

## **Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: What, Who, When, Where, Why, and How?**

*“We are all learners, teachers, and leaders. We just have to give ourselves the opportunity to fill each of these roles. It’s hard. Sometimes the work spins by so quickly, it’s easy to skip this ... Without it, however, the challenges build and the successes shrink.”*

(Mondloch, community partner, in Stoecker & Tryon, 2009)

*And, we would add, without it the engagement process reinforces the technocracy that undermines a truly democratic society and fails to take full advantage of the mutually-transformative potential of [service-learning]. The stakes are high.”*

[Jameson, Clayton, & Jaeger, in press]

*Facilitator:*

Patti H. Clayton, Ph.D.  
Independent Consultant, PHC Ventures  
Senior Scholar, Center for Service and Learning, IUPUI  
Visiting Fellow, New England Resource Center for Higher Education

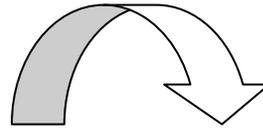
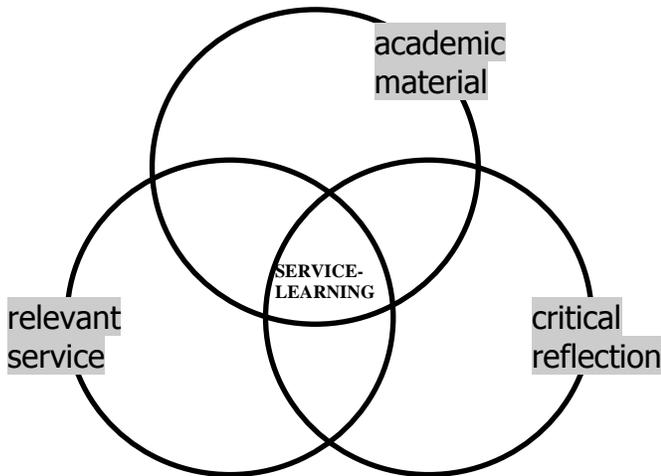
[patti.clayton@curricularengagement.com]  
[www.curricularengagement.com]

**Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement  
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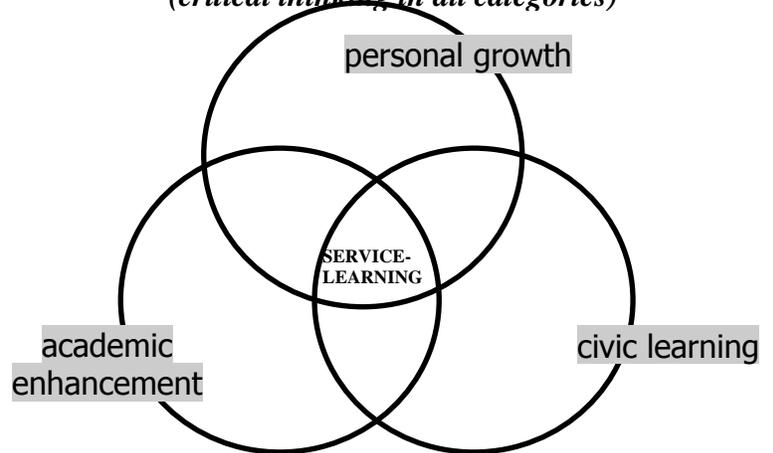
## Conceptualizing Service-Learning

*Service-learning (S-L) is a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote academic enhancement, personal growth, and civic learning. Students render meaningful service in community settings that present them with experiences related to academic material. Through guided reflection, students—individually and in groups—examine their experiences critically and articulate specific learning outcomes, thus enhancing the quality of their learning and of their service. Students, faculty, and community members all serve as co-educators, co-learners, co-servers, and co-generators of knowledge.*

