WRITING-TO-SERVE:

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF A WRITING-ACROSS-THE-CURRICULUM APPROACH

IN A SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

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presented by Johanna Saleska, a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts, and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worth of acceptance.

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I. INTRODUCTION

I first became interested in the possibilities of service-learning as a mode for writing

instruction when I worked as the assistant to the director of the campus writing center at my alma

mater university. Though my duties involved advertising, recordkeeping, and the development of

writing workshops, I spent the majority of my time working directly with undergraduate students

and their writing. It was during these one-on-one tutoring sessions that I began to see patterns of

negative student responses regarding their writing processes. Not only were their papers

consistently wrought with hackneyed topics and arguments, but the students themselves seemed

consistently unmotivated to develop as writers. They viewed their writing assignments as means

of assessment only and necessary hurdles toward a degree, but not as an important step in

developing valuable communication skills for life and citizenship beyond the university. I began

wondering to what extent these students' classroom environments and corresponding writing

assignments were facilitating this frighteningly indifferent mentality about the power of rhetoric

and writing in our culture.

Though at the time I was still in the process of applying for graduate schools, I knew I

eventually wanted to teach college-level writing, and my curiosity and personal interest in the

problem compelled me to research innovative techniques instructors had used to increase

motivation as well as critical and creative thought in writing classrooms. Again and again

throughout my research, composition scholars sang the praises of service-learning—particularly

intriguing to me at that point were their claims that SL increases both classroom engagement and

student motivation for learning to communicate effectively through the written word. Indeed,

Linda Adler-Kassner, Robert Crooks, and Ann Watters, in the introduction to their

groundbreaking *Writing the Community*, list "motivation" as the first benefit of combining

service-learning with composition: "service-learning makes communication—the heart of composition—matter in all its manifestations" and "in the most successful cases … participants in service projects make the crucial transition from students to writers" (2). Moreover, my personal investment in nonacademic community service made me excited at the possibility of further engaging with the community through writing and teaching.

As I prepared to teach first-year composition at the University of Missouri I toyed briefly with the idea of implementing some kind of service-learning aspect into my first-year composition course, but as I delved deeper into the research, I quickly became aware of the overwhelming breadth of the field as well as the various complexities, caveats, and ethical dilemmas I had not considered. Deans, Roswell, and Wurr (2010), in the introduction to *Writing and Community Engagement: A Critical Sourcebook* specifically warn newcomers into the field of service learning to consider lessons learned by "research tradition" as opposed to "muddl[ing] through by trial and error," which is exactly what I would be doing by attempting community service projects as a novice teacher in a community which I hardly knew anything about. Further, I had trouble conceptualizing how I would meet the specific goals of a composition course through service-learning, especially since there seems to be little research on the movement's efficacy in actually creating more proficient writers (Deans et al. 8). Moreover, as I considered the ethical implications of sending students out into the community with the goal of making them stronger writers, it became clear that I not only needed to consider the kinds of writing I might assign, but that I also needed to think much more deeply about how particular assignments affect the ways students view themselves in relation to their communities. In other words, if the goal of the service-learning movement is, as Eyler and Giles suggest, to instill in students a stronger sense of social responsibility and appreciation for diversity (12), I wanted to

know how/if the types of writing assigned in SL courses facilitate that goal. As a budding writing instructor, I was also curious about how/if community-based writing assignments actually create stronger writers.

Thus, rather than attempt to implement a service-learning component into my composition class, I wanted to investigate an established service-learning course that made strategic use of writing. In the spring of 2014, I used the University of Missouri Writing Program website to search for service-learning courses labeled as "writing-intensive" (WI) and came across the MU Community Engagement Project (MUCEP). Though I explain more about what "writing-intensive" means at MU in my Course Context chapter, here I'll say that in order for a course to be designated as "writing-intensive," the instructor must prove a commitment to helping students master course content through frequent writing assignments. Additionally, WI instructors must encourage students to improve their writing and thinking through feedback and opportunities for revision. Besides its WI status, MUCEP intrigued me for its emphasis on the use of writing to meet leadership and public service goals as opposed to potentially problematic service-learning courses that use community partnerships to improve writing skills of college students without regard to community needs. Moreover, the course is well-established on the MU campus and has maintained relationships with a variety of organizations within the Columbia community for over 25 years. Dr. Anne-Marie Foley, who designed MUCEP and continues to teach the course today, assigns frequent writing assignments in a variety of genres for the purpose of creating more thoughtful and responsive servers in the community. Writing assignments include an Organization and Service Profile, four structured Journals, and a Formal Proposal, which asks students to define a social problem and propose a solution.

Research Questions

I began my ethnographic study of MUCEP to address the following question: ***How do the genres of writing assigned in a service-learning course affect students as servers, citizens, and writers?*** Here, I adopt Dr. Foley's definition of "server" as anyone who is "actively" engaged in some form of community development, whether required for a class or not (Int. 1). I asked this question because I wanted a deeper understanding of how writing might be used strategically in service-learning courses to create more ethical servers and socially responsible citizens while also meeting the goals of a campus writing program. As I reviewed the literature on service-learning in composition studies, I found that others in the field have begun asking questions like mine. While in the past most service-learning scholarship was devoted to justifying its use in writing classrooms, researchers are now looking more closely at the writing actually being produced in these courses, the kinds of relationships service-learning courses facilitate, and the partnerships SL programs have developed with like-minded movements, including WAC. David Jolliffe in particular suggests that WAC and service-learning work together, noting that service-learning proponents would benefit from paying closer attention to how different assignment genres elicit different ways of thinking about community engagement (105-106).

In order to explore my research question in its entirety, I broke it down into the following sub-questions, each of which I explore in my Analysis chapter:

1) **What genres of writing are assigned in this course and why?**

2) **How do the assignments in this course affect (or not affect) students as servers and citizens?**

3) **How do the assignments in this course affect (or not affect) students as writers and thinkers?**

I begin by reviewing the existing literature on the use of writing in service-learning programs, paying particular attention to discussions of genre and connections between service-learning and WAC. In the methodology section I explain my reasons for using ethnographic methods and describe my use of interviews, observation, and process of analysis. In the section on course context, I explain both the WAC and Service-Learning programs that the University of Missouri and briefly describe the six students who participated in my research study. The analysis chapter addresses my three research questions in the order I listed above. First, I describe Dr. Foley's beliefs about writing in service-learning as well as how she uses different genres of writing in MUCEP to encourage students to be more "thoughtful" and "active" servers in the community.

In the second section of analysis, I discuss the effects of MUCEP writing assignments on students as servers and citizens. Through my analysis of student interviews and written artifacts, I uncover two recurring patterns regarding how the writing assignments may have influenced the way students began to view "service": First, students developed deeper relationships with members of the community; and second, they began to see social problems as systemic.

The third section of analysis shows how MUCEP writing assignments affected students as writers and thinkers. More specifically, I discuss how MUCEP assignments influenced students as critical and creative thinkers as well as how their ideas about academic research changed as a result of the kinds of research they were asked to do in the course. The fourth and final section of analysis discusses the challenge students faced in handling the workload and time demands of the course.

In the conclusion, I provide an overview of how WAC and service-learning worked together in MUCEP. I first show how WAC theory and practice supported the goals of the course and the service-learning movement in general. Then I address how the service component of MUCEP supported and transcended the goals of the Campus Writing Program and WAC in general. I also consider a few drawbacks of the course as well as avenues for further research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section I briefly review the history of service-learning in composition studies, first showing that writing has been an essential component of the SL movement since its origin, and then drawing connections between the goals of multiple service-learning instructors and composition studies. Using Tom Dean's taxonomy of the three writing assignment paradigms in service-learning pedagogy, I show a sampling of the wide variety of writing genres used by SL instructors. For each "type" of writing, I provide an overview of instructor goals, successes, failures, and ethical implications. Finally, I show the essential connections between WAC and service-learning, revealing that collaboration between the two movements could work to strengthen both. My ultimate goal in this review is to show how attention to genre in service-learning pedagogy is especially important in considering course goals, student learning outcomes, and ethical implications, thus carving out a place for my qualitative analysis of the writing and thinking outcomes of the MU Community Engagement Project.

Though I have chosen to use the terms "service-learning" and "community engagement" throughout this study, it's important to note that such programs appear under a myriad of titles, including "community-based learning," "community outreach," "civic engagement," "work-based learning," "literate social action," and "community-based writing," to name a few (Baca x, xiii). Moreover, finite definitions of each of these terms are difficult to grasp given the vast diversity of programs in higher education that contain community service components (Eyler and Giles 3). In order to encompass SL in all its forms and functions, Janet Eyler and Dwight E. Giles, among others, define "service-learning" as "any program that attempts to link academic study with service" (5). With such a broad definition along with the cross-disciplinary nature of service-learning (Deans et al. 5), it would be a difficult task indeed to attempt to cover the

breadth of scholarship on the subject. I have chosen, therefore, to focus my review primarily on the scholarship those most concerned with genre theory and practice in service-learning courses.

History of Service-Learning in Composition Studies

Community outreach programs in higher education can be traced back to the land grant movement of the 1860s, but Deans et al. note that the reemergence of public service initiatives in the 1980s gave impetus to composition studies' particular investment in service-learning pedagogy (2). In response to civic leaders' accusations that university students were self-absorbed and lacked civic responsibility, the presidents of Brown, Georgetown, and Stanford formed Campus Compact, a support network that promoted campus programs that linked community service to academic learning (Baca xvi-xvii). Deans et al. point out that by the 1990s, service-learning "emerged as its own distinct field": faculty across disciples began experimenting with community engagement in their classrooms, and service learning journals, conferences, and professional organizations cropped up across the country (2). Empirical studies were conducted at colleges across the states, "trumpet[ing] encouraging findings" and culminating in book-length analyses (3). Eyler and Giles, who synthesized these original research studies in *Where's the Learning in Service Learning?*, argue that service-learning leads to greater student engagement with course material, increased critical thinking and understanding of problems as systemic, appreciation for diversity, and a stronger sense of social responsibility (7-12).

Notably, Eyler and Giles also point out that written reflection was a central component in each of the successful service-learning programs they studied, calling it the "hyphen in service-learning" and "the link that ties student experience in the community to academic learning" (171). They write:

> The quantity and quality of reflection was most consistently associated with academic learning outcomes: deeper understanding and better application of subject matter and increased knowledge of social agencies, increased complexity of problem and solution analysis, and greater use of subject matter knowledge in analyzing a problem. This also included students' reports that they learned more, were more intellectually stimulated, and were motivated to work harder by service-learning than in other classes. Reflection was also a predictor of openness to new ideas, issue identification skill, problem-solving and critical thinking skill, and such perspective transformation outcomes as seeing issues in a new way, increased commitment to use of public policy to achieve social justice, and a more systemic locus of problem causes and solutions … it is central to a question for improved academic outcomes. (173)

Thus, the most successful service-learning programs of the 80s and 90s were intimately tied with reflective writing, which remains true in SL courses across the curriculum to this day.

Moreover, the 1990s also marked a "social turn" in composition studies, and a growing number of composition scholars and writing instructors "experimented at the intersections of writing pedagogy and community action" (Deans et al. 3). In their 1997 book, *Writing the Community: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Composition*, Linda Adler-Kassner, Robert Crooks, and Ann Watters synthesized the pedagogical work of Nora Bacon, Bruce Herzberg, Paul Heilker, Linda Flower, Chris Anson, and others, calling the use of service-learning a "microrevolution" in composition studies (1). Though Adler-Kassner, Crooks, and Watters open the collection by pointing out the logistical and administrative difficulties of incorporating service-learning into university curriculum, they also name the numerous places service-learning goals intersect with goals of composition studies. These include increased motivation for both students and faculty, a greater sense that "communication matters" in the lives of others (2), and increased awareness of the systems that "shape social conditions" (5). Further, they find that service-learning in composition serves as a remedy to institutional and disciplinary fragmentation, offers students real and various rhetorical situations in which to work, and encourages multicultural awareness and intercultural communication (5-7).

Building on the work of Kassner, Crooks and Watters, Tom Deans in his 2000 book

Writing Partnerships: Service-Learning in Composition further describes the "social turn" in

composition studies within the context of larger shifts in higher education in general. Citing

"observers of university life," like Ernest Boyer, Clark Kerr, and Derek Bok, Deans notes that in

the new millennium, "we have entered a critical period in which colleges and universities need to

reimagine not only how they go about teaching and doing research but also how they relate both

to their host communities and to society more generally" (7). Along with these changes across

the disciplines in higher education, composition studies in particular began to adopt a "social

perspective" on writing—a perspective that Baca argues is still held by the field today (Baca

xvii). Deans writes,

> The discipline prefers to see itself as having evolved from studies of the lone writer to a
> more contextual understandings of composing; from a narrow, functional definition of
> literacy, focused on correctness, to a broader definition; from an exclusive focus on
> academic discourse to the study of both school and nonacademic contexts for writing;
> from presuming white middle-class culture as normative to analyzing and inviting
> cultural difference; and from gatekeeping at the university to facilitating advancement of
> all students.

Deans goes on to argue that adopting a critical studies or cultural studies approach in

composition classrooms is moving in the right direction, but that cultural critique and critical

reading as expressed in the form of an academic essay isn't enough (8). He writes that if

composition instructors imagine their classrooms as spaces for social justice work, they ought to

encourage students to write in genres that extend "beyond the traditional genres dictated by the

academy" and give students opportunities to "write themselves into the world" (8). He goes on to

show how service-learning both affirms and extends beyond the goals of composition studies

listed above: it widens audiences for student writing to contexts outside the classroom, provides

opportunities for students to situate their work into visible discourse communities (including

those outside academia), asks students to cross cultural and class boundaries, and encourages

students to connect critical consciousness to "pragmatic civil action" (9-10).

Types of Writing Used in Service-Learning Courses Across the Curriculum

While service-learning courses across the curriculum almost always employ some sort of

writing component (most often reflective writing), and though the goals of service-learning and

composition studies theoretically intersect at the points listed above, as Deans points out, the

"dizzying range" of programs and courses that fall under the term "service-learning" makes it

difficult to discuss and analyze how writing is actually used in such courses with any sort of

clarity (15). In order to sort through the various course aims and literacy goals of courses within

this larger movement, Deans proposes a valuable three-part taxonomy for writing pedagogy in

service-learning: writing *for* the community, writing *about* the community, and writing *with* the

community. These three groups, he argues, emerged from "putting questions of purpose to a

range of service-learning courses and programs" (16). Deans admits that supposing every

service-learning course falls into one of these three categories is an oversimplification, but that the

taxonomy functions as "a heuristic for unpacking the aims and assumptions of a diverse range of

literacy practices" (16). In other words, Deans' three-part paradigm offers an important platform

for analyzing how particular genres of writing are used in service-learning courses and to what

ends. I use Dean's three-part paradigm to sort through current research in the field, describing

instructor goals, student learning outcomes, and ethical implications of various writing genres

used in SL courses across disciplines.

Writing *for* the Community. Using Laurie Gullion's 1996 Writing in Sports

Management course at the University of Massachusetts Amherst as an example of the writing-

for-the-community paradigm, Deans notes that writing-for courses bring students together with

nonprofit agencies and ask them to "compose purpose-driven documents like grant proposals, research reports, newsletter articles, and brochures" (53). Thus, student writing itself becomes the primary act of "service." Deans, Gullion, Diana George, Susan Wells, Nora Bacon, Kate Kiefer, and Kara Alexander and Beth Powell, among others, suggest that their goals for engaging their students in "real-world" writing situations include increased motivation and sense of writing's purpose, stronger understanding of writing as an authentic rhetorical act rather than a set of skills, opportunities to engage in new kinds of discourse, and practice transferring academic writing knowledge to nonacademic settings. Deans aligns writing-for approaches with Deweyan pragmatism and educational theory: "experiential learning, experimentalism, cooperation, vocational application, student interest, service, and civic reflection" (54). Furthermore, Wells, George, James Dubinsky, and others, argue that giving students the opportunity to engage in real public discourse harkens back to ancient rhetorical lessons, which emphasized rhetorical theories as firmly situated within contexts that called a composer to intervene. In other words, as George points out, asking students to compose "in response to civic exigency" makes the composition classroom a place that genuinely "prepare[s] students to be *active* participants in a democracy" (51, my emphasis).

