Evaluation report of the pilot Community Service learning Subject – APSS 2819 Community Psychology

Submitted to the Teaching & Learning Development Committee, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Dr. Charles C. Chan

Dr. Chan Hin Wang, Kevin

Dr. Eddie Ng

Department of Applied Social Sciences

April 2012

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 What is Community Service Learning?

Community service learning combines the academic study with voluntary community service. The service activities are carried out by students on a voluntary basis with close cooperation among different stakeholders. It involves a constant interaction among different stakeholders, including program coordinators, students, relevant service agencies, course instructors and service targets. Therefore, a co-operative relationship is expected whereby students learn from the social service agencies and service targets within the community and, in turn, students aid the needs of the service targets.

Unlike field studies or internships, community service learning requires the active participation of students and it imparts the critical elements of reflection and analysis. It requires students to have some understanding of the overall mission, structure and governance of the scheme. In addition, students are expected to take an active role in serving the community and possibly gain an appreciation from other sectors. The service performed may involve a wide range of activities, including knowledge delivery, community development, tackling social or environmental issues, or any activities that contribute to the well-being of individuals and communities.

2. General Framework of Community Service Learning

2.1 Community Service Learning in Practice

An increasing number of universities in Hong Kong have been incorporating the concept of community service learning into their modes of study. These programs are not conforming to one established model; instead they are being adapted to best meet the specific educational needs of each institution and have great flexibility in operation. While there is no particular pattern for these programs, community service learning is often carried out at the departmental level as an elective course. This may include an element of service learning as part of the requirements for a given course.

The establishment of the pilot course "APSS 2819 Community Psychology" offers a real-life opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and skills that they have gained from course work into the community, and to integrate useful knowledge into practice. Students' personal growth, self-fulfillment and satisfaction are expected to be enhanced after joining the community service learning program. All of these have been designed to develop students' motivation and cultivate their life skills through actively assisting individuals in need, including the elderly, ethnic minorities, and people with specific demands.

2.2 Literature Reviews for Community Service Learning Programs

Community service learning refers to credit bearing educational experience that mobilizes students in service catering to community needs while reflecting their experience for deepening their understanding, appreciation, and application of the subject matter learnt.

As a form of active experiential learning, community service learning involves a combination of service in community and academic learning. Community service learning programs that emphasize providing services to the community may not necessarily focus on educational outcomes of students (the outcomes that relate to the nature of the subject that is studied). Some programs do place primary emphasis on academic learning, and others place equal weight on the two components of service and learning. As community service learning research has developed, more experts are arguing that community service learning activities should be integrated into course objectives (Finkelstein, 2005). This approach is supported by Vogelgesang and Astin (Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000) who found that students are more likely to achieve desired outcomes when service is performed as part of a course, rather than as a separate volunteer activity (Campbell, Reider, & Maloney, 2002).

Apart from the intended learning outcome, community service learning also serves to foster enhanced sense of civic responsibility among students (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). From an emerging body of recent research, community service learning has been demonstrated to be associated with various positive effects in students (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001), including learning outcomes such

as academic performance (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000), social outcomes as illustrated in positive changes on civic responsibility (Singer, King, Green, & Barr, 2002), as well as personal outcomes in students engaging in community service learning in areas including self-efficacy and moral development (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009; Eyler et al., 2001).

Beebe and De Costa presented a model of experience-based learning that could help students on the intermediate and advanced levels make the transition from language to literature courses in the context of real-life situations. The Santa Clara University Eastside Project provided a link between the university and the community. Students met the practical needs of underserved Hispanic populations as they pursued the opportunity to practice their classroom language skills in an environment which nurtures a type of learning that cannot be provided within the traditional classroom (Beebe & Costa, 1993).

Educators have identified diverse student outcomes for community service learning programs (McKay & Rozee, 2004). Based on the review of the learning outcomes of community service learning programs as well as the pilot course "APSS 2819 Community Psychology" of the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong, the outcome indicators developed for the community service learning are primarily drawn from the following four dimensions: Interpersonal effectiveness, Teamwork, Problem solving, and Social responsibility.

Cutforth & Puckett (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999) argued that community service learning programs are being advanced as effective vehicles for preparing

young people for active citizenship and promoting growth in self-esteem, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, and personal responsibility. Carrying out physical activity programs provides meaningful Service- Learning experiences for youngsters. The experience improves their self-confidence, concern for others, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and enthusiasm for learning (Hammond-Diedrich & Walsh, 2006).

3. Overview of the pilot course "APSS 2819 Community Psychology"

3.1 Introduction

The "APSS 2819 Community Psychology", funded by LTC fund, is designed as a pilot program to aid in the development of Community Service Learning Programs of the department of Applied Social Sciences and to provide practical service learning for students. In the first semester of the academic year 2011-2012, there are a total of 29 students, 11 males and 18 females (Table 3.1.1) from 12 departments (Table 3.1.2) joined this course. Students are required to attend 14 weeks' lessons and supervisions held on each Thursday 14:30-16:30 starting from September 01 - December 01, 2011.

