The Use of Service-Learning in Composition Courses

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Service-Learning & Composition

- Specifically, how is composition or writing generally taught through a service-learning perspective at your school?

- I recently taught at an institution where service-learning was integrated into ESL for academic writing courses.

- ESL students & undergraduate/graduate TESOL students wrote reflective capstone assignments with written reflections and culminating project/course “newsletters”

- http://helpyhour.com

3 Resources for Service-Learning in Composition

1. **The 4Cs Service-Learning 2003 Position Statement**
   - is worth noting:
     - the references included a ‘statement’ that mirrors the works included in the book below.

2. **Writing and Community Engagement: A Critical Sourcebook** (CBWi)
   - (Deans, Roswell, Wurr, 2010).

3. **The Service-Learning in Composition Studies**: A collection (‘dated’) of references on the subject.

The 4Cs & Service-Learning

- In 2003, the CCCC Chair asked the CCCC Committee on Service-Learning and Community Literacy to write a position statement on service-learning.

- As participants integrate reading, writing, and civic engagement, they rekindle a creative tension common to both classical rhetoric and American higher education: joining intellectual inquiry with service to the public good.

Embracing the Past - Useful Resources #1:

1. The 4Cs Service-Learning Position Statement
   - (Conference on College Composition & Communication)

- The reference list in the 4Cs Service-Learning Position Statement largely mirrors the works included in the Bedford book (and overlaps with the references on the Resource #3 list).

- However, uncertainty remains, concerning whether the position statement was ever adopted by the Executive Committee.

10 ‘GENERAL’ GUIDING PRINCIPLES

For example:

1. **Engage** people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
2. **Provide** structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.

There are also GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY, WRITING PROGRAMS, AND RESEARCHERS

- My particular favorite 4C’s guideline:

  "Develop flexible strategies for course design and implementation because even when courses are planned carefully, emerging community circumstances often demand last-minute course adaptations and situated problem-solving."
Embracing the Past – Useful Resource #2

- The introductory chapter of the Bedford Critical Sourcebook provides as good of an overview as possible in 2010 on Service-Learning in Composition Studies.

- Of course, the whole book is worthwhile, as it is a collection of the best work at the time, Chapter 1 will provide the interested reader with sufficient cursory information.

Writing and Community Engagement
A Critical Sourcebook

Collects key research on the theory and practice of community-based writing. Selections from community projects are also included to help connect scholarly and pedagogical work. 37 Chapters address writing in communities, ethics, community engagement, service-learning, the rhetoric of civic writing, and practical pedagogy.

Rhetoric of Engagement (RofE)

- Emerging to complement and extend the rhetorics of critique in composition studies.
- Emphasizes both personal and political agency.
- Authors/editors welcome and grapple with difference.
  - Use collaborative inquiry and action.
  - Cross customary divisions within the English studies and forge alliances with diverse others.

Quote that Captures the Scope of RofE

“Seize the power of poetry, publication, performance, community organizing, or multimedia to take writing public and, in the process, transform public discourse”

(Deans, Roswell, & Wurr, p. 2, 2010)

Embracing the Past – Useful Resource #3

- The "Service-Learning in Composition Studies" file is a ‘dated’ collection of references on the subject.

- Useful as a reference.
- I updated it with some several recent items.

Conclusion: Planning the Future

1. Hopefully these resources will allow the interested reader to answer the questions more completely that were asked of this section of the panel.

2. I anticipate for the future (given current and/or predicted Service-Learning in Composition needs, considering population changes, institutional requirements, etc.), an ever increasing use of technology and implementation of technology standards.

3. One possible direction is exploring combinations of service-learning, composition, technology, and additional productive areas such as assessment and/or ICC

4. Influence the **Next Generation** of scholars – Graduate and Undergraduate TESOL students.