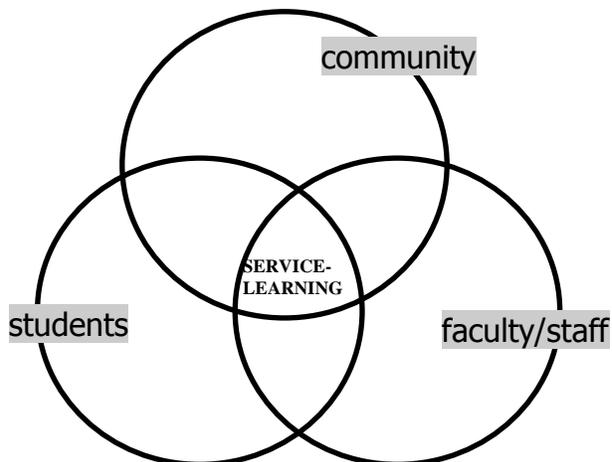
### *Components of S-L*



### *Learning Goal Categories of S-L (critical thinking in all categories)*



### *Partners in S-L*

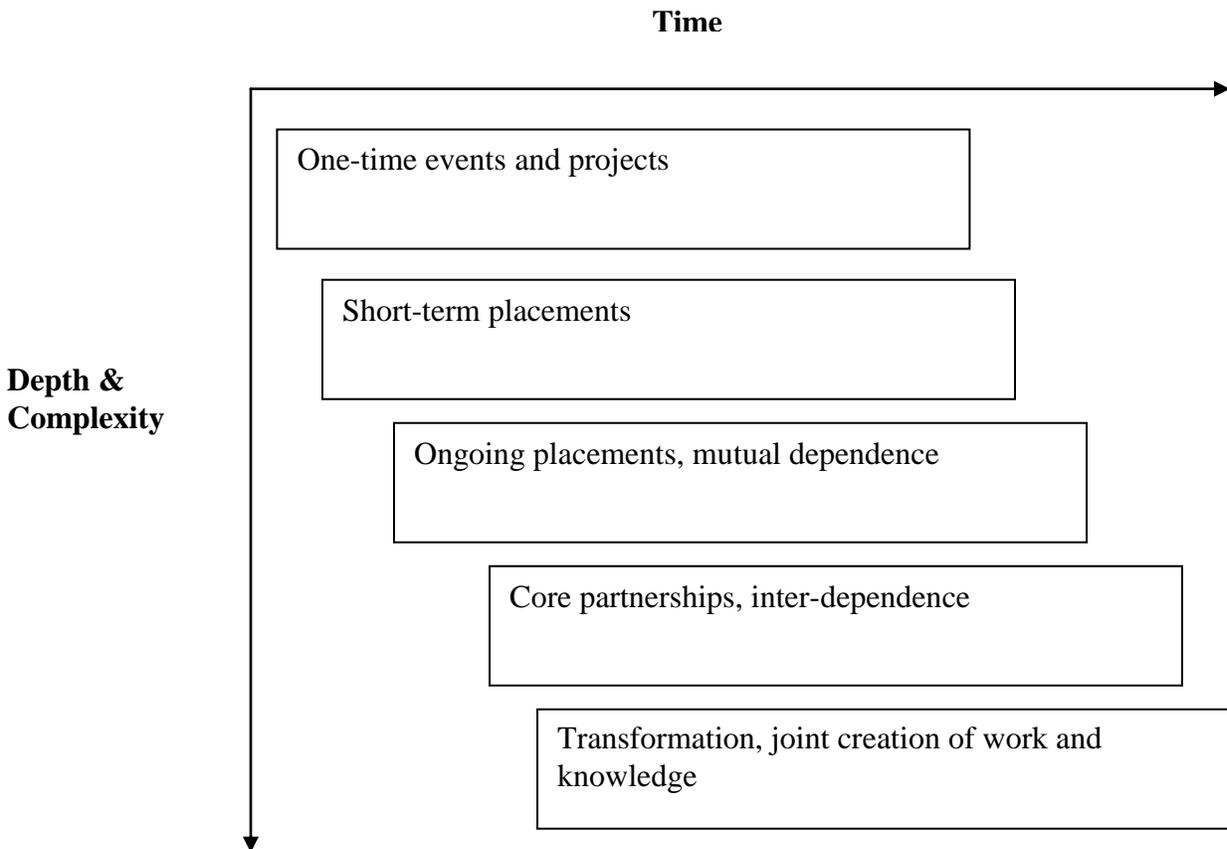


## A Typology of Partnerships in Service-Learning

[Jacoby, B. & Associates. (2003). *Building Partnerships for Service-Learning*. San Francisco, CAL Jossey-Bass. p. 27]

Mark as follows:

- “X” next to the type(s) of partnerships in which you are / have been involved
- “+” next to the type(s) of partnerships in which you want to be involved



## **Worksheet (throughout)**

### **“Reciprocity” ...**

A. What does it mean in the context of service-learning partnerships in particular?

B. Why does it matter, in the context of service-learning partnerships?

### **Concrete Implications for SL Partnerships**

Entry

Capacity Building

Maintenance

Growth

Exit

## An Example of Service-Learning

### **Look for indicators of reciprocity (or not)**

[Excerpted from: Jameson, J., Jaeger, A., & Clayton, P. (In press). Community Engaged Scholarship as Mutually Transformative Partnerships. In L. Harter, J. Hamel-Lambert, & J. Millesen (Eds.), *Participatory Partnerships for Social Action and Research*. Dubuque IA: Kendall Hunt.]

*A nonprofit organization (referred to here as SSO) left a voice mail message at a local university's center for nonprofit studies, saying "We really need someone from the university to come help us out. Our 5-year review will be conducted in 6 months, and our Board has asked us to come to make a case for our impact on our clients. We know we're doing good work, and we've been evaluating our program all along, but we think research from the university will provide better data as well as credibility." The center identified a faculty member with expertise in program evaluation, who spoke with SSO's Director to discuss possible approaches to the project. She suggested that students in her course on nonprofit leadership could use an interview protocol she had previously developed to provide evidence of the impact of SSO's programs through the voices of its clients while she conducted a parallel process of investigating and quantitatively documenting organizational outcomes through a survey of their clients. She also suggested that an Honors student she was mentoring in an Independent Study could guide the class activities, serve as a connecting point between the students' research activities and her own, and support her in analyzing the statistical data she would obtain through her survey.*

*The Director of SSO met with the faculty member and students in class at the beginning of the semester and provided contact information for several clients. The students divided up the list, met with the Honors student to review the interview protocol, conducted five interviews each, and as a class produced a written summary of key themes highlighted with respondent quotes. Throughout the semester they reflected individually in weekly written assignments on the connections between the academic content of the course (leadership challenges facing the nonprofit sector) and what they were hearing in their interviews. The faculty member developed the survey, showed it to the Director for input before finalizing it, and then worked with the Honors student to collect and analyze the data. Together the students and faculty member presented their findings to SSO at a staff meeting at the end of the semester. The staff and students together identified ten quotes from clients that could be used effectively in SSO's report to its Board, and the faculty member shared 5 PowerPoint slides she had made with the Honors student with summary quantitative data. The Director took her up on her offer to present at the next Board meeting.*

*Several outcomes resulted from this project. Students heard the story of SSO clients who had come from difficult situations including homelessness, incarceration, and drug addiction, yet worked with SSO to find employment or build their own nonprofit organizations to support others in their community. Class discussions and students' written products revealed and challenged their assumptions about people with these backgrounds, and they came to better understand that leadership can come from people's goals, values, and commitment, rather than status, money, or power. After the faculty member made her presentation to the Board, Board members viewed the organization differently, understanding better what the staff did on a day-to-day basis and their impact in the community rather than just seeing the organization primarily through the lens of a balance sheet. This reframing of the organization's work deepened the Board's relationship with the Director and created new levels of trust that empowered the staff in new ways. The faculty member was so impressed by the impact of this organization in the community and with her students that she set up a meeting with the Director to explore additional ways to continue their partnership beyond the semester.*

# Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: WHAT?

