it is inherently good because it provides benefits to the students engaged in the service and the communities they serve; however, many authors have highlighted the challenges involved with building ethical ISL experiences (Baker-Boosamra, Guevara, & Balfour, 2006; Ethics of International Engagement and Service-Learning Project, 2011; Grusky, 2000; Schroeder, Wood, Galiardi, & Koehn, 2009). For example, ethical and responsible ISL centers on students *doing with* rather than *doing for* the community (Tapia, 2010). In effect, the commu-

nity partners are not passive recipients of service, but collaborators, and they and the students are contributing to the formation of the others and learning from the others (Tapia, 2010).

The difficulties of developing on-site partnerships and including the participation of stakeholders in program design have been well documented (Crabtree, 2008; Littlepage, Gazley, & Bennet, 2012; Moore McBride, Brav, Menon, & Sherraden, 2006; Wodicka, Swartz, & Peaslee, 2012). In some of the literature, it says that if community perspectives are not considered, ISL programs can be harmful to communities, effectively objectifying those served and perpetuating dependencies (Baker-Boosamra et al., 2006). The possible effect students have on local communities is addressed by Schroeder et al. (2009) in their review of literature on sustainable tourism and their data collected from student participants, host agencies, faculty, and staff who participated in short-term study abroad programs. They found that many of the faculty and staff (some very experienced in leading international programs) had not reflected on possible negative consequences of their program on local communities. When administrators and faculty *do* have a deliberate intention to think about these critical dimensions, many note the academic and logistic pressures consume preparation time and leave little time for critical reflection to address community participation and potentially negative consequences of ISL programs (Baker-Boosamra et al., 2006; Perold et al., 2013).

Crabtree (2008), who has significant experience leading ISL, proposes that we use several theoretical perspectives to inform and improve ISL design and practice to truly examine social justice issues of global significance. For ISL programs carried out in developing countries, an appreciation of the literature on international development provides as essential foundation (Crabtree, 2008). This literature provides insight into the importance of sensitivity to north–south power relationships. In addition to development perspectives, participatory approaches to community work within an SL pedagogy are important (Crabtree, 2008; Perold et al., 2013; Stout, 2013).

Short-term ISL experiences face potential barriers to achieving the dual objectives of student learning and positive community outcomes (Crabtree, 2008). An example includes the abbreviated time frame for study; culture shock and reverse culture shock become potential barriers to achieving objectives (Crabtree, 2008). Thus, formal preparation and ongoing reflection before, during, and after the trip are important. What it means to be from the North and visit the South and understanding the roles of global citizens need to be deliberately discussed before and during the ISL trip (Zemach-Bersin, 2008). In addition, reentry reflection and follow-up action plans are identified as important parts of ethical and responsible ISL design and practice (Crabtree, 2008). Reentry reflection and action plans after ISL experiences can be challenging. If students are not able to process the ISL experience fully, even posttrip, misinformed stereotypes might only be perpetuated (Baker-Boosamra et al., 2006; Grusky, 2000; Schroeder et al., 2009).

The consequence of not properly preparing students through reflection can be destructive (Baker-Boosamra et al., 2006, p. 485). The values of mutuality and reciprocity are critical not only because of ethical issues but also because of practical ones. Thus, more and more scholars, ourselves included, seek to address the outcomes of ISL beyond only student learning and observe effects on the communities served to achieve ethical and responsible ISL.

The Peru Program: A Case Study

The Peru Program can be considered a "sandwich" ISL course as defined by Jones and Steinberg (2011). A sandwich format includes an individual course with initial study and subsequent service on the ground in another country and then another period of continued study and reflection. For the Peru Program in this paper, the emphasis is on providing the reader with an appreciation of the range of actors who have a stake in the success of the program. These stakeholders are the focus of the subsequent analysis.

The Peru Program is a collaboration between Binghamton University's Department of Public Administration, Office of International Programs (OIP), and Center for Civic Engagement (CCE). The program has one on-site language partner and three service partner organizations in Peru. The Peru Program was organized around an academic course (titled "Local Development in the Andes") held at Binghamton University prior to leaving the United States; continued during a 3-week study abroad experience in Cusco, Peru; and concluded with assignments and a reflection after returning to the United States. A brief description of each of the Peru Program stakeholders is presented in Table 1; in the subsequent section, we discuss the role of the partners located in Peru in greater detail.

Table 1

Peru Program Stakeholders and Their Responsibilities

Partner	Responsibilities
University Partners	
Department of Public Administration Faculty Co-Leaders	• Establish the academic component of the Peru Program. • On-site leadership of the Peru Program. • Coordinate the multistakeholder evaluation of the program and maintain relations with service partners.
Office of International Programs (OIP)	• Coordinates marketing and recruitment efforts and application process. • Organizes all of the travel and safety logistics. • Conducts aspects of the student evaluation of the program. • Maintains relations with the language school partner, and oversees the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.
Center for Civic Engagement (CCE)	• Aids in relationship building in Peru. • Educates faculty and students about effective service-learning practices.

Table 1 (cont.)

Partner	Responsibilities
University Students	• Engage in ethical service and act as ambassadors and representatives of the university. • Include graduate and undergraduate students from any academic major interested in local sustainable development, Latin America, and/or service learning.
On-Site Peru Partner Organizations	
Máximo Nivel	• Coordinates language training, home stays, within-country travel to service sites, and guided cultural excursions.
AbrePuertas	• Selects and oversees student projects that involve physical labor as well as work with children.
Corazón de Dahlia	• Selects and oversees student projects that involve activities with children.
Municipality of Cusco	• Connects Peru Program with the *Comedor* network and aids with a project prioritized and selected by the community.

