Change, not charity: A developmental model for promoting active citizens at Miami University

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by

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ABSTRACT

CHANGE, NOT CHARITY: A DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL FOR PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENS AT MIAMI UNIVERSITY

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We began the project as a means of recapturing the original intent of the Social Action Center (SAC) as a mechanism of moving service-learning programs past charity and into change through a progression of specific identities. Ross Meyer was the principal architect of SAC, and proposed a vision of a university office that was a centralized place where diverse groups of people could meet to deliberate pathways for solving the community, university, and students’ problems. Meyer’s work focused principally on a top-down approach in engaging students. Our model maintains his original goal, but tries to base it in the development of individual actors in a set of interconnected programs with strong community ties—contextualizing the whole process in the framework of citizenship. Utilizing our research into developmental pathways and the development of democratic citizenship within the university as a theoretical background, we have developed a model that hopes to generate agents of change who are effective citizens. The process of nurturing agents of change involves three identities: individualistic volunteerism, informed volunteer, and change agent. Distinct from these identities, effective citizenship describes a body of people asserting their right to self-government. In conclusion, we hope to have developed a plausible pathway to effective citizenship that uses the university as a means to foster civil society.
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Background: A General Framework

The late 20\textsuperscript{th} and early 21\textsuperscript{st} century has seen the rise of a new philosophical, spiritual, and social order known as postmodernism, and its origin can be firmly planted within the framework of a rapidly globalizing world. Because of the rise of intensifying globalization and its accompanying cultural, economic, and political interactions, citizens all over the globe are coming into direct contact with neighbors near and far, and in a variety of ways. These interactions are occurring in all facets of the global economy (outsourcing, offshoring); are increasing levels of foreign education and specialization; are increasing access to foreign media such as CNN and Reuters; are heightening the need for political compromise and cooperation based on economic needs and specializations; are driving long-term relationships with and stays in foreign countries (Friedman, 2003). Within these dynamic and globalized interactions, countries, peoples, and corporations are establishing more intimate, long-term, and interdependent relationships, but the relationships of commonality that are being formed must cross major political, social, economic, and cultural barriers and differences. In order to cross these differences, people and societal institutions are learning they must first highlight the differences between them and others. In the process of differentiating themselves within the confines of finding mutual commonalities, people have begun to question modernism’s tenet that all humans are connected and all humans can be linked by generalized similarities. As modernism’s influence has waned, the idea of postmodernism has arisen. Intrinsic to postmodernism is the questioning of knowledge and truth, the salience of difference, a series of
dynamic and unending changes, and a greater sense of multiplicity and complexity (Rhoads, 1997). These postmodern characteristics have led to an environment where the current social and political fabric is being strained and restitched. More specifically, people are discerning greater levels of difference than once experienced and the once simplified in-group is becoming diversified and dynamic. As the typified in-group is enlarging and morphing, people are beginning to feel the loss of community, and people are sensing a loss of power to define their community and lives (Schine, 1999). These differences and complexities have the power to disturb current human cognitive, emotional, and relational structures, but this scenario is neither inevitable nor insurmountable. One means to overcome these problems is by creating ‘dialogue across difference’ and creating communities of difference (Rhoads, 1997, p. 2). In the opinion of Schine, the best means for creating these dialogues and communities is by teaching people to engage in their world critically and actively (1999).

Educational, political, and social scholars have been developing and implementing programs for years in the hopes producing critical, active citizens, but service-learning has shown great promise and acceptance as a means of effecting a group of effective citizens. As understood by the authors, service-learning is defined by the dynamic infusion of educational principles into a democratically based interaction between student, teacher, and community that hopes to generate and maintain a civic society of critical, active citizens. Innumerable studies have commented on and supported service-learning’s potential to effect cognitive, affective, moral, and identity development (McEwen, 1996; Claus and Ogden, 1999). Service-learning’s influence on participants’ development can be found in its experiential, human-rights-based, and problem-posing framework (Claus and Ogden, 1999). This ethical and empowering framework has the
potential to mesh cognitive, affective, moral and identity domains into a program that promotes personal empowerment and social responsibility by helping its participants to think critically and act humanely and responsibly (Claus and Ogden, 1999). Personal empowerment and social responsibility can be developed within a number of behaviors and experiences: actively learning about personally significant issues, morphing education and action into a lifelong process, connecting with diverse populations, and most importantly demonstrating the motivation and power to think critically and act with a sense of purpose, agency, and hope (Claus and Ogden, 1999). In the compilation of these factors and outcomes, one can demonstrate how service-learning’s broad educational framework lends it a unique adaptability that can positively affect people’s developmental outcomes and society’s progression.

The concept of service-learning studied and written about above, however, is not the only form of service-learning. The practice of service-learning did not become prominent until the early 1990s with the creation of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Corporation emerged from two major pieces of legislation: the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Both acts promoted service-learning programs for school-aged youth, in higher education, and amongst working citizens (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2007). At the inception of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, then President George H. W. Bush lauded its passage as the creation of a ‘thousand points of light’ that would shine into the dark reaches of current society and foster a greater sense of service amongst the general population (Kahne and Westheimer, 1999). Bush’s ‘thousand points of light’ concept can be viewed from two perspectives: charity or change.
The concept of charity can be found in numerous religious codes and witnessed in what society has defined as socially acceptable actions, especially Christianity’s Golden Rule of treating one’s neighbor as one would treat oneself. Charity’s historical depth and religious overtones have created a conducive atmosphere for its survival, ensuing strength, and its importance to one conceptualization of service-learning. Charity, sometimes called volunteerism, addresses the issues of poverty and want through compassionate gifts that serve a person’s immediate needs, and is fueled by the service provider’s feelings of fulfillment and joy upon the granting of gifts to the less fortunate (Poppendieck, 1999). Underlying this surface definition is the focus on how to help individual people, and absent within the definition is the fostering of a critical consciousness which in turn increases the entrenchment of privilege and the power of individualism (Bickford and Reynolds, 2002). According to Poppendieck, government and corporate leaders have promoted the concept of charity for one reason: charity allows the government and businesses to shirk their responsibilities to their citizens and workers, allowing them to spend money and resources on different projects and people (1998). For example, the federal government may feel the need to develop its Department of Defense for both protective and aggressive actions, and in order to maintain a balanced budget, they must cut certain programs to maintain others. In this example, the government will disinvest from welfare programs that provide federal subsidies for housing or provide funding for foodstuffs. In making this decision, the government understands it will cause mild to severe disgruntlement within the group of people who formerly received the benefits of welfare. The government’s solution is to ask its constituents to provide the money and resources to bridge the gap between the current and past policies’ provisions. According to Poppendieck, the adoption of charity as an acceptable
model of behavior has created “a culture of charity that normalizes destitution and legitimates personal generosity as a response to major social and economic dislocation” (1998, p. 5).

An accurate example of charity and its outcomes can be understood through an analysis of annual trips many people make to the soup kitchens around the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. In the spirit of the holiday season, many people feel compelled to serve the local poor, and thus they spend a few hours serving meals to their community’s homeless and poor. In terms of positive outcomes, people engaged in these efforts are helping the homeless and poor survive their present predicaments, but in terms of long-term solutions, their actions provide no means of sustainably helping the homeless and poor overcome their social position and general needs. In order for the poor to overcome their plight, many theorists and practitioners contend that the structural forces behind the creation and disintegration of jobs, social supports, education, housing, health care, and food provision must be understood and controlled to the benefit of the indigent. Such a stance understands that volunteering more time at a soup kitchen solves immediate, salient needs and promotes survival, but posits that this stance will not end poverty. The end of poverty will only occur through a reordering and redistribution of structural forces and societal institutions, which will become the framework of a new status quo. As Kahne and Westheimer write, “while requiring students to ‘serve America’…might produce George Bush’s ‘thousand points of light,’ it might promote a thousand points of status quo” (1999, p. 33).

In comparison, change is founded on the development of critical consciousness and collective action (Kahne and Westheimer, 1999), thus politicizing poverty and fighting inequality (Poppendieck, 1998). In Poppendieck’s characterization of change, she envisions it as
the entity that will stall the resurgence of charity and its accompanying perpetuation of the status quo and in turn begin the process of creating equalitarian structures and relationships (1998). An example in relation to change’s definition would be Miami University’s Students for Staff (SFS) group. This group, which formed in the aftermath of the worker strike in 2003, is designed to help the “Miami community have the right to live and work with dignity” by “putting research and knowledge into action” (MU SFS, 2007). Two key elements to the group’s mission statement are its belief in a dialectical relationship between knowledge and action and its reestablishing the Miami community’s dignity by means of reasserting equalitarian wage and compensation structures. In the case of the SFS group, they are impacting the community’s lives in a positive way (eg. wage increase), just like a charity-based endeavor. The differentiating factor for change is the establishment of equalitarian wage and compensation structures that will potentially restore the community’s dignity and rights and will definitely provide more opportunities than previously known. One of the key relationships developed in the process of reformulating the wages structures is between the student and worker. In the meeting between the student and worker, the student will learn to meet the worker where he or she is situated, and by grounding the student’s relationship to the worker in someone else’s reality, the student will be in an environment more conducive for the development of mutual respect with the worker. The learned and mutual respect found is this relationship is primarily a byproduct of the more personalized interaction between student and worker, which is often lacking in the example of charity-based relationships. In the case of SFS’s actions, the group is exercising a critical consciousness towards the workers’ wage structures and then acting upon their reflections. Such understandings and actions are the basis of a proactive citizenship. Miami’s SFS group
illustrates where a thousands points of light can extinguish a thousand points of status quo and establish a basis for a universally affluent, dignified community.

Miami University’s Office of Community Engagement and Service

The analytical framework of charity versus change provides a good means for evaluating the authors’ experiences with service-learning programs at Miami University, both within Student and Academic Affairs. For the sake of brevity and clarity, our discussion will be based in our experiences with the programs offered by the Office of Community Engagement and Service (CE&S) in 2005. Our framework, which employs developmental and political theory and is situated in our personal experiences, will attempt to elucidate how programs can potentially promote student cognitive, social, and moral development and help the surrounding communities to rise above their impoverished conditions. Before discussing our experiences with the CE&S, a small historical background is warranted. Many of Miami’s projects and networks have been established through the hard work of numerous people, but one person of note is a former student named Ross Meyer. Ross Meyer graduated from Miami University in 2003, but left a legacy of discussing pervasive societal problems, interacting with diverse communities, and ultimately effecting social justice. Meyer’s major contributions to CE&S, and ultimately Miami, began in Over-the-Rhine, which is small community north of Cincinnati’s central business district that has experienced paralyzing problems with poverty, violence, and indifference for decades. His initial work revolved around the creation of a service-learning program entitled ‘Over-the-Rhine

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1 In the time period between 2004 and 2007, this division of Student Affairs has changed names. We use the 2007 title for the sake of clarity.
Weekend Experience: An Introduction to Urban America.’ Through this program, he helped students learn about racism, classism, sexism, poverty, privilege, power, and community organizing through their weekend-long encounters with the local poor and local activists.

Meyer’s work then led him to create a Social Action Center (SAC) at Miami University, which was designed as a staging entity through which campus organizations and students could become involved with social-justice issues and programs. SAC’s goal was to unite the concepts of volunteerism and activism into a joint, sustainable, effective social-change effort that would teach students to arrive at and implement complex solutions (Meyer, 2003).

SAC’s original vision involved numerous beliefs, ideas, and actions. One of Meyer’s central tenets was that social change can be created through the integration of volunteerism and activism. By politicizing charity-based endeavors, Meyer hoped to find the appropriate “scope, sustainability, and effectiveness of social change efforts” which in turn would produce complex solutions to mind-boggling problems (2003, p. 262). In order to combine the volunteer and activist models, Meyer proposed developing a system of lectures, reflections, and stage-based actions. Each of these educationally established practices would serve as the means to contextualize the students’ experiences in indigent communities. Meyer defined contextualization as the process whereby students can connect faces with theories, people with problems, and theories with actions. Assuming the service experience was properly contextualized, Meyer contended that the students will become personally empowered and should evidence a heightened sense of social responsibility (2003).