[Bingle, Clayton, & Price, 2009]

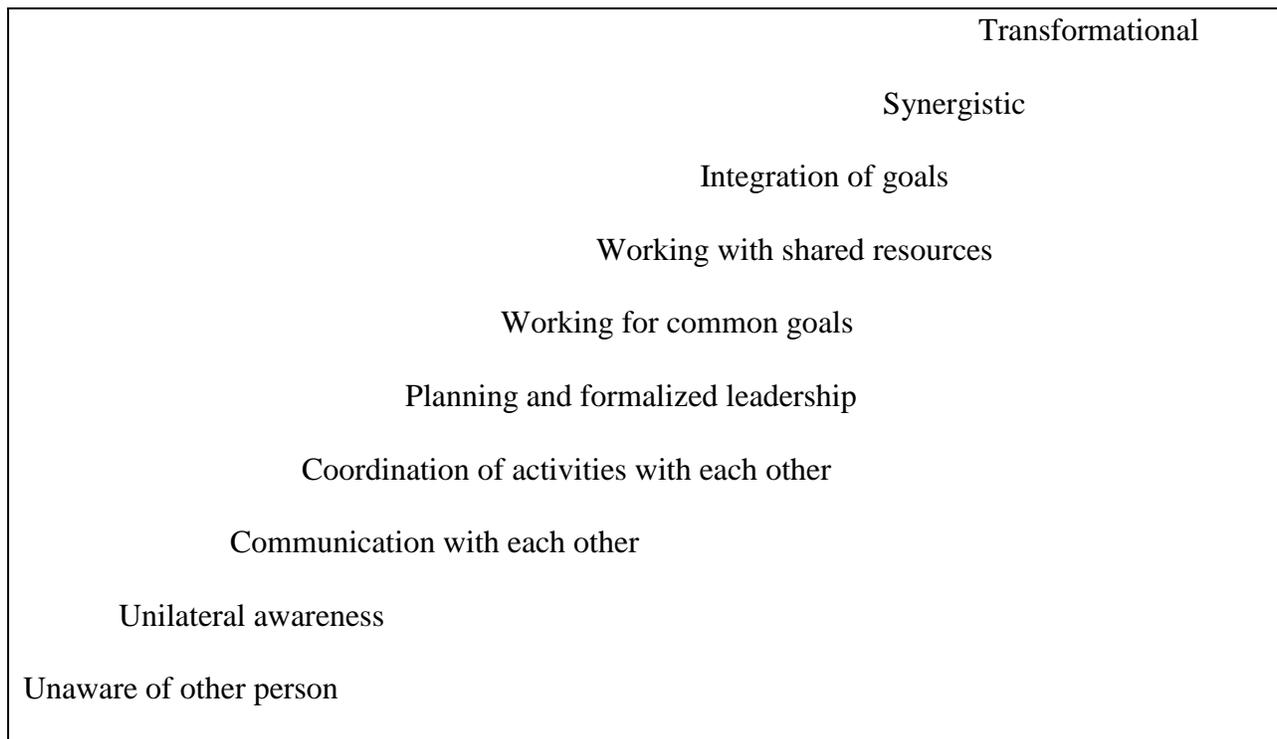
## Distinguishing Between Relationships and Partnerships

*“Relationship” means what?*

*“Partnership” means what?*

### Continuum of Relationship Possibilities

- 1) *At what point on this continuum does a “relationship” become a “partnership” (mark with a P)? Why?*
- 2) *SSO: Select any of the relationships in this example(S-F, F-CP, S-CP) and note where it falls*
- 3) *Where does your relationship with students in SL fall (mark with an X)?*
- 4) *Where does your relationship with community partners / faculty fall (mark with an O)?*
- 5) *Where would you like them to fall, with each (mark with an X+ and an O+)?*



## Engagement Paradigms

“Technocratic”	“Democratic”
Mutuality (“thin reciprocity”)	“Thick” reciprocity
Deficit-based	Asset-based
<i>For</i> the public	<i>With</i> the public
Applied	Inclusive, collaborative, problem-oriented
Uni-directional flow of knowledge	Multi-directional flow of knowledge
Positivist/scientific/technocratic	Relational, localized, contextual
Distinction between knowledge producers and knowledge consumers	Co-creation of knowledge
Primacy of academic knowledge	Shared authority for knowledge creation
University as the center of public problem-solving	University as a part of an ecosystem of knowledge production addressing public problem-solving
Knowledge generation and dissemination through community involvement	Community change that results from the co-creation of knowledge

*Adapted from Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton. (2009). The Democratic Engagement White Paper. Boston, MA: New England Resource Center for Higher Education.*

- A. Rate example SL projects along a continuum from 1 = completely technocratic to 10 = completely democratic. Provide evidence to support this judgment.

	Tech (1) – Demo (10)	Evidence?
SSO		
YOU		

- B. What specific changes might be made to technocratic SL to move it in the direction of democratic SL?

	Changes?
SSO	
YOU	

[Excerpted from: Jameson, J., Jaeger, A., & Clayton, P. (In press). Referencing the example of SL on page 5]

We do not offer this example as a “model” of transformative partnership; rather, we want to use it to help identify technocratic versus democratic and transactional versus transformational elements and to explore the ways these elements intermingle. To begin, there are several ways in which the normative, technocratic approach to engagement can be seen here, especially in the relationship between the community organization and the faculty member. The vignette opens with the community partner calling the university to “ask for help” and expressing its conviction that the resultant data, coming from (presumably expert) faculty members, will be and be seen as “better” and “more credible.” SSO is further positioned as a recipient of information gathered and analyzed by the faculty member, and its clients are positioned as subjects in her information gathering, with neither set of voices contributing as co-generators with the faculty member of knowledge. The faculty member provides the tools and processes for data gathering, analyzes the quantitative data on her own, and presents “her” data to the Board of Directors.