The course is focused on actors involved in community-level sustainable development including local governments and local nonprofit organizations, which mirrors the concentrations available within Binghamton University's Master's in Public Administration (MPA) program. Students participating can elect to do their final papers on the roles of local nonprofits in sustainable development and can count the program as an elective toward the nonprofit management and leadership specialization of the MPA. The course situates local sustainable development practice within its interconnection between environmental issues, economic viability, social equity, and cultural identity. The course was also designed to help students develop knowledge and skills that enable them to reflect on their own roles in international service.

In its pilot year in 2013, the Peru Program attracted a diverse group of students in terms of conventional demographic characteristics, as well as attributes more directly related to their position in the university. The 13 students included 11 women and two men; three African American, four Hispanic, and six White students; eight undergraduate and five graduate students; three first-generation college students; and seven individuals who had never traveled outside the United States. Spanish language skills ranged from beginner to native speakers. Among the 13 students, 10 academic disciplines were represented (Public Administration, Latin American & Caribbean Studies, Human Development, Sociology, Psychology, English, Social Work, Spanish, Political Science, and Africana Studies). With such a heterogeneous group of students, it is important to examine the extent to which they shared expectations and experiences, in addition to examining their assessments of the program relative to other stakeholders.

While in Peru, students received formal language instruction tailored to their individual language abilities and interests at an accredited language school in the city of Cusco. Native Spanish speakers had the opportunity to study the indigenous language of Quechua, providing additional opportunities for them to experience the cultural exchange more fully and communicate with indigenous communities; three students took advantage of this opportunity in 2013. In addition to formal classes, students were exposed in language and cultural immersion, including housing with host families in Cusco, Peru. Students and faculty lived with families during their entire stay in Cusco.

While students and faculty were on-site in Peru, they participated in regular debriefings and reflection, a process that continued once faculty and students returned to the United States. In addition, Peru Program alumni met several times during the Fall 2013 semester to continue the dialogue on their learning experiences gained from program participation with on-campus activities to share the Peru Program with audiences in the United States.

Peru Program Partner Organizations

As illustrated in Table 1, the language school partner and the three service partner organizations each contribute to the overall ISL experience of the Peru Program. Additional information about each of the Peru partners is provided next.

Máximo Nivel. *Máximo Nivel* is an internationally accredited language school with locations in Peru, Costa Rica, and Guatemala that offers Spanish and English language instruction as well as volunteer opportunities for individuals. Binghamton University's Peru Program has a formal partnership and a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with *Máximo Nivel* for language training, coordination of home stays, within-country travel to service sites, and guided cultural excursions. *Máximo Nivel* coordinated logistics from arrival through departure, including airport pickup, and provided a safety briefing and cultural orientation for students and faculty.

AbrePuertas. One service partner organization, *AbrePuertas* (OpenDoors), was started by a SUNY Geneseo University alumna and is situated in the district of Coya, Peru, in the Sacred Valley outside of the city of Cusco. The American founder of the organization and her Peruvian partner run the organization with the support of occasional international volunteers. The organization works to improve community literacy, empower teens through leadership and public speaking trainings, engage families who may undervalue traditional education, and bolster the value of learning and art. In 2013, faculty and students on the Peru Program provided in-kind donations of project materials and worked on indoor and outdoor infrastructure improvements including sanding, cleaning, priming, and painting. Additionally, Peru Program participants sketched a mural designed by children from the community in the organization's common area. The participants and the children worked together to paint the mural.

Corazón de Dahlia. The second service partner organization, *Corazón de Dahlia* (Heart of Dahlia), was started by a Binghamton University alumna. The alum continues to serve as the president of the organization's board and oversee fundraising from the United States. Based in Saylla, Peru, outside of Cusco, *Corazón de Dahlia* provides after-school programming for children, a bilingual and media library, and an educational toy and game library. The Peruvian executive director manages a staff of three including two teachers and a psychologist. In 2013, faculty and students participated

in its 3-year anniversary celebration and volunteered at its Center for the Promotion of Child & Family Development.

Municipality of Cusco. The Municipality of Cusco, the third service partner organization, facilitated the program's work with a soup kitchen as part of its *Comedor Popular* program. Each *Comedor* organization is made up of local women who have organized at a grassroots level and secured recognition and support from the municipality. The *Comedor's* purpose is to provide a source of food for families who would otherwise lack an adequate food supply. The students and faculty worked with community members of a particular *Comedor* to dig ditches around an adobe building that it was using as its main kitchen to allow for better water drainage; constructed netting to plaster the outer wall; and plastered the inside walls of the adobe building to help transition the facility to a more permanent and functional status. Students and faculty also spent several days assisting with food preparation, engaging in physical activities (basketball, tag, and dancing) with children and youth serviced at the *Comedor,* and exchanging songs and sayings with the youth and women.