Table 3.1.1 Gender of Students in this pilot course

Gender	Number of students	Percentage (%) of Gender
Female	18	62%
Male	11	38%
Grand Total	29	100%

Table 3.1.2 Number of Students in specific departments

Department	Number of Students
Accounting and Finance	2
Applied Social Sciences	3

Building and Real Estate	1
Chinese and Bilingual Studies	2
Electrical Engineering	1
English	1
Industrial and Systems Engineering	2
Fashion and Textiles	6
Logistics and Maritime Studies	2
Management and Marketing	1
Rehabilitation Sciences	1
Hotel and Tourism Management	7

3.2 Community Service Learning Program

The Community Service Learning took place in South Kwai Chung Service Centre (SKCSC) in Lai King Estate. It is a local non-profit making charitable organization offering various social services for its residents in the Lai King constituency, especially the elderly. With a strong orientation towards community health promotion and needs to address the elderly population, the centre provides quality leisure and cultural services to enrich their life and enhance harmonious environment in the district. Students in this course collaborated with this

organization on prioritized initiatives prescribed by the SKCSC as well as relevant independent projects proposed by the students and endorsed by the teaching team and NGO representatives.

The 40-hour Community Service Learning comprised of prioritized initiatives advocated by the service agency and independent projects proposed by the students themselves. Assigned into four groups, students were engaged in various tasks in contact with the service population within the set hours. Details about the activities are listed below:

Table 3.2.1 Activities performed by students

Activities assigned by the service agency	Activities held by students
Home Visit for Cho Yiu Estate	Elders Mixed and Match and Scarf Dye Workshop (Group 1)
Home Visit for Solitary elderly in Lai King Estate	South Asian Youth Development in Kwai Tsing (Group 2)
Research analysis for Cho Yiu Estate Home Visit	Rummikub Competition (Group 3)
Care for the Elderly Raffle Ticket 2011	Elderly Computer Class (Group 4)

Noticeably, a student from the department of Fashion and Textiles and a student from the department of English have already committed to their service programs, namely the Dongguan Migrant Children Empowerment Exchange Program and Hong Kong Girl Guide Community Outreach Program respectively. Instead of participating in the community service learning projects organized in Kwai Chung district, their course evaluations were based on their individual engagements.

4. Evaluation of the Community Service Learning

4.1 Teaching Timeline

Week	Date	Contents	Deliverables
1	September 01, 2011	Orientation	
2	September 08, 2011	What is community psychology	Distribute mission statement form at the end of lecture
3	September 15, 2011	What is community: Definitions and types of communities; Social Capital	
4	September 22, 2011	Empowerment / Community & Social Change	
5	September 29, 2011	Prevention & promotion: Key Concepts & Implementation	
6	October 06, 2011	Understanding human diversity; Social inequality	
6	October 06, 2011	Individual level skill training for CSL students: interpersonal skills, teamwork & teambuilding	Collect mission statement form at the beginning of lecture
7-11	October 13, 2011-November 10, 2011	Supervision	
12	November 17, 2011	Program evaluation & program development / Workshop on	Drafts of reflection journal

		grant proposal drafting	
13	November 24, 2011	Community & Social Change: Coalitions & other community organizing issues / Workshop on finalizing reflection journal	Outline of grant proposal
14	December 01, 2011	Project presentations	Grant proposal + Reflection

4.2 Students' assessments

	Course Work			50%
1		Class & Blackboard LMS participation (Individual)	5%	
2		Proposal of community intervention for submission to relevant public funding sources in HK	25%	
3		Application Report (Individual)	20%	
	Community Service Learning			50%
4		Students' reflection (e.g. CSL Mission statement / Reflective Journal / Project Group Blog) (Individual)	30%	
7		CSL Setting Supervisors' reports (Individual)	10%	
8		Project Team Presentation	10%	

4.3 Quantitative evaluation of Student Learning Outcomes

The Student Affairs Office suggested four areas of service learning student learning outcomes in communication skills, teamwork, problem solving, and social awareness. Changes in these parameters over the course span were analyzed with a series of paired t-tests. Excluding student attrition and late registration, with 6 missing entries from the pre-service survey and 4 missing entries from the post-service survey, a total of 20 CSL surveys were included in the analyses.

Comparing student learning outcomes from Pre-service & Post-service surveys results

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t (Time1 – Time2)	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Communication Skills - Time 1	3.52	20	0.91	0.20	-1.71	19	0.10
	Communication Skills - Time 2	3.87	20	0.48	0.11			
Pair 2	Teamwork skills - Time 1	3.79	20	0.97	0.22	-0.70	19	0.49
	Teamwork skills - Time 2	3.93	20	0.41	0.09			
Pair 3	Problem solving skills - Time 1	3.54	20	0.94	0.21	-1.37	19	0.19
	Problem solving skills - Time 2	3.80	20	0.59	0.13			
Pair 4	Social awareness - Time 1	3.45	20	0.99	0.22	-2.38	19	0.03
	Social awareness - Time 2	3.91	20	0.37	0.08			

In general, self-reported service learning outcomes increased over time across the span of the course, though the differences were subtle. Students reported statistically-significant change in self-reported social awareness (t=-2.38, df=19, p=0.03). Nonetheless, reported changes in the three remaining outcome parameters did not reach statistical significance, although the results suggested that perhaps students have experienced a moderate improvement on their communication skills upon completion of this SL course.