On the other hand, we can also see elements of the vignette that are more democratic, especially in terms of the involvement of students and community members. The project does involve students, faculty, and community members, all with some level of contribution to the process and outcomes. The Director of SSO and her staff identify the question, and the Director meets with the faculty member and later the students to help plan and launch the approach. The faculty member asks for input on her survey from the Director before finalizing it. The Honors student takes on a role as peer leader with the class, helping prepare them to conduct interviews, and as something of a colleague with the faculty member, collaborating in gathering and analyzing the survey data. Finally, SSO staff and students work together to identify the ten key quotes that would be used in documenting impact.

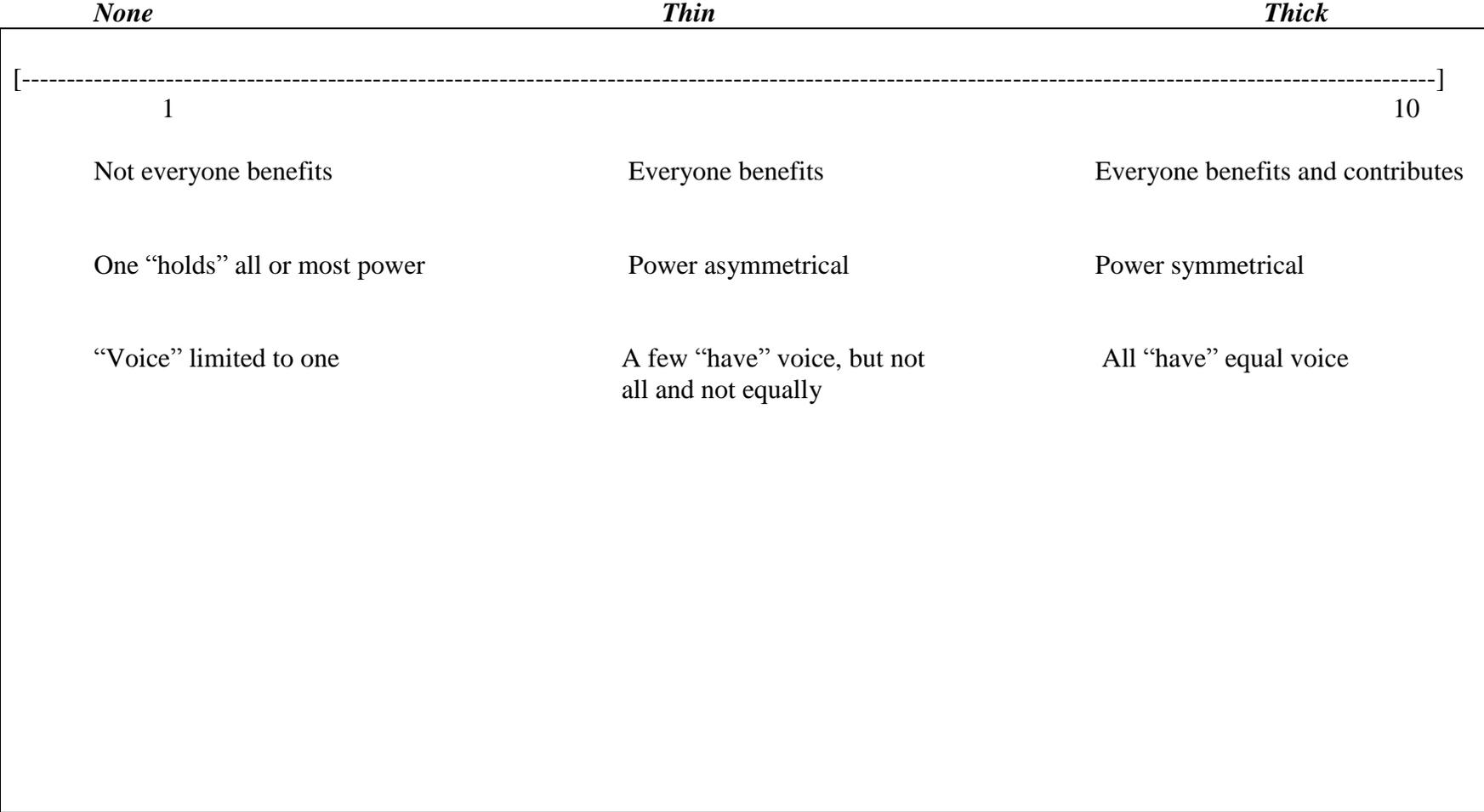
The next question concerns the ways in which this vignette demonstrates elements of transactional and/or transformational relationships. We see evidence here that, at a minimum, the students, faculty member, and community partner all benefit from this project, which is initially conceived as close-ended and oriented toward a specific, pre-determined task. It is a good learning experience for the students; they take away from it stronger critical thinking skills, a deeper understanding of the field of nonprofit studies and its relevance to organizational development, experience conducting interviews, and increased confidence in their ability to learn through integrating theory and practice. The faculty member is exposed to new examples of nonprofit leadership challenges in the context of SSO that she is able to incorporate into her teaching in the area of nonprofit leadership development, and she is able to add to the service section of her dossier the presentation to SSO’s staff and its Board of Directors. The Director of SSO is pleased with the quotes from the students’ interviews and with the faculty member’s presentation to the Board, and her staff enjoys the discussion with the students and feels affirmed by the quotes in their efforts to support change in their community; the organization gains the “better” data it desires and accomplishes the goal of making the case of its impact to its Board.

The vignette also contains more transformational elements. For example, we see that this process leads to a change in Board members’ thinking about SSO, in the relationship between the Board and the Director, and in the levels of empowerment experienced by the staff. There is some evidence of transformational learning, in that this experience challenges students’ previous assumptions and potentially changes the way they see others in their communities. Arguably, seeing the achievements of SSO clients and coming to understand the ways they enact leadership may modify the students’ sense of their own leadership potential. The Honors student experiences a peer mentoring role and collaborates in a research project, both of which certainly have potential to stimulate both changes in her sense of identity and development of a variety of new skills. Finally, when the faculty member seeks ways to continue the partnership beyond this semester, she may be recognizing the potential for more than short-term, task-oriented interaction with the community and setting herself up for changes in the way she teaches future classes or designs future research.