Multiple-Stakeholder Program Evaluation Methodology

As mentioned earlier in the discussion of the ISL literature, most ISL programs are evaluated primarily, and at times exclusively, from the perspective of participating students. A limitation of this approach is that international participants may not perceive the relationship as true partners. For example, a reciprocal partnership might allow for participation of partner organizations in the development of the pedagogy or an evaluation of individual student performance. Figure 1 shows a model in which university officials make decisions about service projects to provide the best experience for students, students deliver that service and benefit from the international experience, and the hosts in another country are passive recipients of service or charity. In this context, all evaluation efforts are directed at the students, collectively with some attention on longer term effects on students' global engagement. The Figure 2 model reflects the Peru Program designed as a more mutually beneficial experience in which all stakeholders play some role in design and implementation and all are included in the evaluation (Figure 2). Evaluation of student experiences remains an essential element, but it is no longer the sole focus as other stakeholders' experiences also factor into decisions about program improvements. All stakeholders contribute equally in the multistakeholder evaluation approach. Simply, the ISL experience is with service *partners* rather than service *recipients.*

Evaluation Methods

To evaluate the Peru Program, we utilized several sources of data. Some data were already available from student course evaluations and reflective essays. Course evaluations were completed by all 13 students and included a combination of closed- and open-ended questions. Each student also wrote and submitted a concise (500-word) reflection within 1 week of returning to the United States. These reflective essays were analyzed using a thematic coding process. Themes were identified first by one of the authors, then evaluated by the others, and finally independently applied by all three authors to each of the students' reflections to provide a measure of interrater reliability in the qualitative analysis.

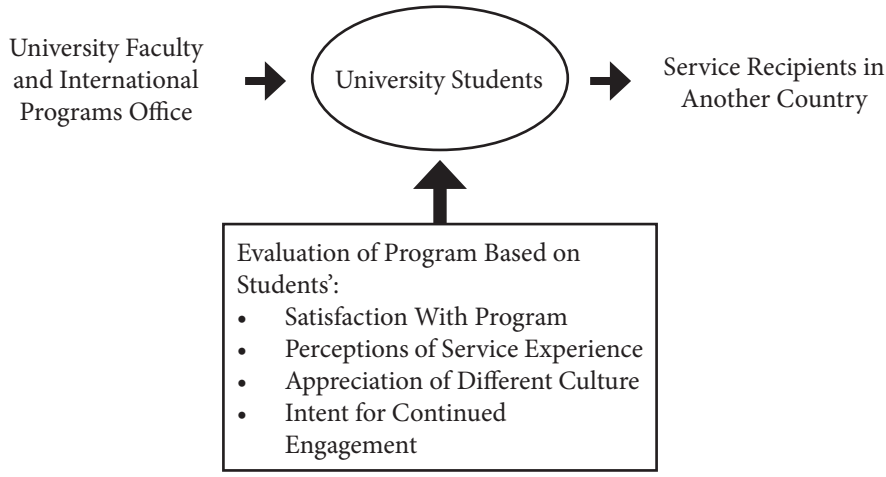

Figure 1. Conventional student-centered ISL design and corresponding evaluation.

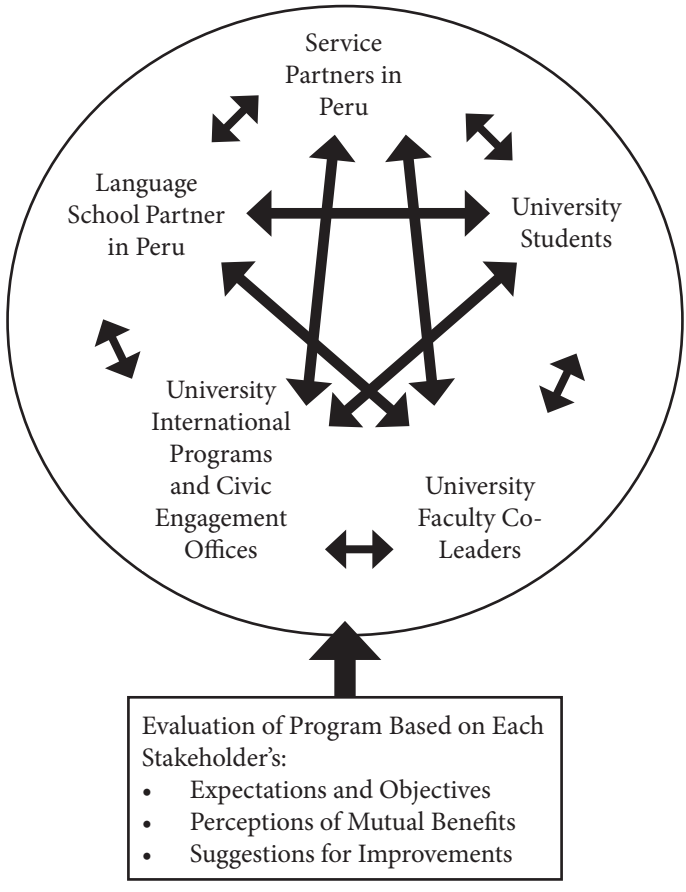

Figure 2. Peru Program ISL design and multiple-stakeholder evaluation.

Additional data were collected through a series of online surveys of the stakeholders. Stakeholders were surveyed based on their experience in the Peru Program's first year. Surveys were sent to the 13 student participants, two faculty leaders, three administrators, and six people across the on-site Peruvian partners. The surveys were sent to participants approximately seven months after the conclusion of the program. They were distributed electronically during the week of February 17, 2014, with a reminder sent 1 week later. Completed surveys were received from both faculty, all staff, nine students, and one person from each of the four Peruvian partner organizations (representing an 83% response rate). Surveys were given in English except for three of the service partners for whom Spanish versions of the survey were distributed. The surveys included common questions as well as some targeted specifically for the stakeholder group. Surveys were a combination of closed- and open-ended questions to balance our ability to compare responses across groups and calculate basic descriptive statistics and also to provide the opportunity for elaboration of ideas and perspectives.

It is important to note the limitations of self-reported data. Researchers looking at international education, study abroad, and ISL observe that social desirability bias may influence participants' views (Moore McBride et al., 2012). Given service participants' understanding of the program, participants might report on what they think they should report. However, we sought to address this problem by explaining that the surveys were to gather data and information to inform programmatic improvements.