As of 2007, SAC no longer exists, and its power and effectiveness diminished shortly after Meyer’s graduation and due to student disinterest. The question is why its original conception
falter and how Miami’s CE&S might reinstitute and sustain SAC’s original vision. From our personal experience with and analysis of CE&S and SAC’s programs, we perceived a major fragmentation of projects and programs, a lack of leadership development, and lack of sustainability. The first issue concerned the fragmentation of programs and projects. Meyer’s original idea was to use SAC as an integration platform, from which diverse programs could collaboratively solve community problems (Meyer, 2003). Within the SAC, it seems Meyer intended to create a structure that would model the process of civic engagement. Unfortunately, the implementation of SAC’s concept lost broad support within the student body. Due to this unraveling, one could witness a major disconnect between many SAC-related programs, the work of CE&S, and academic departments. As an example, the students who work in Over-the-Rhine do not consider their work to be tied to the work other students do in Hamilton, and this artificial gulf frustrates the students’ ability to communicate across their projects. The absence of a generalized and explicit set of guiding goals for communication across programs hindered their ability to generate the comprehensive change Meyer envisioned.

The second issue surrounded sustainability and leadership development. When Brian first became involved with the CE&S, he enrolled in the Empower program, which began on Miami’s Campus in 1991. One of the most positive aspects of the Empower program in the spring of 2005 was its ability to allow students to witness poverty and to analyze those experiences critically, but the major negative aspect was its dearth of leadership development. For example, the program taught him to analyze critically the situation of poverty, but it never provided him with the experience, knowledge, and resources he needed to become an empowered, proactive leader. A major concept left out of the program was the belief that leaders need to share power
and ownership of the idea or program with other people, and the accompanying skills and capabilities needed to foster critical thinking and action in people who would work with the leader. In other words, the program’s structure created critical activists, but bred activists without leadership capabilities.

As a result of this program flaw, Empower did not successfully infuse the proper leadership skills in CE&S’s future leaders that year, and we can guess that many other campus service-learning efforts might fail in this regard for similar reasons. Because of the absence of a democratic leadership style and of the skills to conduct critical reflection, there was a dearth of skilled Service Guides, which caused some programs to lose the characteristics needed to help participants become more critical of their experiences, ideas, and behaviors. For example, a student who participated in the Saturday trip to Over-the-Rhine would most likely never participate in a critical discussion of the neighborhood or the group’s experiences. In the absence of critical reflection, the student was less likely to re-engage with the environment and was less likely to become the next generation of Service Guides and community activists. Without a diverse and large group of leaders, SAC’s vision of being a place of integration floundered, contributing to its un-sustainability. While we argue in these three points that Meyer’s vision has hit major confounds and roadblocks, we maintain that each is fixable and adaptable.

We believe the absence of integration, leadership, and sustainability leads to a system incapable of effecting change in its participants and the community. Although we have focused on the case study of some the CE&S’s former programs and SAC’s implementation, this critique can be used to evaluate all of Miami’s service-learning programs. With the basic appraisal in
hand, this paper will use a developmentally based model and a political-action-based model for the creation of a specific program that could potentially foster critical reflection and action amongst its student participants and create sustainable change within the community. We will begin our discussion with developmental theories and then transition to our discussion of civil society and citizenship. From our research into these distinct disciplines, we will then outline a developmentally based model for fostering citizenship.

**Developmental Theory**

As Claus and Ogden assert, cognitive, affective, and social development are key components of service-learning, and need to be carefully explicated in order to understand the inherent breadth of change service-learning can generate within its participants (1999). The understanding of a human being’s development begins with its definition. According to Nevitt Sanfrod, development is the “organization of increasing complexity,” which is defined as the increasing diversity of experience people accrue with time. In other words, development occurs when people are better able to integrate their complex experiences into coherent schemas (McEwen, 1996). For example, a senior student, Shannon, enters a first-year class about psychology, having already taken numerous upper level courses in the department. At the point of entering the class, she can be located on a specific developmental pathway with identifiable capabilities and experiences. Shannon will stagnate at her current level of development if she is not challenged with new expectations and experiences, but if the teacher decides to provide knowledge and experiences that lie outside of her scope but are within reach, Shannon is more likely to develop beyond her current developmental stage. The reason Shannon is capable of
growth is the environment both challenged and supported her. If the challenge and its ensuing stress become overwhelming, incomprehensible, and defeating, she is likely to disengage from the learning process. As argued by Vygotsky and applied within the task model of education, the student who is given a challenge slightly beyond his or her current capabilities and experiences and within the context of a supportive environment can hope to develop into higher levels of being (Zimmerman and Arunkumar, 1994).

Of unique importance to providing students with both challenge and support is the concept of developmental pathways. Within the realm of cognitive, social, and moral development, these pathways can literally be traced in the brain as synapses which connect and communicate, but within the language of service-learning, developmental pathways are figurative models predicting how people will grow within a system of stages or concepts. Cummings et. al. argue that figurative developmental pathways are the routes of increasing complexity and integration that people take, and these pathways are continuous until the environment provides a challenge, which provides the necessary context for change to occur (2000). Borrowing from Cummings et. al.’s coupling of the ideas of complexity and integration with developmental pathways, service-learning programs have the potential to challenge its participants’ current developmental capabilities to become both more complex and integrated. As mentioned above, service-learning’s potential to help students grow can be found in its experiential-based, participatory, human-rights-focused, and problem-posing models. By integrating these four factors into a coherent program, service-learning empowers the student through a unique combination of cognitive, moral, and social growth that can be witnessed in academic discussions and in new relationships acquired with the community, but service-learning then links this new knowledge
Cognitive Development

Cognitive development is defined as the understanding of the process of how people think and reason, and cognitive development’s goal is to increase the person’s capability of thinking in complex manners and increase the person’s forms of understanding (McEwen, 1996). In order to understand the process of making a person’s thinking both more complex and diversified, we turn to Perry’s model of intellectual and ethical development and to Belenky et. al.’s model of women’s ways of knowing. Perry’s model has four distinct stages with a total of nine smaller positions embedded with the four larger stages. The first large stage is termed dualism; is
subdivided into two positions; demonstrates a heavy reliance on external authority. The first position harbors no diversity of opinion, and the second position is when someone’s experiences and ideas are simplistically divided into that which is right and wrong (McEwen, 1996). For example, a student who relies solely on parental opinions in order to form his or her own or comes off as moralistic is demonstrative of the first stage. The second stage is multiplicity; is reached when the student begins to see that a gray area exists between right and wrong, which is termed the “yet-to-be-known” component. Multiplicity’s second position is the understanding that all knowledge is not fully known, and thus all knowledge must be on an equal footing (McEwen, 1996). An example of a student in the multiplicity stage would be the person who often argues about a topic from a multitude of perspectives and will not consistently form a personal opinion, often appearing to be an escapist. The third stage is contextual relativism, and it begins when the student sees some knowledge as better than other forms if supported with proper evidence and justification and as developed within a context. The third position occurs when the student makes firm commitments to a specific form of knowledge (McEwen, 1996). The student in this stage will have a particular lens for interpreting experience. For example, the person may believe structural forces are more powerful predictors than personal responsibility and decision-making in determining who becomes poor. The final stage is commitment in relativism. It begins with a student making a commitment to an aspect of life based on his or her beliefs; who then experiences the implications of the commitment; and later integrates the experience into making new commitments (McEwen, 1996). This student is the type who will interpret experience and knowledge with a self-defined lens, and then acts on the knowledge. For example, the previous student who understands poverty through the lens of structural
violence becomes active in reshaping health care and housing policies in an impoverished neighborhood. By reaching the stage of commitment to relativism, a student will exhibit his or her full cognitive capacities, but most students never reach these later stages.

Several aspects of Perry’s model warrant further explicit explanation. The keystone to his stages is that the majority of development occurs between the major stages, not necessarily within, and movement between the stages relies on providing structured “threats” to the person’s current developmental pathway (McEwen, 1996). In implementing these ideas, one must return to the challenge model explicated earlier, and understand the importance environmental support plays in moving between Perry’s stages. Without support, people will return to their former cognitive structures because of the stability and comfort they provide to the person. Because Perry’s model fits well into the challenge and support model, we argue that his work should provide the background theory for creating cognitive goals for students and for understanding where students may stand in the realm of cognitive development.

Although we rely heavily on Perry’s model of cognitive development, we also want to highlight its potential limitations. Belenky et. al. have argued that Perry’s model misses the intersection between gender and ways of knowing, and have developed a simple way of differentiating male and female patterns of knowing (1986). In terms of males, the authors argue that they exhibit separate knowing that is characterized by knowing through doubt and questioning and by separating the self from knowledge. In other words, males tend to take an objective, scientific approach to knowing. Females, on the other hand, demonstrate a connected form of knowing, and connected knowing is found when people know through belief. In other words, women tend to know by developing empathy-based relationships (Belenky et. al., 1986).
Belenky et. al.’s idea that ways of knowing can be differentiated by gender has not stood up to quantitative tests, and Richardson and King argue that there are no consistent gender differences in reasoning or cognitive structures (1991). In effect, males and females do not have differentiated cognitive pathways, but there may still be a multitude of cognitive pathways that cannot be delineated according to gender but instead by the individual. With this information in mind, we support the idea that Belenky et. al.’s division of knowing along gender lines may not imply an either-or situation exists; rather, both genders should construct knowledge by means of both (McEwen, 1996). A second outcome of Belenky, et. al.’s work is the realization that a multitude of factors, as defined by the person’s situation, will affect development, and in considering all of these factors, we are pressed to utilize numerous models of development in the hopes of capturing the diversity of situations and pathways people may take. By utilizing both Belenky et. al. and Perry’s models, service-learning can help its participants become cognitively more advanced, and provide the environment for creating a cognitively well-rounded individual in its use of an inclusive model of cognitive development.

Numerous practitioners and academics have explored the intersection of cognitive development and service-learning. Eyler and Giles provide the most comprehensive exploration of the intersection in their book Where’s the Learning in Service-learning?. In their chapter on the development of critical thinking skills, they explore how students will approach and solve ill-structured community problems, and they discovered that “understanding is...constrained by the capacity to interpret experience” (Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 120). In order to conceptualize the student-specific constraints, the authors used Perry’s model of student development and King and Kitchner’s reflective judgment model, which outlines the different levels students exhibit
when they problem solve, to guide their examination of service-learning programs. Using these models, they defined a cognitively well-developed student as someone who can make judgments and commitments while respecting the relativism of knowledge and as someone who could identify complex problems, frame them complexly, and justify their choice of opinion and action. Although their benchmark would exemplify the most cognitively developed student, Eyler and Giles discovered that service-learning can positively influence cognitive development and problem-solving capacities, but they admit that the growth of cognitive capacities is a slow process, requiring numerous challenges over time and extensive support systems. Their findings, however, occurred in the context of specific service-learning programs that can be differentiated on numerous bases. For example, they found students’ growth was directly linked to the level of structured reflection, engagement with the community, and intellectual stimulation in the discussions. Within these constraints, they concluded that in order for cognitive development to occur in the context of service-learning the students must have numerous experiences that are later evaluated through reflective periods. If these and other criteria are met, the students will exhibit “changes in critical thinking ability [that] represent a transformation in the way students see and use knowledge” (Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 128).

**Moral Development**

Cognitive development’s close sister is moral development, and although their growth often occurs in tandem, we need to take a close, individualized look at moral development’s important points of distinctiveness. The empirical study of moral development has historically been focused on the process of moral reasoning, which Rest defined as the “‘process by which a
person arrives at a judgment of what is the moral thing to do in a moral dilemma’” (Boss, 1994). Of significant note is the observation that moral reasoning is distinct from moral action, and its study is concerned with the processes people utilize to make moral judgments and define moral actions, not determine what is right or wrong (McEwen, 1996). One major contributor to the study of moral development was Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg developed three major stages, each with smaller subdivisions. The first major group is termed preconventional. Its first position is the punishment-and-obedience orientation where the goal is to avoid punishment from an external authority, and the second position is called instrumental relativism, meaning actions that fulfill all personal needs and some needs of others are moral (Kohlberg 1975). An example of this type of person would be the young child who learns that by not pulling his sister’s hair, he will be rewarded. A more adult-like example is best seen in violent youth who often do not view murder and violence as wrong if it fulfills their needs. The second group is termed conventional, and has two divisions. The first division, interpersonal concordance or “good boy-nice girl orientation,” occurs when the person tries to maintain others’ expectations and favor, and the second division, law-and-order orientation, is attained when rightness is determined by whether it maintains social order (Kohlberg, 1975). An example would be a person who believes flag burning is immoral because it promotes lawlessness, and another would be the person who continues to attend church because their parents expect such participation. The final group is termed the postconventional stage. The first division, social-contract orientation, is found when people analyze actions based on how well they fit into an individual’s rights that society has deemed appropriate and productive, and the final position, universal ethical principle, is met when the person utilizes self-chosen ethical principles that are logically comprehensive,
universal, and consistent (Kohlberg, 1975). The first position would be exemplified by someone arguing that the loss of freedom of speech for women in war-torn countries is immoral, and the second position can be understood in someone that argues the loss of economic and social rights amongst impoverished women is deplorable. Utilizing these categories to analyze college students, Kohlberg found that the majority of college students enter and leave college at stage four (law-and-order orientation) and that only about one percent of the population will reach the universal ethical principle stage (McEwen, 1996). Kohlberg’s findings were originally reported during the mid 1970s, and despite their age they still find acceptance amongst practitioners. For example, Boss found in her study of 91 University of Rhode Island undergraduate students who took an ethics class that the inclusion of community service as a class requirement was found to move students’ moral reasoning capabilities to more principled levels (1994). Current research supports Kohlberg’s contention that most students’ moral reasoning resides at lower levels by showing that students evidence significant increases in moral reasoning after participating in service programs.