Assuming, as we do, that many community-engaged scholarship projects have such a mix of elements and that in at least some instances practitioners could—perhaps, should—deepen the democratic and transformational nature of their partnerships, we need to consider how this vignette—as a sample project—might be deepened. For example, the students, faculty, and community partners might have spent more time together at the beginning of the project and

throughout its implementation, getting to know one another's perspectives and resources and concerns and having more opportunities to learn from one another. Had they all gone into the project with "co-" identities established—or, had they designed it in such a way as to develop such identities through their work together—they might have envisioned it sooner as setting the groundwork for ongoing collaboration: the client stories being used to produce a training manual on grassroots organization for social change, for example, or fed into grant proposals or SSO's webpage. Had the students and community partners worked with the faculty member to build their capacity to develop research tools and to analyze quantitative data, they might have grown more in their own identities as generators of knowledge; importantly, the community partners might have become better able to design, conduct, and analyze the results of research on their own. Had the course been designed such that the students—including the Honors student—reflected not only individually but also collaboratively—with one another and perhaps with SSO's Director and staff and with their instructor—and SSO staff members mentored the students, there would likely have been greater exchange of diverse perspectives and more opportunities for professional development and civic learning.

# Conceptualizing Reciprocity in Service-Learning



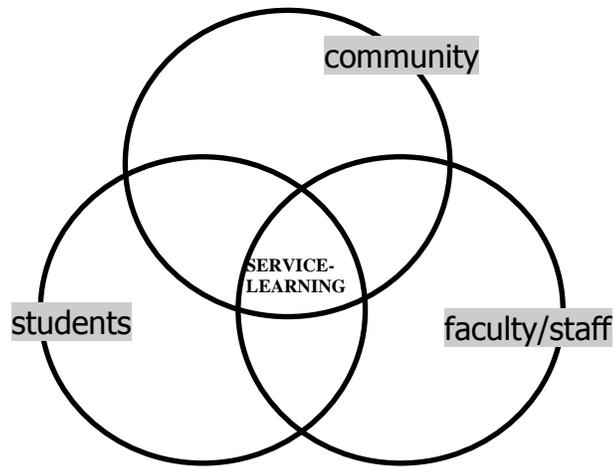
### Operationalizing Reciprocity in Service-Learning

Activities	None	Thin	Thick
Defining problem / issue / question			
Establishing goals			
Ensuring communication			
Designing process			
Assessing processes / products			

# Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: WHO?

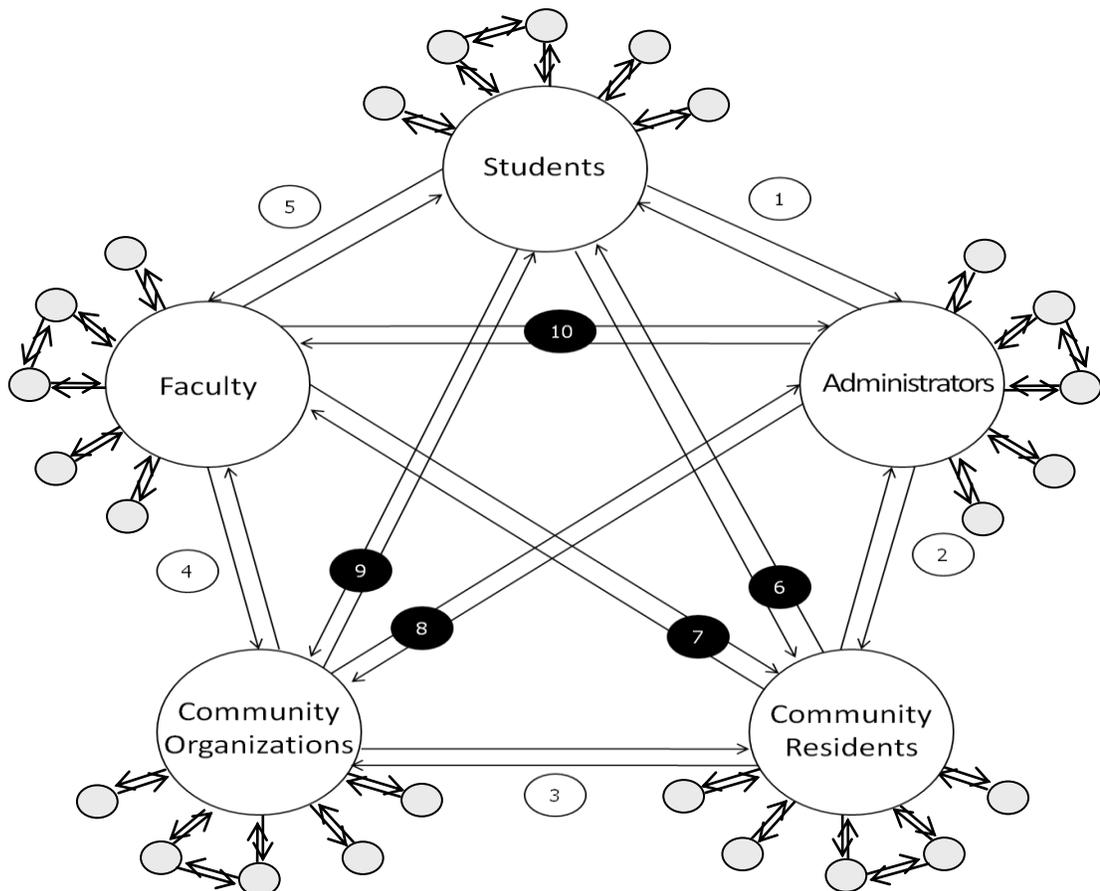
(Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009; Clayton et al, 2010)

## Partners in S-L



## SOFAR: A Model for Partnerships

Apply to SSO and to your own context: Who, specifically, are the constituents?