This finding should be expected due mainly to the fact that enrollment was voluntary and the students were from a group of self-selected persons who identified well with the aims of the subject. Their respective level of competence in the four areas therefore should be considered high to begin with relative to their peers. In other words, we could not rule out this potential "ceiling effect" with this group of students. One can reasonably expect that changes will be of a larger magnitude when ALL students are required to participate in this subject from 2013 onwards.

4.4 Qualitative Evaluation of Student Learning Outcomes

Reflections on psychological empowerment from the CSL experience

Psychological empowerment of service recipients and students in this course can be conceived in terms of three levels of outcomes: interpersonal, interactional, and behavioral. Interpersonal outcomes center on individual level changes

including perceived competence and the sense of mastery in community work. Interactional outcomes include the development of critical awareness about resources and skills required community intervention, understanding of causal agents in community issues. Psychological empowerment can also be encapsulated with behavioral outcomes in terms of community involvement and participation (Zimmerman, 1995, pp. 588-590).

Fostering sense of mastery in students

A Social Policy major student in this class reflected upon her experience in working with the elders on how to build rapport with them:

I learnt that patience is the most important thing in communicating with elderly after running this activity. In explaining the game rules, I need not one but repeated illustrations. I have to sit close enough to them so they can hear me well and speak slowly when I cover the rules and encourage them to engage in the games. Fortunately, we have enough group members to cover all participants at the event. Now I realize that how important it is of having sufficient personnel to work with the elderly.

Fostering sense of mastery in service recipients

Reporting from her tie-dyeing workshop, a fashion and textile students recalled what her clients said after attending her session:

All of them really enjoyed tie-dyeing and attempted with several rounds of hands-on practices. We were delighted to see the satisfaction on their faces with their work. Towards the end of the session, they were eager to join more advance class about tie-dyeing and even asked for an advance level extension of this tie-dyeing

workshop. We wish that they can do it (tie-dyeing) with their own garment to explore and create more special tie-dye effects. We wrapped up the session with a group photo of our team, the tie-dyeing students, and our products.
Interactional outcome – Developing critical awareness about community issues

A number of students have reported in their reflection about their critical awareness about the motivation for elders to stay house-bound in the housing estate they visited.

Hindered by the pain in their legs and backs, these elders seldom go out for a walk or shopping.

One elder we interviewed is a widower who lives alone, away from his children and grandchildren. He has difficulty in walking and I think the Cho Yiu Estate is not friendly to elders like him. Although he revealed interest in getting a blood pressure check, he withdrew his request after learning that he must go to the South Kwai Chung Service Center, which is down the hill for a 10-minute walk and out of his access. Can we do something to improve access to health service in this community?

Behavioral outcome – Experiencing community involvement and participation

From their CSL experience, students were able to learn about behavioral outcomes in psychological empowerment in terms of their observed community involvement beyond merely looking into service center attendance count:

I thought the elders joined the Rummikub competition to kill time and earn a chance to win the prizes, a pack of rice for the winner and noodles for the runner-

up team. We are all wrong about that. At the end of the day, we learnt that they were keener on learning the game itself, engaging with other folks in the community, and doing quality time with young people like us. People in this community genuinely love hanging out with each other.

In assessing the impact of community service learning, the scope of evaluation is not limited to the educational and behavioral outcomes in students, but also including progress and changes in partnering community. In terms of the impact of CSL on the community and participating students, experience and attainment generated in this subject could be conceived as four distinct types of community engagement (Butin, 2010, p. 136)

Type	Engagement	Example
Technical	Instrumental effectiveness on teaching, learning, or research	Learning about human diversity by actually interviewing South-Asian immigrants
Cultural	Meanings of the practice for the individuals and institutions involved in the teaching, learning, and research practices	Help students to be responsible to our society and foster community outreach in university learning
Political	Promotion and empowerment of voices and practices of historically disempowered and non-dominant groups in society	Nurturing the sense of mastery among housewives with cloth-dye workshop
Anti-Foundational	Raise challenges to presumed behaviors, assumptions, or norms	Empowerment between CSL partner organization clients is not a one-way empowering process; students can be empowered by the process and the clients they work with