Based on the literature of ethical and responsible ISL, we asked program stakeholders questions related to four areas of interest: (1) What was your motivation for program participation? (2) What did you feel were the expectations, objectives, and goals of the program? (3) Who benefited most from the program? (4) What were the greatest benefits and challenges for you while participating in this program?

An Evaluation From Multiple Stakeholders in ISL

The themes that emerged in our evaluation suggest some overlap in assessments among the stakeholders as well as unique and important perspectives. In presenting the themes, we focus on how they inform specific Peru Program improvements as well as their broader implications for ISL. In particular, themes about design components present in the data include expectations and objectives of the program, the importance of language and cultural immersion, and the challenges to creating mutually beneficial partnerships.

Expectations and Objectives of ISL

As mentioned, the aim of the Peru Program was to develop a short-term ISL and language immersion that combined interdisciplinary academic study of sustainable local development and ethical considerations of ISL. All of the student respondents indicated in the survey that the program's focus on ISL was a primary motivating factor to participating in the program. A majority of students (six out of nine respondents) selected that interest in the course topic of local development was a motivator, and four out of the nine respondents picked developing language skills and helping people in a developing country as motivators (see Table 2).

Table 2

Primary Motivators for Students' Participation in the Peru Program

Motivator	Count	%
International service-learning component	9	100.0
Interest in the course topic (Local Development in the Andes)	6	66.7
Develop language skills	4	44.4
Help people in a developing country	4	44.4
Desire to go to Peru	2	22.2
Seeking short-term study abroad	2	22.2
Work with children in another country	0	0.0
Other (please specify)	0	0.0

Note. Students were asked to identify the top three motivators for their participation in the Peru Program.

Student commented that they were committed to service from the start and were conflicted about the uneven amount of work done at the service sites. One student reflected in her short posttrip reflection,

> Our service expeditions varied from both extremes, at one point we felt extremely useless and like we were doing nothing. This happened when we were waiting and eating at the Municipality's *El Comedor* and when we were at *Corazón de Dahlia* watching their anniversary performance.

The student continued,

> Yet service-learning isn't about going into a location and deciding what we should do. Service-learning is about showing support, acting as curious helpers who, in another country are learning about culture and customs as much as about nonprofit organizations and NGOs.

Suggestions were also made on how to manage expectations and better support students. Given the varied level of service intensity and working conditions, a service partner encouraged the program to prepare students better for the service projects specifically with children. She explained,

> I think it would be good to implement an orientation (1-2 hours) before starting future projects so that students will be familiar with the organization, know exactly what we hope to accomplish, and have the basic language and child management skills necessary to do it!

Table 3 illustrates that the perceived objectives of the Peru Program varied across stakeholder groups. Although all groups identified promoting global citizenship as an important objective, the service partners in Peru disproportionately selected helping communities of Cusco as a priority and students prioritized the service projects; helping the communities of Cusco, Peru; and learning about local development. The faculty and university staff stakeholders identified developing global partnerships as more important than did other stakeholders.

Table 3

Perceived Objectives of the Peru Program Across Stakeholders

Perceived objectives of the Peru Program	Faculty (*n* = 2)	Staff (*n* = 3)	Students (*n* = 9)	Service partners (*n* = 4)	TOTAL (*n* = 18)
Promote global citizenship	2	2	4	2	10
Help communities of Cuzco, Peru	0	1	6	3	10
Participate in international service projects	0	1	6	1	8
Improve cultural sensitivity	0	2	3	1	6
Learn about local development in Latin America	0	1	5	0	6
Improve language skills	1	0	2	2	5
Develop global partnerships	1	1	0	0	2
Internationalize Binghamton University	1	0	0	1	2
Contribute to student appreciation for diversity	0	1	1	0	2
Other: Build on department expertise, interest, and partnerships in the Andes	1	0	0	0	1
Other: Diversify study abroad options at Binghamton University	0	1	0	0	1

Note. All stakeholders were asked to identify the top three perceived objectives of the Peru Program.

Language and Cultural Immersion

Language and cultural immersion were explicit goals of the program that were deliberately intertwined with the ISL component. The language and cultural immersion on the ground, in particular, were important design components of the program. When ISL extends to a non-English speaking context, the challenges to ethical service and the opportunities for true global learning increase exponentially. ISL has the potential to help students appreciate how language and culture are intrinsically linked. In places where the communities are of indigenous peoples with languages that are not among the major world languages,

> students see that languages are particularly vulnerable since they are not considered prestigious or valuable enough for engaging in the global dialogue. In a global society, language embodies the intellectual wealth of the people who speak it, and it is used to construct meaning in ways that are natural and relevant to the needs dictated by the local society. (García & Longo, 2013, p. 119)

Across stakeholders, the language immersion and staying with host families were characterized as value added to the program. One of the faculty leaders felt this was one of the most important benefits for students in particular. She wrote,

> I think being able to communicate in a different language and meeting people from different backgrounds (both in regard to the student group diversity itself and the people in Peru, particularly the host family) was so enriching for the students.

Indeed, in reflection papers, students provided insight to the influence immersion had on them. Almost all students reflected on their improved language skills. The following statement is representative: "One of the things that I am most proud and thankful for was the opportunity to communicate with my host family and improve my language skills from the classes." The partnership with the on-site language school was an important facet to building these language skills and the immersion objective. In response to the survey, seven students indicated that the language immersion classes and family home stays "greatly enhanced" their experience. Service partners recognized students working on their language skills and practicing with community members—particularly children. One partner site leader stated that she "saw the students put a great deal of effort into their Spanish skills."