**Worksheet: SOFAR & Reciprocity**

<b>Rel</b>	<b>Opportunities for / examples of reciprocity</b>	<b>Challenges of reciprocity</b>
<b>1</b>		
<b>2</b>		
<b>3</b>		
<b>4</b>		
<b>5</b>		
<b>6</b>		
<b>7</b>		
<b>8</b>		
<b>9</b>		
<b>10</b>		

## Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: WHEN?

### Assessing Capacity to Partner, A

Drawing on the SSO example and your own experience, what *assets/resources/knowledge/experience/skills* does each partner bring to SL?

Students:

Community Organization(s)

Faculty:

University Administration/Staff:

Community Residents or Clients:

What *constraints* does each partner bring to SL?

Students:

Community Organization(s)

Faculty:

University Administration/Staff:

Community Residents or Clients:

### Assessing Capacity to Partner, B

List criteria of interest in assessing capacity (e.g., transportation, SL experience, financial resources, etc.) in the left column. Rate each partner’s capacity by putting an X in the appropriate ranking column—1 for low capacity, 4 for high capacity.

Note instances in which the partnership process allows partners to compensate for one another’s relative capacities. What can the partnership as a whole do/provide/undertake that individual constituents couldn’t?

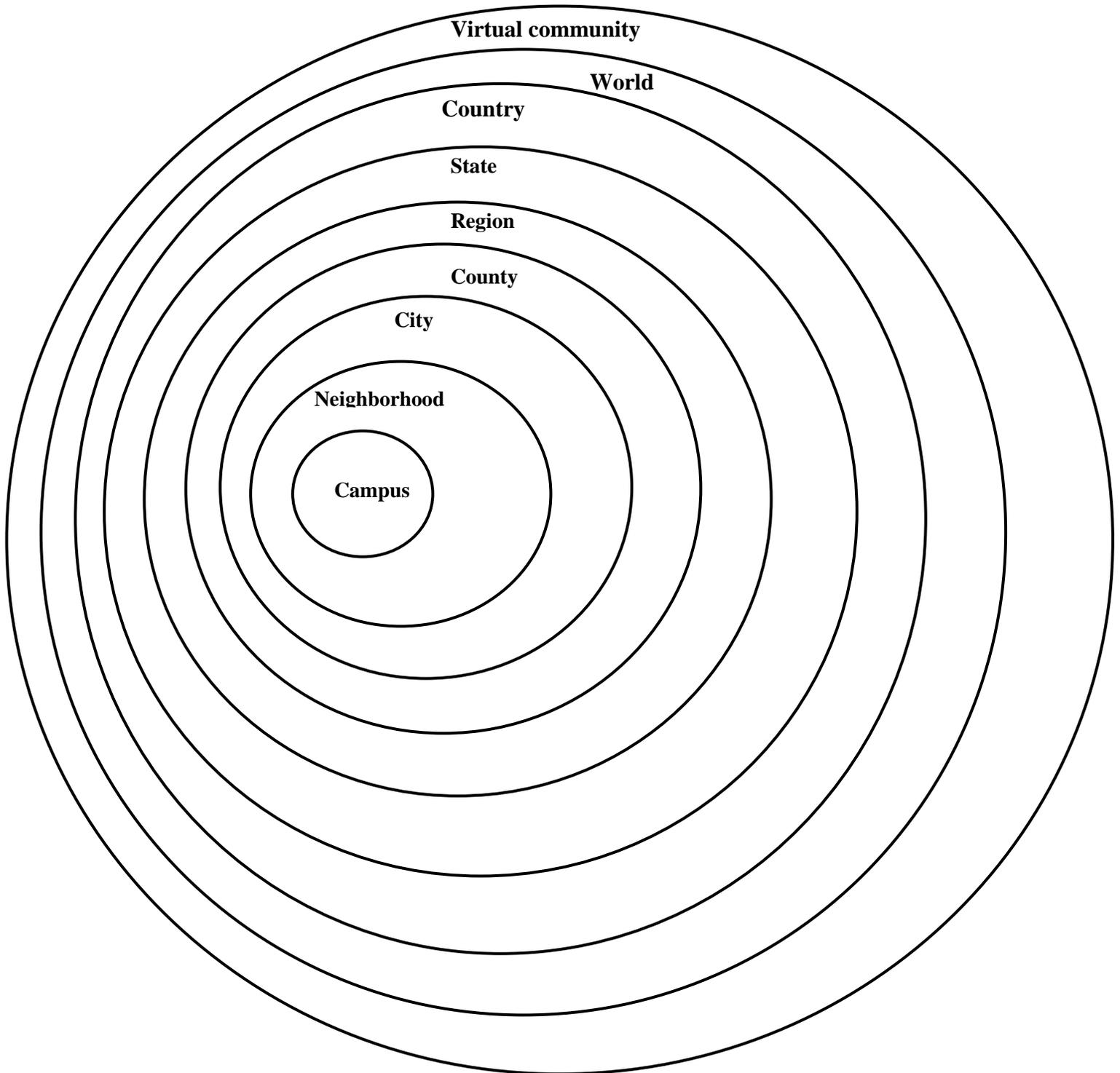
Criteria	Partner	1 (Low)	2	3	4 (High)	n/a
???	S					
	O					
	F					
	A					
	R					
???	S					
	O					
	F					
	A					
	R					
???	S					
	O					
	F					
	A					
	R					
???	S					
	O					
	F					
	A					
	R					
???	S					
	O					
	F					
	A					
	R					

***Implications for your partnerships?***

## Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: WHERE?

Place an X on the level(s) at which you have or do partner in SL. Place an O on the desired level(s).  
Identify

- 1) examples of partnerships at each geographic level
- 2) opportunities for and challenges to reciprocal partnerships at each level



# Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: WHY?

## Determining the Ends, A

The 4 quadrants below represent 4 combinations of rationales for / motivations for SL, encompassing low and high service emphasis and low and high learning emphasis.

As a group identify examples of SL activities that fit into each of the 4 quadrants

Put an “X” in the box(es) that best describes your own current approach(es) to SL and provide evidence from the design of your project(s) that supports that judgment.