Instructors who employ writing-for genres in their classes point out that these course goals are indeed met, though to different degrees depending on context and students' backgrounds, and not without some instances of failure. Gullion and Alexander and Powell, who had students complete agency projects in groups, report that many students expressed frustration with their group members and/or with the unclear expectations or general unhelpfulness of their clients. Both Deans and Gullion in particular note that some students are simply unable to adapt to the nonacademic discourse of community organizations, which is partially a result of the

brevity of service-learning courses—one or two semesters is not enough time to fully adapt to a

new discourse (Deans 62). The inability for students to adapt to the discourse of the client or

their desire to merely finish a project rather than do it well can result in poor, unusable projects

(Deans 80-81, Alexander and Powell 48). In "*From* Students in the Streets," Paula Mathieu

documents five examples of failed reciprocity between students and community agencies,

including a number of students who are rude, overly demanding, or leave important projects

unfinished. Moreover, she notes that in some cases, entire classes deliver documents that are of

no use to the organization at all (285). Mathieu suggests that failed partnerships with community

members are in large part a result of institutionalized, top-down approaches to service-learning;

she advocates instead for local, tactical, and grassroots community projects headed by instructors

who put the needs of the community first (288). In addition to potentially wasting a client's time

and energy with poorly executed or useless documents, however, reciprocity with community

agencies is also complicated by the problem of assessment (Deans 83). Deans asks,

> To what standards do we hold students undertaking difficult projects in new genres? How
> do academic teachers evaluate nonacademic writing? What formal or informal role
> should the community agencies play in grading? What happens when the evaluations
> from teacher and community partner conflict? (83)

Moreover, both Deans and Wells warn against allowing students in writing-for projects to

uncritically "adapt to the dominant rhetorics and ideologies of the workplace," which can

potentially reinforce the "American concept of individualism and meritocracy that serve to mask

the systematic causes of social injustice" (Deans 76). Similarly, Dubinsky notes that service

courses which focus too much on "giving" create a model of "charity" as opposed to helping

students become "educated citizens who participate actively in their communities to solve

problems and affect social change" (263). Deans, Wells, and Dubinsky all suggest combining

writing-for projects with structured critical reflection so as to mitigate these kinds of ethical

concerns. Despite these potential complications, those who employ writing-for genres in their classrooms consistently report that the benefits outweigh the drawbacks (Deans 83-84, George, Wells, Bacon, Kiefer 45-46, and Alexander and Powell 63-64).

Writing *about* the Community. As illustrated above, reflection has long been a vital component in successful service-learning courses, including those in which the primary assignment genres fit into Deans' writing-for-the-community paradigm. Critical written reflection plays an even more central role in courses where the writing assignment genres involve writing *about* the community (Deans 85). Deans defines writing-about-the-community courses as those "which ask students to do community service and then reflect on their community-based experiences in writing" (85). Thus, writing-about courses differ from writing-for courses in that the service component itself does not typically involve writing; rather, students' community experiences become "like texts ripe for analysis" (Deans 86). Though course themes, outreach experiences, and types of reflection vary widely among writing-about courses, Deans, Bruce Herzberg, Cheryl Duffy, Brock Haussamen, Angelique Davi et al., and Adam Webb all assign writing genres that are largely familiar in academia—reading summaries and responses, syntheses, critical essays, and, of course, plenty of reflective writing. Other genres in writing-about courses include personal narratives, biographies of community members, and profiles about community organizations (Deans 105-107, Haussamen 415-418).

Despite the wide variety of course angles and themes, the primary goals of writing-about courses typically include experience with academic discourse, the development of a critical consciousness and informed social empathy, and deepened relationships with the community. Bruce Herzberg's service-learning composition course at Bentley College, for example, which involves literacy tutoring, was designed to help students "investigate the social and cultural

reasons for the existence of illiteracy—the reasons, in other words, that the students needed to perform the valuable service they were engaged in" (146). In order to push students beyond mere personal reflection of their service experience and into critical analysis of such social problems and their causes, Herzberg has students read, summarize, and reflect upon Mike Rose's *Lives on the Boundary* and Jonathon Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* and then compose research papers based on topics that emerge from readings, discussion, and/or service experience (141). Deans, who uses the Bentley College service-learning courses as exemplars of writing-about-the-community pedagogy, notes that Herzberg's teaching approach resonates with critical pedagogy and the development of a Freirean "critical consciousness" (Deans 88-89). Unlike instructors who value writing-for-the-community genres, Herzberg is less interested in audience concerns and more focused on teaching the conventions of academic discourse and staying true to "the philosophical commitments of critical literacy" (Deans 92-93). Thus, Herzberg's use of analytic and reflective writing genres facilitate his goals of teaching both academic and critical literacy.

Similarly, Duffy, Haussamen, Davi et al., and Webb use writing-about pedagogy in their service learning courses to break down barriers of difference and to teach academic discourse. Duffy, whose course involves working collaboratively with international students at a nearby language institute, assigns personal reflections, summaries and reaction papers to a series of critical readings, annotated bibliographies, essays critiquing American culture, and capstone reflective essays (Duffy 408-409). The primary goals of Duffy's course are to "begin bridging the gap of 'otherness'" and to facilitate personal and academic development (405). Haussamen encourages students to pursue any volunteer opportunity that interests them personally and then assigns narratives, definitions of community, volunteer site and client profiles, argument papers about required services, and problem-solution papers with a research component (Haussamen

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418). Haussamen's purpose is "not to solve community problems but to improve [his students']
education" (419). He tells his students that he believes "their education ought to promote not
only their professional and personal development, but their development as community members
as well" (419). Angelique Davi, Michelle Dunlap, and Anne Green, like Herzberg, emphasize
Freirean critical consciousness in their discussion of the importance of developing "local
pedagogies" based on location, demographics, and students' backgrounds (Davi et al. 466).
Though they argue for flexibility in creating writing assignments and assigning readings based
on local course context, their courses are reflection-heavy and include carefully selected readings
about race, class, gender, and sexuality, which students are encouraged to link with their service
experience through writing (468). Through these readings and directed reflections, Davi, Dunlap,
and Green work to create a service-learning classroom environment where students feel "safe
enough … not only to discuss 'difference,' but to complicate students' ideas of difference in
ways that enhance their critical thinking, levels of engagement, and commitment to social
justice" (483). Webb's service-learning courses also adopt a critical and social justice framework
but with a greater emphasis on service-learning pedagogy itself. Webb assigns responses to
articles on service-learning, reflective essays about students' volunteer experiences, and large-
group debates over the pros and cons of service-learning and volunteering (3). Like the others
discussed here, Webb's goals include creating space for students to think critically about "race,
culture, gender, [and] class" (17) in addition to providing opportunities for students to engage in
academic discourse.

Both Herzberg and Duffy warn of the potential ethical implications of reflective writing
in service-learning courses if not carefully directed by the course instructor(s). To frame his
argument for critical (as opposed to personal) writing in SL courses, Herzberg quotes then

Campus Compact director, Susan Stroud: "'If our community service efforts are not structured to raise the issues that result in critical analysis of the issues, then we are not involved in education and social change—we are involved in charity'" (139). Herzberg worries that community service could act as a kind of "band-aiding" of social issues in that it potentially allows students to ignore underlying causes of problems while simultaneously letting them "off the hook" for addressing those problems (139). Moreover, he suggests that students' beliefs in meritocracy and individualism are so deeply ingrained, that community service combined with personal reflection alone is not enough to inculcate in students an understanding of social problems as systemic. He writes, "It is all too easy to assign narratives and extort confessions, and to let it go at that"; however, these genres are "not sufficient to raise critical or cultural consciousness" (140). Duffy similarly notes that in an early version of her service-learning course, the genres she assigned— narratives, compare/contrast papers, and biographical profiles—yielded student papers that "were disappointing" and "lacked critical depth" (406). Like Herzberg, Duffy argues that service experience "must be couched in some sort of intellectual context, surrounded by readings, discussion, and critical reflection" (407). She notes that one of her students in that earlier version of her course, who wrote his final paper on the contrast between Japanese and American food, seemed to completely lack cultural awareness at the end of the semester: "His paper dripped with sarcasm: 'Who *wouldn't* prefer slimy raw fish to juicy steak?' He might have though he was being funny, but he was actually being ethnocentric and unthinking" (407). She argues that because her course lacked critical readings and space for critical analysis and reflection, it had unintentionally "reinforced notions of superiority and 'otherness'" (407). Thus, those who value writing-about approaches to service-learning must be critically aware of their practices.

Writing *with* the Community. Both writing-for and writing-with advocates question whether academic genres of critique actually have the power to transform society through active community intervention (Deans 109). Wayne Peck, Linda Flower, and Lorraine Higgins suggest that "discourses of critique" might provide a way for "individuals to recognize themselves as oppressed" and "unwittingly oppressive to others," but that such discourses fall short of creating actual change: "Critique is necessary but insufficient on its own terms for building a just society" (Peck et. al 205). Peck, Flower, and Higgins are all heavily involved with the Community Literacy Center (CLC), a partnership between Community House in Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University, and Dean's exemplar of his writing-with-the-community paradigm (Deans 110).

According to Deans, writing-with initiatives are perhaps the most difficult of the three paradigms to categorize given their "grassroots sensibility" and multitude of forms; however, they generally involve direct collaboration between the university and community members to "research and address pressing local problems" (18-19). They value "intercultural communication" and "collaborative problem-solving" (19). As Deans points out, this kind of university/community collaboration to solve problems resonates with Deweyan pragmatism and the bringing forth of marginalized voices (113-115). Writing genres that emerge from writing-with programs can range from more conventional grant proposals (Deans 19, Garza 74) and narratives (Rumsey et al. 205) to experimental "hybrid" genres (See Higgins et al., Hull and James, and Rousculp). Whereas writing-for and writing-about initiatives value skills university students can learn from practice with dominant rhetorics (either workplace or academic), writing-with programs take seriously the importance of genuine reciprocity between the university and community, the breaking down of discourse barriers, and the strategic use of

literacy for social change (Deans, Hull and James, Higgins et al., Goldblatt, Rousculp, Jacobi, Pompa, Garza, Rumsey et al.).

The CLC, as Deans notes, stands as "the most visible and well-researched university-community partnership under the writing-with-the-community paradigm" (110), and has served as a model for similar university-community collaborations across the country, including DUSTY in Berkeley, California (Hull and James 75) and the Community Writing Center (CWC) in Salt Lake City, Utah (Rousculp 387). As noted above, most service-learning programs emerge from academic courses and/or university initiatives—the CLC (and initiatives like it) differs in that the work done there "reflects a long-term relationship supported by the university *and* the community" (Deans 111, my emphasis). In addition to a Carnegie Mellon Community Literacy and Intercultural Communication course, the Community House supports onsite community tutoring and public gatherings that address community issues (112). Deans writes, "Rather than a revamped college composition course, the CLC is a comprehensive social change effort with rhetoric at its center" (112). Indeed, the CLC/CMU course, Community Literacy and Intercultural Collaboration, emphasizes goal-driven collaborative writing between university mentors and urban teens, with both groups developing as "writers, problem solvers, and strategic users of literacy for social change" (Deans 112-123). Together, teens and CMU mentors develop texts for CLC publications, "which are intended to voice multiple perspectives on pressing local problems for a diverse public audience" (126). Collaborations often result in a melding of academic and teen discourses and come in a variety of genres, including skits or videos (130). Moreover, after the collaborations are complete, Carnegie Mellon students are encouraged to continue to read and write hybrid texts for their final "inquiry" research projects (133). Deans notes that these inquiry projects do not fit neatly into one kind of discourse: "They are essay-like

but betray some of the conventions of the traditional humanistic essay": rather than applying theory to experience, asserting "confident" claims, and reaching for "seamless elegance," these hybrid essays "work from experience toward theory," "advance tentative claims," and "adopt report-like text features" (136-137). The projects prefer "a diverse range of sources" over "traditional 'authoritative' texts," often use slang, and include appendices with empirical data in addition to bibliographies (137). Deans writes, "[the inquiry projects] mark a phenomenon rare in college courses—an organic, experimental genre emerging from a deliberate mingling of the academic with the nonacademic, of White with Black, of dominant discourses with marginalized voices" (137).

Writing-with initiatives do not always involve community literacy centers—Tobi Jacobi and Lori Pompa each describe courses where university students collaborate with inmates at local prisons. Rumsey et al. describe a course that involves collaborative writing between students and the elderly. Moreover, Deans suggests that any course with a "problem-solving ethos" might also be an example of a writing-with course—he uses Aaron Schultz and Anne Ruggles Gere's ideas for "public" service-learning as an example, which asks students to use writing to address campus community problems (Deans 140). Garza, who asks her students to use writing for social change in the form of grant proposals, also considers her course an example of a writing-with initiative (Garza 74).

Though these collaborative initiatives may seem inherently reciprocal, like the writing-for and writing-about paradigms, writing-with program assignments are not without their ethical concerns. Deans notices in interviews with Carnegie Mellon service-learning students that sometimes the course imperative to "get the writing done" can impede "the priority to engage in collaboration" (129). He also notes that sometimes college mentors' expectations and goals

differ from CLC leaders, leading to "frustration and confusion" (130). For example, one mentor in particular valued expressivist, process-oriented approaches to writing, which conflicts with the "goal-driven rhetoric" of CLC projects (129-130). Garza further notes that students sometimes fail to understand the goals of instructors altogether, focusing only on their personal gains from the course rather than developing a socially responsible civic identity (81). Hull and James express a constant worry about sustainability, noting that funding competition can complicate university relationships with local nonprofits and that "the range of tensions" among "those who come from the university" and those who live in the community can result in "uphill battle[s]" (89). Rousculp warns those who edit collaborative publications against attempting to interpret community members' texts through publication introductions, which can unintentionally "usurp" community voice (395). Moreover, she notes that collaborative partnerships can sometimes focus too much on the "disenfranchised group," which, again, "unintentionally" results in "the kinds of exploitive relationships that higher education community-collaborations can engender" (395). Nevertheless, Deans, Garza, Hull and James, and Rousculp note that with careful attention, community collaborations can move towards the truly reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships they hope for.

Connecting Service-Learning and Writing Across the Curriculum

In a chapter of the 2001 book *WAC for the New Millenium*, David Jolliffe urges proponents of WAC and service-learning to find ways to work together, suggesting that each can strengthen the other (86). Though WAC and service-learning have largely remained as separate movements within higher education (despite the widespread adoption of SL in composition studies), Jolliffe notes that the movements share a similar history as well as other potentially productive connections. He points out the following links between WAC and SL: both are

reform movements that developed through grassroots efforts at colleges and universities (89),

both are aimed at cultivating better teaching and learning at the university, both are cross-

disciplinary and allow for instructors to adapt strategies according to context, both are valued

and praised by administrators, students, parents, and society, but also "devalued within

traditional higher education reward hierarchy," and both include innovative pedagogy that can be

threatening to "customary and established postsecondary teaching" (91).

Moreover, Deans, Jolliffe, Steve Parks and Eli Goldblatt, and Michelle Hall Kells all

point to ways service-learning can and has strengthened WAC programs. In *Writing

Partnerships*, Deans suggests that service-learning could contribute to WAC's "collaborative

vision," citing Barbara Walvoord's prediction that for WAC to thrive, it must "coexist" with

other similar education reforms (169). Building on Deans, Jolliffe proposes that WAC capitalize

on the "energy" of the service-learning movement, which he attributes to five political and

economic forces influencing higher education: general criticism of higher education faculty for

"living cushy lives inside the ivory tower"; The New American College Movement, which

emphasizes the connection between theory and practice; the "redefinition/reintegration of service

movement"; "inter- or multidisciplinary inquiry"; and emphasis on the importance of

experiential learning (92-94). In other words, Jolliffe notes that service-learning is doing

precisely "what the critics of higher education are asking colleges and universities to do," which

could go a long way in bolstering the success of WAC programs (95). In a 2000 article, "Writing

Beyond the Curriculum: Fostering New Collaborations in Literacy," Parks and Goldblatt imagine

a reframing of WAC that reaches beyond the disciplines and into the communities outside

university walls (338). They argue that institutional shifts, changes in student demographics, and

the increasingly complicated demands students face after graduation call for writing programs

that introduce students to rhetoric and writing as it functions in the world outside of academia (339). Similarly Kells, in describing her "Writing Across Communities" work at University of New Mexico, argues that traditional WAC programs "too narrowly privilege academic discourse over other discourses and communities shaping the worlds in which our students live and work" (373). She contends that "higher education is more than a personal asset, emblem of entitlement, or marker of prestige," and that for WAC programs to truly shape students as cross-culturally competent thinkers and citizens, they must expand into the "rhetorical arts of community praxis and intercultural communication" in addition to those of academia (383).

Deans and Jolliffe also discuss how WAC theory and practice can inform service-learning. Deans encourages community-based writing advocates to take note of the history of WAC development, particularly how the most successful WAC programs garnered faculty support and adapted to particular institutional contexts (168). He also suggests that SL "capitaliz[e] on WAC's institutional success," noting that service-learning still runs counter to the traditional culture of institutions (168). Jolliffe suggests that WAC's special attention to genre theory would help service-learning instructors address course goals more consciously (106). Citing Russell, Jolliffe points out that WAC proponents are well aware that the genres in which instructors have their students write directs "students' motivations for writing, the identities they form through writing, and the processes they employ to write successfully" (103). Thus, attention to genre, Jolliffe argues, would help SL instructors more effectively determine how their students are understanding the course material as well as how developing their own identities as thinkers, writers, and citizens (105).

As the literature shows, writing has long been at the center of the service-learning movement. Despite this distinct commonality among successful service-learning courses,

however, it is clear that instructors use a wide variety of writing genres in their courses to address different goals and to avoid different ethical implications. For this reason, WAC's attention to genre can inform service learning, specifically by helping service-learning instructors consider ways students approach, identify with, and develop their writing in the context of any given service-learning course. The literature also shows that service-learning can support the goals of WAC by calling students to learn new discourses outside of academia. In the next section, I describe the methodology for this study.

III. METHODOLOGY

In this section, I describe and justify my use of ethnographic research methods for this study. I first explain how the importance of context in both WAC and service-learning make ethnography an ideal methodology for studying the MU Community Engagement Project. Then I describe my specific methods, which included classroom observations, interviews, and artifact analysis.