Kohlberg’s model of moral development, however, was created using only males as his participants, and shows evidence that higher moral reasoning is based on the concepts of justice, rights, and rationality. In the application of Kohlberg’s model with females, Carol Gilligan found women are unable to move to the conventional level of reasoning by virtue of their gender-related differences in moral reasoning (McEwen, 1996). According to Carol Gilligan, women process moral situations not in terms of principles and propositions but in terms of care and responsibility to the other. As expressed in Nodding’s creation of an ethic of care based on Gilligan’s work, “how good I can be is partly a function of how you—the other—receive and
respond to me” (1984, p. 5). In other words, Gilligan is suggesting that moral reasoning is not the focus of women; rather, women’s morality involves the founding of relationships between herself and the other that originate in a caring, loving environment. Working with these principles, Gilligan designed a simple model of how women develop into moral beings. The first level is found in women where the self is the central locus of attention and concern. With maturity and socialization, women begin to believe responsibility is defined by how well they care for others, not the self, and this level directly contrasts the first level. In the final level, women moderate their stance between the self and other as they learn responsibility to the self and other is not an anathema but are complementary entities (McEwen, 1996).

Although Gilligan’s work produces a separate portrait of moral development from Kohlberg, both sides reveal unique understandings and applications that have the possibility of complementing each other in the field of service-learning (McEwen, 1996). Kohlberg’s model provides a useful format for helping students think about and use the concepts of justice and rights in their moral analysis of their experiences. On the other hand, Gilligan’s work furnishes a model for developing caring, responsible relationships between the participants and the community. By integrating these perspectives, service-learning programs have the potential to develop the moral systems of all participants and the possibility of teaching new moral perspectives to all participants. For example, males are more likely to morally reason through situations, but the introduction of morality in terms of caring relationships may provide a relevant and powerful point of growth for males. The same is true for females but in the opposite direction: caring relationships to moral reasoning. In order to enhance the moral reasoning of all individuals, both moral systems need to be integrated into the context of the
challenge and support model. For example, males should be challenged to develop close, caring relationships with the people they work for, and women should be challenged to consider how their actions influence the provision of justice. By utilizing both conceptualizations of moral systems, service-learning can provide the optimal and most inclusive environment for moral development.

Although both forms of moral reasoning are recognized, most research has focused on service-learning’s impact on Kohlberg’s model of principled moral reasoning. This focus stems from the fact that moral reasoning cannot be consistently differentiated along gender lines (Woods, 1996). Judith Boss’s study on moral reasoning follows along these lines of recognizing both forms of moral reasoning but studying principled moral reasoning. Boss defined the higher levels of moral reasoning as “autonomous moral reasoning, universality and impartiality, as well as a concern for justice and mutual respect” (1994). As mentioned earlier, Boss found that 51% of her students who participated in service-learning programs showed evidence of more principled moral reasoning. She found that the students who showed the positive changes had two key experiences. The first experience was the feeling of cognitive disequilibrium, which occurred when the student was challenged to reason at higher moral reasoning levels in order to solve a moral dilemma. The second experience was the personal identification that one is a moral agent. By realizing the person has a voice in moral decisions, they are driven to reason at higher levels. Boss, however, does acknowledge that affective-based forms of moral reasoning should be emphasized and attached to the program. Just as she generated cognitive disequilibrium, people should also create affective disequilibrium in the students. Boss’s study provides support for the contention that service-learning can enhance moral reasoning, but she
only shows that service-learning can be correlated with the moral-reasoning outcomes.

Leming’s study of moral reasoning provides a more in-depth study of service-learning programs and moral reasoning outcomes. He used the Building Decision Skills (BDS) curriculum, which is characterized by its emphasis on ethical decision-making within service-learning reflections. In order to measure moral reasoning skills, he defined student outcomes in terms of agency, social relatedness, and moral-political awareness. In each category, he found significant differences in moral reasoning in the students who participated in the BDS curriculum. These results point out that a specific part of the service-learning program, reflection with an emphasis on ethical decision making, accounts for moral reasoning changes in service-learning programs (Leming, 2001).

Social Development

The third major form of development, social development, often falls into the realm of psychosocial development, and results in the creation of an identity. Identity, as understood by Rhoads, is the entity that corresponds to the roles people take, and in turn, these roles shape people’s interactions with others and the environment in such a way that the self continues to develop (1997). Rhoads’s definition of identity focuses on the interacting relationships between the self and environment in the creation and evolution of a person’s identity (Rhoads, 1997). Using identity development as an indicator of psychosocial development, we sought psychosocial developmental theories based on the mutual influences of self and environment. Historically, Lev Vygotsky was one of the first major proponents of socially based development, but Erik Erikson created the first major lifespan theory of psychosocial development. Erikson
proposed that humans develop their personality and identity through relations with their social environment and in a stage-like format. In these interactions, people are challenged to integrate a new set of essential human capabilities, catalogued as developmental themes, and can only develop them in the midst of a supportive environment. Each theme represents an epigenetic principle, which Erikson defines as a bidirectional, antithetical pathway. For example, during adolescence, the person can develop a sense of identity or exhibit role confusion, and the resulting developmental pathway is considered either healthy and productive or inhibiting and destructive (Erikson, 1950). Erikson’s work, however, proposes only a simple, broad definition of psychosocial development during the adolescent and young adult years. In recognition of its limitations, Chickering and Reisser’s model of psychosocial development will be used.

Chickering and Reisser’s work expands on Erikson’s developmental theme of identity in adolescence, and focuses solely on late adolescence and early adulthood. The foundation for their theories is the idea that identity is created through interactions with the environment, and identity then becomes the lens through which subsequent experiences and relationships are explored, analyzed, understood, and integrated. From this foundation, they formulated seven stages of identity development, four of which occur primarily during the early years of college. The fifth stage provides the connection between the first four and the last two. Each stage shows evidence of a progression from lower-order identity constructs to higher-order, integrating constructs. During the first four stages, the person will develop a sense of competence, the ability to manage emotions, a move to interdependence, and the development of mature interpersonal relationships. These initial stages move from strongly forming the individual’s capabilities to becoming a mature person in relation with others (McEwen, 1996). For example,
John enters college as a first year having spent limited time away from his parents and hometown friends. Immediately, John learns to develop specific personal competencies to manage the independence he has acquired, and as John struggles with these competencies and a world of both opportunity and struggle, he must learn to manage his emotional reactions. In other words, John must first learn to become self-dependent and grounded. As John begins to assert himself, he will also learn the need for interdependence, which in turn leads him to develop mature interpersonal relationships. These two stages are when John will realize humans are social beings that operate in a complex social environment that cannot be survived cognitively, socially, and spiritually without outside help. These extremes of independence and interdependence, however, must congeal into a coherent whole, which leads to the higher-order stages.

The fifth, sixth and seventh stages are when the individual establishes his or her identity and begins to move forward in life according to principles and dreams. In the fifth stage, individuals establish their identity, or a comprehensive sense of self. The sixth stage occurs as individuals begin to use their identity as the lens through which they define their purpose. The seventh and final stage is the process of creating a generalized set of values and ethics that will serve as a consistent, internal guide to future behavior (McEwen, 1996). To return to the case of John, he may enter the fifth stage when he becomes involved in personally fulfilling activities, such as reading novels or taking solitary hikes, but then becomes involved with organizing religious retreats with his friends or leading service groups. After incorporating these diverse behaviors into his self, John can then begin to plan his future. He will start to decide what type of job he wants to take and more generally what lifestyle he wants to follow. In John’s case, he decides to
become a social worker and plans to start a family. As John moves forward with his plans, he integrates his experiences into basic beliefs or schemas that guide future behavior. As John works as a social worker, he finds happiness in his ability to empower individuals, and later, John attempts to create an environment of potential and empowerment in all his relationships, thoughts, and behaviors. Upon transition into the last stages of Chickering and Reisser’s model of identity development, the individual will have acquired a stable lens for interacting with, thinking about, and reflecting on the environment, but more importantly, the capability to make connections and ultimately make meaning (McEwen, 1996).

While Chickering and Reisser’s model focuses on the individual’s generalized identity development, one must also consider how identity interacts with and forms within our historical and social environment. Within our highly complex social environment, identity is constructed through numerous forces and experiences that can be differentiated into numerous constructs. Being unable to live outside of the social environment, the person must learn and frame these socially mediated constructs into a coherent identity that functions as a whole but can be defined by its pieces. Some examples of these constructs are race, class status, sexual orientation, and (dis)ability (McEwen, 1996). We will review racial identity development and class status because of their relevance to and salience in service-learning programs and its participants.

Racial identity, according to Janet Helms, “refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on one’s perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group” (McEwen 1996). Traditionally, people have focused the study of racial development in non-white communities, but more recently, research has delved into discerning the formation of a white racial identity. We will start with the formation of a minority racial development. One
of the most prominent models is called the minority identity development (MID) model and was
developed by Atkinson, Morten, and Sue. The MID is composed of five stages. The first
(conformity) and second (dissonance) stages meld together. The person will begin by
conforming to the dominant group’s prescribed role in an oppressed group, and then the person
will begin to question their minority status. The third stage (resistance and immersion) is
highlighted by the rejection of society’s imparted role and the immersion in the minority group’s
independent identity. The fourth stage, introspection, occurs as the person assesses the benefits
and costs of the minority identity in comparison to the dominant group’s identity, and the fifth
stage, synergistic, is when the person identifies with his or her cultural group while also pulling
in positive aspects of the dominant group’s identity (McEwen, 1996). The significance of MID
in service-learning programs is that many minority students may be transitioning through these
stages, and special attention and care should be paid to constructing the program to aid students
in the movement toward an independent minority identity. Of additional importance is the
realization that service-learning may propel a minority student into these stages of identity
development and cause a strong feeling of dissonance between former beliefs about his or her
identity and what was experienced in the program. Because of the potentially unique and
beneficial intersection of service-learning programs and minority racial identity development, we
propose that future programs implant these models in their programs with the hopes of mitigating
the struggle to develop an identity outside the dominant discourse (Yates and Youniss, 1999).

As stated earlier, racial identity should also be applied to white students. Janet Helm’s model
of white racial identity development provides a lucid portrayal of how a white student may
unlearn explicit and implicit racist attitudes and behaviors. In the first phase, the white person
will become aware of race and eventually determine that race-based inequalities are to be blamed on minorities. Despite these experiences and attitudes, the white person may experience a "jarring" event that will begin the process of questioning suppositions about racial minorities. Because of this provocative event, the white person will start the process of developing a nonracist white identity. Such a development, however, progresses through stages of hoping to make minorities more white to reflecting on whiteness to transcending racial segregations and forming a non-racist but white identity (McEwen, 1996). The process of becoming aware of a white identity and overcoming its racist components should be a major focus of any college service-learning program given the knowledge that many college students are white and that white identity is often left unexplored because of its position of dominance (Rhoads, 1997).

A major but not final component of identity development focuses on social class. Authors generally agree that social class is defined by economic security, parental education, parental income, wealth, perceived choices, and social capital (McEwen, 1996). Although there are no developmental models for conceptualizing social class identity, class plays an important role in determining people’s perspective and interactions with people of lower social classes. Because of the difference in social class between most participants and the people they are serving, the participants often believe in a one-way approach to community service, whereby the people with social and economic capital charitably donate their time and resources to the disadvantaged. Such an arrangement conceptualizes community service as a one-way street, and it perpetuates the structure of class difference and domination (Kahne and Westheimer, 1997). Service-learning programs need to help students identify the invisible class structures in which they operate and to help students to interact across social-class boundaries by means of respectful
empowering relationships with others. The result of such democratic relationships is an explicit awareness of how social class pervades interactions between the person serving and the people served, and from this awareness, the student can begin to develop two-way relationships that foster student growth and communal change (Rhoads, 1997).