Put an “+” in the box(es) that best describes your desired approach to SL, if it is different from your current approach(es). What would it take for you to move from where you are to where you want to be?

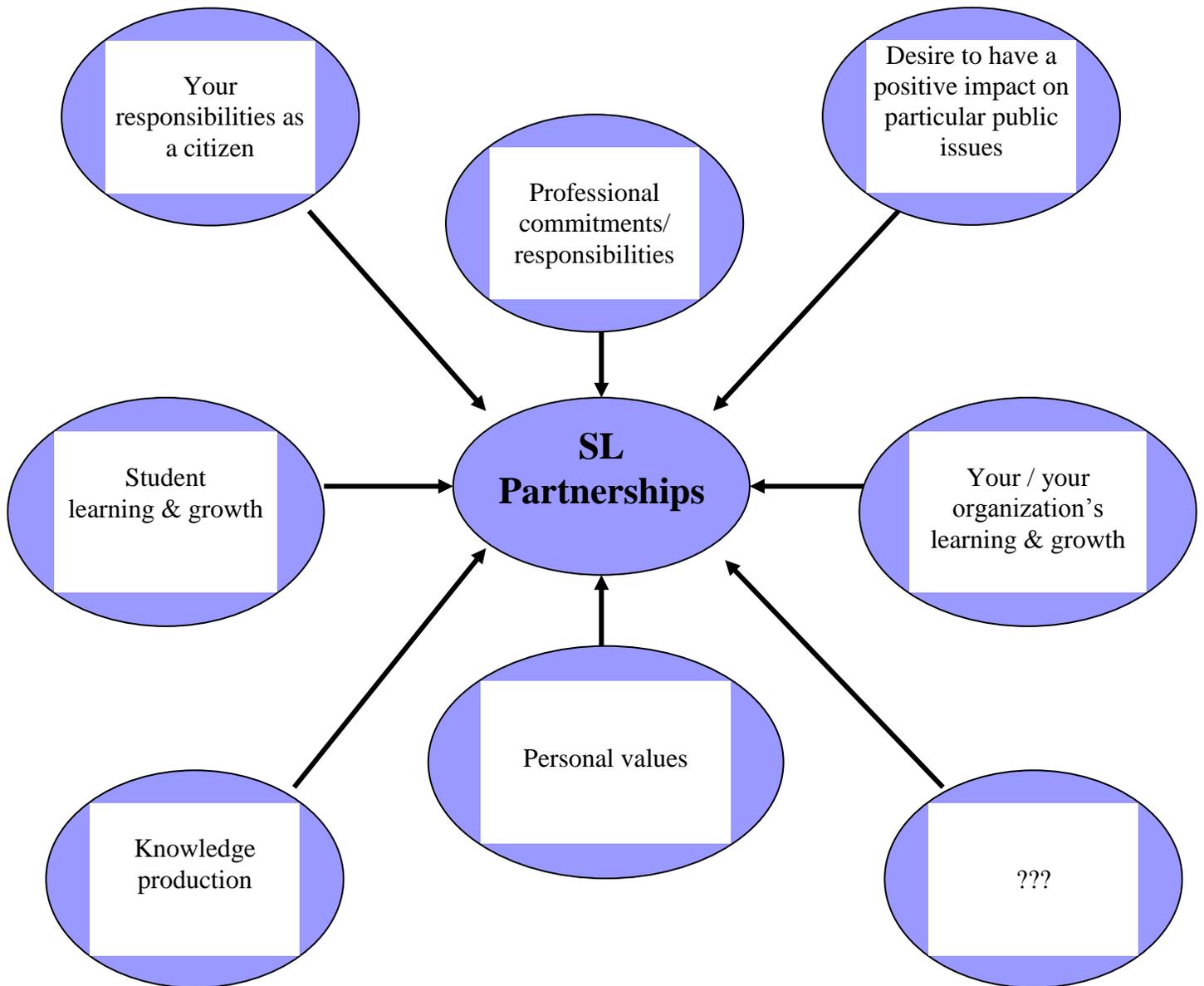
s = service is less significant  
S = service is more significant

l = learning is less significant  
L = learning is more significant

<b>s-l</b>	<b>s-L</b>
<b>S-l</b>	<b>S-L</b>

## Determining the Ends, B

What are your primary pathways into / reasons for being involved in SL partnerships? Why?



# Reciprocal Partnerships in Service-Learning: HOW?

## Building Capacity for Thick Reciprocity in Service-Learning

- A. What roles and responsibilities are associated with each partner, positioned as a “co-educator, co-learner, and co-generator of knowledge”?
- B. What capacity building is required for each in these roles/responsibilities?

	Co-educator	Co-learner	Co-generator of knowledge
S	A  B	A  B	A  B
CP	A  B	A  B	A  B
F	A  B	A  B	A  B

## Designing and Assessing Partnerships for Mutual Benefit / Mutual Transformation

[Excerpted from Clayton, Janke, & Bringle, 2010 DRAFT (adapted from Clayton & Bringle, 2009) ]

### Analysis of a partnership

For each of the following 10 aspects of partnerships noted below, please ...

- mark with an “X” the alternative that best characterizes the actual nature of the partnership from your point of view
- mark with an “O” the alternative that best characterizes the desired nature of the partnership from your point of view (desired may be the same as actual)