Ethnography as a Research Method

As noted in the literature review, one important common denominator between WAC and service-learning initiatives is that they are highly context dependent. Because the MU Community Engagement Project sits at a unique intersection between the WAC and service-learning programs at the University of Missouri, it became especially clear that I needed to select a research method that would not only account for context, but would view context as "a resource for understanding rather than an enemy of understanding" (Kantor, Kirby, and Goetz 296). In defending ethnographic research in the field of composition education, Kantor et al. note that ethnography places particular emphasis on contextual elements, which they argue is "crucial" for understanding how students approach writing in classroom settings (296). I chose to use ethnographic methods because I wanted to understand how writing is used and understood in a course that combines elements of WAC theory and service-learning pedagogy.

In addition to emphasizing the importance of context, ethnography allowed me to address the kinds of questions I was interested in answering. In *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis,* Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland, lay out eight basic questions commonly used by ethnographers and other qualitative researchers, three of which were of particular interest to me: questions of a topic's types, questions of a topic's

consequences, and questions of a topic's structures (144). Questions of type are of interest to ethnographers looking to observe the types of "goal-pursuit strategies" used by organized groups (128). They ask questions like, "'What is this thing or cluster of things I see before me?'" (145). I wanted to know what types, or genres, of writing were begin assigned in MUCEP, how those genres coincided with the professor's course goals, and the types of thinking each assignment encouraged. Questions of consequence, on the other hand, focus on outcomes, or, the "effects of a particular line of action" on an individual or group (163). I hoped to discover how the professor's "line of action," specifically the writing assignments, affected students as writers. Questions of structure were of interest to me because they account for "relational connections" between people in ways that quantitative research cannot (151). In order to determine how MUCEP assignments affected students as servers and citizens, I needed to ask questions that would provide insight into how students viewed themselves in relation to the members of community they were working with.

Thus, ethnography allowed me to pursue the kinds of inquiry called for by Deans, Roswell, and Wurr: exploration of teacher's "roles" in "determining genres" and "advising writers" as well as "the consequences of particular pedagogical and project ideas" on students as writers and citizens (9). This study does not assume that any other course, even future MUCEP courses, will be identical to MUCEP as I observed it in the fall of 2014; rather, my aim is to investigate the implications writing-intensive strategies can have in a community-engaged classroom. Also, I hope to provide insight into how one Service-Learning/WAC partnership is developing on the University of Missouri, Columbia campus.

Specific Methods

All the student participants in this study were enrolled in Dr. Anne-Marie Foley's

GN_HON 2021/2021H: MU Community Engagement Project at the University of Missouri,

Columbia in the fall of 2014. At the beginning of the semester, with Dr. Foley's permission and

approval from Institutional Review Board, I recruited volunteers by verbally addressing the

class. I described the purpose of my study and explained that I planned to interview all

participants and collect their graded assignments. Out of the seventy-five students enrolled at that

time, twelve volunteered. From those twelve volunteers, I ultimately chose six to participate in

the study. Since my time observing MUCEP was relatively short (one semester) and I focused on

only one specific aspect of the course (writing), LeCompte and Schensul might consider my

project a "compressed" ethnography, for which they recommend strategically selecting a group

of participants that best represent the larger demographic of the population being studied (88-89).

As such, I made sure that the six students I selected included an equal number of participants

from each course section (Youth and Public Health), an equal male to female ratio, and an equal

number of honors and non-honors students. Further, since the course is made up mostly of

sophomores with some juniors and seniors, of the six students I selected, three are sophomores,

one is a junior, and two are seniors. In exchange for their time, the student participants received

three points of extra credit for the course (students who did not participate were offered other

opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester). Dr. Foley and the two MUCEP teaching

assistants, who I refer to as Jeff and Rachel, also participated in this study.

Classroom Observation

Lofland, Anderson, Snow, and Lofland write that an "intimate familiarity" with a

research site is essential for gathering "the richest possible data" (15). Ethnographers achieve

such familiarity through "persistent and systematic" observation of the context in which the participants' "actions are embedded" (15). In order for me to understand the way Dr. Foley uses writing within the unique context of MUCEP, it was essential that I observe how she defines and discusses writing with her students. Moreover, Kantor et al. argue that direct observation is especially important in classroom ethnography since "the contexts within which students write will greatly affect written performance" (296). Thus, to understand why students approached the assignments the way that they did, I needed to be as familiar as possible with the classroom context in which they were writing.

I chose to observe the Monday and Wednesday lectures led by Dr. Foley as well as the Friday "lab" sessions led by Rachel and Jeff. During Friday labs, students enrolled in the Youth section of MUCEP met with Rachel, and those enrolled in the Public Health section met with Jeff. Because these two sections both met at 1:00 on Fridays, I had to alternate between observing Youth Lab and Public Health Lab each week. If I had had a research partner, it would have been interesting to compare notes from lab sessions that occurred on the same days in order to see how the TAs discussed assignments differently based on their particular sections. However, this was not feasible given my sole authorship.

Wanting to intrude as little as possible to avoid biasing my observations, I took on the role of "passive participant" as described by Savin-Baden and Major, wherein a researcher selects an "out of the way post to assume during observation" (396). Each day, I sat in the back row of the class and took notes in a journal (students were not permitted to use laptops for note-taking). Further, since Lofland et al. note that visible differences between the researcher and those being researched might "throw up barriers to the acquisition of rich data" (23), I did not make an effort to stand out in any way from the other students in the course in terms of dress or

demeanor. Though I had addressed the class and assumed the students knew who I was and why I was there, I was surprised to find that several times throughout the semester I was mistaken for an MUCEP student. For example, during one lab session, Rachel asked the students to break into groups of three, and when I sat near a group to listen in on their discussion, the other students looked to me for contributions. They expressed surprise when I reminded them I was just observing. This indicates to me that I in some ways became what Berg calls an "invisible researcher" (147), meaning that students may have been less likely to alter their behavior as a result of my presence.

Every evening after I observed a class, I used my handwritten notebook as a guide for typing up a more detailed description of my observations. Murchison urges ethnographers to record their observations "as soon as possible" since human memory is "fleeting" and can unnecessarily "complicate the [ethnographic] record" (70). Therefore, it was important for me to type up my notes on the same day I made my observations. The process of translating handwritten notes to typed notes proved extremely beneficial in discovering patterns, which I recorded and used later as I developed a coding schema.

Interviews with Students and Instructors

Madden calls interviewing a "cornerstone" of ethnographic research, noting that "a good ethnographic interview" offers a researcher "insight into how a participant sees the world in analytical, typological, and relational ways" (71, 73). Interviews were especially important for my study because the nature of my research questions requires understanding the goals and perspectives of Dr. Foley and MUCEP students. I interviewed Dr. Foley twice during the semester: once near the beginning and again during finals week. I asked her general questions about MUCEP history and goals, her teaching philosophy regarding course readings and writing

assignments, and how she grades and defines "writing" in the course. I asked about trends and issues with student writing, what she thought students handled well, and how current MUCEP students compared to students from previous years. I also asked her what she has changed about the course over the years, and what she might change in the future. Both interviews lasted around an hour each. To triangulate my data, I also interviewed the two MUCEP TAs, Jeff and Rachel. I asked them to react to the course and its students, describe their teaching and grading philosophies, and reflect on problems and successes in MUCEP student writing. These interviews were less central to my study and lasted around 20 minutes each. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded in order to address the research questions, discussed later in the Analysis chapter.

I individually interviewed the six student participants three times throughout the semester: once near the beginning, once around mid-semester, and once during finals week. Because Berg recommends creating questions around "categories" (74) to help keep interviews focused, I developed questions loosely around my three lines of inquiry: reactions and approaches to each writing assignment, the particulars of writing struggles and processes throughout the course, and the relationships students were developing at their service sites. In my first round of student interviews, which I conducted in the fourth week of the semester (after students had volunteered at their service sites at least once), I asked about course expectations, general feelings toward academic writing, and reactions to their assigned service sites. In the second round of interviews, I asked specific questions about how their service was going so far, how they felt about the writing assignments they'd done, and about the composing/rewriting process for the Organization and Service Profile Assignment and Journals in particular. In the third round of interviews, which took place during finals week, I asked students to reflect on the

course experience over all in addition to specific questions about the MUCEP Formal Proposal. These interviews were also audio recorded, transcribed, and coded in order to address the research questions.

I adopted a semi-structured interview style, which, according to Berg, involves asking a number of predetermined questions but also allows the researcher to probe in new directions throughout the course of an interview (70). My goal here was to be "a good listener," which Murchison notes is key in ethnographic research so that the interviewer might put herself in a position to "cede some control of the research process" and genuinely "learn from others" (105). Because I came into my research with the mentality that service learning can facilitate students' writing motivation and processes, I needed to allow space for my interviewees to disagree, and I wanted to be open to questions or connections that I had not considered.

In keeping with Madden's suggestion that ethnographic interviews have direction but also "allow for expansions and clarification" (70), I designed my questions to be open-ended and generative: Can you talk about the relationships you're forming at your service site? How did you feel about this writing assignment? What was the process of writing this paper like? Madden recommends asking questions that allow interviewees to "ramble," as they typically "return themselves to the task at hand, but in the process leave [the researcher] with interesting additional information" (70). I certainly found this to be true—both students and instructors sometimes spoke for several minutes at a time and would offer insights I hadn't considered or take the interview into directions I hadn't anticipated.

Written Artifacts

In order to address my question of how MUCEP assignments affected students as writers, I was tempted to collect student papers as a means of tracking writing improvement over the

course of the semester; however, Kantor et al. suggest that a more fruitful goal in classroom

ethnography is to examine the development of students' composing processes rather than the

written products themselves (300). Similarly, Deans et al. note that attempts to determine

students' writing proficiency are problematic in that definitions of "good writing" vary from

researcher to researcher and from one method of analysis to another (9). Nevertheless, the

collection of written artifacts in ethnography "can offer corroborating or comparative data in

relationship to the ethnographic record" (Murchison 164). Thus I chose to triangulate the data I

was gathering from interviews and classroom observation by collecting the six student

participants' major writing assignments after they had been graded and handed back. These

assignments included an Organization and Service Profile, four "Journals," and a Formal

Proposal. In addition to these formal assignments, students also did in-class writing quizzes over

each course reading, which I chose not to collect. Although the in-class writings asked students

to make sense of what they were learning through their readings, and, therefore, develop a

certain kind of thinking, I was more interested in examining the genres of writing composed for

larger communicative purposes.

- For the **Organization and Service Profile**, I copied the first draft, the grading rubric
  with instructor comments, and the graded final submission of the paper (referred to in the
  course as the "rewrite").

- For the first two **Journals**, I copied the graded first drafts as well as the graded rewrites.[*]
  Since the third and fourth journals did not go through a drafting process, I copied only
  one graded version of each.

[*] Students who score a 92% or higher on a first draft are not required to rewrite. A few of my
student volunteers were not required to rewrite on either one or both reflections, so, in those
cases, I only collected one graded submission.

- The first part of the **Formal Proposal**, called the "Problem Definition," was graded several weeks before the completed Formal Proposal was due; however, I waited until students submitted their entire revised Formal Proposal before collecting and photocopying them.

These artifacts offered further insight into student and instructor perceptions of each assignment as well as how the assignments impacted students' writing processes and understanding of the communities in which they served. As with my field notes and interview transcripts, I coded the assignments to identify themes and patterns that addressed my research questions. Again, these themes are discussed further in the Analysis chapter.

Analysis Strategies

I began by informally compiling a list of possible codes based on patterns I noticed as I typed up my field notes, read papers, and transcribed interviews. Over the course of the semester, I noticed patterns in classroom lectures and discussions, like telling jokes and sharing stories, making connections between service experience and course material, and referring to students as "activists." In student interviews, other patterns emerged: building relationships at the service site, praising site mentors, feeling empowered to create change, referencing course readings, struggling with research, and adjusting to new styles of writing. Dr. Foley and the other instructors spoke about students' difficulties with writing, class size, getting students to participate, grading practices, and teaching philosophies.

When the class was over and I had finished collecting data, I ran my written materials through a qualitative data analysis program called ATLAS.ti. I chose ATLAS.ti for a number of reasons. First, the program is compatible with my Mac computer and offered a free trial version, which I found to be more user-friendly than other data analysis programs I tried. It allowed me to

easily upload field notes and interview data, which were then immediately converted to Rich Text Format. The program allowed me to highlight portions of data, which I could then create a code for or link to a code I had already created. I could create as many codes as necessary and enter them into the program at any time. ATLAS.ti saved all my coded data and displayed my entire list of codes on the left-hand corner of the screen, so when I reached the writing phase of the project, I could see all instances of a particular occurrence just by clicking on the corresponding code. Moreover, ATLAS.ti offers a significant discount for student researchers, and I was able to download the program instantly to my computer. For an example of my coded field notes, see Appendix E; and for an example of a coded interview, see Appendix F.

I chose to code student papers by hand rather than uploading them to ATLAS.ti simply because I found it easier to explore and highlight patterns on the physical copies rather than via the computer screen. This is personal preference more than anything, and other researchers may find it easier to upload all data to the computer. However, by reading students' papers by hand, I found it easier to compare them and look for patterns because I could physically set each paper side-by-side and compare notes. I read each paper several times and highlighted portions that would offer further insight into students' composing processes. For example, I noted when and how they incorporated personal reflection, storytelling, or research. I also made note of how they described relationships they were forming at their service sites, their personal service philosophies, and their plans for future service. I used the same coding schema for student papers as I used for field notes and interview transcripts.

I originally analyzed my data using around 20 different codes. I then narrowed these codes down to seven themes in using the following steps: First, I chose to overlook codes that

occurred infrequently. For example, the instructors and students talked about "assessment" a few times during our interviews, but not enough to warrant inclusion in the Analysis chapter. Next, I combined codes that were similar to each other. For example, I combined the codes "Problem-Solving," "Synthesizing," and "Creativity" into one umbrella theme: "Critical and Creative Thinking." Finally, I considered codes that often occurred simultaneously and thought about how and why they were connected in order to develop a theme. For example, students often talked about "Having Fun" while "Building Relationships" with the members of the community, so instead of keeping the code "Having Fun" as its own separate theme, I chose to discuss the pleasure students got from their relationships within the overarching theme of "Relationships with Community Members." In all, seven major themes emerged. The first two themes are teacher-focused and respond to the first research question about the professor's use of genre. They are

- Encouraging Thoughtfulness
- Encouraging Action

The next four themes are student-focused and respond to the second and third research questions regarding how the assignments affected students as servers and writers. They are

- Relationships with Community Members
- Awareness of Social Problems as Systemic
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Research

One final theme does not directly address any of the research questions, but occurred frequently enough to warrant discussion. It is

- Difficulties with Workload and Time Demands

In my Analysis chapter, I explore each of these seven themes in the order they are listed above. The first section of my Analysis chapter responds to the first research question (*What genres of writing are assigned in this course and why?*) and thus analyzes the themes "Encouraging Thoughtfulness" and "Encouraging Action." The second section of Analysis responds to the second research question (*How do the assignments in this course affect students as servers and citizens?*) and thus explores the themes "Relationships with Community Members" and "Awareness of Social Problems as Systemic." The third section of Analysis responds to the third research question (*How do the assignments in the course affect students as writers and thinkers?*) and thus analyzes the themes "Critical and Creative Thinking" and "Research." The final section of analysis discusses the challenges students faced with the workload and time demands of the course.

Limitations

My research was not without limitations. First, because of the short amount of time I had to conduct and write up the project (two semesters total), I chose a relatively small number of students participants even though my research could have benefited from a larger sample size. As it was, the six participants represented the course demographic fairly well, but still only made up less than 9% of the total number of students enrolled in the course. The second barrier is that that I was unable to collect students' papers prior to my interviews with each student; doing so could have allowed for more specific interview questions. Because student papers were divided up randomly among Dr. Foley, Jeff, and Rachel for grading, the easiest way for me to collect my student participants' graded papers was from the students themselves after the papers had been passed back. Thus I interviewed students about their papers at the same time I collected them, which made it difficult to ask specific questions about the particular choices students made while

writing each assignment. Finally, my project could have benefited from a research partner in a couple of ways. First, as Peter Smagorinsky notes, the validity of qualitative research greatly increases when two or more researchers code data collaboratively (401). Because I was the sole researcher and author of this study, I coded the data on my own. The second reason a co-researcher would have been valuable, as I mention above, is that I was unable to observe both Friday lab sessions each week since they took place at the same time. Thus, future researchers considering similar projects might consider collecting data from a larger number of participants, finding a way to be more strategic about collecting artifacts and scheduling interview dates, and collaborating with a co-researcher.

IV. COURSE CONTEXT

In order to contextualize my findings, in this chapter I further describe the mission and goals of the MU Community Engagement Project (MUCEP) and situate it within the context of the University of Missouri Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Program and Office of Service-Learning. First, I describe the goals of the Campus Writing Program and its requirements for designating a course as "writing-intensive." Then, I explain the mission of the MU Office of Service Learning, followed by a description of MUCEP's place within that mission as well as an outline of the course and its major writing assignments. Finally, I describe the six students who participated in the study.

Writing Across the Curriculum at University of Missouri, Columbia

In order to graduate from the University of Missouri, Columbia, all students must take three writing courses: a one-semester first-year composition course through the English Department, and two writing-intensive (WI) courses through the Campus Writing Program. In order to fulfill this requirement, students may choose to take one WI course in any discipline, but must also take at least one upper-division WI course in their major.