In addition, through immersion and the service site experiences, students were able to question their own cultural preconceptions about Peru and its relations to the United States. One student wrote in her reflection that she has reconsidered

> [t]he idea that Peru is a country that needs the USA to intervene [in order that it] is successful. I used to believe this to be true but after the trip I realized that we can learn so much from countries similar to Peru and we should take advantage of this opportunity.

This quote and others like it suggest that the interaction with service partners contributed to instilling values of mutuality and reciprocity and a questioning of the model of one-directional international development.

Related to immersion, the posttrip student reflections also indicated the need to be better prepared for reentry. The terms "adjust" or "adjusting" to the fast pace of the United States or speaking and hearing English were used repeatedly in the reflections. Upon returning to the United States, one student explained,

> I thought everything felt very quiet in comparison to the activity and vibrancy that seemed to occur daily in Peru. It was interesting to see how many things happen in the open spaces [in Peru] ranging from the festivals, dances, and demonstrations.

Likewise, putting the experience into words once returning to the United States was difficult. One student explained in her reflection,

> The most challenging thing for me is to explain to my friends and family members about my trip and all that I have learned, in the least bias[ed] way. I try to speak about

> the trip while being conscious of any foreseeable consequences of my words, as we had discussed and reflected on the readings as a group.

Serving for Mutual Benefits?

Mutual benefit allows for the creation of a common vision among stakeholders and balances all stakeholder interests with outcomes defined by the communities served (Baker-Boosamra et al., 2006; Crabtree, 2008; Martínez, 2010). Faculty members reported wanting to have seen the students engaging more in hands-on service projects to produce more benefit for the service sites, but realized the limitations. One faculty member said, "I would've liked to have seen more structured activities with the children as I felt as though some of our group (including myself) were overwhelmed with some of the children," but she continued that still "[t]he experience is much more than the physical labor of the students." Even when a partner site had a more intensive hands-on project, it was difficult to complete the project given the time restraints, according to one service partner. Additionally, the nature of some projects is that all students are not busy at one time. This was a challenge, and the service partners expressed that they felt the burden of having to keep students active at all times. Indeed, a service partner explained her impressions: "[The Peru Program was] about what I expected, although maybe some individual students were less proactive than I might have anticipated, so I think tailoring projects to student interest and providing more structure would help next time." A service partner from the municipality in Cusco observed that the people served at *El Comedor* benefited from the collaboration with Binghamton University, but also expressed a desire to achieve several more things the next time around, which included better coordination, identification of the needs of the community, extension of the visit from the students and faculty, and more funding to be able to complete the projects fully.

Administrators active in the program planning, design, and implementation felt that students were perhaps the main beneficiaries of the program in its first year. An administrator wrote,

> While I believe that the service partners did receive a true benefit, I feel that the students benefited most in the initial year of the program . . . we have not had enough time in the development of this program yet to understand how we can best couple our student learning goals with service partner goals for the most mutually beneficial relationship possible.

Another administrator responded similarly: "I am sure that the service partners benefit some, especially by the sincerity and eagerness of the students, but I imagine the needs are great and that sustained service is what might make the most benefit for them." Furthermore, mutual benefit and its challenges do not only span across a U.S. university group and on-the-ground partner organizations. ISL collaboration can be challenging across university entities. An administrator from one university partner encouraged more communication and better follow-up. She explained, "Keep the university partners . . . better informed so they can promote the program more . . . and provide specific outcomes, numbers, and benefits gained to those who support the efforts so they can justify their efforts to support the program."

The two service partners, which are in part run by SUNY alum, noted that their allegiance to their alma mater was an important dimension to sustaining the partner-

ship. One service partner said that as an alumna, she "care[d] about continuing the relationship with the university." However, even with this interest, the service partner understands that building the relationship is challenging given the geographic limitations. In this case, the founder of one of the organizations in Peru lives not in Peru or Binghamton but rather about 3 hours driving distance from Binghamton University. She lamented that she cannot have direct contact with students who are traveling to the organization in Peru. She explained, "I would love to find a way to meet with the group pre and post trip to Peru to engage with them more directly."

Students were aware of the limitations to understanding fully the effect that the program had on the service partner organizations. One student explained in the survey, "As a student it was easier to see and understand the impact that our service projects had on us individually. It is harder for me to know what the impact was on the [service] site." Other students understood the nature of the program being in its first year, but wanted to see the program build "lasting relationships and get over the 'meet and greet' phase."

Likewise, faculty members and administrators observed that relationship building needs to continue to achieve the program's goal to have all stakeholders benefit equally. One faculty member suggested a mid-year visit while planning for the on-the-ground portion of the program and having a student stay on for the summer to continue to work with service partners as ways to strengthen the relationships and the participation of all stakeholders in program design, implementation, and evaluation. An administrator wanted more ongoing communication with service partners. She explained, "We don't just want to use them as a site for our students when June comes around again each year." She included students in this as well and noted that two students joined the board of *Corazón de Dahlia* once coming back from Peru, a step toward student–service partner long-term engagement. The administrator proposed several new ideas for keeping up with communication through writing letters to the children at the service partner sites and having Binghamton University students write guest columns for organizational newsletters that are published occasionally.

Lessons Learned: Recommendations for Faculty and Administrators

The Peru Program has the developing elements to advance ethical and responsible ISL. Based on the data collected and analyzed, we provide key recommendations: (1) establish clear objectives and expectations for all stakeholders; (2) emphasize partnership and continued, sustained communication; and (3) include academic content and reflection about ethics and related values. These recommendations will not only improve the Peru Program but can also inform ISL programs in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education that want to advance ethical and responsible ISL programming.