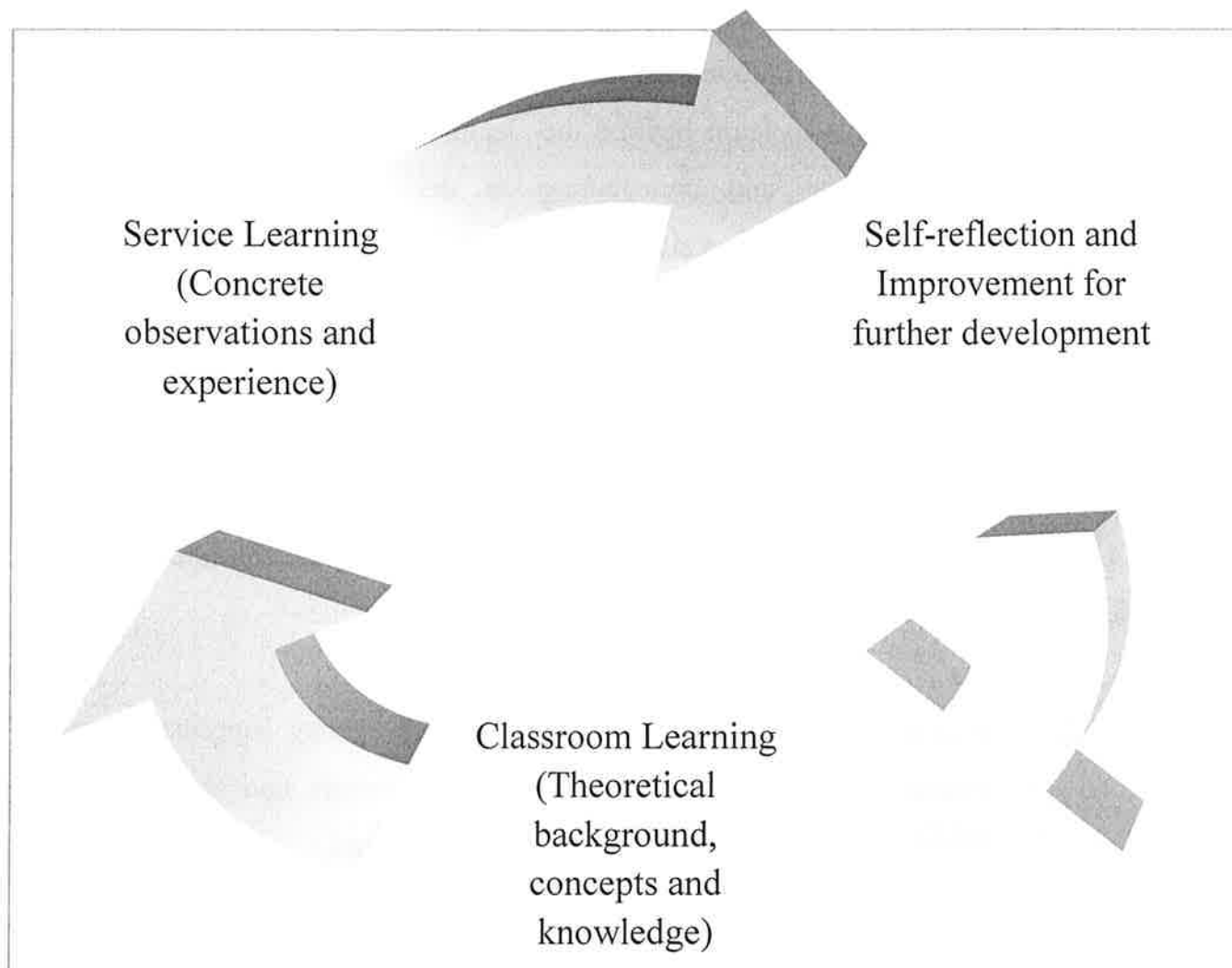## Generic feedback about the course

Students in general appreciated the opportunities in this course to solve problems related to serving the community as well as presenting themselves in community service settings, either in lecture format, group activities, or home visit engagement. Several students also expressed that such experience has boosted their self- confidence. From students' anecdotal feedback, a CSL course with a longer

time frame would allow students to gain prolonged exposure and opportunities for their continuous development with reference to the community service projects they have incubated.

5. Recommendations

Recommendations substantiating from APSS 2819 Community Psychology will be organized into findings and implications pertaining to the following four stakeholder groups: University, course team and service agency, and students.

5.1 Framework for development of Community Service Learning program

Service Learning
(Concrete
observations and
experience)

Self-reflection and
Improvement for
further development

Classroom Learning
(Theoretical
background,
concepts and
knowledge)

Based on what scholars presented to us that the experience-based learning

could help students transform their classroom learning to the context of real-life situations, we are going to propose a framework to refining the program structure and delivery of community service learning in the long run. We believe that service learning activities should be carefully planned at community sites so that students can have the opportunity to practice their classroom knowledge and skills into practical needs. After acquiring the experience from the community, they have to reflect for their self-improvement. In short, the service learning environment is important for students to learn beyond the lecture room and to apply their knowledge to serving and contributing to the community. The program of community service learning is a supplement to traditional classroom learning and it is always a cycle in our life course.