In conclusion of the developmental theories, we will move back to Sanford’s definition of development as the dialectical interaction between integration and complexity. By applying this definition to the major cognitive, moral, and social developmental theories, one can see clearly that development is a major aspect of the college experience. Given the possibility of major developmental milestones and transformations during the college years, service-learning programs need to define their foundation in terms of developmental theory, and need to emphasize the importance of creating both a challenging and supportive environment in which its participants can explore, analyze, and act. In fostering a developmentally based program, service-learning has the potential to foster greater cognitive capabilities, teach new modes of moral thought, and aid the formation of a purposeful identity. In order to elicit this broad set of developmental outcomes, we turn to a specific educational model, called the Learning Partnerships Model.

**The Learning Partnerships Model**

Marcia Baxter Magolda’s Learning Partnerships Model is based on the intersection of psychology, sociology, and educational theory, which collectively provide a fertile ground from which service-learning activities and its participants can grow and thrive. This intersection’s productivity, however, requires a theoretical structure to support a multitude of developmental
types and stages. The LPM was designed as such a structure, and it provides the context necessary for a program to foster critical thought, critical action, and potentially perspective transformation. Baxter Magolda combines these outcomes into one concept called self-authorship, defined as the “capacity to define their [the students’] own beliefs, identity, and relationships internally” (2002). Baxter Magolda and King externalize and operationalize this definition when they write that “self-authorship, in its intricate blend of autonomy and connection, enables meaningful, interdependent relationships with diverse others grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences and the cultural practices and values these differences reflect” (2004). Baxter Magolda’s initial definition focuses on the internalized changes self-authorship should evidence, and later Baxter Magolda and King focus on how these internalized changes express themselves in everyday relations and interactions. This section will focus on how to enact internalized self-authorship and how to release its potential to act responsibly, compassionately, and relevantly in the world.

Baxter Magolda and King’s conceptualization of self-authorship originated in their experiences as educators and from a 17-year longitudinal study of young adult’s learning development. From their experiences and the empirical study, Baxter Magolda and King developed the Learning Partnerships Model (LPM). The LPM’s goal is help college students navigate the complex, diverse contexts they will experience in college but especially outside of college. By means of an empirical and experiential base, the LPM creates a holistic system for conceptualizing how teachers can help students develop cognitive maturity and an independent identity within the context of mutual relationships. In other words, the LPM seeks to help students become independent agents of change and foster mature, productive collaborations with
other adults. From this conceptualization, the LPM provides its students with the tools, resources, experiences, and ideas to become an effective agent of meaning making. Lisa Landreman sums up the effects of Baxter Magolda and King’s LPM when she writes that “‘achieving consciousness implies an understanding of self and identity (intrapersonal) in a historical and socio-cultural context (interpersonal), achieved through reflection (cognitive) and action’” (Baxter Magolda and King, 2004). As Landreman highlighted, the LPM focuses on the developmental foundations of knowledge, self, and other, which ultimately leads to ‘consciousness’ or what Baxter Magolda and King term self-authorship. Self-authorship, however, is not an end unto itself; rather, it is the means to creating the possibility for effective, educated citizenship. As Baxter Magolda and King write, self-authorship “undergirds lifelong learning and responsible citizenship” (2004). It is the goal of the LPM, service-learning programs, and our reconceptualization of Miami’s Office of CE&S’s activities to create the environment that will produce an effective, responsible, motivated, and educated citizenry.

The process giving birth to a proactive and conscious citizenry can be achieved through the active implementation of the LPM’s assumptions, principles, and practices. Baxter Magolda and King assert that in order for a program to foster self-authorship, its structures and practices must harbor certain assumptions and must evidence specific principles. Their assumptions and principles stem from their utilization of three dimensions of development. The first dimension relates to how people know, also known as epistemology, and relates back to their focus on cognitive maturity. Baxter Magolda defines this foundation as the ability to “develop an internal belief system via constructing, evaluating, and interpreting judgments in light of available frames of reference” (Baxter Magolda and King 2004). The second dimension is how people view
themselves, which is what they call an intrapersonal dimension. Magolda writes that this foundation is when a person will “choose their own values and identity in crafting an internally generated sense of self that regulates interpretation of experience and choices” (Baxter Magolda and King, 2004). The third dimension is how people construct relationships with their environment and others, what they term the interpersonal dimension. Baxter Magolda finishes that this foundation is the “capacity to engage in authentic, interdependent relationships with diverse others” in which the person takes “others’ perspectives into account without being consumed by them” (Baxter Magolda and King, 2004). Assuming these dimensions to be essential for the full development of a student, Baxter Magolda and King design the LPM’s assumptions and principles around these dimensions.

The LPM’s assumptions begin in the epistemological realm with the idea that knowledge is socially constructed. The authors define the social construction of knowledge as the understanding that knowledge’s truth is ambiguous. Within this ambiguity, people can define multiple interpretations, and by means of multiple interpretations, people can make their understandings of the world, its relations, and its people more complex (Baxter Magolda, 2002). An example would be the social construction of poverty. Numerous interpretations of the etiology, nature, and consequences of poverty are abound, but no one paradigm can fully explain or solve the problem of poverty. The second assumption is that the self is central to the construction of knowledge. In this assumption, the authors validate the individual’s ability to define the self (Baxter Magolda, 2002). An example of self-definition would be how an individual constructs their vision of poverty. In one case, an African American, impoverished youth growing up in the inner city may discern poverty as the result of structural forces beyond
the individual’s control. The student’s perceptions are based on his or her experiences in the neighborhood, such as problems with access to health care that result in frequent visits to the emergency room for preventable problems. From these experiences, the student will attempt to understand the situation as a coherent whole, or construct knowledge. The student’s resulting idea about poverty is strongly situated in his or her interactions with the environment, but the idea bears the unique mental and social characteristics of the person. The third assumption is the idea that authority and expertise are shared in the mutual construction of knowledge. This idea shows how people can function interdependently to integrate their seemingly mutually exclusive sets of knowledge (Baxter Magolda, 2002). An example would be the meeting of the previous minority student with a white student in a class on social policy. In this class, the students are given the opportunity to discuss their viewpoint and to listen to others, and are then asked to provide a solution. Both sides may realize neither extreme will solve the solution of poverty; rather, an integrated solution focusing on the individual and the structure provides a more holistic and practical approach.

From each assumption, a practical principle is born. From the first assumption of a socially constructed knowledge base, the program must validate the learners’ capacity to know, and the program can achieve this goal by means of establishing basic levels of trust, respect, and interest. The second principle expands on the first principle, and it posits that the program must situate learning in the learners’ experience, which can be realized by using current knowledge and experience as a point of growth. The third principle makes the final step of helping the student to construct knowledge with others. This can be achieved in environments where people equally participate in the reflection on experience. Each principle rests on several characteristics to be
present between the educator and learner. In terms of the educator, he or she must introduce developmentally appropriate and then scaffolded levels of complexity, respect the student, and increase the student’s agency. In return, the learner must be actively engaged by showing initiative and responsibility, and must actively and interdependently construct knowledge and meaning (Baxter Magolda, 2002). Altogether, the active implementation of these assumptions and principles within the presence of experienced leaders and the context of mutual exchanges can provide the fertile ground for the achievement of self-authorship.

Our discussion of the LPM has been primarily situated in the context of learner and educator and the outcomes of the LPM have been focused on the learner. When applying the LPM to service-learning programs, we, however, believe there must be an expanded group of agents involved with the student’s learning and the outcomes must generalize to the community, not simply the student. Service-learning’s additional partner must be the community, which is defined as local activists, local agencies, and those who are served, and in relation with this group of people and institutions the student must develop self-authorship. The community’s growth must parallel the student’s development, and the community agents must take an active role in the relationship with the student. By melding student and community objectives into a coherent program, we argue that service-learning programs can create positive social and educational outcomes for both the individual and community.

Up to this point, we have discussed the developmental progression of college students. The milestones of importance to college students are experienced at the cognitive, moral, and social levels. In order to foster student development, we suggest that Baxter Magolda and King’s LPM can aid the student’s growth in relation to the community. To further elucidate the intersection
between student development and the community, we must define the concept of citizenship and explain the university’s role in educating for effective citizenship.

**University and Citizenship**

Citizenship endows people with the power of collective self-government, allowing its members to decide upon, and to act toward, the common goods of society. Though each person born in the United States gains the title of citizen, the rights and responsibilities of that distinction are hardly innate. The tenets of interconnectedness, responsibility, deliberation, and participation are all vital components to citizenship, but these values, skills, and knowledge need to be taught. Citizenship is principally a social distinction, and needs the lessons of society to materialize it. But who is responsible for ensuring the creation of strong citizens? Do families shoulder all of the responsibility? Or, does the duty fall to the national, state, or local governments? Do religious institutions have a special task in crafting citizens? What about groups such as the National Rifle Association or the American Civil Liberties Union? Are these associations important in crafting citizens? And where do the various school systems fit into the formula of citizenship? We argue that the public university that encompasses all of these diverse groups is the best institution for fostering citizenship because it can function as civil society—the place where citizenship is both learned and empowered.

The public university cannot be neutral about the types of citizens it creates if it wishes to create a strong democracy. Democratic citizenship must not come to be defined by right-bearing individualists who preach personal liberty above all else. “Whatever democrats ‘say,’” writes
Wilson Carey McWilliams, “democracy does not promise ‘living as one likes.’ Its aim is self-rule. Autonomy is possible for human beings only as parts of wholes, in which our ‘partiality’ and the things to which we are ‘partial’ are recognized as secondary, though important” (Goldwin and Schambra, 1980, p. 83). McWilliams emphasizes the interconnectedness of citizenship by showing how isolation weakens the individual. He or she cannot be a solitary citizen, but needs the community to support individual rights to make them viable. Robert Putnam, drawing on a study by economist James T. Hamilton, states, “neighborhoods where people owned their homes and voted were (holding constant many other factors) less likely to get hazardous waste plants than neighborhoods where people rented and rarely voted” (2000, p. 344). While home ownership can, on one hand, reflect a community’s economic strength, it also becomes a source of what Putnam calls “social capital.” Social capital indicates the level that individuals interact, and participate in, community activities. Strong identification with a community correlates with high social capital, helping to protect aggregate rights of the individual citizens when augmented by an aggregate voice (voting). Where these factors are weaker, individuals can be isolated and forced to endure infringements on their rights. The university must demonstrate for students that only by working in solidarity with others, and not as isolated individuals, may they hope to retain protections from both governmental and market coercion.

The creation and maintenance of rights rises as the principle form of enlightened self-interest in society. The classical liberal notion of rights views them as individual possessions held apart from the community. Benjamin Barber extrapolates on this flaw in reasoning: “As a \textit{me}, I can make claims; but only as part of a \textit{we} can I possess and acknowledge rights.
Citizenship, is among other things, a kind of self-redefinition in which, with respect to the polity, we rethink who we are and what is good for us” (1998a, p. 74). Rights talk must not fall into the rhetoric of absolute individuality, but must be formed in the context of enlightened self-interest and community goods. Instead of resting on preconceived notions of natural liberties, rights are in fact displays of empathy—a community recognition that certain values are vital to citizen identity (Barber, 1998a, p. 74). Democratic citizens who retain empathy for others give rights a firmer base. “[A] form of strong democracy focusing on mutualism, active pursuit of common goods, and creative common action—because it nourishes empathy and imagination—is more likely to be hospitable to rights than a form of thin democracy that waters down citizenship and encourages passive accountability, mutual suspicion, and adversarial bargaining” (Barber, 1998a, p. 74). Rights must come to be understood as a form of collective empathy, not individualistically minded, unenforceable trumps to communal action.