1. *Relationship among goals in the partnership:* To what extent would you say that the partners have common goals in your collaboration?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Generally our goals are at odds
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Generally our goals are not connected, although not at odds
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Our goals converge at some points
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ We have common goals
2. *Conflict management:* If (or when) conflicts arise about the work of this partnership
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ All of us actively avoid dealing with the conflict
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ One or a few of us attempt to deal with the conflict while the others would avoid it
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ We all deal with the conflict, but it is uncomfortable for us
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ We all deal with the conflict openly, with the shared expectation of resolving the issue
3. *Decision-making:* To what degree do the partners collaborate in decision-making?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Decisions about this project are made in isolation, without any consideration of the other partners
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Decisions about this project are made in isolation but with consideration of the other partners
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Decisions about this project are made collaboratively and are generally driven by the interests of one or the other of us
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Decisions about this project are made collaboratively and are generally reached through a consensus process that reflects our shared commitment to our shared goals
4. *Resources:* In this partnership
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ None of us have really contributed resources to this partnership
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ One of us has contributed most or all of the resources to the work, and the others have not really contributed resources
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ One or a few of us have contributed significantly more resources than the others, but everyone has contributed more than minimal resources
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ All of us have contributed approximately equal and more than minimal resources to the work
5. *Role of this partnership in work:* This partnership
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Has on balance hindered everyone’s work
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Has on balance hindered work for some of us and advanced work for others
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Has on balance advanced everyone’s work
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Has on balance redefined our work as common work, for most or all of us
6. *Role of this partnership in identity formation:* This partnership
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Has compromised identities for at least one of us
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Has had no impact on any of our identities
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Has helped define “who I am” for at least one of us
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Has helped define “who I am” for most or all of us

7. *Extent and nature of interactions:* This partnership has involved
- \_\_\_\_\_ Almost no interactions / shared activities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Limited interactions / shared activities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Frequent interactions / shared activities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Frequent interactions / shared activities that are substantive and diverse
8. *Power:* In this partnership
- \_\_\_\_\_ One or two of us have most or all of the power, and the others have very little or any power
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One or two of us have somewhat more power than the others
  - \_\_\_\_\_ The power is equally shared in this partnership
  - \_\_\_\_\_ The power is equally shared in this partnership and everyone respects and is comfortable with their own and others' use of power
9. *What matters in this partnership:*
- \_\_\_\_\_ What each of us separately get from this partnership matters to us as individuals
  - \_\_\_\_\_ What each of us separately gets from this partnership matters to us as a group
  - \_\_\_\_\_ What all of us get—separately and as a group—matters to us as a group
  - \_\_\_\_\_ What all of us get—separately and as a group—as well as the extent to which our partnership itself grows matters to us as a group
10. *Satisfaction:*
- \_\_\_\_\_ All of us are dissatisfied with this partnership
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One or more of us are dissatisfied with this partnership but some are satisfied
  - \_\_\_\_\_ All of us are satisfied with this partnership
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Most or all of us are more than satisfied with this partnership – it exceeds our expectations

## Analysis of the impacts of a partnership

For each of the following 3 categories of impacts of partnerships noted below, please ...

- mark with an “X” the alternative that best characterizes the actual nature of the partnership from your point of view
- mark with an “O” the alternative that best characterizes the desired nature of the partnership from your point of view (desired may be the same as actual)

### 1. *Impacts on you*

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have been taken advantage of (intentionally or not)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am worse off / have on balance been harmed
- \_\_\_\_\_ There has been no impact on me
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am better off / have on balance benefited
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have grown / been changed for the better

### 2. *Impacts on your organization / the organization or group you represent in the partnership*

- \_\_\_\_\_ It has been taken advantage of (intentionally or not)
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is worse off / has on balance been harmed
- \_\_\_\_\_ There has been no impact on it
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is better off / has on balance benefited
- \_\_\_\_\_ It has both gained and grown / been changed for the better

### 3. *Your impacts on others (individual people or organizations) in the partnership*

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have taken advantage of others (intentionally or not)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have made others worse off / I have on balance harmed others
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have had no impact on others
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have on balance contributed to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have nurtured the growth of others / contributed to positive change in others

## Selected Publications

**Jameson, J., Jaeger, A., & Clayton, P. (In press). Community Engaged Scholarship as Mutually Transformative Partnerships. In L. Harter, J. Hamel-Lambert, & J. Millesen (Eds.), *Participatory Partnerships for Social Action and Research*. Dubuque IA: Kendall Hunt.**

**Hess, G. Blank, G., Clayton, P., Connors, J., Ramsey, J., Reis, K., Snow, C., Steelman, T., & Wallace, J. (in press). Building the Wake Nature Preserves Partnership. In L. Harter, J. Hamel-Lambert, & J. Millesen (Eds.), *Participatory Partnerships for Social Action and Research*. Dubuque IA: Kendall Hunt.**

**Clayton, P., Bringle, R., Senior, B., Huq, J., & Morrison, M. (2010). Differentiating and Assessing Relationships in Service-Learning and Civic Engagement: Exploitative, Transactional, or Transformational. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 16 (2). Forthcoming.**

ABSTRACT: As a defining aspect of service-learning in particular and civic engagement more generally, relationships can exist between faculty members, students, community organizations, community members, and administrators of campus programs. The purpose of this research was to develop procedures to measure several aspects of these relationships in order to understand them better and to suggest processes and practices that might improve their quality. This pilot project collected information from faculty members about their relationships with community partners using the newly-developed Transformational Relationship Evaluation Scale (TRES). Results indicate that transactional and transformational qualities of relationships can be differentiated and they are related to other characteristics of the relationships (e.g., closeness). Implications for future research and improving practice are presented.

**Bringle, R., Clayton, P., & Price, M. (2009). Partnerships in Service Learning and Civic Engagement. *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement*, 1(1).**

ABSTRACT: Developing campus-community partnerships is a core element of well-designed and effective civic engagement, including service learning and participatory action research. A structural model, SOFAR, is presented that differentiates campus into administrators, faculty, and students, and that differentiates community into organizational staff and residents (or clients, consumers, advocates). Partnerships are presented as being a subset of relationships between persons. The quality of these dyadic relationships is analyzed in terms of the degree to which the interactions possess closeness, equity, and integrity, and the degree to which the outcomes of those interactions are exploitive, transactional, or transformational. Implications are then offered for how this analysis can improve practice and research.

**Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton. (2009). The Democratic Engagement White Paper. Boston, MA: New England Resource Center for Higher Education.**

**[www.nerche.org](http://www.nerche.org) → Projects → Democracy and Higher Education**

**OR**

**<http://futureofengagement.wordpress.com/>**