Establish Clear Expectations and Objectives for All Stakeholders

The ISL literature is clear in its recommendation that all partner organizations be involved with the decision-making processes surrounding the program design. This overlaps with discussions on "meaningful partnerships" in nonprofit studies literature (Mendel, 2013a, 2013b) and effective partnership as defined in the context of interna-

tional development (Brinkerhoff, 2002). For example, a meaningful partnership refers to "a relationship in which both parties view themselves as approximate equals in participation, decision making, risk and accountability" (Mendel, 2013a, p. 4). Meaningful partnerships have been discussed within the government–nonprofit contracting regime, but its tenets can relate to ISL partnerships as well. Likewise in the context of international development, Brinkerhoff (2002) observed two considerations within partnerships that must be accounted for and can inform ISL programming. First, the ideas of mutuality and equity in decision making are important. These include mutual dependence and the rights and responsibilities of each actor in the partnership. Brinkerhoff explained, "All partners [should] have an opportunity to influence their shared objectives, processes, outcomes and evaluation" (p. 23). Second, maintaining organizational identity allows for long-term success in partnership relations. This means that an organization should maintain and be committed to its own objectives, values, and stakeholders throughout the partnership (Brinkerhoff, 2002, p. 23). A critical aspect of building partnerships in an ISL context is trust. Although some research suggests that in some contexts mutually beneficial cooperative relationships can occur in the absence of trust if other mechanisms are in place to promote cooperation (Levi, 2000; Troy, 2004), trust is also widely recognized as a valued element that strengthens social relations (Cook, Hardin, & Levi, 2007).

In the context of ISL, building partnerships can be especially challenging in the planning stages because of constraints caused by distance as well as language and cultural differences. Nonetheless, to avoid the problem of different expectations and objectives, we concur with ISL, nonprofit studies, and international development literatures that it is important to include all stakeholders in the process of not only designing service projects, but also establishing clearly defined expectations and program objectives during the pretrip period and during the on-site time in Peru. Our research suggests several simple ways to do this.

For example, one service site partner suggested a more formal orientation on-site to the organization, which might allow the opportunity to map out joint expectations and objectives among partner organizational staff, community members, students, and faculty. This would help to capture the *doing with* rather than the *doing for* the service partners (Tapia, 2010). This would also address another service partner's observation of the need for better coordination and identification of the needs of the community. On-site orientations might include drafting expectations and objectives as well as assessing community needs and assets. The formal on-site orientation would complement the predeparture research about the service sites and communities conducted by students. These design elements address the call for more participatory approaches in ISL programs in the literature. In addition, the data suggest that service partners could have chances to be more integrated into the reflections among students when appropriate. This would complement formal student coursework, such as formal group reflections among the faculty and students. It would also add to informal experiences in reflection that happen naturally on-site during service projects and interaction among partner organizations, community members, students, and faculty.

In addition to involving stakeholders in the initial process of setting expectations and objectives and designing service projects, our research also suggests the importance of multistakeholder evaluations. Through this process, we were able to identify

areas in which expectations did not coincide, and we are making program improvements accordingly. Ongoing evaluations that elicit feedback from all parties reinforce the equal value on all stakeholders.

Emphasize Partnership and Continued, Sustained Communication

In continuation to establishing clear expectations and objectives for all stakeholders, we find that the developing relationships in the Peru Program with the partner organizations have the potential to become strong, truly mutually beneficial partnerships. Benefits to the partners can be achieved through the interaction facilitated through the students' language and cultural immersion emphasis and the actual work of the service projects. As these relationships are built over time, the goal will be not only to provide cultural exchange and physical labor, but also to promote intellectual and creative collaborations among partner organizations, community members, students, and faculty that can inform and implement more sustainable projects and practices. In effect, our goal will be to develop what Fine (2012) referred to as an example of "tiny publics," that is, a small group that has its own unique *idioculture* that defines and holds the group together. These small groups or *tiny publics* provide the foundation for effective civic engagement (Fine, 2012), which is often an important student learning objective of ISL. Indeed, part of the nature of the Peru Program's first year was building relationships across all the stakeholders. An administrator explained the experience with one of the partner sites:

> . . . in the initial year of the program, in the spirit of hospitality the leaders of Corazón de Dahlia were not responsive to the request for the students to do work at their organization; instead, welcoming the students to a celebration. As we continue working with this organization I believe that in future years we will be able to design service projects with Corazón de Dahlia that will benefit them, but more communication and time is needed before this will come to fruition.

As previously mentioned, students engaged in several postprogram activities as ideas and opportunities surfaced. These opportunities enhanced program promotion and students' continuous reflection upon their experience. These include participating in a student-focused study abroad fair, speaking as guests on a campus radio show, conducting two panel discussions for those interested in study and service in Latin America in coordination with Binghamton University student groups, and a reception to celebrate the success of the 2013 Peru Program and shared experiences with people from Binghamton University and the surrounding communities. However, a more intentional structure of reimmersion and posttrip action plans that benefit the students and the service partners would further foster a continuous and systematic way to lengthen and sustain the benefit to all stakeholders and advance solidarity.

Through the development of reentry action plans that involve continuous projects with the service organizations, students will have opportunities to engage in more international and service activities in the short and long term. These opportunities might include a presentation about their study abroad experience and participation in promotional activities for the program. In addition, faculty and administrators need to seek more opportunities to explore continued interaction with the service partner organizations. For example, from a distance, students can volunteer to assist with the organizations' social media promotion, help develop newsletters, or serve on organiza-

tions' boards of directors. If these are discussed with service partners before and during the implementation of the on-site portion of the program, a mutually beneficial postprogram reentry action plan could be established before returning to the home university.