WI courses at MU adhere to WAC theory and practice by emphasizing the principles of "writing-to-learn" and "learning-to-write." In other words, these courses use writing to help students learn course content as well as teach them to think and write in discipline-specific ways. According to the MU Campus Writing Program website, WI courses include assignments that add up to at least 5,000 words of writing (with some exceptions) and offer students "ample opportunity" to improve the content and quality of their work through revision. In order for a course to be designated as "writing-intensive," it must be formally approved by the Campus Writing Board.

Service-Learning at University of Missouri, Columbia

The mission of the MU Office of Service Learning is to "promote lifelong commitment to social responsibility and public service," and to "develop civic, corporate, and social responsibility while enhancing the students' personal growth and enriching the lives of persons within the community" ("About Us").

In addition to housing the MU Community Engagement Project (MUCEP), the Office of Service Learning supports around 150 service-designated courses per year in various departments on campus. It also offer a Minor in Leadership and Public Service, set students up with local government and global internships, partner with the U.S. Peace Corps to prepare students for global service through a Peace Corps Prep Program, provide international service-learning courses, and match students up with volunteer opportunities in the Columbia area. It is partnered with over 260 non-profit organizations and 150 government offices, and have over 4,600 participating students.

MU Community Engagement Project Course History, Goals, and Layout

Created in 1990 by Dr. Anne-Marie Foley, MUCEP was the first service-learning course on the University of Missouri, Columbia campus and became "the inspiration behind the campus-wide program" (Foley Int. 1). Dr. Foley, who continues to teach the course in addition to directing the Office of Service Learning, designed MUCEP in the MU Honors College as a way to "create a context" for honors students think more seriously about social justice and public service (Int. 1). The course, then called the Honors College Community Involvement Program (HCCIP), enrolled 15 students, who tutored at-risk youth in the Columbia area and reflected on their experiences.

Now, the MU Community Engagement Project, a 2000-level, 3-credit-hour course, is available to both honors and non-honors students and is required for the Minor in Leadership and Public Service as well as the Peace Corps Prep Program. In the fall of 2014, MUCEP enrolled seventy-five students. According to the syllabus, the course is designed to help students become more "thoughtful and responsive server[s] in the community" through service experience, readings about social justice and leadership, and a variety of writing assignments.

To fulfill the service requirement for the course, students are partnered up with a Columbia-area organization based on their skills and interests and must complete at least 35 hours (45 hours for honors students) of service at their designated organization over the course of the semester. In addition to their service hours, MUCEP students meet in class three times per week. On Mondays and Wednesdays, Dr. Foley leads discussions about course readings or other topics regarding social justice. Readings assigned in the fall of 2014 included Jonathon Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections*, Tracy Kidder's *Mountain Beyond Mountains*, Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickle and Dimed*, Anne Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, and a collection of short essays about philosophies of service written by a variety of activists. On Fridays, the students split into two "lab" sections based on the kinds of organizations with which they are working. Students whose organizations fall under the "Youth" category meet with one TA, while students whose organizations fall under the "Public Health" category meet with another TA. In the fall of 2014, the lab sections were led by Rachel (Youth) and Jeff (Public Health) and were primarily devoted to working on the students' writing assignments.

In addition to being both "honors-designated" and "service-designated," MUCEP is a "writing-intensive" course, meaning it fulfills the requirements set forth by the Campus Writing Program. These requirements are somewhat flexible but involve giving students multiple

opportunities for revision, assigning at least twenty pages of writing over the course of the

semester, and designing assignments that encourage critical thinking (see "Writing Intensive

Guidelines"). In the fall of 2014, MUCEP students were required to complete the following

formal writing assignments:

- **Organization and Service Profile** (See Appendix A). Using a minimum of three

  sources, students were to explain the mission, vision, and goals of the community

  organization for which they were volunteering, describe the needs and challenges of the

  population the organization serves, explain their personal role within the organization,

  and describe what they hoped to learn/explore during their service experience. If students

  earned a 91% or lower on the first draft of this assignment, they were required to submit a

  rewrite.

- **Four "Journals"** (See Appendix B). Four times throughout the semester, students

  documented their service experience through Journals. Each Journal included four

  sections: A) A summary of service experience, B) personal and educational development

  (Journals 1 and 3), community issues and challenges (Journals 2 and 4), C) synthesis of

  themes discussed in course readings/discussions and service experience, D) future goals.

  If students received a 91% or lower on the first drafts of Journals 1 and 2, they were

  required to submit a rewrite. They were not permitted to rewrite Journals 3 and 4.

- **MUCEP Formal Proposal** (See Appendix C). Students were to define a social problem

  in the Columbia area and then create and propose a solution that could in some way help

  solve the issue. Proposal sections included a "Problem Definition" (4-5 pages), "Model

  Programs" (2 pages), "Proposed Program" (5-6 pages), "Conclusion" (1 paragraph), and

  a Works Cited/Bibliography. The Problem Definition section was due one month before

the completed proposal. For this section, students were required to research a social issue

or challenge, present the background and context of the issue, explain the facts and

implications, and describe the issue's particular effect on mid-Missouri. Students were

encouraged to revise the Problem Definition based on instructor feedback before they

submitted the completed Formal Proposal.

Students also composed five in-class writings based on the course readings and a final report on

their overall service experience, which I chose not to collect.

Student Participants

Alison. Alison is a sophomore honors student majoring in International Studies with an

emphasis in Environmental Studies. She enrolled in MUCEP to fulfill the requirement for the

Peace Corps Prep Program. During our first interview she explained that she also was also

excited for the class because it gave her "an excuse to get involved" in the Columbia

Community. Alison was in the Public Health section of the course and completed her service

hours at the Columbia Farmer's Market. She explained that her role at the Farmer's Market was

to "come up with educational activities that [would] engage children" (Int. 1). Her supervisor

gave her "free reign" to design activities any way she wanted, which she enjoyed because she got

to "be creative" and incorporate her personal interests (Int. 1). For example, she told me that she

is "passionate" about painting and was able to incorporate paints into several of the Market

activities she designed. Her final project addresses food insecurity for minority populations in

Columbia and proposes a program at the Farmer's Market to increase minority participation.

Cassie. Cassie is a senior majoring in Cultural Anthropology and International Studies.

Like Alison, Cassie took MUCEP to fulfill the requirement for the Peace Corps Prep Program.

Cassie was in the Youth section of the course and completed her service hours at Centro Latino

de Salud, a non-profit organization that "provides assistance to immigrants as they become acclimated to their new environment" in Columbia ("Centro Latino"). Cassie explained that she was happy about her placement because when she enters the Peace Corps, she hopes to go to South America. Cassie spent most of her time at Centro Latino tutoring a young girl in reading. Her final project proposes the implementation of a music education program at Centro Latino as a way of addressing the achievement gap "between immigrant children and their white counterparts."

George. George is a senior majoring in Business Management, but hopes to "get into firefighting" when he graduates (Int 1). He enrolled in MUCEP to fulfill the requirement for the Minor in Leadership and Public Service. George was in the Public Health section of the course, and completed his service hours at MU Adult Day Connection (ADC), a facility that provides care to elderly and disabled adults while family caregivers are away. George chose to volunteer in the mornings, and his duties included checking clients in, having "table discussions" with them over assigned topics, helping them with exercises and other activities, and serving lunch. His final project proposes a "memory" program at MU Adult Day Connection specifically for enhancing the lives of clients with dementia.

Henry. Henry is a sophomore honors student majoring in Political Science. He took MUCEP to fulfill the Minor in Leadership and Public Service requirement and to receive honors credit. Henry was in the Youth section of the course and completed his service hours at the Boys and Girls Club of Columbia. During his time at Boys and Girls Club, Henry tutored a number of students from kindergarten through fifth grade in reading and math. He also played games and sports with the children during "free time." His final project proposes a literacy program targeted

at low-income school districts that would make learning to read more engaging through active teaching and technology.

Lucas. Lucas is a junior majoring in Health Science. He discovered MUCEP while searching for Health Science electives and decided to enroll because he thought the course "looked interesting" (Int. 1). Like George, Lucas was in the Public Health section and completed his service hours at MU Adult Day Connection. Whereas George chose to volunteer in the mornings, Lucas preferred volunteering in the afternoons. He described his job at ADC as "mak[ing] sure [the clients'] days are brighter and they have something to do": "We encourage them to read, play games with them; we try to jog some cognitive memories and skills, like playing trivia games or asking them questions about their life" (Int. 1). Lucas spoke often and highly of the relationships he formed with the clients at ADC. His final project proposes the creation of a non-profit organization that would address "communication complications" among the various healthcare facilities in Columbia.

Sophia. Sophia is a sophomore honors student majoring in Biology and Pre-Med. She found MUCEP through the honors college and decided to enroll to earn honors credit and because she is "really interested in service and volunteering." She had also heard "from a lot of people" that MUCEP was "an interesting class" (Int. 1). Hoping to eventually become a pediatrician, Sophia enrolled in the Youth section of the course and completed her service hours with the STEM Program at Benton Science Club. Sophia's duties included leading discussions with small groups of children over topics discussed during STEM lessons and working individually with students to make sure they understood the material. Because she was in the honors section and needed to complete more hours than the other volunteers, she also helped the

organization director prepare the lessons. Her final project proposes a program that would "build

confidence, develop peer relationships, and provide support" for at-risk youth in Columbia.

A "Writing-Intensive" Approach: Encouraging Thoughtfulness and Action

In their introduction to *Writing and Community Engagement: A Critical Source Book,* Deans, Roswell, and Wurr suggest that researchers "begin to build more intentionally on what is known" about service-learning through deeper exploration of "particular pedagogical and project choices" (9). I take up that challenge in this part of my analysis by addressing the first research question: *What genres of writing does the professor use and why?* After observing class lectures and labs, interviewing Dr. Foley, and studying the course assignment sheets, two major themes emerged regarding how the writing assignments function in the MU Community Engagement Project: to encourage greater thoughtfulness about social issues and to encourage pragmatic action in the community. I begin by describing Dr. Foley's beliefs about writing in service-learning, noting in particular how her ideas intersect with WAC theory and practice. Then I describe the genres of writing assigned in the course and show how each assignment requires students to consider the interplay between thoughtfulness and action.

The Professor's Beliefs about Writing in Service-Learning

Though MUCEP did not technically become designated as "writing-intensive" until recently, Dr. Foley has used writing as a mode of teaching since the course began in 1990. On the first day of class, Dr. Foley explained to her students that MUCEP was "naturally designed" to be writing-intensive because critical reflection, research, and the "effective communication" of relevant solutions to social problems are all essential in "becoming more effective servers," which is the ultimate goal of the course. More specifically, Dr. Foley explained that she believes the writing she assigns works to help students become more "thoughtful" about community challenges and more "proactive" in finding solutions to those problems (Int. 1).

As I considered Dr. Foley's philosophy in light of the literature on service-learning, I noted that her ideas about encouraging "thoughtfulness" through writing resonate with Herzberg, Duffy, Haussamen, Davi et al., Webb, and other "writing-about-the community" proponents. Indeed, Dr. Foley explained that the original iteration of the course hinged on reflective writing: "My thought was, let's do a course where we work with at-risk youth and we talk about issues of poverty, social justice, and equality and inequality and reflect on it" (Int. 1). Though the writing assignments have undergone a number of transformations over the years, they continue to emphasize the importance of "think[ing] critically" about "social justice," "philosophies of service," and how "stereotypes affect public policy" (Int. 1). As with other writing-about courses, Dr. Foley often referred to students' service experiences as "texts" to be reflected upon and synthesized with course readings, discussion, and outside research. In other words, like Herzberg and others, Dr. Foley hopes that reflection, synthesis, and research combined with service experience help students begin developing a Freirean critical consciousness—a more in-depth understanding of the oppressive social systems at play in the Columbia community and in the larger world. As such, this philosophy also resonates with WAC's emphasis on "writing-to-learn": writing is used to stimulate critical thinking and a deeper understanding of course material (readings about social justice and service experience). Further, in asking students to consider the larger social forces that create the need for service in the first place, Dr. Foley encourages students to *think* like professionals in the field of public service.

Moreover, as is true with other "writing-about" proponents, Dr. Foley emphasizes helping students succeed in academia and beyond: "We want [students] to learn to write better … that's not the main attraction, but it's an important one for me" (Int. 1). She remarked that many University of Missouri students come from "overcrowded" high schools where funding has

been cut and "independent thinking" is not rewarded: "They're coming in with big gaps in their education. Employers are complaining about [students'] inability to do independent research, think critically, put things together … as an educator, that's my responsibility" (Int. 2). To this end, Friday class periods (or "labs"), which were run by the TAs, were almost entirely devoted to working on student writing. During these Friday lab sessions, Jeff and Rachel spent time going over the specific requirements of each writing assignment and allowing students to ask questions, brainstorm ideas through free writing, and discuss works-in-progress in small groups. Additionally, graded assignments were always handed back on Fridays, and Jeff and Rachel would often explain to students where they were commonly losing points and then offer tips for future improvement. For example, in one Friday lab, Rachel handed back the students' second Journals, noting that they were "still backing into ideas instead of writing in active voice." For the first half of the class period, Rachel wrote several examples of passive sentence structure on the board and illustrated ways to restructure each sentence into active voice. Similarly, Jeff often spent time in the Public Health lab sessions going over short worksheets and handouts that explained active voice, offered examples of strong versus weak word choice, and illustrated proper MLA format.

Additionally, Rachel and Jeff would often explain where students needed to "go deeper" with their thinking on certain writing assignments. Rachel noted during our interview that after the first few Journal assignments, she felt compelled to point out to students where they were "overgeneralizing" certain concepts. In one lab, she explained to students that many of them were writing comments like, "the education system is failing society," or "such and such child at Boys and Girls club has a worse home life than I had," both of which are sweeping assumptions that need to be carefully analyzed and supported. Thus Friday labs were not only about

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addressing "technical" writing issues and challenges, but also about helping students think critically about how they are expressing their ideas.

In addition to devoting Friday discussion sections almost entirely to writing workshops, Dr. Foley spends a great deal of time with student writing outside of class. During one lecture, she told students, "I don't spend time marking [your papers] up because I hate you, I mark them because I love you … I do it because I care about you." During one of our interviews she remarked that when students come into her office for help, either because they "haven't had all the advantages" or are "just struggling," she will work with them to rewrite a paper until they "earn an A." She said, "Somebody's got to put the hours in. That doesn't happen a lot on this campus. Somebody's got to care enough" (Int 1). Dr. Foley's student-centered approach resonates deeply with the goals of the WAC movement, which developed out of the desire to make higher education "more equitable and inclusive" for underprepared students (see Bazerman and Russell 19). Thus, while the service-learning component of MUCEP facilitates critical thinking about systems of oppression in the community, the "writing-intensive" approach allows Dr. Foley to simultaneously work against systems of oppression plaguing students in higher education.

Where Dr. Foley's philosophy diverges from pure "writing-about" pedagogies like Herzberg's, however, is in her emphasis on writing that encourages "ethical action" (Int. 1). Like Peck, Flower, and Higgins, Dr. Foley sees the development of a critical consciousness as important for raising awareness of social problems and systemic inequalities (or inculcating "thoughtfulness"), but ultimately not enough to empower students to create actual change in their communities. Unlike Herzberg, Dr. Foley does not "want to make [MUCEP] a research paper class," rather, each writing assignment "ties in directly to how [students] perform their service"

(Int. 2). They are designed to make students more "proactive" servers and "informed *participating* citizens" (Int. 2, my emphasis). As Deans points out, this kind of dialectical connection between learning about social challenges and acting in the community is reflective of John Dewey's theory that a circular relationship between knowledge and action is necessary for real learning to occur (30-31). Similarly, WAC proponents cite Dewey as a major influence in WAC theory (Russell 25). Through writing, students learn to how to think like experts in their field of interest, and they learn to use writing as a way of "acting" within that particular discipline. The difference between MUCEP and traditional WAC-oriented courses, however, is that students *immediately* act out their learning beyond the walls of the University, and then those real-life experiences relate directly back to how they approach their next writing assignment. The genres of writing Dr. Foley assigns in MUCEP continually call students to consider this interplay between what they learn in the classroom and how they act in the community.

The Professor's Use of Genre

As is true for many service-learning courses that might fall into the "writing-about-the-community" category, with the exception of the final assignment, the genres of writing Dr. Foley assigned in MUCEP in the fall of 2014 are largely familiar in academia. The **Organization and Service Profile (OSP)** asked students to research the community organization for which they would be volunteering and compose a profile with the following four sections: "Vision, Mission, and Goals of Community Organization and Population Served," "Description of the Population the Organization Serves," "My Role Within the Community Organization," and "My Future Learning and Explorations" (See Appendix A). Deans notes that community-based research assignments like organization profiles, a genre which he sometimes assigns in his service-

learning composition course (107), offer space to "encourage social and critical analysis" (105) while giving students practice with academic discourse.