5.1 *University Level*

A structure conducive to the development and growth of community service learning is usually characterized with the following elements:

(i)   Healthy relationships among social service agency supervisors, course instructors, service clients, program coordinators and students should be positive and based on mutual respect and trust

(ii)   An explicit linkage between the program of study and the service activities which is applicable and beneficial to the community being served

(iii) The type of service activity performed, the amount of time spent and the quality of service rendered should be well-planned and mutually beneficial to the service agencies as well as students' growth. Simultaneously, continuous support in terms of safety and health care of the students should be taken into account

(iv) The needs and academic level of the students should be appropriate to encourage them to critically examine any theories or viewpoints in the light of their own service experience.

To facilitate the development of credit bearing Service Learning, a new and challenging initiative in the university, PolyU has set up the Office of Service Learning (OSL) in March 2012 to coordinate efforts pertaining to the planning, development, implementation, and administration of CSL subjects in PolyU.

The Office of Service Learning is supporting CSL with reference to its four mandates (Human Resource Office, 2012):

1. Promotion of Service Learning as a core academic pedagogy in the University

2. Coordination and support of the offering of Service Learning Subjects in collaboration with academic departments

3. Identification of community needs, liaison with external organizations, sourcing opportunities for Service Learning

4. Conducting research in the effective application of Service Learning in university education

While course instructors focused on assisting their students in meeting their learning needs through coursework delivery and assuring effective community contributions from students' community service learning with the aid of liaising with supervisors from community partner agency, the program coordinator, funded by the pilot scheme funding, was instrumental in relieving the administration and coordination work involved in this pilot subject.

Program coordinators are responsible for liaising and engaging with all partners to plan and coordinate the students' orientation, training workshops and service practicum. Besides, program coordinators assume a bridging role between the course instructors and community partner agency supervisors, to facilitate the supervision of students' performance in CSL and provide support and training during the span of CSL sessions.
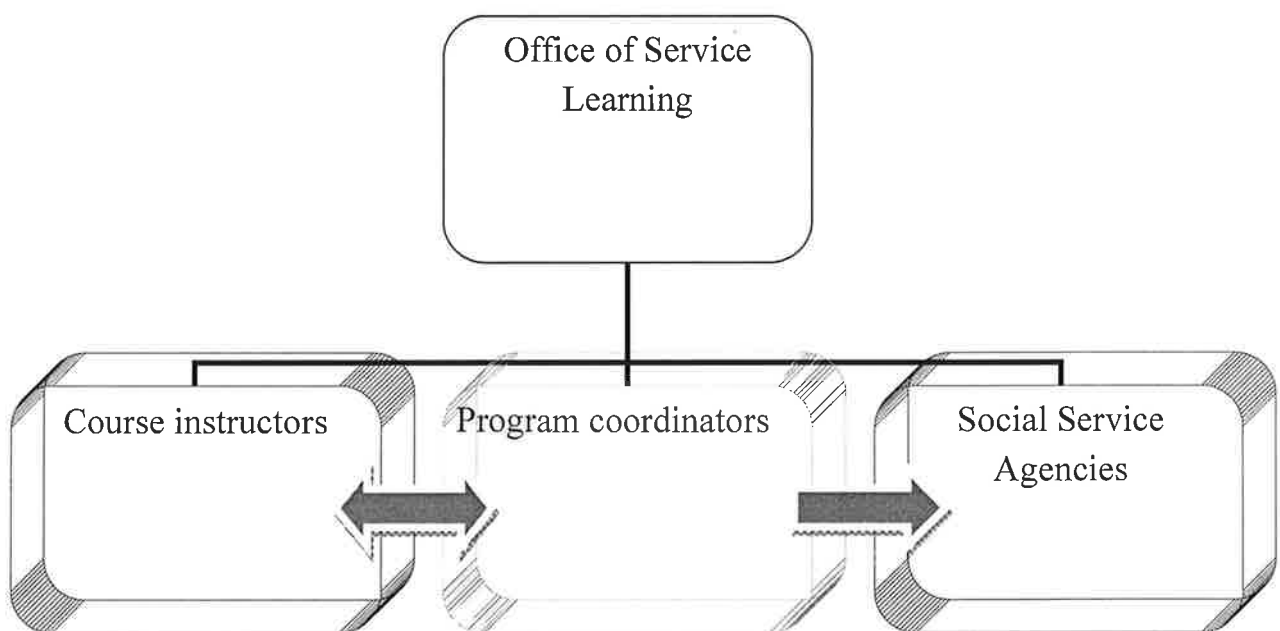
While community service learning projects have clearly impacted on students' civic awareness and engagement, learning outcomes in CSL could be enhanced with consideration to the following issues:

Given the limited 14-week span of CSL subject, skills involved in CSL projects (e.g. public speaking, teamwork, problem solving) enhances students' core competence, such as the Tomorrow's leaders GUR requirement in the first year, should be considered a prerequisite for taking up CSL.