Even the individual right to property can be shown to require the interconnectedness of citizens under the auspices of the state. “Private property depends on property rights, which do not exist without government and law...” writes Cass Sunstein. “Government is needed both to create the system of property rights and to police it. Without trespass laws and a police force, property could not exist” (2004, p. 198). Lacking the collective force of society organized into the state’s police powers, private property would be little more than a wish. This is not to say that the acts of the state cannot violate our individual rights. The wholesale transfer of property from one private entity to another private entity occurred with the backing of the Supreme Court in _Kelo v City of New London_. Through eminent domain, the government marked the homes of New London residents to be used for redevelopment purposes. Justice Stevens, who authored the
majority opinion, writes, “We emphasize that nothing in our opinion precludes any State from placing further restrictions on its exercise of the takings power. Indeed, many States already impose ‘public use’ requirements that are stricter than the federal baseline” (Kelo 2005). He concludes the Court’s decision with a reminder that it is the people who ultimately determine what laws will be tolerated. Justice Stevens foresaw the unpopularity of the decision, but felt that the Court’s hands were tied. A year following Kelo, eight state ballot referendums were passed curbing the powers of eminent domain. Though states can help to secure rights, they can also try to take them away. Collective action by citizens provides the essential check on government to ensure the delicate balance between maintaining rights and trampling them.

The example above would imply that voting is a strong form of collective action, when in fact it merely represents an aggregate of individual opinions and not a collective decision. Collective decisions require collective, inclusive deliberation. The Founders of the United States do ultimately trace the line of checks and balances to the people, stating in Federalist Paper #33, “If the federal government should overpass the just bounds of its authority and make a tyrannical use of its power, the people, whose creature it is, must appeal to the standard they have formed, and take such measures to redress the injury done to the Constitution as the exigency may suggest and prudence justify” (1987, p. 225). For the American Constitution to remain viable, it requires a strong citizenship to provide checks on the government. If the country’s rulers begin encroaching on rights, it is up to the people to vote them out of office. Though the people provide the ultimate check on the state, the daily affairs of democratic self-government were not entrusted to them. As Harry Boyte and Nancy Kari indicate, James Madison in Federalist Paper #10 “argued that deliberations of representatives, ‘a chosen body of citizens,’ are ‘more
consonant to public good than if pronounced by the people themselves’” (1996, p. 15). If
citizens are defined by those who deliberate on, and participate in, self-government, then at any
given time only a few people are citizens. Instead of invigorating citizenship in the masses, the
Constitution sought to narrow it. Madison writes in *Federalist Paper #57*, “The aim of every
political constitution is, or ought to be, first to obtain for rulers men who possess most wisdom to
discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of society” (1987, p. 343). Meaningful
participation and deliberation of the “public good” becomes consolidated under the Founders’
system of government. Some may maintain that by voting, citizens ultimately shape who
participates and what gets deliberated, but every action of elected representatives is not beholden
to voters. Citizenship defined solely by voting would significantly narrow the definition of
citizenship to a point where a person is a citizen only once every two years and a subject the rest.

Madison’s government creates deliberative bodies based on exclusion, whereas the
interconnectedness of citizenship requires inclusive deliberation for effective self-government.
Self-government does not mean that everyone’s wishes are carried out, but that everyone has a
say. “The slave is not defined by living under a rule but by having no say about that rule,”
McWilliams writes. “Voicelessness, not restraint, is the mark of a slave” (Goldwin and
Schambra, 1980, p. 82). Face-to-face deliberation is the means through which voice can be
maintained. Voting, it can be argued, maintains the voice of the people in representative
government. But voting does not require deliberation. It is an act ultimately performed in the
isolation of a voting booth. Even to get to that point, Putnam shows, requires a stronger sense of
interconnectedness than fostered by exclusionary, deliberative bodies. He writes, “Voluntary
associations may serve not only as forums for deliberation, but also as occasions for learning

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civic virtues, such as active participation in public life. A study of high school seniors found that regardless of the students’ social class, academic background, and self-esteem, those who took part in voluntary associations in school were far more likely than nonparticipants to vote, take part in political campaigns, and discuss public issues two years after graduating” (Putnam, 2000, p. 339). Associations where people can voluntarily meet face-to-face become vital even in thinner definitions of citizenship.

The value of voluntary associations is nothing new. Alexis de Tocqueville, writing during the nineteenth century, saw the important place associations held in American life. “Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of disposition are forever forming associations,” he writes (2006, p. 513). Tocqueville goes on to elaborate the need for these voluntary groups in a democracy: “If the inhabitants of democratic countries had neither the right nor the taste for uniting for political objects, their independence would run great risks... But if they did not learn some habits of acting together in the affairs of daily life, civilization itself would be in peril” (p. 514). These habits of associating are largely being lost on modern Americans. “The frequency of virtually every form of community involvement measured in the Roper polls declined significantly, from the most common—petition signing—to the least common—running for office. Americans are playing virtually every aspect of the civic game less frequently today than we did two decades ago” (Putnam, 2000, p. 41). The lessons of participatory citizenship are not being taught to large swaths of the population, and if Tocqueville is correct in his predictions, the whole society will suffer. Miami University could help shift the tide. By becoming not only a place of classroom-based learning but also a breeding ground for voluntary associations, the public university can teach both the formal and informal lessons of American citizenship.
Miami University would not be alone in trying to stem the recession in democratic citizens. Groups like Campus Compact and others have emerged to link these diverse institutions into a similar objective. “This network uses an explicit language of colleges and universities as agents and architects of democracy that indicates awareness of the formative cultural power of higher education in today’s world” (Boyte, 2004, p. 136). The cumulative efforts of universities can do more than aid democracy; they can actually form it through a redefinition of their mission to include lessons of citizenship for not only students but for the whole community. “This argument suggests not that the university has a civic mission, but that the university is a civic mission, is civility itself, defined as rules and conventions that permit a community to facilitate conversation and the kinds of discourse upon which all knowledge depends” (Barber, 1998a, p. 182). To take on this role, the university will have to first redefine its place in society to legitimize a stronger civic mission for students and community members alike.

Civil Society

Americans often perceive themselves as existing in two realms: public and private. The state characterizes the public realm of understanding, erecting an apparatus that controls society through government. The market dominates the private sector, triumphing notions of individualism and personal ends. Both, however, fail to grant full dignity to citizenship. Barber echoes the decline of citizenship presented above in his book A Place for Us. In the bureaucratic state, Barber argues, “the word citizen has no resonance and the only relevant civic act is voting” (1998b, p. 43). The flaw in solely equating voting with citizenship has already been made apparent, but the alternative offers little recourse. The individualism of the private sector
reduces the concept of citizenship to a point where it “has no meaning and the only relevant
activity is consuming” (Barber, 1998b, p. 43). Armed with only the private and public
conceptions of citizenship, the hope for a reinvigorated definition of citizenship may seem
daunting. Barber, however, turns to the often neglected third realm as the means of revitalizing
citizenship. By positioning itself in this third realm, the university can be instrumental in forging
a stronger citizenship.

Civil society is Barber’s “mediating third realm,” existing between public and private
conceptions of society (1998b, p. 34). Civil society has come to be defined differently by
different theorists, so an examination of these variances might help clarify the term. Barber
differentiates himself from what he sees as the communitarian and libertarian notions of civil
society. Communitarian civil society is portrayed “as a zone where people interact and are
embedded in communities, and they treat it as a condition of social bonding” (1998b, p. 23).
Communities are not voluntary for the communitarian, but are formed by obligations established
by traditions. Seeing citizens as encumbered selves, guided by “natural” concepts of identity,
communitarian citizenship “takes on a cultural feel and marks its territory by exclusion rather
than inclusion” (Barber, 1998b, p. 24). This renders civil society as a static entity based on
blood and tradition rather than one of diversity and choice. For libertarians, civil society is
understood “as a surrogate for the private sector and a synonym for consumer choice” (Barber,
1998b, p. 21). Libertarians view government skeptically, preferring individual decisions to the
perceived coercion of the state. Civil society becomes a place where “‘voluntary consent’ is
required every time one forges a relationship with another—whether in a business, a church, or a
marriage” (Barber, 1998b, p. 19). It avoids the obligations of communitarianism, but complicates society with an overbearing individualism fused with shallow social connections.

We advocate for Barber’s concept of a democratic civil society. Democratic civil society does not promote exclusionary notions of community, but seeks an open and diverse body that rests on voluntary membership—not coercion. It, in essence, combines the virtues of both the private and public realms. Barber writes, “although [civil society] is public, it is neither sovereign nor coercive, and partakes of the liberty and voluntariness of the private sector” (1998b, p. 35). Emphasizing the value of collective action and the common good, democratic civil society avoids the isolation of rampant individualism without sacrificing individual identities. Through democratic deliberation, civil society empowers citizens by reinstating their voice. A university trying to foster democratic civil society recognizes the power in collective action but does not lose sight of the individual members that make it possible.

Collective action at the university can be centered around Boyte and Kari’s concept of “public work.” “Public work is work for the public. It is also work of the public and by the public. It brings to the fore questions of responsibility, reciprocity, civic dignity, and accountability” (Boyte and Kari, 1996, p. 23). A university taking on a greater civic mission could utilize its resources around public works projects designed with the community, carried out in conjunction with the community, and benefiting the whole community. Such a policy could make large strides in reconfiguring the role of the university in society—creating it as an institution of mutuality instead of yet another private interest. The claims of “ivory tower elitism” could diminish under projects that emphasize the university as not above but a part of the community.
The greatest change in perceptions might be within the students themselves, as they often enter college with a focus directed narrowly toward the workplace. In its 2004 annual survey, the Higher Education Research Institute found that seventy percent of students attend college to “get a job” (cited in Knight Abowitz, 2006, p. 17). This goal, while not deplorable, does cast the university into the role of proxy to corporate America. Such a conception renders the university as a private entity, subordinate to the market forces that dominate the private sphere. A public works campaign would help reposition the university as an equal member in democratic civil society rather than a subject to private interests.

Public Works

The essence of a university supported public works program has found support amongst a service-minded segment of students who equate community involvement as essential to learning. “The New Student Politics,” written by a collection of students at the Wingspread Summit, states that “colleges challenge them not by informing students of a set of civic duties, but by modeling the right way to be in a community, particularly how to subordinate individual desires to a larger public purpose—even while living in a market economy that defines success by the fulfillment of those individual desires” (Long, 2002, p. 6). The students place the university’s relation with the community—above the information presented solely in the classroom—as the defining lesson on civil society. They try to learn from the examples the institution provides, taking from the school cues on how to foster civic engagement. The students perceive the university as a social actor who exemplifies, and not merely extols, civic virtues. The school’s importance rests more on the university’s position as a communal entity rather than a figure of privatization.
A public works project does not need to be constructed on a national or global stage. In fact, the goals of civil society are best implemented within localities while contextualizing the actions in larger national and global movements. This premise has some resonance in the construction of the American state. Tocqueville writes, “in America one may say that the local community was organized before the county, the county before the state, and the state before the Union...Interests, passions, duties, and rights took shape around each individual locality and were firmly attached thereto. Inside the locality there was a real, active political life which was completely democratic and republican” (2006, p. 44). Democracy and rights were nurtured in the American localities, according to Tocqueville, and then slowly grew into the federal system. Because of its accessibility, the local community becomes the best place to learn the tenets of citizenship and self-government. “[T]he strength of the free peoples resides in the local community,” Tocqueville writes. “Local institutions are to liberty what primary schools are to science; they put it within the people’s reach; they teach people to appreciate its peaceful enjoyment and accustom them to make use of it” (2006, p. 63). The small communities dotting the nineteenth century landscape provided citizens with lessons in self-government that translated into power on a greater scale.

As mentioned above, Madison and the Founders moved toward a concentration of power at the national level. “A feeble executive implies a feeble execution of the government. A feeble execution is but another phrase for a bad execution,” Alexander Hamilton writes in Federalist Paper #70 (1987, p. 402). The creation of laws was concentrated into the hands of Congress while implementation fell to a solitary executive under the Founders framework. This consolidation of power into more national entities has only increased over the years in both the
public and private spheres. The use of the media as a forum for national debate has been
distorted by the accumulation of power in a few hands. As McWilliams points out, “Private,
often self-selected, leaders in the media chair our public forum, able to set the terms of
deliberation” (Goldwin and Schambra, 1980, p. 99-100). Corporations have not stopped at
national boarders but have taken on more and more global dimensions. This trend makes the
work in localities seem almost trivial. Tocqueville observes that “if you take power and
independence from a municipality, you may have docile subjects but you will not have citizens”
(2006, p. 69). The consolidation of power across the public and private spectrums poses a real
challenge to universities advocating work within their local communities. With the
accumulation of power in a small number of hands, citizens can feel powerless as this
consolidation professionalizes various skills of citizenship and life.