Unlike a traditional community-based research paper that focuses primarily on the development of a critical consciousness, however, the MUCEP Organization and Service Profile requires an action-oriented kind of thinking. In addition to conducting library and Internet research in order to determine the goals of the organization and the challenges a particular population struggles with, Dr. Foley required students to interview the organization leaders: "Find out why anyone would want to work so hard at a job where they get paid so little, or nothing at all … it's because they love it—find out what that means." Rather than simply asking students to explore pressing social issues, Dr. Foley asked them research and write about the people who are actively providing solutions to those problems. Thus, the assignment does not allow students to explore community challenges without also considering the possibility (and necessity) of finding ways to solve them. Moreover, the last two sections of the profile required students to immediately situate *themselves* within the solutions to the problems they were researching, to answer the question, "what will [I] contribute?" Even though the OSP itself is an "academic" genre and, therefore, not used for direct social intervention, it encourages an orientation toward direct community action wherein students must conceive of themselves and their site mentors as problem solvers rather than secluded academic researchers.

The four **Journals**, which form the majority of assigned writing in MUCEP at 5-6 pages each, are also largely "academic" in terms of genre—the understood audience is the course instructors, they are composed according to MLA format, and they ask students to summarize, reflect, synthesize, and perform scholarly research. On the prompt, students are asked to begin with a "thesis statement" or "topic sentence" for each section, followed by "a story," "specific

examples," or "facts" that support the initial "assertion." (See Appendix B). As students

workshopped their Journals during lab sections, Jeff and Rachel illustrated concepts like "active

voice," the use of "succinct language," and "informative" versus "editorial" tone. In this way, the

Journals offer students practice with academic discourse even as they require students to

critically reflect on their service experience. For these reasons, like the OSP, the Journals most

accurately fit into the "writing-about-the-community" paradigm.

In the original iterations of the course, the Journals were "free-flowing" reflective

assignments based on a "list of open-ended prompts" (Foley Int. 1). As Herzberg, Duffy, and

others warn can happen with open-ended reflective assignments, Dr. Foley noticed that students

tended to "brain dump" and their reflections lacked critical depth (Int. 1). In order to "get

[students] to the next level of reflection," she began to add structure to the Journal prompts. In

the fall of 2014, the Journal assignments contained four distinct sections: "Summary," "Personal

and Educational Development," "Synthesis," and "Future Goals" (See Appendix B). For Journals

2 and 4, the "Personal and Educational Development" sections were replaced with a section

called "Community Issues and Challenges." The prompt calls students to divide each Journal

into these four parts using explicit section headings, and gives clear instructions as to what each

section should include (See Appendix B). Analyzed in light of the other course content as well as

WAC theory, the Journals not only require in-depth reflection, but each Journal section requires

a specific type of thinking valued in the field of public service. Additionally, as with the OSP,

the types of thinking invoked in each section work together to inspire both thoughtfulness and

action.

For example, in the "Summary" and "Personal and Educational Development" sections,

students are asked to reflect upon and illustrate their service experience in the form of stories,

which I came to find is an essential way of thinking and form of communication within the field of public service. As I observed the class, I noticed that storytelling played an important role on a number of levels: Dr. Foley often told multiple stories during each lecture; students acted out the true stories of people who struggled through poverty during a required poverty simulation; the books Dr. Foley assigned are creative nonfiction stories about individuals who serve human needs and respond to social injustice; and students were constantly encouraged to listen closely to the stories of those they worked with during their service. During one lab session on Journal writing, Rachel advised students to include "stories" with "specific detail" in their Summary and Personal and Educational Development sections, suggesting that they "think back to the Kozol reading" for examples of detailed stories that support some larger purpose. Dr. Foley explained in an interview that part of the reason she assigns creative nonfiction is to help contextualize a semester-long discussion on how "attitudes affect lives." The stories that students heard, read, and experienced, worked to help build relationships across cultures, invoke social empathy, and dismantle stereotypes. As the readings illustrated, stories can also function as evidence of the failures and successes of public policy and community programming. By immersing students in these stories and then offering them space to tell stories of their own, Dr. Foley is teaching an important way of thinking about service as well as an effective way of communicating in the field of public service.

The course readings Dr. Foley assigns are more than models of effective storytelling, though. In the "Synthesis" section of each Journal, students are asked to think like cultural critics and activists by making connections between themes within the texts and their service. The readings raise issues like "how stereotypes affect public policy," the "inequalities" and "politics" of healthcare, long-term service as "process," the complexity of intercultural communication,

and others (Int. 1). By reflecting on these larger issues, students are encouraged to see social problems as systemic, which Herzberg, Duffy, Haussamen, and others argue cannot happen through service experience alone. By making critical connections between the texts and the social injustices they are seeing during their service, students are encouraged to think critically about the larger cultural and political causes of social injustice (i.e. to be more "thoughtful" about their service). Important to note, however, is that Dr. Foley is intentional about preventing students from feeling "overwhelmed" with the notion that social problems are "so huge" that they "give up" (Int. 1). Whereas Herzberg sees development of "critical literacy" as an end in itself (Deans 93), the readings Dr. Foley assigns provide examples of individuals taking small steps toward change: "What matters is the walking, the journey … it's those small ethical actions that get things done" (Int. 1). Thus, where the OSP called students to research real people in the Columbia community working to create change, the synthesis sections of the Journals ask them to reflect on the "small ethical *actions*" of the activists they are reading about (Int. 1, my emphasis).

Also connected closely with direct community action are the research portions of the Journals. For Journals 2 and 4, students replace the section on "Personal and Educational Development" with a section called "Community Issues and Challenges," where they continue to investigate the population their organization serves. Here, students are asked to conduct academic research by finding "facts" and "figures" and citing sources in an MLA-style bibliography. As with the research in the OSP, students are to tie their discoveries directly to their organization's mission as well as to their own personal service activities. Dr. Foley explained that the idea behind this section is that when servers are "better informed," they are more effective (Int. 1). Then, in the final section of each Journal, students are to draw upon their

stories, course themes, and research in order to describe their "Future Goals." They are asked to explain what "impact" they hope to have at their service site.

Moreover, as these Journals were composed and submitted about every two weeks throughout the semester, they stand as a strong example of how the course writing was used to recursively link students' classroom learning with their actions at their service sites. The students' service experience helped form the content of each Journal, and the larger course themes that students were to tie in with their experience were designed to inform the way students approached their service experiences. Again, this concept is reflective of Dewey's theory of the cyclical nature of knowledge and action—a theory deeply foundational in both service-learning and WAC.

Whereas the OSP and Journals are primarily "academic" in terms of genre and most accurately fall into the "writing-about-the-community" paradigm, the **MUCEP Formal Proposal** calls students to "write with" the community using a genre of writing less familiar in the classroom—the grant proposal. As Deans notes, writing-with-the-community assignments are characterized by their "grassroots" efforts to "address pressing local problems" (18-19). The MUCEP Formal Proposal prompt calls students to use their "experience and expertise" to propose solutions for the social problems they observed and researched over the course of the semester (See Appendix C). The prompt also calls students to structure the document similar to how one might structure a grant proposal. There are four distinct sections: A four to five-page "Problem Definition" section, where students research and describe the social problem their proposal will address; a two-page "Model Programs" section that requires students to describe other organizations that have worked to solve the chosen social problem; a five to six-page

"Proposed Program" section, where students describe the goals and details of their program idea; and a one-paragraph "Conclusion" (See Appendix C).

Dr. Foley explained that "first and foremost," she hopes the Formal Proposals help students feel empowered to *act* in the community: "I want them to be free of this idea that their hands are tied, free of the cynical smirk when someone wants to change the world, free of feeling that there is no way to help anybody" (Int. 2). Over and over during course lectures, she told her students to "fall in love" with their Proposal ideas. During one of our interviews, Dr. Foley explained that MUCEP Formal Proposal is one of the few assignments during a student's college career that offers them "the freedom to be creative" with their ideas (Int. 2). As with the other MUCEP assignments, the Formal Proposals are also meant to inculcate a kind of action-oriented thinking: "I want [students] to see that through their minds and their hearts and their imaginations, they can look at a problem, research that problem in some small way, and propose solutions … That there are solutions, and that you start in a small way and see what you can build" (Int. 2). The research combined with a student's "imagination" becomes a "problem-solving technique," a step toward pragmatic, ethical action (Int. 2). Ultimately, Dr. Foley hopes each student becomes, "not just a reactive individual, but an interactive and proactive individual" (Int. 2).

In addition to promoting a problem-solving kind of thinking, which is a kind of thinking Dr. Foley noted that many students "have never done before" (Int. 2), the MUCEP Formal Proposals offer students practice writing within the field of public service. The assignment is framed as a "generic grant proposal," which "if [students] are truly interested in entering a life of public service need to be able to think around and do" (Int. 2). While practice writing within a particular discipline is a core principle behind WAC theory, the MUCEP Formal Proposals are

unique in that they are not merely "practice runs"—the documents themselves can actually be used to create change in the community. Dr. Foley sets aside around two hundred dollars worth of funding each semester to help particularly engaged students carry out their proposal ideas in the community. Dr. Foley mentioned a number of Columbia-area community organizations and programs that began from MUCEP Formal Proposals written by former students, including Central Latino de Salud (where Cassie volunteered), MU Stop Traffic (a student-led anti-human trafficking organization), Tiger Pantry (an organization that provides food resources for the MU community), a mentoring program embedded in Granny's House (an after-school program), and a nutrition program embedded in Central Latino, among others (Int. 2).

The combination of writing-about and writing-with assignments in MUCEP on a larger scale also reflects the interplay between thoughtfulness and pragmatic action emphasized by Dr. Foley. Where the OSP and Journals encourage students to think critically about social issues, how stereotypes affect individuals, and what "ethical action" looks like, the MUCEP Formal Proposals give students the opportunity to *act* on what they are learning, to see that their writing is not simply a way of thinking through problems, but that it can actually affect change in the community. In this way, the service-learning component of the course inherently facilitates (and in some ways moves beyond) the goals of the Campus Writing Program, which are to help create "citizenry capable of reasoning critically, solving complex problems, and communicating with clear and effective language" ("Mission"). At the same time, the core principles behind the WAC movement support and enrich the goals of service-learning: through relatively short, frequent writing assignments, students learn to think like storytellers and informed cultural critics; they learn essential forms of communication within the field of public service, including proposal

writing; and underprepared students are given the necessary support to develop as writers and thinkers in the academy and beyond.

In this section, I focus primarily on the professor's beliefs about how writing should function in service-learning and how she used certain genres of writing in the fall of 2014 in order to work toward those goals. In the next two sections, I focus on the *effects* of these writing assignments on the students as servers, citizens, and writers.

Effects of Assignments on Students as Servers and Citizens

In an early chapter of *Writing Partnerships*, Deans quotes James Berlin to point out that college curriculum is a potentially powerful tool "'for encouraging the production of a certain kind of graduate, in effect, a certain kind of person'" (25). As Deans points out, Berlin's statement "raises important questions for educators" about the "kind of person" we hope to encourage through our classroom curricula. In this section, I address my second research question: *How do MUCEP writing assignments affect (or not affect) students as servers and citizens?* I asked this question not only because it is in line with Berlin's comment, but also because the ultimate purpose of MUCEP is to create more effective and proactive servers and citizens—I wanted to see *how* the writing in the course worked toward (or failed to reach) that goal. Additionally, as Deans points, the field of service-learning is riddled with ethical concerns, including questions regarding reciprocity, noblesse oblige, and potentially uneven power dynamics, among others (20-24). As such, I felt it important to explore how MUCEP writing assignments influenced the way students perceived themselves in relation to the community and what they were learning about what it means to be a "server" in the community. During my analysis of interview data and written artifacts, two major themes emerged regarding the effects of MUCEP writing assignments on students as servers and citizens: first, they appeared to

develop deeper relationships with members of the community; and second, they expressed a raised awareness of social problems as systemic.

Deepened Relationships with Members of the Community

In contrast to advocates of "liberatory classroom pedagogies" (235), Ellen Cushman argues that "activism begins" when students leave the "ivory tower" and start to "view social change at micro levels of interaction" (239-240). She writes that activism as discussed in cultural studies classrooms often fails to show how social change can occur through "day-to-day interactions" in which people "disrupt the status quo of wider society" by inverting traditional social structures (240). Through the process of building genuine, dialogical relationships, argues Cushman, members of universities and communities "come to identify with each other and challenge the bases for our differences" (245). Moreover, small interactions between individuals become " the first steps toward social change" (240). Though opponents of service-learning note negative connotations behind the idea of "service," which they argue can produce an altruistic "do-gooder" effect and/or fail to meet real community needs altogether, Cushman suggests that if the "give-and-take relationships" between university and community members are "openly and carefully navigated," they can be mutually empowering (244).

Of all the topics that emerged during interviews, the students always appeared most excited to talk about the people with whom they were interacting at their service sites. In fact, "building relationships" became my most frequently used code during the analysis phase of my research. As I spoke with these students and read through their assignments, I noticed that their ideas about "service" began to bear a striking resemblance to Cushman's: "serving" became more about developing reciprocal relationships than suggesting "sweeping social upheavals" (Cushman 240).

For Henry, getting to know the children and Boys and Girls Club on a personal level became important as he began to realize that "understanding kids' backgrounds" is essential for avoiding assumptions that might lead to unethical treatment. He noted that he began to "really embrace" the importance of this concept after reading and reflecting on Anne Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (Int. 2), which was his favorite course reading of the semester. During one of our interviews, he offered the following illustration of how Fadiman's book affected him (an illustration that stems from an actual experience that he wrote about in his third Journal):

> On an average day at the playground [at BGC], you may see kids being really reactionary, like get out in 'Knockout' and be cussing at another kid and throw the ball at them, and you may judge them initially. Like, 'whoa that's a bad kid, he's in second grade and cussing at other kids and throwing the ball at them.' But when you understand the circumstances, you realize that maybe … being reactionary is the only way he's ever been taught to handle conflict … So, like, understanding holistically who you're serving kinda helps a lot. (Int. 2)

Henry's desire to "understand kids' backgrounds" seems to reflect a realization that assumptions and misunderstandings can create barriers between the children at BGC and society at large. By getting to know these children and suspending judgment about their actions, Henry was in some sense "disrupting the status quo of wider society," as Cushman puts it. Interestingly, out of all six students, Henry was the most skeptical that the short amount of time he spent at his service site would really make a difference: " … I'm pretty realistic about things, and I just don't think 45 hours of service is enough to make much of a substantive impact on anybody's life" (Int. 3). Yet when I asked him if he planned to continue serving at BGC after the end of the semester, he replied that he did because he felt like he made a "small difference" there. He said,

> Forty-five hours of service is not a lot, but at the same time, I taught some kids how to do harder multiplication, and I taught a kid how to tie his shoelace … Could they have learned that otherwise? Probably. Did I teach them that? Yes … I like the ability to make

an impact. I feel like it's definitely a good thing for the community and for the kids to be volunteering there. (Int. 3)

Though Henry doubted his ability to make a "substantive impact" at this point in his college career, he displayed an awareness of how "micro-level" interactions *can* make a difference. And, in this realization, he made a commitment to continue working toward those small changes at BGC.

George and Lucas, who both spent their service hours at MU Adult Day Connection, also felt that they had a direct impact on the organization as a result of the relationships they formed with ADC clients. Moreover, they often described the "give-and-take" nature of their interactions, noting that ADC volunteers offer "love and attention" (Lucas, Int. 1) and, in return, receive interesting stories and life lessons. Early on in the semester, George remarked that he hoped to approach his service at ADC in the same way as Jonathon Kozol in his book *Ordinary Resurrections* and Doctor Paul Farmer from Tracy Kidder's *Mountain Beyond Mountains*:

> They sparked my passion. Just to see how some people go *way* beyond what like a hundred percent of other people do just for one cause. They're so dedicated to it, and it kind of makes me want to do that in my service work too. I want to give them [the clients at ADC] everything I can and take as much as I can from them too. (Int. 1)

In approaching his service this way, George expressed a growing desire to continue breaking down barriers of difference between himself and the clients at ADC. In his first Journal, he wrote that he hoped to develop "an understanding and appreciation of people of diverse backgrounds and life situations." He went on to describe a kind of reciprocal relationship between himself and those at his service site:

> All of the people that come into the MU Adult Day Connection come from a variety of backgrounds and have different stories to tell. During our morning table talks, I get to hear some of these stories and share mine with them. It's interesting to sit and listen to how and where they grew up and just some of the different stories they have to share … some [tell] about their college experiences and how mine is totally different from theirs. (Journal 1)

Important to note is that George both listened to stories and shared stories of his own in order to build and sustain relationships with the clients at ADC. He continued to describe this sort of "give-and-take" relationship during our interviews. Specifically, he felt that by developing relationships with individuals he was making "an impact on the whole organization" but that he was also gaining valuable communication skills (Int. 2).

Lucas also continuously spoke of "give-and-take" relationships with clients at ADC, indicating that these ideas were inspired by his interpretation of Kozol's approach to service in *Ordinary Resurrections*. At the beginning of the semester, Lucas explained that what he learned from Kozol's book is

> to take each person [at ADC] as an individual—get to know their stories, get to know what they're about, what happiness is in their lives …You get to develop a relationship or friendship from that, and it's the mutualism between you and the person you're doing service with … [it is] a give and take … you have to be in-tune with what you're giving and what you're taking away" (Int. 1).