Although all students were able to fulfill their CSL requirement in terms of sessions and hours served, the length of this subject may not be optimal for students to actualize their enthusiasm and creativity to collaborate on service projects beyond the prescribed 14-week period, less the necessary time for course lecture material delivery and pre-service training and orientation. Apart from limiting the scope and depth of CSL projects, the limited time frame of the current offering exerted constraints on students' capacity to reflect on their CSL experience and consolidate concepts learned in classes with applications in their CSL projects. The limited time span also exerted constraints on the partner agency to plan and incorporate CSL partnership with their routine services. In local community service agencies, activity proposals, budget planning and manpower coordination are usually planned and formulated a year ahead, which limits the possibility of any large-scale proposals or ad hoc programs provided by the university on the instant.

The OSL could consider the possibility of extending the time frame for CSL subjects to allow work with longer duration and greater impact. Different avenues to materialize such extension should be deliberated in future research agendas

regarding CSL subjects structuring along with the strategic temporal alignment with the GUR requirement and other relevant 334 initiatives.

Students with existing CSL commitment who demonstrated their track records in participating and organizing community service were exempted from the CSL requirements in this course. Nonetheless, their service learning performance was accredited with the course work requirement in terms of their reflective journal, application report, and funding proposal. The two exempted students have illustrated their experience and competence through documenting their participation in the reflective journals and demonstrating their understanding about the community project on hand in the application report as well as the funding proposal. Their coursework assignments were corroborated with individual evaluation reports from respective supervisors of their project host organizations. Given their exposures and experience accumulated, it is likely that these students with continuing engagement in community service would enjoy a head start in community service learning, translating what they do in the community with their classroom learning, over their counterparts who are relatively new to community service. In fact, one of the students on independent projects was assessed with the highest grade in this class. In the near future, the possibility of facilitating and encouraging these students in their established community work through CSL subjects or direct assistance from the Office of Service Learning deserves a more in-depth examination.

5.2 Course & Service Agency Level

The community partner agency, the South Kwai Chung Service Centre, expressed due respect and recognition to the novel perspectives from our students in devising projects in collaboration with the community (e.g. tie-dying class by ITC students). The possibility of expanding the realm of social services in community settings could be invigorated by the infusion of students from various disciplines, along with their developing knowledge and skills in their major areas, into these community settings.

The service operators, as well as the service clients, cherished the opportunities for seniors to engage in intergenerational exchanges (e.g. computer classes and home visits).In general, elders in this service community expressed genuine fondness to keep in touch with contemporary youth along with their culture to meet their needs to "stay contemporary" with the ever-changing society.

In implementing the CSL with the course staff team, the community partner agency admitted that CSL incurs corresponding additional human resource for monitoring and coordinating daily operations of the planned activities (e.g. interest classes, community assessment visits, fund-raising coordination, etc.). Such cost incurred should be ratified with the perceived achievement of CSL initiatives from the agency's perspective.

Agency partner found the students enthusiastic and energetic in general. Nonetheless, supervisor from agency partner suggested that students have room for improvement in areas pertaining to work ethics and professionalism, including punctuality at CSL sessions, informed absence on agreed CSL session committed, and timely communication about logistic arrangement regarding CSL project

events. Moreover, a number of students have exhibited difficulties in learning and adapting to the culture and practice of the service agency. Consistent with other CSL evaluation from the partner's perspective, work skills and etiquette of students in CSL, with particular reference to attendance and punctuality (Ferrari & Worrall, 2000), comprises an integral part in their partner site supervisor's evaluation.

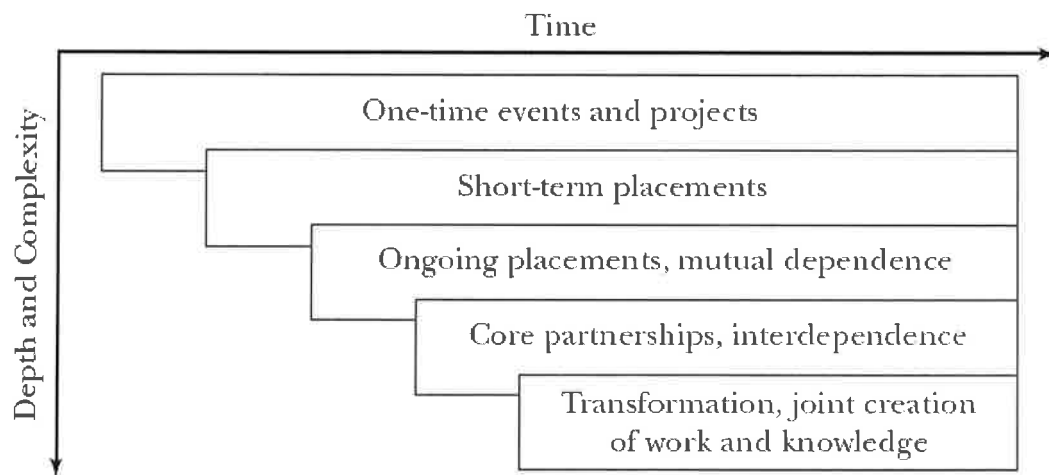**Strengthening pre-service training with community partner agency**