The increasing professionalization and privatization of society may drive some to
advocate re-constructing citizenship through the market. Others might claim that an ample
supply of democratic institutions already exist in the private sector, finding no need for a
stronger civil society. Both laud the marketplace as a legitimate alternative to civil and public
life. In the marketplace, it is said, true democracy thrives as everyone can vote with his or her
wallets. Barber, however, would strongly challenge this claim. “Democracy is not a synonym
for the marketplace,” he writes, “and the notion that by privatizing government we can establish
civil society and civic goods is a dishonorable myth. Freedom to buy a Coke or a Big Mac...is
not the freedom to determine how you will live and under what kind of regime. Coke and
McDonald’s and MTV thrive in undemocratic Singapore and China as well as they do in chaotic,
semi-democratic Russia and in the genuinely democratic Czech Republic” (1998b, p. 71-72).
The consumers under oppressive regimes do not find a more fulfilling and dignifying citizenship in market freedom. Instead of broadening the possibilities for individuals, the privatized marketplace reduces them. People become grouped into categories of consumer and producer. Citizenship fades because “[m]arkets are simply not designed to do the things democratic polities or free civil societies do. Markets give us private, not public, modes of discourse: we pay as consumers in currencies of consumption to producers of material goods, but we cannot use this currency when we deal with one another as citizens or neighbors about the social consequences of our private market choices” (Barber, 1998b, p. 72). Privatization destroys the nobility of citizenship by rendering it meaningless in the community.

Succumbing to the seeming strength of large, faceless entities with centralized power fails to acknowledge the place collective action still retains in society. The university may not have the same power to levy taxes, control debate, or manufacture goods on the same scale as other entities, but acting in concert with community members, students, and faculty does grant the university an ample source of committed person-power. Boyte calls this assertion of self-government in our daily lives the work of “everyday politics.” He writes, “Everyday politics involves people reclaiming politics as an activity owned and engaged in by citizens, in environments that reach far beyond the formal political system” (2004, p. 36). It does not seek to replace representative government, but merely recognizes the limits inherent in the governmental system. Everyday politics generates “the civic energy and talent to address the multiplying problems that governments alone cannot solve, but which cannot be solved without government” (Boyte, 2004, p. 4). Instead of replacing government, it tries to “deprofessionalize” some sectors of the public system to recapture politics for the people. “[Strong democracy],” writes Barber,
“begins with the idea that there can be no ‘amateurs’ in politics because there can be no professionals, and insists that sovereignty can neither be alienated nor represented without eventually destroying the autonomy of the individual or people represented” (1998a, p. 129).

Even in civil society (at least a faux civil society), more and more “professionals” are claiming to represent the interests of the people. Putnam writes, “The number of nonprofit organizations of national scope listed in the Encyclopedia of Associations more than doubled from 10,299 to 22,901 between 1968 and 1997” (2000, p. 49). This influx of associations does not constitute a surge in civil society, but points to the creeping professionalization of the third realm. “The proliferating new organizations are professionally staffed advocacy organizations, not member-centered, locally based associations” (Putnam, 2000, p. 51). The ability of the university to maintain local, face-to-face meetings between community members, students, and faculty points to its viability in creating a genuine civil society. To avoid falling into these subscription-based associations, the university must actively assert its ability in achieving collective action through authentic deliberation that honors all participants.

It stands to be reiterated that the school must constantly be cognizant of the strong temptation to become dictatorial in its relations with the other members of civil society. Fellow community members and leaders should be brought into any civil planning on which the university embarks. But, as the Wingspread Summit iterates, the “[c]ommunity members should not be made to feel as if they are being studied or objectified” (Long, 2002, p. 7). An authentic desire to engage in deliberation with the community must be possessed by the members of the university. Legitimate dialogue with real world consequences need to arise out of the participation of community members, students, and faculty. Barber states that “participation without power is a
fraud and a provocation to cynicism” (Calvert, 2006, p. 72). A college engaging in inauthentic dialogue with the community only pushes students and residents away from a more vigorous citizenship. On the other hand, a genuine, democratic institution created by the university and community members goes a long way in fostering citizenship. Boyte observes, “Historically, as people saw themselves creating American democracy, they become more public people, with the habits, virtues, identities, knowledge, and public reputations needed to make and sustain the public world.” Democracy becomes self-sustaining when “[i]t leads to people seeing themselves as the co-creators of democracy, not simply as customers or clients, voters, protestors, or volunteers” (2004, p. 5). A strong, democratic partnership between the university and community not only provides a model for students but for the residents as well. For instance, Students for Staff actively engage in deliberation with Miami University’s workers about their wage structures. These discussions occur in a democratic context where workers and students actively participate in the creation of solutions for the problem of income disparities. Within these interactions, no one actor dominates the process and outcomes, allowing all participants to exercise their democratic faculties.

By recognizing the inherent need for reciprocity in both democracy and learning, the university can broaden the learning process to encompass both enrolled students and community members. The lessons of citizenship are not lessons solely for those paying tuition. Boyte writes, “The largest promise of civic engagement in higher education is its potential to help make the culture as a whole more public, open, and democratic. This involves understanding that culture itself is made, not simply given” (2004, p. 154). There needs to be recognition by all participants that culture is not a static entity. It can be shaped—by all citizens—for both the
good and the bad. This requires that “we see democracy and its products, the multiple forms of public wealth, as goods we are all responsible for creating and sustaining” (Boyte, 2004, p. 162). Democratic systems need to be a public good—created, maintained, and enjoyed by all citizens. Since democracy is a form of “public wealth,” even those with the deepest of pockets cannot own it. The university should become an institution to counter the undemocratic forces arising in modern society that perpetuate the myths of pre-packaged culture.

Trying to recapture its role in defining democratic values may seem a radical endeavor for the university. Some opponents of such a suggestion may argue that this objective would require the university to engage in a formative project—an attempt to craft individuals that align with a particular ideal. Students do not attend universities to be institutionalized in a set of values and beliefs, no matter how noble they may be. Such critics say that instead of teaching a “stronger” form of citizenship, schools should stick to the vocational focus that students expect. The vocational focus, however, does not escape a formative project. Michael Sandel, using the anecdote of McDonald’s Hamburger University, illuminates how at the heart of all employment training is a level of indoctrination to the work culture: “Even a wholly instrumental, vocational training in the fast-food business finds it useful, apparently, to forge a shared corporate language and culture. Unlike an education for citizenship, however, the formative project of Hamburger U. aims at perfecting, not complicating, the fit between its students and the roles they will occupy in the world of work” (Calvert, 2006, p. 50). Sandel’s critique does not apply simply to trade schools, but can be found in the training for any occupation—whether business, medicine, law, or academia. The parallel to other professions is apt considering the presence of a professional ethics in a wide range of industries and services. By trying to seamlessly fit
students into future careers, the vocational emphasis of universities and students fails to produce reflective, questioning individuals. This limits choices as alternatives become shrouded in the emphasis on the culture of the workplace. Either path the university takes, it cannot escape the formative project.

It may be worth pointing out that by assuming the responsibility of teaching citizenship, the university does not ignore its role in teaching the skills of professions. Citizenship is not an either/or proposition. The school can still instruct students in citizenship while providing classes and training vital to certain jobs. An effective businessperson is no less a citizen than a doctor, a teacher, or a plumber. Too often the fractured perceptions of life separate the identity of citizen. As Boyte and Kari write,

“Public work” is work by ordinary people that builds and sustains our basic public goods and resources—what used to be called “our commonwealth.” It solves common problems and creates common things. It may be paid or voluntary. It may be done in communities. It may be done as part of one’s regular job. In fact, adding public dimensions to work—recognizing the larger potential meaning and impact of what one does as a teacher or nurse, as a county extension agent or a computer programmer or a machinist or a college professor or anything else—often can turn an unsatisfying “job” into much more significant “work” (1996, p. 16).

Boyte and Kari indicate how citizenship does not have to be something done on the side. One’s occupation can be tied to the larger work of civil society without demeaning citizenship. But the person must be taught to recognize the larger implications of what he or she does to fully appreciate work as something citizens do. This is an essential lesson in the interconnectedness of democratic life.
Linking individual occupations with acts of citizenship does not mean people can vacate civil society for the private sector. Such an act would lead to the professionalization of knowledge that threatens democracy. It would unravel the understanding of interconnectedness vital to citizenship as people retract into their cubicles, offices, and shops. Boyte writes,

In our educated, service society, most middle class and professional people can be both the ‘power elite’ and the ‘powerless,’ depending on the system or institution. As knowledge power grows in importance, the struggle around its accessibility and use becomes more and more central to democracy. The success of contemporary citizen politics in a variety of contexts depends upon the ability to discover key information, often against the efforts of powerful interests to restrict access... Large-scale organizations not only centralize information; they also strip it of meaning, mirroring the excessive specialization in academic life and professions... Issues are separated from the larger context. Longitudinal knowledge disappears... Information lends itself to sharing transactions, rather than the exchange transactions of the marketplace. And if it is unusual to think about framing values and concepts in our age of excessive specialization, skillful efforts to do so produce considerable power (2004, p. 180-181).

Knowledge and information are goods that need to be shared amongst diverse minds to make them most effective. Civil society is most valuable when it offers a physical place for these unframed pieces of information to be brought together and contextualized into powerful knowledge. The university, by providing a place for discussion and deliberation, helps bring together and channel these fractured thoughts and figures into collective action.

If all civil society takes is a place to meet, some might argue, why should the university shoulder the responsibility of teaching citizenship. Any public hall, park, or stage could serve as an institution for civil society. For one, these public places are declining across America. “[W]hen more than half of us now live in suburban developments that are anything but
neighborhoods and that have no obvious public spaces—neither civic centers nor even sidewalks—or in inner cities where public space is often unsavory or unsafe, we have fewer and fewer of these formal and informal meeting places” (Barber 1998b, p. 76). The supply of public spaces is a dwindling resource in America, and to build more does not assure a revitalization of civil society. It takes more than a “build it and they will come” approach to solve the problem. The other error in the argument is that citizenship requires work. Boyte and Kari write, “When citizenship lacks acknowledgement of the hard work required to impact the world, citizens inevitably become distanced from serious engagement in public affairs” (1996, p. 28).

Citizenship is not always an uplifting experience. Discouragement and frustration do not abate when people enter civil society. Bitter debates will erupt and diverse interests will clash. A figure of perseverance and patience needs to be present to keep the participants focused on what they have organized around. Without such a person or group, civil society will fracture from all the pressures working against it. The university can serve as the mediator of civil society, working to keep the third realm intact under the strain of internal and external forces.

Ultimately, Miami University must teach students how to resuscitate civil society on their own. The students are the most transient part of the equation in the form of civil society argued for here. After graduation the vast majority will fan out across the country and world, finding themselves in places where civil society advocates are far less vigorous. An effective judge of how well students learn citizenship will be found in their ability to retain the lessons of interconnectedness, deliberation, and participation in their post-graduate life. The tenet of responsibility will be shown in their later efforts of maintaining the strong form of democracy taught to them at university. Empowering students with the skills and desire to unite into
member based civil groups is vital not only for democracy but also learning. “In democratic countries,” writes Tocqueville, “knowledge of how to combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all others” (2006, p. 517). A university dedicated to learning must likewise be dedicated to the lessons of civil society and citizenship.

Lacking the lessons of democracy, a society will find itself with far more subjects than citizens. Individuals need to be taught citizenship in order to make democracy a viable system of self-government. The university can play an instrumental role in educating both students and community members when it creates an environment conducive to civil society. Any instruction in citizenship, however, must be undertaken with an understanding of how people learn. Using Baxter Magolda and King’s LPM, we tie lessons on citizenship into the developmental process. Below, we provide a model integrating the two disciplines into the education of effective citizens.

A Conceptual Model: The Integration of Student Development with Democratic Citizenship in the Context of Service-Learning Activities

Introduction

Utilizing our research into developmental pathways and the development of democratic citizenship within the university as a theoretical background, we have developed a model that hopes to generate agents of change who are effective citizens. Our model will demonstrate a progression of three major identities that will be influenced by specific levels of cognitive and

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2 Throughout this section, we will not specifically cite where our information originated because of our extensive integration of the material and our previous citations in other sections.
relational maturity but will have a higher-order definition. We then use the constructed identity as our lens for creating program suggestions that work toward progressing the student to this stage, and between each identity stage, we provide practical suggestions for the process of bridging the stages. We then conclude with an analysis of how the person with the identity of change agent will become an effective citizen.