Include Content and Reflection About Ethics and Related Values

The previous two recommendations are related to relationship building at the programmatic level. The third recommendation for faculty and administrators to consider is more related to student academic learning. Course material was important to the program in many ways. One administrator mentioned that the academic material focus on development theory and SL pedagogy distinguishes the program from other ISL programs at the university. She explained that through course material ". . . the greatest benefit for students who participate is learning how to disassemble and reassemble the framework through which they view themselves and others (particularly 'others' of the developing world)." As the course is organized around theory and the practice of local sustainable development, development theory allows students to engage in critical thinking about what development means. Academic content and ethical considerations are enhanced also by including specific material on values such as ethics, solidarity, reciprocity, mutuality, and power in a global context. Several readings have been integrated into the coursework of the Peru Program. These include Baker-Boosamra et al.'s (2006) work on solidarity in ISL, a reflection on global citizenship and its challenges from a student perspective (Zemach-Bersin, 2008), and several pieces on the complexities of ISL (Grusky, 2000; see also the provocative piece *To Hell With Good Intentions* by Illich,1968). Other media sources, including a 2013 documentary looking at the implications of international travel, are now also included in the curriculum (*Gringo Trails* by Vail, 2013).

Given its importance in the ISL literature, the need for more in-country reflection as part of the program design does not come as a surprise to us. All student respondents noted on the survey that occasional reflection and debriefing discussions in Peru "greatly enhanced" or "contributed" to their experience in the Peru Program. Reflection as a group started during the three half-day class sessions before departure, but scheduled time for reflection was not initially put into the Peru Program's on-site itinerary. Faculty leaders quickly learned on the ground that they needed more group reflection time, needed time set aside for academic seminar sessions, and needed to have these prescheduled in subsequent years. For its first year, the faculty leaders were able to improvise and have reflection sessions during group lunches. In addition, students were encouraged to meet individually with the two faculty leaders at least once to discuss their linking of the academic course material to their experience on the ground in Peru. The previous recommendation posits that these reflections should also involve partner organizations when appropriate.

Once group reflections were in place on the ground in Peru, they were extremely important to the process of working through student motivations and expectations. More purposive reflection on what is service and meaningful dialogue on values related to service and culture was fruitful and can be central to ISL programs. One faculty leader explained,

> I think questioning *our* (i.e., western) values versus values they were seeing in Peru was maybe the most important benefit for students. Students would express their uneasiness towards some of the uncertainty of service projects and concerns for the unstructured-ness at the service sites and we talked about it. Group discussions led to really questioning some of the values in the US that are almost a gold standard now—order, efficiency, etc. This was a powerful lesson for the entire group.

Students learned in reflection—in group sessions and individual reflective writing—to question their own values and assumptions. One student explained, "This trip made me learn that I have so much to learn about patience and perseverance. It also made me see that one cannot measure the deeds you do on one set-in-stone, black and white scale." Part of the reflection too can emphasize that students need to take responsibility in their own learning. Eight out of the nine students *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they were asked to scrutinize and think critically about local development. Faculty leaders can give the tools and space for reflection, administrators can work out the kinks and the details, and service partners can provide opportunities for collaborative learning, but students need to be encouraged to make the connections, individually and through group reflections. Sharing stories of successes and frustrations contributes to group cohesion (Fine, 2012). These responsibilities taken on by the student help to truly build fellowship not only among the students and faculty, but also in concert with on-site partner organizations.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The Peru Program's academic focus includes local sustainable development theory and ethical considerations in international travel and SL. It has campus and on-site partners committed to the success of the program. Still, how can we achieve more ethical and responsible ISL for our program and more generally in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit management education? We have presented recommendations based on our experiences and a multiple-stakeholder evaluation. Next steps include implementing the recommendations we have identified based on the analysis, specifically to (1) establish clear objectives and expectations for all stakeholders; (2) emphasize partnership and continued, sustained communication; and (3) include academic content and reflection about ethics and related values. The present descriptive and reflective study validates the need to incorporate key stakeholders in ongoing evaluations. Indeed, our multistakeholder evaluation will need to expand to include not only service partner organizational leaders but also community members at large as some scholars have advocated (see Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo, & Bringle, 2011). This research did not include community members and presents a limitation to our understanding of creating ethical and responsible ISL.

ISL programs must be committed to developing partnerships that provide partner organizations, community members, students, faculty, and administrators with opportunities to examine critical questions at global and local levels. If and when ISL programs can create effective *tiny publics,* they will be able to contribute to broader social discourse and effect wider scale change (Fine, 2012). ISL requires an institution-wide commitment and strategy, but it also demands individual ISL courses that are well designed and implemented. ISL courses in the fields of public affairs and nonprofit

management education must apply creative pedagogies and facilitate cross-cultural dialogues to foment mutually beneficial partnerships and students who are prepared for the globally interdependent world.

References

Appe, S., Rubaii, N., & Stamp, K. (in press). Advancing global cultural competencies in public affairs education: A baseline study of international service learning within NASPAA member programs. *Journal of Public Affairs Education.*

Baker-Boosamra, M., Guevara, J. A., & Balfour, D. L. (2006). From service to solidarity: Evaluation and recommendations for international service-learning. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 12,* 479–500.

Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher. (2011). International service learning. In R. G. Bringle, J. A. Hatcher, & S. G. Jones (Eds.), *International service learning: Conceptual frameworks and research* (pp. 3–28). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2002). Government–nonprofit partnership: A defining framework. *Public Administration and Development, 22*(1), 19–30. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pad.203

Crabtree, R. D. (2008). Theoretical foundations for international service learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 15,* 18–36.