This mentality governed the way Lucas conceptualized service throughout the entire semester. In our final interview, I asked him how his experience in MUCEP compared with other volunteer work he had done in the past, and he noted that the reciprocal relationships made the difference:

> If you sustain a relationship, you're doing something for another person, but that's also how you get back … it's not just a one-way thing. Like you're getting a relationship, you're hearing about their life stories and experiences, and sometimes you can get close enough to hear their regrets, or their wins and successes. And you can learn from those just as much as you can learn from your own successes and failures … So I just think those are things that I'm able to take back, having sustained relationships with the people at ADC. (Int. 3)

In addition to feeling empowered by the clients at ADC, Lucas (like Henry and George) felt that the impact he had at the organization was at a "micro level" of interaction: "It's not a huge visible change or transformation, it's more so of a relationship" (Int. 3). Moreover, both George and Lucas also planned to continue volunteering at ADC after the end of the semester. Lucas

explained that, because he "was so involved with all the participants" at ADC, he felt "it would be an injustice to them just to stop midway [through the year]" (Int. 3). He said, "You can't just not show up after doing it for a whole semester … I wouldn't want a person helping me out for so long to just disappear once they got the requirements out of the way" (Int. 3). Though I cannot predict whether or not these students will continue to pursue social change through volunteer work in the long-term, Lucas's comments indicate that his relationships at ADC had a direct effect on his desire to stay connected with the organization.

Sophia and Alison also began to define "service" in terms of relationships, noting that their volunteer hours were particularly enriching because they got to share their personal "passions" with the children at their service sites. Sophia indicated that her service experience was fulfilling because she was able to see Benton Science Club children's "love for science grow" the more she "got to know them" (Int. 3). She said, "it's just cool to see kids who are interested in the same thing as me, and they're spending their time pursuing it" (Int. 3). Like many of the other students I spoke with, Sophia claimed that her ideas about building relationships came from her interpretation of Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections*. In her first Journal, she made note of the way Kozol took time to listen to the children he interacted with at a South Bronx public school, which inspired her to do the same at Benton Science Club: "The volunteers at [BSC] cannot just treat this experience as a [*sic*] 'I teach you learn' situation … listening can be a great tool for teaching and learning things you did not know before" (Journal 1). During our final interview, Sophia remarked that before MUCEP, she may have been "quick to judge" but that now she realized "you really do have to get to know the individual" (Int. 3). When I asked Sophia if she felt like she was making a difference at Benton Science Club, she replied that in addition to seeing that "the kids are learning," she felt like she made a "tangible

impact" by forming relationships with children who may want to eventually pursue medicine, but whose circumstances make such an aspiration appear "impossible" or "very hard" to reach (Int. 2). Like Cushman, Sophia appeared to recognize how a relationship can be a first act of resistance against a traditional social structure (that a low-income child cannot pursue a degree medicine).

Sophia also noted that she personally benefited from the service experience in that the relationships she formed with the children helped give her a greater sense of belonging in the community. During one interview, she told me a story about how she had seen several of the kids from BSC while walking in the university homecoming parade with her sorority: "Their eyes lit up when they saw me … it was cool because I got to high five them and wave to them, and that was really awesome" (Int. 2). She told the story again during our final interview and added, "It was really cool … Just feeling like you're part of the Columbia community. You're not just a student at Mizzou; you're a person in the community" (Int. 3). She also noted at the end of the semester that her understanding of "service" had changed from the idea of "helping others" to the realization that "service" is really about "getting to know the individual … you're putting your whole being into it" (Int. 3).

Alison's definition of "service" at the end of the semester was similar to Sophia's and also markedly reminiscent of Cushman's ideas about creating social change at "micro levels of interaction": "I would say [service is] any type of engagement in relationships within a community … it's developing really non-selfish relationships with other people that aren't purely self-motivated and more concerned with … how well others are doing than yourself" (Int. 3). Alison also reported that many of her ideas about approaching relationships came from Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections.* In addition to indicating that building relationships with the children

who frequented CFM helped her develop more effective children's activities, she also noted that genuine engagement with the children made her service experience more pleasurable and rewarding. In the Synthesis portion of her first Journal, she wrote that Kozol's book helped her see that "children's receptiveness and trust of certain adults stem from their impression of an adult's sincerity." As such, Alison felt it important to create market activities that she was personally passionate about, which not only helped her enjoy her service more, but ultimately attracted more children to her booth. To illustrate ways she had responded to themes in Kozol's book, Alison told a story of a little girl named "Rosie," whose trust she earned during a painting activity:

> My passion for increasing interest in art and creativity initially sparked Rosie's responsiveness, and her excitement then caught the attention of the other children. Rosie granted me insight into her world for a few hours, entrusting me with her desires for help and feeling comfortable enough to ask me questions. Soon other children trusted my intentions to help with their own creations. (Journal 1)

Alison continued to tell stories about Rosie during our interviews and in her Journals, adding that her relationship with Rosie helped her make connections with other children at CFM as well. She also remarked that children would often come into her booth and ask her to "paint with them more" (Int. 2). She said, "[Painting is] something I really like to do, and I feel like they can see that I really enjoy painting, so it makes them excited about doing that" (Int. 2). While Alison felt like her activities helped contribute to the market atmosphere, getting to share her "passion" with the children she interacted with helped enrich the experience for her personally as well.

Over the course of the semester, Alison added to her understanding of the importance of developing relationships after reading and reflecting on Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, which, like Henry, she said was her favorite book of the semester. She explained that the text showed her "how cultural barriers affect the success of relationships." Alison also

noted that this idea from Fadiman's text ultimately inspired her Formal Proposal topic, which is about "overcoming cultural barriers" at CFM in order to involve more low-income minority families in market activities. She said that cultural barriers at the market and in wider society are "unintentionally promoting more segregated views because people aren't interacting as much because they don't know how or they can't" (Int. 3). Alison's comments echo Cushman's contention that the first step to creating social change is breaking down barriers of difference through genuine interaction. Moreover, as with Henry, George, and Lucas, both Sophia and Alison made plans to continue engaging with their service sites after the end of the semester.

As I spoke with these students and read through their assignments, it became apparent that their readings (and subsequent written reflections) played a significant role in the way students conceptualized their relationships at their service sites. As illustrated above, all six students reported that the course readings—which they were required to write about in their Journals—made a direct impact on the way they chose to approach and explain their interactions with community members. Interestingly, I noticed that the connections students drew between the course readings and their site interactions during our interviews was often identical to those made in their Journals. This indicated to me that the process of writing the Journals may have helped students internalize these connections. Alison and Lucas corroborated this theory, reporting that the process of writing the Journals helped them "recognize … the significance of different relationships" (Alison, Int. 3), and reflect on the most effective ways to "connect" with community members (Lucas, Int. 2).

Awareness of Social Problems as Systemic

Bruce Herzberg, one of the most cited practitioners of service-learning in composition classrooms, suggests that developing personal relationships with the poor is important for

helping students overcome "fear and prejudices" and commit to more volunteer work in the future (139). However, he notes that within these personal relationships lies an "ironic" danger—students may never feel it necessary to "search beyond the person for a systemic explanation" (139). If students ignore the underlying causes of social problems, argues Herzberg, the hours spent at their service sites become acts of "charity" rather than opportunities for education and social change. As such, Herzberg suggests that service-learning courses employ writing assignments that push students to question their deeply ingrained beliefs in meritocracy by researching and writing about the "social forces" behind "poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, and injustice."

As I note in the first section of my analysis, MUCEP assignments required students to research and reflect on the causes of social problems in increasingly sophisticated ways over the course of the semester. The Organization and Service Profile asked them to research the population their community organization serves, Journals 2 and 4 called them to research the specific social challenges that population faces, and the Formal Proposal asked them to engage in "significant research" on a social issue and develop a solution to help combat the problem locally. Additionally, the recurring Journals required students to continuously connect their research with themes from the course readings, class discussions, and service experiences. My analysis of these written artifacts along with the way students spoke about social problems in our interviews revealed a growing awareness of these issues as systemic. Interestingly, because the students were each involved in different organizations working with different populations, they each engaged in independent research and reflection regarding different areas of social injustice.

While most of the students I spoke with adopted Kozol and Doctor Farmer's "relational" approaches to community engagement (as I illustrate in the above section of analysis), Cassie

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noted that these first two course readings instead helped her consider "why people are in poverty, what keeps them there, and what it takes to get them out" (Int. 1). During our first interview, Cassie explained that *Ordinary Resurrections* in particular cast light on the systemic causes of observations she had made growing up in what she described as an "incredibly segregated" portion of Omaha, Nebraska:

> The opportunities that the people in North Omaha, which is predominantly African American … you know, what their population was facing and how that carries on to what is going on in the Bronx [as described in *Ordinary Resurrections*] … it's just kind of like, [the same thing] was probably going on … there's no denying that … [the book] just kind of opened my eyes to it a little more and it helped me realize the social structures that are going on … and just how intricately intertwined it all is… these books are really just showing how deep the system is in cycling poverty. (Int. 1)

Cassie pulled similar observations from the other course readings as well. During one interview, she indicated that Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* helped her see her own place of privilege as a middle-class white woman. Cassie described how she, like Ehrenreich in the book, had been a waitress for a short period of time, but after "six months" grew "sick and tired of the food industry and minimum wage jobs":

> … I was fed up, and just knowing where I've come from … and having the option to leave that, and realizing these women, the people [Ehrenreich] worked with, they didn't have that option; I think that's really important. (Int. 2)

In both of these instances, it is apparent that reading and reflecting on these course texts at the very least deepened Cassie's understanding of some of the larger social forces that perpetuate poverty. Additionally, in the research portions of her OSP, Journals, and Formal Proposal, Cassie investigated a few of the systemic causes of the achievement gap between Latino American students, like those she tutored at Centro Latino, and their white counterparts. In one particularly astute portion of her Formal Proposal, she wrote:

> [The achievement gap] can reveal certain influences that may prevent students from doing as well as others and reveals critical points of weakness in education. Often times

the biggest gap in test scores is seen between minority groups and middle class white American children. The gap between ethnic groups can reveal racist, cultural biases or fundamental learning differences that have a profound effect on the future lives of these citizens, especially in the case of Latino Americans.

She goes on to describe how cultural stereotypes can lead to "social marginalization" for Latino students, how language barriers lead to poor test scores, and how poverty—which she notes disproportionally affects Latino families—can lead to poorer educational opportunities.

Though Eyler and Giles point out that students can sometimes begin to feel powerless when they discover how deeply rooted social problems like poverty are (100-102), Cassie felt that researching the underlying causes and implications of the achievement gap actually had the opposite effect: "[The research] helps me understand the importance and necessity of my work, and the impact that my tutoring has on the future for these students. The individualized tutoring I participate in is directly combating this educational gap" (Journal 2). She further noted in her final Journal that understanding the systemic causes of the achievement gap along with her experience tutoring at Centro Latino will be "critical" for the kinds of work in education she hopes to do in the Peace Corps (Journal 4).

Like Cassie, Henry regarded Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections* as a tool for better understanding the "cyclical nature of poverty" (Journal 1) and applying that knowledge to his service experiences. At the beginning of the semester when I asked him how he felt the readings and subsequent reflections related to the course, he replied that they helped him "make a connection" between his service experiences and those of the books authors' so that he could "draw conclusions beyond the surface" (Int. 2). He said,

> Like serving at the Boys and Girls club, maybe I wouldn't have considered, like, for example, the Kozol reading talking about the stigmatization of poverty and things like that. Maybe I wouldn't be considering that if I had just gone into it on the surface and just played on the playground with the kids. So it makes you think of deeper concepts beyond the work that you're actually doing. (Int. 2)

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Henry's comments reminded me of Herzberg's argument that questions about social structures are not "automatically raised by community service" alone—that service experience ought to be couched with critical readings and guided reflections (140). Indeed, Henry's first Journal draws strong connections between the systemic causes and implications of poverty as described in Kozol's book and observations Henry has made at Boys and Girls Club:

> Both by reading Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections* and serving at the Boys and Girls Club, I have learned a lot about the conditions which have bred the system of "economic apartheid" which we are witnessing today. Kozol's description of the black face of America's poverty problem isn't one contained to the streets of the South Bronx, but one seen here in Columbia and at the Boys and Girls club. (Journal 1)

He goes on to describe a recent restructuring of Columbia Public Schools that transferred a "large minority population" from a high school in an upper middle class neighborhood to a "minority-heavy school" in a different part of town, which affected the siblings of the children he worked with at Boys and Girls Club. With this kind of district restructuring, Henry wrote, as revealed in Kozol's book, "the cyclical nature of poverty comes full circle with diminished opportunity despite increased need reinforcing poverty amongst minority groups [*sic*]" (Journal 1). Whether or not Henry had some notion of the systemic nature of poverty before the course, it is clear from his comments and written work that considering Kozol's book together with his service experience helped deepen his understanding as well as his ability to apply national issues to a local context.

Henry also responded to Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* as Cassie did, noting that even though he "always knew that people in poverty aren't lazy," Ehrenreich's book "really shed light on that" (Int. 2). He added, "… you can be a hard-working individual with like three jobs and still be impoverished and entrenched in it to a degree where you can never get out … Books like that just kind of shed light on just the extent of poverty (Int. 2). Moreover, in the research

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portions of his Journals, Henry continued to add to his knowledge of some of the larger forces

behind poverty, including "stereotypes and discrimination" which lead to "self-fulfilling

prophesies" for minorities (Journal 2), food insecurity (Journal 2), and the problem of illiteracy,

which he discovered is "a major component of cyclical poverty" (Journal 3). In his Formal

Proposal, he continued to focus on the problem of illiteracy, incorporating research on how

illiteracy "disproportionally" affects "the poor and minorities," affects multiple generations, and

forces Americans into "crime or low-wage jobs" without "the promise of social mobility"

(Formal Proposal).

Though Henry expressed an increasing amount of doubt that his "fleeting presence" at

Boys and Girls Club would really make an impact in the face of such a deeply entrenched

problem, he remained committed to the importance of service work: "The challenge I'm facing

in tutoring, and that which I hope to overcome, is how to make a big difference in a short amount

of time. With continued communication and interaction with the kids, I hope to make small

strides towards a greater goal" (Journal 2). Thus, in both cases, though the students gained a

deeper awareness of certain social problems as systemic, they were not so overwhelmed by the

issues as to feel paralyzed, and both hoped to continue serving at their sites after the end of the

semester.

Sophia used the term "eye-opening" several times during our interviews while discussing

what she was learning from the course readings and her independent research. Though her

primary "take-away" from Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections* was the way he developed

relationships with the children at a public school in the South Bronx, she also noted that Kozol's

book helped her consider how pollution and other health concerns affect children in low-income

areas:

> … [the book] just really opened my eyes to stuff … I mean I obviously knew there was poverty out there, and there are children and adults who struggle, but I guess just the specifics in that book—you know, the fact that people first have to meet the health needs … Like the generator that's in there [the South Bronx] that's causing all the smoke and stuff and making their asthma worse … you never think of that being an issue, because where I'm from it's not an issue … just thinking that's even an issue is insane. (Int. 1)

Sophia continued to explore health concerns that affect low-income children's ability to learn in the research portions of her subsequent Journals. Specifically, she researched low-income families' lack of access to nutritious foods and quality healthcare. She also researched the lack of resources educators in low-income school districts have access to, noting that she has seen this problem first-hand as her director at Benton Science Club often uses her own money to buy supplies for the children.

Sophia also indicated that Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* deepened her understanding of "the obstacles" that "make it nearly impossible" for low-income workers to "escape" the cycle of poverty (Journal 2). During an interview she said, "I think just seeing that you really can't live off of minimum wage, like, it's very difficult. I mean it's *very* hard … I think [the book] just opens your eyes to, even though the U.S. is such a well-off nation, there are still struggles within that we still have to work on, such as poverty" (Int. 2). In her Formal Proposal, Sophia tied together her prior research with insight she gained from the course readings to describe a few of the "external factors" that cause a child to be considered "at risk." These "external factors," or social forces, include socioeconomic status, race, failing school districts, and lack of access to health care (Formal Proposal). Like Cassie and Henry, Sophia noted that understanding the external forces that impede low-income children from succeeding in school does not prevent her from feeling that she can make a difference; rather, she felt the information would enable her to "more effectively serve" the children at BSC (Journal 2).

Alison also researched and reflected on larger social forces that perpetuate poverty, but primarily focused on the causes and implications of food insecurity. With each research assignment, Alison built on her knowledge of the systems in place that prevent low-income families from gaining access to healthy food. In her Organization and Service Profile, she included research that shows the lack of full-service grocery stores and farmer's markets in low-income neighborhoods and the high prices of healthy foods. She also noted that the implications of hunger and poor nutrition "automatically" place low-income children "at a disadvantage" in school and in overall development. Alison's research became increasingly more sophisticated with each Journal, and she began exploring the "multiple factors" that lead to food insecurity in Columbia, Missouri specifically. Alison noted also during our interviews that reading Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* also contributed to her understanding of food insecurity, calling the book "a good wake-up call":

> I always think in my head if I ever encounter an economic problem I would just cut down on things, but it wasn't like [Ehrenreich] was spending on extra things for her own relaxation; she was using it all purely to survive … I took away a more realistic perspective of the challenges that low-income individuals face, and I kind of related it to my service because [Ehrenreich] faced a lot of food insecurity. She didn't know when she'd have time to eat—that was a huge concern---or if she would be able to eat nutritious foods, which a lot of times even when she was able to get help with that from different organizations, it wasn't healthy food at all. (Int. 2)

In her second Journal, Alison linked her ideas from her research, Ehrenreich's book, and the class poverty simulation to show the "inequality" low-income families face in gaining access to nutritious foods for themselves and their families.