Tailored pre-service training is another area proposed by the partner agency towards refinement of the existing protocol. Pre-service training could be strengthened by incorporating inputs from the partners, including instructions to students on the clients' privacy. The training could be presented in written, video or audio formats. The agency may also provide initial informal sessions to advise students about their clients' personality traits, the specific socioeconomic conditions and the cultural and linguistic barriers which the clients are facing to heighten their sensitivity about diversity upon physical contacts. For smoothing concerted efforts between the CSL projects and agency's annual service plans, agency partner could introduce CSL students to the structure and flow of the agency's general administration. Professional feedback and guidance in terms of attendance, work attitude and individual commitment from the agency are also very important for student growth and development. With reference to this issue, agency partners have expressed their willingness to assess students on interim terms, prior to the end-of-term supervision report. Simultaneously, individual

reflective meetings or feedback and sharing sessions should be arranged to facilitate the student's service practicum when necessary.

Sustainability of CSL program: Partnership maintenance

Prior to the commencement of this CSL subject, the course staff team has been collaborating with the community partner organization on various research and intervention initiatives. Our partner is looking forward to a more stable collaboration pattern to allow for more long term and recurrent planning on how to optimize the resource being brought from CSL projects. For example, a stable ongoing commitment of CSL in the next triennium would allow the partner organization to plan for a district wide community need assessment scheme with repeating waves of community visits by utilizing the extra resource generated from CSL partnership. With reference to the Jacoby's framework for campus-community partnership (Jacoby, 2003, p. 27), we look forward to progress from the stage of mutual dependence towards latter stages of interdependent and transformative community partnership.

**Figure 2.1. A Framework for Development
of Campus-Community Partnerships**

Time

| One-time events and projects |
| Short-term placements |
| Ongoing placements, mutual dependence |
| Core partnerships, interdependence |
| Transformation, joint creation of work and knowledge |

Depth and Complexity

5.3 Student Level

Observing from this subject, mixing students from different discipline has broadened their horizon and facilitated understanding among different faculties and departments. In fact, all four project teams in this subject comprised students from two or more disciplines.

A recurring theme from students' reflective journals suggested that students' recognition of their effort and gratification from their achievement in CSL projects constituted a substantial component in their subjective learning outcome. Future offerings could explore further mechanisms for recognizing students' achievement in community settings apart from the existing mechanisms including the reflective journals, project blogs with visual and / or audio-visual documentation of their projects, and project presentations. An example would be to consider nominating all students completing CSL with a commendable attainment for the community

service awards being held annually by the Student Affairs Office.

Beyond the generic sense of achievement, students appeared to be particularly receptive about the observable progress, recognition, and praise from the service clients in their CSL projects. Further research on how clients' recognition from CSL operates as reinforcement to students and criteria for CSL assessment is much needed.

Some students in this subject, despite completing all requirements in this course and found the effort worthwhile, expressed their difficulty in coping with the demands of CSL subject, including setting aside the time for community service in addition to the coursework and class lecture, as well as learning to work in a team being held responsible by the course staffs and partner organization supervisors. Such concern appears to coincide with the demands on students going through their transition from secondary schools to university life where students might experience enormous stress from the lack of a fixed group of classmates for support and flexibility in timetable juggling. On the other hand, second year students who have weathered the storm from the turbulent first year in university, should be more adjusted to campus life yet equipped with sufficient course space to fulfill the CSL requirement.

Readiness of students into CSL is related to another issue in offering CSL, in the recruitment of students most eligible for CSL. Since this offering of CSL subject was classified as a Broadening General Education (BGE) subject, interviews for intakes and enrollment criteria based on academic competence or community service track record were not feasible. Nonetheless, it is imperative in

offering CSL subjects to screen for students who are both competent and ready for community service to maximize students' suitability with the CSL projects and enhance the likelihood of obtaining an optimal learning experience. Interview for CSL subjects would likely screen out those who appears to be motivated about engaging oneself in CSL. Suggested in the CSL research literature, self-selectors tend to be more motivated with CSL subjects (Gray, Ondaatje, & Zakaras, 1999, p. 45)

Echoed from feedback from our partner agency, the students interview board and criteria could be jointly set up by both university staffs and partner organization representatives to maximize students' suitability with the CSL projects and enhance the likelihood of obtaining an optimal learning experience by fitting students into corresponding projects demanded by the partner organization based on their observed strengths and weaknesses.