Cook, K. S., Hardin, R., & Levi, M. (2007). *Cooperation without trust?* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Ethics of International Engagement and Service-Learning Project. (2011). *Global praxis: Exploring the ethics of engagement abroad.* Retrieved from http://ethicsofisl.ubc.ca/downloads/_2011-EIESL-kit-loRes.pdf

Fine, G. A. (2012). *Tiny publics.* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

García, N. A., & Longo, N. V. (2013). Going global: Re-framing service-learning in an interconnected world. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement, 17*, 111–135.

Gillman, S., & Penor Ceglian, C. (2012). Service learning in nonprofit leadership alliance (NLA): It's not a minor point. *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership, 2*, 82–96.

Grusky, S. (2000). International service-learning. *American Behavioral Scientist, 43,* 858. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/00027640021955513

Howard, J. (Ed.). (1993). *Praxis I: A faculty casebook on community service learning.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Office of Community Service-Learning.

Illich, I. (1968, April). *To hell with good intentions.* An address to the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects (CIASP), Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Jones, S. G., & Steinberg, K. S. (2011). An analysis of international service learning programs. In R. G. Bringle, J. A. Hatcher, & S.G. Jones (Eds.), *International service learning: Conceptual frameworks and research* (pp. 89–112). Herndon, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Kiely, R. (2005). A transformative learning model for service-learning: A longitudinal case study. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 12*(1), 5–22.

Levi, M. (2000). When good defenses make good neighbors. In C. Menard (Ed.), *Institutions, contracts, and organizations: Perspectives from new institutional economics* (pp. 137–157). Cheltenham, United Kingdom: Edward Elger. http://dx.doi.org/10.4337/9781781952764.00024

Littlepage, L., Gazley, B., & Bennet, T. A. (2012). Service learning from the supply side. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 22,* 305–320. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/nml.20056

Martínez, M. (2010). Aprendizaje servicio y construcción de ciudadanía activa en la universidad: la dimensión social y cívica de los aprendizajes académicos [Service learning and construction of active citizenship in the university: The social and civic dimension of academic learning]. In M. Martínez (Ed.), *Aprendizaje servicio y responsabilidad social de las universidades* (pp. 11–26). Barcelona, Spain: Ocateadro-ICE.

Mendel, S. C. (2013a). *Achieving meaningful partnerships with nonprofit organizations: A view from the field* (Urban Publications Paper 673). Retrieved from http://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/urban_facpub/673

Mendel, S. C. (2013b). Achieving meaningful partnerships with nonprofit organizations: A view from the field. *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership, 3,* 66–81.

Moore McBride, A., Brav, J., Menon, N., & Sherraden, M. (2006). Limitations of civic space. *Community Development Journal, 41,* 307–320. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsl010

Moore McBride, A., Lough, B., & Sherraden, M. (2012). International service and the perceived impacts on volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 41,* 969–990. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0899764011421530

Perold, H., Graham, L. A., Mavungu, E. M., Cronin, K., Muchemwa, L., & Lough, B. J. (2013). The colonial legacy of international voluntary service. *Community Development Journal, 48,* 179–196. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bss037

Rubaii, N., Appe, S., & Stamp, K. (in press). Are we getting them out of the country? The state of study-abroad opportunities within NASPAA-member programs. *Journal of Public Affairs Education.*

Schroeder, K., Wood, C., Galiardi, S., & Koehn, J. (2009). First, do no harm: Ideas for mitigating negative community impacts of short-term study abroad. *Journal of Geography, 108,* 141–147. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00221340903120866

Stout, M. (2013). Delivering an MPA emphasis in local governance and community development through service learning and action research. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 19,* 217–238.

Tapia, M. N. (2010). Calidad académica y responsabilidad social: el aprendizaje servicio como puente entre dos culturas universitarias [Academic quality and social responsibility: Service learning as a bridge between two university cultures]. M. Martínez (Ed.), *Aprendizaje servicio y responsabilidad social de las universidades* (pp. 27–56). Barcelona, Spain: Ocateadro-ICE.

Thomson, A. M., Smith-Tolken, A. R., Naidoo, A. V., & Bringle, R. G. (2011). Service learning and community engagement: A comparison of three national contexts. *Voluntas, 22,* 214–237. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11266-010-9133-9

Troy, P. (2004). Distrust and the development of urban regulations. In R. Hardin (Ed.), *Distrust* (pp. 207–232). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

UNESCO. (1998). World declaration on higher education for the twenty-first century: Vision and action. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/wche/declaration_eng.htm

Unger, S., Pribesh, S., Bol, L., & Dickerson, D. (2014). Students' perspectives of NGO service-learning experiences: A case study of operation smile. *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership, 4*, 139–161.

Vail, P. (Director/Producer). (2013). *Gringo trails* [Documentary]. United States: Icarus Films.

VanHorn, T., & Elliott, E. (2011). International pedagogy: Nonprofits in civil society - A Guatemalan case study. *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership, 1*, 30–44.

Waldner, L., Roberts, K., Widener, M., & Sullivan, B. (2011). Serving up justice: Fusing service learning and social equity in the public administration classroom. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 17,* 209–232.

Wodicka, R., Swartz, N., & Peaslee, L. (2012). Taking the classroom to town hall: Advancing public affairs through university–municipal collaborations. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 18,* 271–294.

Zemach-Bersin, T. (2008). American students abroad can't be 'global citizens.' *Chronicle of Higher Education, 54*(26), A34.