In her Formal Proposal, Alison developed this idea even further, using research to show that minority and low-income neighborhoods have "unequal access to healthy food," which she argues, "reflects racial injustices enmeshed in food insecurity" (Formal Proposal). She reports also that poor nutrition resulting from food insecurity adds to the cyclical nature of poverty as it

can result in "income loss, work absenteeism, increased healthcare expenditures, lower educational development, unemployment, and impaired work performance" for adults and "chronic illness, low birth weight, lower school performance, and developmental problems" for children (Formal Proposal). Alison's Proposal went on to suggest a program for Columbia Farmer's Market that would help combat food insecurity in Columbia by increasing low-income minority participation at the market. She remarked during our final interview that she felt her idea might actually be effective in helping CFM work toward its goal of engaging with low-income minority families in Columbia, and that she was considering doing more research on the topic over break so she could contribute her ideas to the market the following semester. Thus, while the other students felt empowered to continue serving despite their knowledge of deeply entrenched social problems, Alison used her knowledge to develop a more expansive solution that has the potential to be put into effect.

Effects of Assignments on Students as Writers and Thinkers

In this section, I explore how MUCEP writing assignments affected students as writers and thinkers. I chose to address this question not only because the field of service-learning lacks significant research regarding the effects of community engagement on student writing proficiency (Deans et al. 9), but also because MUCEP is a "writing-intensive" course at the University of Missouri, meaning that a partial goal of the course is to enhance students' writing and thinking abilities. An analysis of student interview data and written artifacts revealed three reoccurring themes regarding student development as writers and thinkers: Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Research.

Critical and Creative Thinking

One of the primary goals of the MU Campus Writing Program (and WAC programs across the country) is to "enhance students' critical thinking abilities" and to "better engage them in complex problem solving" through writing ("Mission"). While faculty in the disciplines might meet these goals in a number of ways, Eyler and Giles suggest that service-learning may provide an especially effective venue for the development of these skills. They argue that bringing students in contact with real-world issues requires them to recognize that problems are complicated, context-dependent, and cannot always be solved with simple solutions (16). MUCEP writing assignments did appear to facilitate students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills in accordance with Eyler and Giles' argument. In particular, as I illustrate earlier, the Journals required students to make critical connections between their service experience and complex real-world issues discussed in the course readings and discovered through research. In making these connections, students used critical thinking skills to question their prior assumptions and develop deeper understandings of social problems as systemic. In this section, however, I discuss a critical thinking task that students reported as particularly difficult: the Problem Definition portion of the Formal Proposal. The task of framing and defining a community-based social problem required students to engage in more sophisticated critical thinking and problem-solving skills than they reported having ever done before.

In the "Problem Definition" portion of the Formal Proposal (due several weeks before the completed Proposal), students are asked to identify and define a local social issue—a task that Eyler and Giles suggest is particularly difficult for students given the "ill-structured nature of most social problems" (102). They argue that issues in the social sciences, particularly those encountered by service-learning students, are deeply embedded in "complicated real-world

context[s]" and that even the "experts rarely are in full agreement on either the definition of the problem or what should be done to solve it" (102-103). Thus, when students are asked to frame (and eventually address) a social issue, they must sift through multitudes of perspectives from a diverse range of minds operating across a wide range of contexts. Such a task, as Eyler and Giles note, undoubtedly leads to confusion and frustration for students, but when effectively supported, can also lead to the development of sophisticated critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The Problem Definition portion of the Formal Proposal did indeed present a significant challenge for MUCEP students. Five of the six participants agreed that writing the Problem Definition was the most difficult part of the course, noting that the process was more time-consuming and more rigorous than writing assignments they had experienced in other college courses. In describing their first attempts at the assignment (students were permitted to rewrite the Problem Definition before submitting the completed Proposal), they used words like "terrible" (Alison), "miserable" (Cassie), and "daunting" (Lucas) to describe their composing processes. The students' comments during our interviews indicated that the assignment was difficult for two primary reasons: first, to account for their chosen issue's local context, they had to be much more selective with research than they were used to; second, the complexity of the information they found while researching required them to adjust and revise their ideas while writing.

Across the board, students expressed difficulty "focusing" their Problem Definitions, specifically in terms of research. George, who sought extra help from Dr. Foley before submitting the completed Formal Proposal explained his struggle this way:

> [Dr. Foley] looked over my bibliography as was like, "This [source] might not apply as much, you should find a different one" … In other classes you can get away with just having a bibliography—that's usually good enough—and kind of citing stuff … but [Dr.

Foley] looked at [my paper], and in the Problem Definition was like, "This is not as focused as it should be." So I had to go back and do more in-depth research. (Int. 3)

Sophia had a similar reaction regarding her research process: "I've never struggled with research so much!" (Int. 3). She also sought help from Dr. Foley, noting that the Problem Definition portion of the Formal Proposal was "the most difficult part of the assignment" because the research had to be "focused" and "recent," which, she realized, is "really important … for the type of paper we're writing since we are talking about [organizations] we're in now and the children who are in them" (Int. 3). George and Sophia's struggles indicate that they had to use critical thinking skills to evaluate their research in ways they perhaps have never done before.

Lucas and Alison also struggled with selecting relevant research to include in their Problem Definitions, but described their difficulty in terms of feeling overwhelmed by the sheer amount of complex information they had to "sift through" (Alison, Int. 3). Even after Lucas sought help from the campus librarians to find materials they assumed must be "good sources," he still found the process of selecting information to be "harder compared to [his] past research papers" (Int. 3). He explained,

> All my research kind of kept changing my original thought along the way … I let the information kind of take over. I would read one thing and link it to another thing or a different article or find a different scholarly source, and it made me end up thinking too broad about the information … [and] trying to combine all of it into one conglomeration." (Int. 3)

Alison's experience was nearly identical:

> … I kept pushing [the research] off because I was dreading how involved it was … once I had the books, it was still even harder than I expected because of filtering through the information … I'd be like, "Oh this is such a great point," and then I'd start to write about it. But then I'd be like, "this doesn't even relate to what I'm trying to prove." So it was kind of an overwhelming amount of information … (Int. 3)

Lucas and Alison's difficulties appear to reflect Eyler and Giles' findings that the "ill-structured nature" of social issues makes writing about them especially challenging for college students,

who typically expect to find "simple truth[s]" about problems they encounter (101). As Eyler and Giles note, when students are pushed to such a place of uncertainty, they must use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to make decisions despite the inherent complexities of the issues they are writing about. When I asked Alison if she discovered anything about writing while composing the Formal Proposal, she said, " … it was kind of like being more in the process than just going through the steps. So, like, thinking more—I guess great problem-solving when it comes to writing papers, like planning it out as I'm writing" (Int. 3). George, Lucas, and Sophia responded similarly, noting that their Problem Definitions and subsequent Formal Proposals changed directions one or more times during the research, writing, and rewriting processes.

For this reason, the opportunity for students to put their Problem Definitions through a drafting process along with support from Dr. Foley proved essential in helping students reach the level of critical thinking necessary to carry out the assignment effectively. Though students expressed significant discomfort with their first drafts, all six students felt confident about their revisions. When I asked George how he felt his completed Formal Proposal turned out, he said, "I think it turned out pretty good. My Problem Definition wasn't the greatest, but I was able to restructure my goals and really get focused. That was really helpful—being able to do that and getting feedback before turning in the whole thing" (Int. 3). When I asked Sophia the same question, she responded, "I think it went good … The first draft of it I didn't do so well, and I saw her afterwards and basically I just had to redo the research portion [Problem Definition], and after that I changed how I approached it … I think it went good now" (Int. 3). Lucas and Henry also used the word "good" to describe their final Proposals; Cassie called hers "fine," and Alison

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thought hers was "overall successful" but wished she had more time to go back and continue to "narrow" her idea.

In addition to critical thinking, MUCEP students were asked to use *creative* thinking in their Formal Proposals by developing original solutions to the social problems they framed in their Problem Definitions. Sharon Bailin distinguishes critical thinking from creative thinking this way: "Critical thinking … is the means for arriving at judgments within a given framework or context. Creative thinking, on the other hand, is seen as imaginative, constructive, generative. It is what allows for the breaking out of or transcending of the framework itself" (23). Through the Organization and Service Profile, Journals, and Problem Definition, students spent a great deal of time thinking critically about social problems and existing solutions to those problems; in the final weeks of the semester, however, students were made to transcend those frameworks and think up creative solutions of their own. Interestingly, the students had a variety of reactions to the creativity required for the Formal Proposal. Sophia, while developing ideas for her Proposal, expressed some anxiety at the notion of being creative: "I'm just struggling because … I just like to be creative, and I don't want to mock someone else's idea that's been done" (Int. 2). While she wanted to be creative, she recognized that it presented potential difficulty. Later, however, she also noted that the permission to be creative increased her motivation for writing:

> … writing is my weakness, and I don't look forward to writing … but the more we do talk about it [in class], I actually do get more excited and want my idea to be more creative because, you know, it's something that we're thinking of and could actually be implemented. (Int. 2)

Alison responded similarly during our final interview when I asked her how the Proposal compared to other writing assignments she had done in other courses. In addition to mentioning that the Proposal was more time-consuming than anything she had ever written, she said,

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> I really liked writing this paper … because I was learning more and got to be creative. It's one of the first times I've gotten to be creative that's not completely abstract creative writing … I get to have structured writing, which I like better … and then I got to get a little creative with structuring… the program I wanted to start, or the idea. (Int. 3)

George did not express particular excitement about the creative portion of the Proposal, but he did note that developing his own ideas was actually "easier" for him than the kinds of research papers he wrote for a writing-intensive business class. He said, "You had to do more research for [the Formal Proposal] but, … it wasn't like I had to go out and take other peoples' stuff that they said on the Internet. I kind of make up my own" (Int. 3). Conversely, Henry—the only student to call the Problem Definition "easy"—found the creative portions of the Formal Proposal difficult:

> [The Problem Definition] was more linear based … you know, like, 'Identify the problem, what are the causes, what are the hard numbers and statistics, what can you draw from that?' Whereas the Formal Proposal actually required you to creatively think, like, 'What are you going to do to address the problem and how are you going to do so?'… Having to use your brain and not just regurgitate stuff is a lot harder. (Int. 3)

Despite students' various reactions to developing original solutions to social problems, their responses indicate that creative thinking is something they rarely do in their other college courses—even those that involve writing.
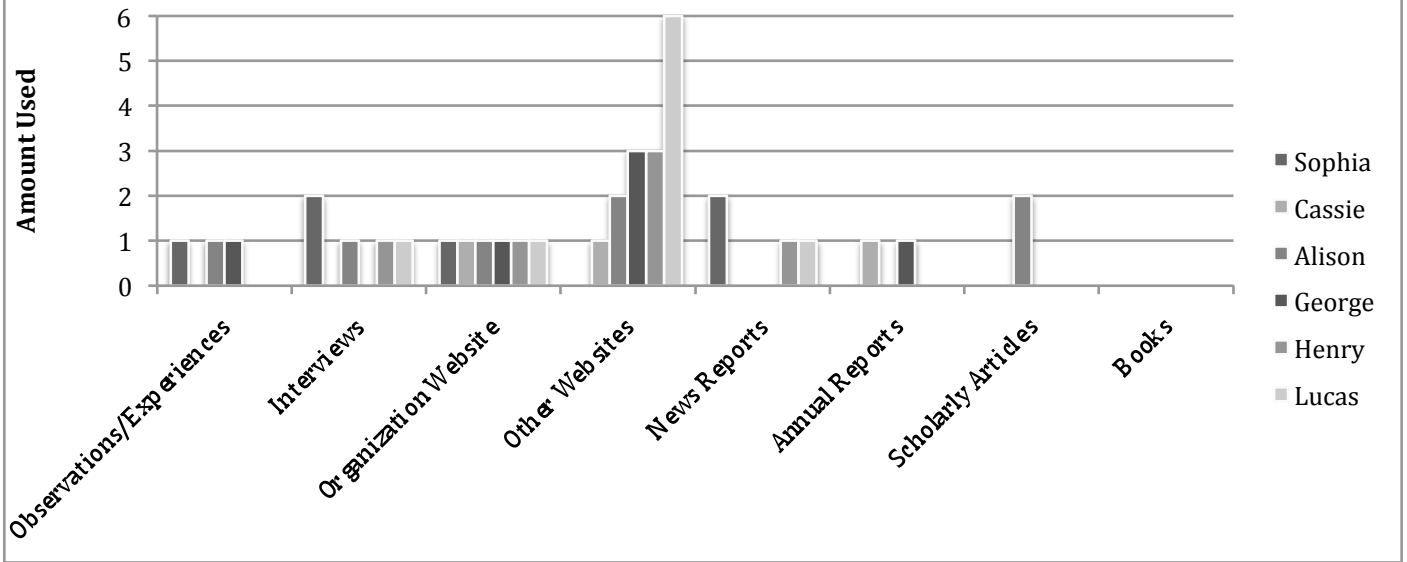
Research

As I illustrate above in the section on critical thinking, the Problem Definition portion of the MUCEP Formal Proposal presented a significant challenge for students as they worked to define "ill-structured" problems through research. In addition to facilitating critical thinking, this portion of the assignment compelled students to be more selective with their research *and* to view research as a process of discovery. Margaret Kantz argues that such research tasks require students to view themselves as "active, able problem-solvers," who use research to develop "constructive solutions" to relevant questions and problems (87). She also notes that this sort of problem-solving orientation toward research represents a departure from the way college

students typically use research in their writing assignments (as a compiling of information to support an already-decided-upon conclusion) (85). Through my interviews and artifact analysis, I found that MUCEP assignments did affect the degree in which students began to view themselves as active, independent researchers. First, they used a wide variety of source material, including primary research in the form of storytelling and interviews. Second, they began to view research as directly relevant to their lives and ability to serve effectively, which, in some cases, increased their motivation to do more research in the future both within and beyond classroom contexts.

Using Primary Research Methods. MUCEP students were required to incorporate outside research into four assignments: the Organization and Service Profile, Journals 2 and 4, and the Formal Proposal. Depending on the assignment, they were either required or strongly encouraged to incorporate certain types of source material into the research portions of each of these four papers. As I read through each completed assignment, I found that students depended a great deal on primary sources like interviews and observations even when not specifically called to do so. When I asked students about this, they indicated that these primary research strategies made the writing process easier and more enjoyable. Moreover, such methods helped them feel more invested in both their writing and in their service.

For the research portions of the Organization and Service Profile, ("Vision, Mission, and Goals of Community Organization" and "Description of the Population the Organization Serves"), students were required to use a minimum of three outside sources and strongly encouraged in class and on the assignment sheet to interview a site supervisor or staff member (See Appendix A). The wide variety of materials students chose to include in these two sections is evident in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Sources Used in Sections A and B
of the Organization and Service Profile**

Amount Used

Categories (x-axis): Observations/Experiences, Interviews, Organization Website, Other Websites, News Reports, Annual Reports, Scholarly Articles, Books

Legend: Sophia, Cassie, Alison, George, Henry, Lucas

While it seemed natural that students would incorporate their personal observations and experiences at their service sites into the second two sections of the OSP, ("My Role Within the Organization" and "My Future Learning and Explorations"), it is notable that three of the six students also included experiences from their service into the first two research-focused sections. In all three cases, the personal stories were used to corroborate outside research. For example, Sophia used two observations of children she worked with at Benton Science Club to add to her supervisor's description of the population the club serves: first, she told a story of a girl she encountered at her site who "likes learning about the earth," and "actively participates in the activities"; second, she mentioned that two other boys "have a hard time sitting and staying engaged." George made a similar move. In his first draft, his "Description of the Population" section included a general description of common challenges and disabilities clients of Adult Day Connection face without either cited research or observations to offer support. However, in his second draft, perhaps in response to marginal comments that read "more research," George

added a personal story paired with outside research: "The first day I was volunteering, [the supervisors] stressed the need to keep an eye on people as they are walking so they don't trip. With a little outside research, I found that the Center for Disease Control stated that the main cause for death and minor injuries in older adults were related to falling."

As the semester continued, more students began weaving their observations with outside research in increasingly sophisticated ways (see Figures 2 and 3 below).