5.5 Areas for research

The experience and assessment in this pilot project generated several research agendas pertaining to the optimization of delivering and evaluating CSL. Reflective journals from students have generated a pool of qualitative data for formulating more refined measurements of students' attainment from CSL. For instance, the evidence of empowerment reported from reflective journals could be collated into formal qualitative analyses and lay foundation for developing quantitative instruments in this domain. Supervision reports are another avenue for refining existing supervision criteria and service competence. Specific parameters and descriptions concerning students' competence, professionalism, and attitude

could be consolidated with current rubrics towards evaluations more ecological to the needs and culture of the partnering organizations. Apart from using interview to screen for students with maximum potential towards CSL, deployment and mapping of relevant screening tools to maximize fit between students' interest and service learning environments should be explored as an alternative towards inclusion of more students to involve in CSL. Research on the synergetic effect observed of intergenerational relationships between CSL students and elders in communities being served is also worthwhile for understanding its impact on the elders, the CSL students, as well as the community itself.

6. References

Astin, A. W., Vogelgesang, L. J., Ikeda, E. K., & Yee, J. A. (2000). *How service learning affects students*. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute, University of California Los Angeles.

Beebe, R. M., & Costa, E. M. d. (1993). Teaching beyond the Classroom: The Santa Clara University Eastside Project Community Service and the Spanish Classroom. *Hispania, 76*(4), 884-891.

Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (1995). A Service-Learning Curriculum for Faculty. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 2*(1), 112-122.

Butin, D. W. (2010). Toward a theory and practice of community engagement. In D. W. Butin (Ed.), *Service-Learning in Theory and Practice : The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education* (pp. 125-142). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Campbell, S. V., Reider, B. P., & Maloney, R. C. (2002). A service-learning approach to achieving taxpayer compliance in Alaskan native communities. In J. E. Ketz (Ed.), *Advances in Accounting Education Teaching and Curriculum Innovations* (pp. 1-19): Emerald.

Conway, J. M., Amel, E. L., & Gerwien, D. P. (2009). Teaching and Learning in the Social Context: A Meta-Analysis of Service Learning's Effects on Academic, Personal, Social, and Citizenship Outcomes. *Teaching of Psychology, 36*(4), 233 - 245.

Cutforth, N. J., & Puckett, K. M. (1999). An Investigation into the Organization, Challenges, and Impact of an Urban Apprentice Teacher Program. *The Urban Review, 31*(2), 153-172.

Eyler, J. S., Giles, D. E., Jr., Stenson, C. M., & Gray, C. J. (2001). At a glance: What we know about the effects of service-learning on college students, faculty, institutions and communities, 1993-2000: Third edition. *Journal,* 121. Retrieved from http://www.compact.org/wp-content/uploads/resources/downloads/aag.pdf

Ferrari, J. R., & Worrall, L. (2000). Assessments by Community Agencies: How "the Other Side" Sees Service-Learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 7*(1), 35-40.

Finkelstein, N. D. (2005). *Teaching and learning physics: A model for coordinating physics instruction, outreach, and research.*

Gray, M. J., Ondaatje, E. H., & Zakaras, L. (1999). *Combining Service and Learning in Higher Education*: RAND.

Hammond-Diedrich, K. C., & Walsh, D. (2006). Empowering Youth through a Responsibility-Based Cross-Age Teacher Program: An Investigation into Impact and Possibilities. *Physical Educator, 63*(3), 134-142.

Human Resource Office. (2012). Establishment of the Office of Undergraduate Studies (OUS), Office of General University Requirements (OGUR) and Office of Service Learning (OSL) *Administrative Note No. 12/12*: Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Jacoby, B. (2003). *Building partnerships for service-learning* (1st ed.): Jossey Bass.

McKay, V. C., & Rozee, P. D. (2004). Characteristics of Faculty Who Adopt Community Service Learning Pedagogy. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 10*(2), 21-33.

Singer, J. A., King, L. A., Green, M. C., & Barr, S. C. (2002). Personal Identity and Civic Responsibility: "Rising to the Occasion" Narratives and Generativity in Community Action Student Interns. *Journal of Social Issues, 58*(3), 535-556.

Vogelgesang, L. J., & Astin, A. W. (2000). Comparing the Effects of Community Service and Service-Learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 7*(1), 25-34.

Zimmerman, M. A. (1995). Psychological empowerment: Issues and illustrations. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 23*(5), 581-599.

7. List of dissemination activities from the project:

APSS Briefing seminar on CSL
Community Service Learning at APSS - Community Psychology (APSS 2819)
Date : November 22, 2011
Time : 16:30-18:00
Venue : TU107

EDC Seminar on Service Learning
Implementing a Service-Learning Subject with Local Services: Experience from
    APSS-2819 Community Psychology
Date : January 31, 2012
Time : 12:30-14:15
Venue : TU616

PolyU Service Learning Web Site (Launched on March 26, 2012)
Approved pilot project – APSS 2819 Community Psychology
http://sl.polyu.edu.hk

Exhibition on Service Learning
Date: March 26, 2012 – April 1, 2012 Venue: FJ Podium

FHSS newsletter article on service learning
April 2012 issue

Chan, K, Chan, C.C., Ng, E. (2012, under revision). Teaching community
    psychology using community service learning: A case in Hong Kong.
    Manuscript submitted to the *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the
    Community*.