The Identities: Individualistic Volunteerism, Informed Volunteer, and Change Agent

Our first identity, individualistic volunteerism, is defined by low cognitive maturity and by low relational maturity. We define low cognitive capability as simplified intellectual processing of information and nonreflective formation of judgments. These two constructs result in decontextualized problem-solving processes resulting in overly simplistic solutions. For example, a first-year student, Ladd, volunteers in Over-the-Rhine as a one-time event, and has a discussion about poverty in the community. According to him, poverty is caused solely by individual characteristics, such as the inability to delay gratification or sheer laziness, and the student discounts alternative theories such as the role of institutions and social policies as major factors. In addition, the student is unable to disengage objectively from his positions. In other words, Ladd will not seek to understand the assumptions and ramifications of his opinions. Finally, Ladd’s problem-solving process centers on his strict viewpoints and experiences, and does not incorporate the knowledge and experiences of community members as relevant factors.

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3 We define low cognitive capability in relation to the potential cognitive capacities of an adult. These capabilities were outlined in the section on developmental theories, more specifically in Perry and Belenky et. al.’s theories.

4 Ladd will serve as our prototypical Miami University student. He originates from a middle-to-upper class family who lived in the suburbs; is white and male. These characteristics place Ladd at the top of our current society’s social hierarchy, which provides him with immense opportunity and privilege.
in the creation of a solution, which effectively silences alternative explanations and complex solutions. Altogether, Ladd’s simplistic approach to understanding the problem of poverty results in narrow solutions.

Low relational maturity is defined by the compartmentalizing of relationships to a point of fracturing community. Compartments are assembled around differing power structures. The stage one individual may find him or herself in control of one section of life while a silent subordinate in another. The compartments can be assembled into two principle classes of public and private, with smaller sections further dividing them. A rigid border exists between the classes, with the parts fusing only rarely. For example, Ladd may begin his trip to Over-the-Rhine on Miami’s campus, where he is a student and understands his relationships with peers as one being essentially equal. But that conception changes when he reaches Cincinnati, where he becomes a volunteer and falls to the position of subordinate to the Service Guide yet in an elevated position to those being “served.” Differences dominate his perceptions of strangers, as Ladd views himself as separated from the community and not a co-creator of it. Deliberation becomes stifled because of these power dynamics, and the Service Guide is assumed to have the “answers” while the volunteers defer to him or her. This scenario describes an asymmetrical sharing of knowledge that creates an artificial stratification whereby the student is subsumed under the educator and becomes disempowered. The over reliance on “professionals” renders participation into a mere laundry list of chores.

Compartmentalizing is configured from Harry Boyte’s theories on the power dynamics occurring across different institutions, presented in more detail in his book *Everyday Politics: Reconnecting Citizens and Public Life*. 
In combining low cognitive maturity and relational maturity, the result is the identity of individualistic volunteerism. At this level of lower cognitive and relational maturity, a person would exhibit limited capabilities of creating self-defined and communally situated meaning. For example, Ladd’s trip to OTR exemplifies passive altruism. His passivity stems from his inability to analyze independently his actions and to understand the origins of the volunteer opportunity. In other words, Ladd’s early authority figures demonstrated the positive moral and social outcomes of charity work without emphasizing the structural and causal factors behind poverty. Due to these omissions, he isolates himself and his experiences in OTR from the larger historical and global movements to fight poverty; acts locally without thinking globally or structurally; most importantly, does not understand his actions as an act of dissent against the status quo. Returning to meaning making, Ladd’s thoughts and actions are driven by outside authority figures and are disconnected from a complex understanding of working with impoverished communities. Placing the identity of individualistic volunteerism in the language of citizenship, one can see a citizen who underutilizes his or her critical thinking skills; defers to political and social authorities, such as politicians and ministers; seeks short-term, over-simplified solutions to his or her immediately pressing problems. This citizen does not show evidence of self-authorship and is hindered in his or her ability to deliberate toward solutions.

Given a student who is situated in the stage of individualistic volunteerism because of lower cognitive and relational maturity, we would like to suggest a few general guidelines for helping these students move beyond this stage. Before moving into the guidelines, we must acknowledge the limitations a person will experience when helping a student who is performing a one-time act of charity. These experiences are often differentiated from other programs and
events by their limited time for reflection and continuity. For example, if students travel to OTR for a Saturday morning volunteer event, the Service Guides can only have the participants reflect for the hour-long ride to and from the site. With these constraints, our program seeks to make the most efficient use of the time available. On the ride down to OTR, a PowerPoint presentation could be offered introducing the volunteers to the history of the area and its position in the fight for homeless rights. This presentation should situate the students into the larger, global movement against poverty while emphasizing the political nature of their actions. On the ride back to campus, we suggest asking the students to reflect and deliberate on their experiences in OTR, and we suggest using a model of problem-posing as the method for conducting the reflection. Initially, the Service Guides should have the students speak about their feelings and thoughts attached to their experiences. The Service Guides should then pose a problem that incorporates the participant’s experiences into the larger, salient issues surrounding poverty. During the discussion about the posed problem, the Service Guides should seek to elicit ideas and responses from all the participants. With these individual responses, the Service Guides will seek to effect several outcomes. First, the Service Guides need to help the students reframe their responses in a more complex, integrated manner. Second, the guides should use the reflection period to demonstrate and practice the process of democratically solving the posed problem(s). Third, the guides should help the students to develop independent meanings about poverty and their actions. These three outcomes, however, would indicate large developmental advances, which are implausible given this scenario. Instead, we suggest the Service Guides must respect the developmental limitations of the participants, and must not expect sweeping changes. The

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6 The concept of problem-posing is taken from Ira Shor’s work. If you would like an extensive reading on the process, please refer to his book titled Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change.
services guides must understand they are only beginning the process of advancing the participants’ capacity for critical thought and political action. Our intentions for this stage are to expose the participants to a complex problem, to democratic deliberation, and to a map of additional options for being involved with local communities, but the exposure will be of a limited nature.

Between the first and second identity is a large gulf that must be bridged. The broad goals of the bridging process include aiding the students in having recurring experiences with poverty-related issues of interest to them, and aiding them in discussing their experiences more frequently and eventually with greater complexity. These basic principles can be enacted through numerous formats. Of immediate importance should be the presentation of a flier that contains information about CE&S’s diverse opportunities. These sheets should include contact information of the agencies and of students who consistently participate in these programs; they need to provide a basic introduction to the type of work done and with what populations. Additional immediate actions could be to invite the students to lunch or dinner after the experience in order to discuss further their experiences and ideas. Another way to aid this process would be to communicate explicitly an open-door policy at CE&S, especially if the students would like to discuss the experience further but not necessarily immediately. At the end of the day, the Service Guides should discuss the Empower program as a future opportunity to become more involved with and better versed in community problems. The Service Guides should also ask the students if they would like to become a part of CE&S’s listserv. In these e-mails, the students should receive information about newly advertised opportunities to serve, and

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7 The idea of a bridge was borrowed from Robert Kegan’s work. A suggested work of his would be *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life.*
they should receive a document outlining generic opportunities existing in different communities. The MU Volunteer list-serv, that has been developed in recent years by CE&S is a perfect forum for these kinds of communications with current students and future leaders, particularly in their early stages of community engagement. In conclusion, these practices have the potential to better inform the students about CE&S’s activities and to help them become more consistently involved in a specific neighborhood. As the student becomes more involved with activities, he or she can experience the jump between the first and second identity.

Our second identity is termed the informed volunteer, and transitional levels of cognitive and relational maturity define it. During this stage, the person’s intellectual powers begin to process and use multiple ideas at one time, and their judgments tend to be relativistic and less committed. As a result, the person will attempt to solve problems with numerous, often disparate, sources of information, and will support numerous solutions to the problem due to an inability to integrate the information into a coherent, committed stance. Returning to the example of Ladd, he has joined the Office of Community Engagement and Service’s Empower program. The program emphasizes diversifying the participants’ ways of conceptualizing poverty and acting in the community, but within the context of a specific problem. Initially, the students are introduced to numerous vantage points for defining poverty, and they are reminded to consider all viewpoints when attempting to interpret their experiences in the community. With a plethora of frameworks, the students will dissect the specific issue of interest, and will collectively attempt to provide answers to key questions about social policy’s assumptions, methods, and effects. In

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8 Although we focus on Empower as a current experience that exemplifies what we believe to be appropriate for helping students at this stage, we hope that Empower will serve as a pedagogical example that can be broadened to such arenas as the general classroom. We believe the principles behind Empower can be transported to numerous contexts, and can still effectively produce the changes we envision.
using numerous frameworks, the students often interpret situations from a multitude of perspectives but struggle with committing to one stance or creating integrated solutions. In effect, the students are diversifying their understanding of poverty, but lack the confidence and ability to make and support one framework.

Transitional relational maturity is defined by an equalization of roles and blurring of compartment distinctions. The various power dynamics within each section have been mitigated in part by the increase in cognitive abilities of the individual. Simply put, they know more and can therefore contribute more meaningfully to discussions with others. They at the same time have begun to understand that community members are important in the educational process—and as a consequence will be more prone to consider the forces that keep them silent. Seeing the value others offer in relationships, the inherent worth of interconnectedness will begin to take hold. This aids in the deconstruction of compartments, as the individual lives a less fractured existence in the community. The distinctions of student, volunteer, and citizen have begun to fuse as they see more than just “students” being educated and more than “professionals” doing the educating. Ladd’s experience in Empower would introduce him to a well-defined deliberative body as the small classes revolve around the common theme of the program. The unified theme serves as a real-world problem posed to the students, and they draw from readings to deliberate on that problem. The exposure to the community begins the process of showing the interconnectedness of all participants in mutual learning. Acting in concert with others in the student body and somewhat in the community slowly dissolves the rigid boundaries of a compartmentalized life.
By combining the transitional cognitive and relational maturity, the product is an informed volunteer. As the student’s cognitive and relational abilities grow and expand, his or her ability to create meaning by herself or himself without losing a communal perspective augments. As an informed volunteer, the person is beginning to expand his or her knowledge base of poverty, increasing the frameworks through which to create meaning. They can take on different perspectives, and can interject themselves into the meaning making process but without taking possession of it. When trying to frame poverty and its issues, the students will adopt differing perspectives at different times, but are incapable of creating their own system for understanding impoverishment. Deliberation is fostered by the ability of students to draw on more perspectives, but hindered by their inability to solidify the views within themselves. This leaves them vulnerable to the whim of popular opinion in the class, and causes a pattern of oscillation when conceiving the problem and offering solutions to it. The increase in perspectives being considered broadens the cognitive abilities of the student, but creates uncertainty in how to act. With fluctuating perspectives, the students are unable to justify changing their actions because of inability to agree on one perception, which forces them to retain behaviors evidenced in the first identity. The identity of informed volunteer can be placed in the context of citizenship. This citizen will begin the process of limited deliberations about community problems and will begin to incorporate a plethora of perspectives during the deliberations. This citizen, however, will struggle to find an effective, mutually agreed-upon solution, and the process of communal betterment often stagnates or is mired with ambiguous, overly generalized solutions.

The movement to informed volunteer begins with the placement of service activities in a curricular, educational context, where experiences are reframed in a more academic and
democratic setting. In terms of academic understanding, the program should introduce the student to a larger number of perspectives on poverty while also presenting the material in a more complex fashion. With these perspectives, the student needs to learn the process of interpreting his or her experiences and situations from a number of different vantage points. These vantage points need to combine both academic and community sources. The student’s next step is to discuss the viewpoints of such actors as professors, community members, and community representatives amongst the group, and as a group, the students should aid one another in using knowledge to interpret experience. It is encouraging that more recent Empower programs have added more opportunities for these multiple perspectives on the poverty they are encountering in the community, and what we stress here is the emphasis on student deliberation and meaning-making at this state in citizenship development. By means of these interpretations, the students learn to deliberate amongst themselves and to create partially individualized meaning. We believe the major focus at this stage should be on the student’s cognitive maturity, and should model deliberation within the group. We, however, also recognize the fact that later in the program the students will have learned and practiced key skills in deliberation and thus should begin to deliberate with the community in a limited manner. In addition, the program’s leaders should effectively model the process of committing oneself to a framework of understanding poverty, but without forcing the students to take such stances themselves. The program of Empower, formerly offered by CE&S, provided a similar although not complete model. We would suggest using its basic framework as a starting point, but would recommend adding several new components to the program’s current structure. The first major change would be to balance the utilization of academic sources with community-based sources. The
second change would be to design a means for the students to deliberate directly with community members, such as a small forum or interview. The third change would be to have the program’s leaders model actively a commitment to specific means of conceptualizing and solving a problem. Finally, we would like to point out that these three suggestions can be integrated into a single event. For example, at the end of the program, students may wish to meet with a community member or activist with whom they can discuss a selected issue, and from whom they would learn a specific framework for solving the chosen problem.

As existed between the first and second identities, there exists a bridge between the second and third identities. The factors necessary to bridge this territory include allowing the student to become more directly involved in discussions with the community, granting the student greater autonomy and responsibility, and helping the student become more focused on a specific issue of interest. In order to facilitate greater communication between the student and community, we would suggest the student becoming active in a residency program, where the student lives and works with the community. Another helpful option is Miami’s independent studies. These independent studies grant the student the chance to hone his or her interests to a specific topic and to work collaboratively with other students and professors in the creation of a project. A third option is CE&S’s current service-guide program. This program grants its participants autonomy and responsibility by employing them as student leaders of service-learning experiences. Although we have outlined how each program focuses on a specific capacity in need of development, each program does utilize and foster all of the suggestions. As the student progresses through these programs, he or she will enter the third identity stage.
Our third identity, change agent, is defined by high cognitive and relational maturity. A student who demonstrates high cognitive maturity will exhibit the capacity to understand a multitude of viewpoints and pieces of information and to integrate the disparate pieces into a lucid argument, and his or her reflective judgments will be guided by how new pieces of information can inform the student’s understanding without necessarily changing it radically. Using these greater intellectual powers and stabilized reflective judgments, the student will attempt to solve problems by integrating numerous stances into a justified argument that will lead to a consistent set of actions. Using Ladd as an example again, he has graduated from Empower, and has become heavily involved with the issue of housing in Over-the-Rhine. His involvement has led him to form an independent study with his peers and professors. In his study of housing, he learned about the multitude of perspectives on how to approach and solve the housing dilemma in OTR. In order to understand fully these heterogeneous pieces of information, Ladd interviewed major actors in the housing situation, and convened community forums where he had the community provide ideas and where he granted them the opportunity to critique his plan of action. From the interviews, forums, readings, debates, and discussions, Ladd formulated what he believed to be the most sensible, pragmatic, community-driven, and integrated solution to the housing problem. In summary, this stage is defined by the integration of material into a coherent, enlightened framework and plan of action.

High relational maturity is defined by the formation of communal bonds based on reciprocity. The individual understands that he or she is both a student and teacher in working with community members, putting to an end the former power dynamics that compartmentalized learning and life. With the demise of compartmentalization, the individual fully grasps the
interconnectedness of life and is able to see how various movements fit into larger social contexts. Interconnectedness is not seen as a limitation for the individual but as a source of strength in democratic society. Direct action comes to characterize the participation of those with high relational maturity, as the individual no longer feels suffocated by the isolation of individualism. He or she works both with the community and for community, all the while understanding that through interconnectedness the individual will benefit as well. Thus service is not something done by the “advantaged” for the “disadvantaged.” Instead, it becomes work of citizens, by citizens, and for citizens—done not as acts of service, but of citizenship. Ladd, for example, will seek out experiences with others in order to increase both his sense of community and his own learning. If he is exploring the causes and impacts of poverty, he will look for other students, professors, and community members that share his interests and concerns. By discussing their mutual concerns about impoverishment, they contribute to each others’ understanding of poverty and deliberate on ways to solve the problem through collaborative action. These individuals will be able to introduce Ladd to others that share his concerns, and from these new discussions, he might be exposed to even more views on poverty that further enrich his understanding of the larger movement in the fight against impoverishment. In summary, Ladd invests much time in fostering communal interconnectedness from which he and the community can grow in concert.

The identity of change agent results from the high cognitive and relational maturity. The student is able to create his or her own meaning by personally constructing knowledge from outside sources. By taking possession of the process of knowledge construction, the student feels confident in what he or she believes. This results in a stronger commitment to the student’s
own opinions, allowing him or her to formulate a direction for action. Although we are emphasizing a possession of knowledge, the student still seeks out information from the community to further evolve his or her knowledge base. By possessing knowledge and recognizing the continual role of communal deliberation, the student attempts to create and reform institutions that affect community well being. In essence, the student comes to understand that culture and institutions are made, not given, and thus has the opportunity and power to work in conjunction with community members in reshaping cultural and institutional constructs for the betterment of all citizens. Change agents help form the human base of civil society and its empowerment of effective citizenship.

The CE&S can be instrumental in facilitating progression at this point. We propose a general framework for guiding a program that would be valuable to an individual with the identity of change agent. First, the experience must continually challenge former perspectives with new information, but should allow the participants to help shape the learning process within the classroom, the university, and the community. Programs that help blur the distinction between these three places would be ideal, as this helps further deconstruct the compartments in which people function. Second, by means of democratizing the learning relationship between student, community, and teacher, the program will help the participants to democratize their environment. For a Miami student, one specific opportunity exists in Tom Dutton’s OTR Residency Program. In this program, the participants live and learn in the diverse Cincinnati community, shattering the former dichotomy between student and citizen. The students are permitted to choose what service programs best suit their interests, allowing them to tailor their education around problems.

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9 This idea is discussed extensively by Paolo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 

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that they feel dedicated to addressing. A more generalized goal of CE&S might be to become more active in encouraging independent study options between faculty and students around shared interests. The office can serve as a place to organize these fractured interests around campus into a close-knit group of participants collectively dissecting a social problem that exists in the community. The flexibility of independent studies helps democratize the learning process as a set syllabus is not brought into class, but arrived at by deliberation among the various participants. This further extracts the former power structure of learning dictated by “professional” educators, opening up channels of communication. CE&S could serve as a valuable resource in guiding the various independent study groups toward community members embracing similar concerns, using its role as liaison between the differing parties to facilitate discussions.

**Effective Citizenship**

Effective citizenship is not simply an individual identity, but a collective distinction recognizing the fact that change agents are not the only people entitled to citizenship. Defined as a group of people actively asserting their right to a deliberative, democratic, and participatory system of self-government, effective citizenship is naturally opposed to exclusion. Understanding that individuals in the lower identities have skills vital to successful self-government, the distinction gives everyone a chance to utilize their talents in democratically based, collective action. This distinction, however, requires an environment where democratic learning is a part of life—an environment nurtured in civil society. Change agents function as the human architects of civil society, working to ensure that it remains egalitarian and open.
Such an ideal mandates the removal of students from programs circumscribing the individual identities into differentiated groups, while at the same time providing a workshop on the construction of a democratic civil society.

The process laid out above may lend itself to programs tailored for people at relatively similar points along the spectrum of cognitive and relational development where little interaction occurs among people with differing identity levels. Such a situation threatens to breed cynicism and frustration among students who try to apply what they have learned to life post-graduation. The university must provide opportunities for change agents to exercise their faculties of society building in the maintenance of a democratic civil society encompassing all the identities.

To maintain effective citizenship, CE&S must initially facilitate interaction between diverse student associations and clubs around common projects. In conjunction with other student groups and community members, change agents begin to polish citizenship within civil society. The student’s application of what he or she has learned creates a broadened democratic community that intensifies and enriches daily life by stretching the realm of the classroom to include the entire campus, all components of student life, and the surrounding community. In order to link these groups around a larger movement, the office should stay abreast of the diverse groups on campus, and should assume the mindset of finding connections and problems around which they could work. At this stage, CE&S’s principle role is that of effective networker, helping to link groups together so that broader base action can occur.

The program for fostering effective citizenship embraces a truly federated system of collective action that recognizes members as co-creators of democracy. Within the many co-curricular groups currently around campus, deliberation is encouraged amongst relatively like-
minded peers. These groups are largely grassroots organizations depending on student membership to be effective. They form among students organized by their strong, similar interests. The CE&S, however, should pursue a policy of emphasizing the less apparent connections among these various groups to each other. Meetings could be held at the office between group representatives in hopes of easing networking among seemingly conflicting interests. This program, though, must ultimately loosen the hierarchical structure of CE&S involvement to a point where the office serves as mediator, not creator, of such networks. The organizations must remain student formed, voluntary associations to keep the focus on the ultimate goal of service-learning: to form citizens that will take it upon themselves to build their own associations outside of the university setting.

An example of such a system at work might be helpful. Ladd, after a prolonged interest in OTR and poverty, forms a group with peers he met along his service-learning progression. He, through deliberation with his group and community members, comes to feel that government programs should be utilized better to help alleviate poverty—deciding that the most pragmatic approach might be the use of Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC). His group researches EITC and finds that within the Cincinnati area, a large number of people eligible for the credit paid professional tax preparers to process their claims. These tax agencies charged upwards of one hundred dollars to process the forms. Through further discussion with community members, Ladd’s group finds that generalized fears of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and insecurity about their math skills drove many people eligible for EITC to pay for services. Ladd and his peers decide they can actively do something to help alleviate this problem. They decide to enlist the support of community agencies that help provide EITC services free of charge, learning that
they provide basic training to students wishing to aid low-income residents in filing returns. With the support of the agency, Ladd and his peers decide to try and include more individuals who might have an interest in filing tax returns.

They organize meetings with the Accountancy Club on campus to enlist their support and opinions in the project. Also, the Miami University Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MUCTM) is brought in to see if the group would be interested in helping willing community members to gain confidence in the mathematical skills required to complete the forms. These students might embrace differing political mindsets from Ladd’s group, but they try to operate around a common goal. The groups are given access to a neutral space at the CE&S and are aided in cooperation and deliberation by a neutral mediator who retains focus on the common objective of the groups. Through these deliberations, the combined associations may realize part of the problem is that residents simply do not know that free services are available. In the interest of diversification and inclusion, the larger group seeks the support of Pi Sigma Epsilon (a co-ed marketing fraternity). With them, the groups utilize connections within the larger community to learn the best ways to advertise the free services. This exposes all participants to community members, and aids them in understanding that they need to learn from community in order to make the project a success. The process continues as this project snowballs to include more and more student groups working towards the solution they all helped devise.

Under this framework of student involvement, it is hoped that the university mirrors civil society and helps to forge a lasting state of effective citizenship in students. As an effective citizen, a person actively co-creates democracy with fellow citizens in daily life. He or she finds both personal and communal value in the tenets of democratic associations, and seeks to harness
interconnectedness, responsibility, deliberation, and participation to aid in the construction of community. It is hoped that students who leave Miami as effective citizens—having practiced the craft within a model form of civil society—will go off and help construct networks of democratic associations in the places they live.

**Limitations**

The model laid out represents only the beginning of the plausible repertoire of suggestions for CE&S to pursue. We close with a reiteration of the model’s limitations. Assumptions should be avoided when dealing with students as they do not all enter the university at the same level. Some will be more advanced while others lag behind, so malleability is advised in any implementation of these suggestions. Though students should be challenged and supported through the progression, they should not be coerced. Not every student is capable of achieving the higher levels of cognitive and relational maturity outlined here. In spite of this limitation, we propose that the model should incorporate high expectations for its participants. Designing a program with high expectations has the benefit of always nudging the students and community forward in their development. Altogether, we believe the model has great potential in helping students enhance their current capacities, and we believe it can provide the necessary adaptability for a diverse student body. Although we do not predict perfection or completion in all cases, we believe the model can influence a large majority of students if effectively and flexibly implemented.
Conclusion

We began the project as a means of recapturing the original intent of SAC as a mechanism of moving service-learning programs past charity and into change through a progression of specific identities. Ross Meyer was the principle architect of SAC, and proposed a vision of a university office that was a centralized place where diverse groups of people could meet to deliberate pathways for solving the community, university, and students’ problems. Meyer’s work focused principally on a top-down approach in engaging students. He created a forum for diverse groups to meet without giving their members the desire or inclination to do so. Our model maintains his original goal, but tries to base it in the development of individual actors in a set of interconnected programs with strong community ties—contextualizing the whole process in the framework of citizenship. Meyer’s work on how to help differentiated groups communicate and deliberate proposed an idea of what the office should strive to be in the end, and we hope to have developed a plausible pathway to that end. In conclusion, our work seeks to build upon and enhance Meyer’s vision, and we hope that future students and community members will deliberate upon Meyer’s and our work in the hopes of developing their own models, pathways, and visions.
Bibliography