Figure 2: Sources Used in "Community Issues and Challenges" Section of Journal #2
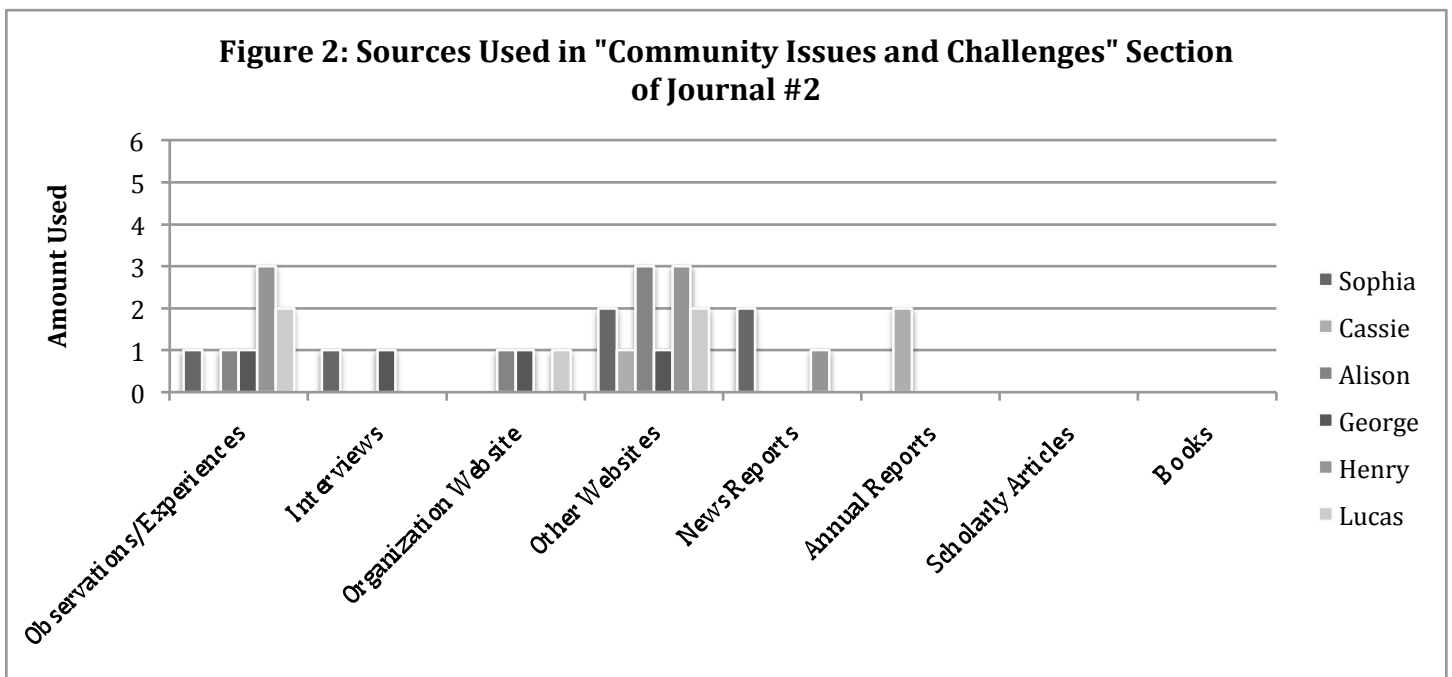
Three times in the "Community Issues and Challenges" section of Journal 2, Henry further explains or exemplifies outside research about poverty using observations from his time tutoring at Boys and Girls Club. For example, after offering statistics that show large percentages of minorities living in poverty, he suggests that such large percentages create stereotypes linking poverty to race, which, in turn, affects the way the kids he tutors at Boys and Girls Club feel about their situation. He writes, "Some of the kids say things like, 'I hate school, I know I'm not

going to do good at it anyway', reflecting a mentality where they feel destined to fulfill the circumstances of their birth, and continue living their lives in poverty." Five of the six students similarly weave observations or stories from their service in with their research in Journal 2, and all six do so in Journal 4 (See Figure 3 Below).

Figure 3: Sources Used in "Community Issues and Challenges" Section of Journal #4
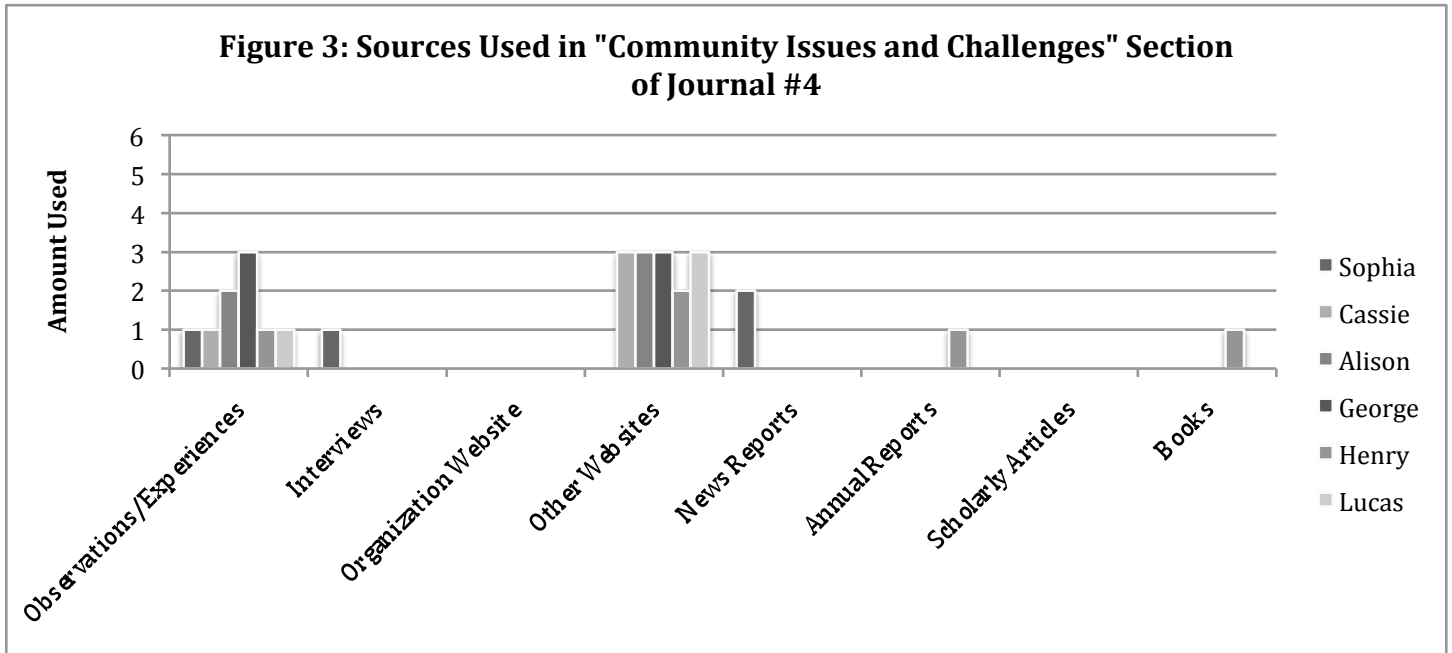
The use of personal experience and observations in conjunction with research in the OSP and Journals is reflective of the students' understanding of the genres in which they were being asked to write. I asked students how the OSP and Journals compared to writing they do in other classes, all six noted that these assignments offered a rare opportunity to be "personal" or to "share experiences," which, they told me, made the writing "easier" and/or more pleasurable. Alison said, "I'm in classes that are factual, or, I'm not telling stories necessarily, and this is more of a story … [in other classes] I'm focusing on actual facts and ideas, and in this one I'm focusing more on the message I'm creating. It's a different approach" (Int. 1). She went on to

say, "I'm much more motivated to write about things in this class than things in other classes because it's more personal … I can actually write about things that are important to me." George also remarked that the OSP and journals were "like sharing a story" (Int. 1). He said,

> It is a lot easier to write for this class just because I can relate to it. It's not like I read a boring business article and have to analyze it. I actually lived out what I'm writing about … It's not like factually selling something to somebody. It's just telling them what I did and how I helped, and what I learned, and what I can learn. It's not really, 'here's point, point, point,' and then something that supports it or something like that, it's different writing than I usually do." (Int. 1)

Because the students viewed these writings primarily as opportunities to share stories or "create" a message through lived experience, the outside research began to function more as a way of adding to the students' perceptions of situations, rather than, as George said, for making "points" about someone else's ideas.

In addition to personal experiences and observations, students relied on another form of primary research—interviews. While they were strongly encouraged to include interviews on the OSP,[1] I noticed that some students continued to incorporate interviews in the research portions of other assignments as well, including the Formal Proposal (see Figure 4 below). When I asked students about their research processes, those who used interviews explained that doing so made the research easier. While writing her OSP, Alison began by asking her site supervisor the questions on the assignment prompt, and then "started writing based on his answers." After the initial interview, she emailed him in order to fill "holes" in her "understanding" of the other research she was finding online: "He explained things really well, so that kind of helped me with writing" (Int. 1). Alison also interviewed her supervisor a second time for the OSP rewrite: "I

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[1] As shown in Figure 1, four of the six students quoted and/or cited an interview in the OSP, but it is possible that the other students used information from interviews in their papers without directly quoting the interviewee or citing her/him as a source on the works cited page. This is also true for Journals 2 and 4 and the Formal Proposal.

just asked him the places I was missing and he broadened my understanding" (Int. 2). Later,

while coming up with ideas for the Problem Definition portion of the Formal Proposal, Alison

reported that she "originally had a completely different idea," but then thought to herself, "Why

don't I just ask the people who work at the market what their challenges are? Because, I mean,

they've been working there a lot longer than I have, so they would have a better idea" (Int. 3).

The information she gathered from her supervisor about the lack of low-income minority

involvement at the Columbia Farmer's Market became the basis for her completed Proposal.

Figure 4: Sources Used in Formal Proposal
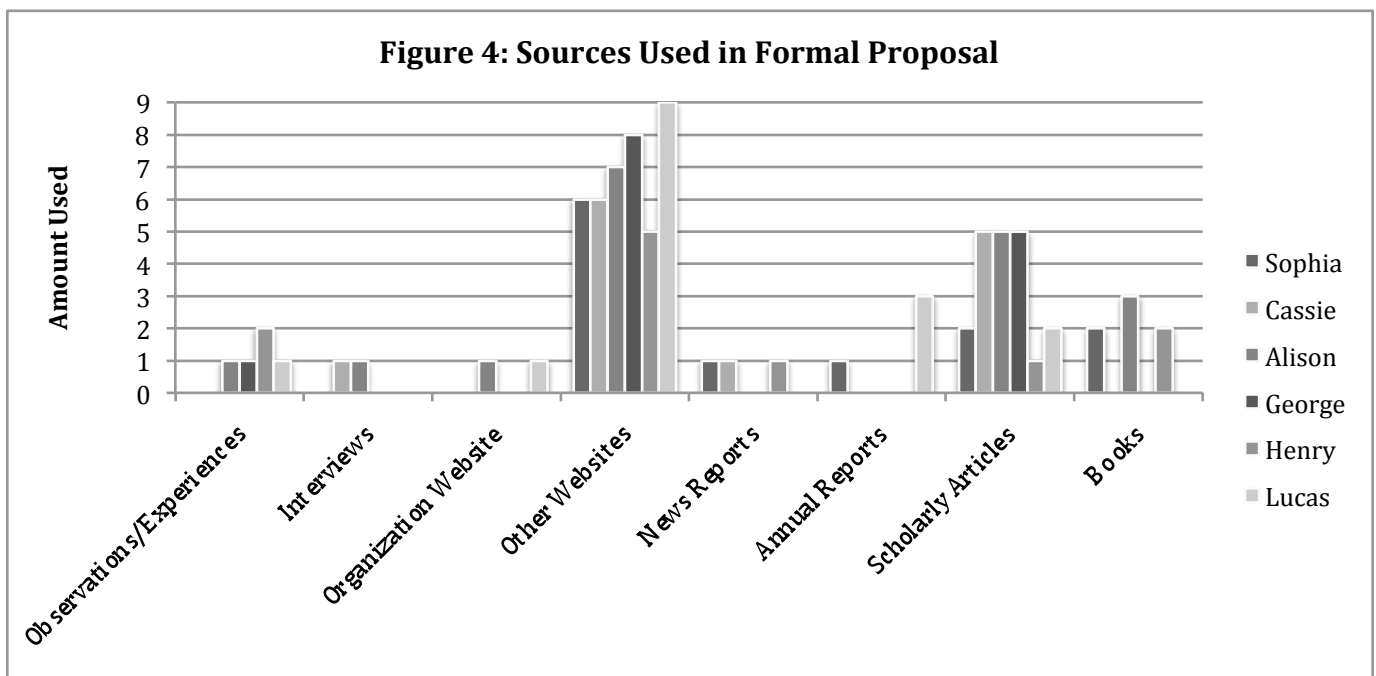
The Formal Proposal called for "significant research" and required students to incorporate a

minimum of six sources, with at least three from library collections (See Appendix D). This

explains the wider variety of source material students used as research for this project, especially

the use of scholarly articles and books.[2] Both Alison and Cassie, however, still incorporated

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[2] George, Alison, and Lucas all told me that prior to researching for their Formal Proposals, they had never consulted the campus librarians or checked out books before, but all said they plan to do so again in the future. Alison said, "I had never honestly gotten a book out of the library, but

interviews. Cassie noted that the interview she conducted with the ELL coordinator for Columbia

Public Schools was her easiest way of finding locally focused information to include in her

Formal Proposal: "[During the interview] I learned a lot about how [the achievement gap] affects

Columbia … which was really helpful because I can't find any other data specifically on

Missouri" (Int. 3).

Interestingly, while these interviews helped provide focused and local data to inform

students' research, they also appear to have helped facilitate student relationships with their site

supervisors. Alison and Sophia, the two students who used interview research most often,

reported becoming particularly close with their supervisors. Sophia told me that her supervisor at

Benton Science Club became "like another mother" (Int. 2). She described a reciprocal and

productive relationship: "I help her plan [activities] and she boosts my self-esteem about stuff.

She's very accepting of [my] ideas … Yeah, she's the director of my service site, but she's also

another person to look up to … she's kind of inspiring to me" (Int. 2). Alison also reported

growing "pretty close" to her supervisor at Columbia Farmer's Market, who ended up giving her

a lot of freedom to develop activities for the children's booth: "I would just text him and be like,

'Hey, I need baking soda and vinegar for this activity,' and he would have it at the next market"

(Int. 3). Like Sophia, Alison noted that her supervisor would ask her about school and

congratulate her on school-related accomplishments. She also noted that her supervisor helped

her network with other people in her area of interest: "He's in AmeriCorps VISTA, and I'm

leaning towards the Peace Corps … and he had a lot of friends and other market volunteers that

were involved in the Peace Corps, so it was kind of cool to talk to them" (Int. 3). Whether Sophia

and Alison's use of interviews helped them grow relationships with their supervisors or the good

after I did for this paper, I've been checking out books like no other. I just realized how
important that is. Internet sources can only take you so far (Int. 3).

relationships begot more interviews is difficult to determine; nevertheless, it is clear that an important connection existed between the research process and the students' overall experience at their service sites.

Making a case for teaching primary research in their writing-about-writing course, Douglas Downs and Elizabeth Wardle argue that "conducting primary research helps students shift their orientation to research from one of compiling facts to one of generating knowledge [and] empowers them to write with legitimate originality and conviction" (562). This is most certainly the case for MUCEP students' use of storytelling and interviews in their research assignments. Outside research became a way to supplement and enhance what students were learning through their service and from their site supervisors. As Alison said, the MUCEP writing and research became a way to "create" a message. She told me, "I feel the need to share the knowledge that I've learned, and maybe that will help other people become more successful, which is the end purpose of doing service" (Int. 1). Lucas said, "It's not like you're writing some broad-based research paper on some subject … it's something attainable and in your reach … you're personally involved in it" (Int. 1).

Viewing Research as Directly Relevant. Students also began to look at research as directly relevant to their personal lives, future careers, and ability to serve effectively in the future as opposed to viewing research as only relevant in academic situations. Henry, though he was the only student I interviewed who did not report feeling challenged and/or excited by the research required for the Formal Proposal, still felt that the research process was a "valuable" part of the assignment (Int. 3). Despite feeling like his finished Proposal idea was "not the best route" to address illiteracy in Columbia, Henry noted that the research itself was important for him because he feels that it is "better to know that there are issues in society than to just ignore

them … because if you don't [know them], you can't really address them, or try to address them" (Int. 3).

Lucas and Cassie both came into MUCEP with doubts about how academic research would be relevant to the class since they assumed most of the writing would involve "personal reflection." Lucas initially thought the research required for the OSP was "busy work," but after he finished writing the assignment, he felt that the kind of research he did would be valuable to him in the future: "You need to know, no matter what, in the real world who you're working with, what they're doing, what they're purpose is, and then how you play into that, what you're place in the organization is, how you feel about the organization … it's good that we had to do it" (Int. 1). He went on to say that he felt more connected to the research than he typically does in other college courses: "It's not like you're doing a broad based research paper on some subject … it's something attainable and in your reach … whereas writing papers about topics that are so far away from you can get you away from what you should be getting out of the assignment" (Int. 1).

Similarly, during our first interview, Cassie did not feel that academic research made much sense in a service-learning course. She said, "I know [Dr. Foley] wants research for some of these [assignments] I think, but I don't understand where she wants the research because I don't see what role it has … It's a lot of personal reflection, so I'm like, how can you do research on that?" Later, however, when discussing the research process for the Formal Proposal, even amidst her struggle, Cassie reported that the research was "kind of fun" because it was about music education, which was personally interesting for her: "I've always known that music can have different effects on the brain and what it can do, so it's kind of nice actually seeing the research right there in front of me" (Int. 2).

Alison in particular noted that she hopes to continue volunteering at the Columbia

Farmer's Market after the course ends, and that she wants to continue researching her Proposal

idea throughout the semester so that she can contribute more ideas to market activities. She also

said that after taking MUCEP, she is "more inclined to do research" for any kind of service she

may do in the future so that she can "know more" about the "direct benefit" she may have to

whatever cause she is serving (Int. 3).

Difficulties with Workload and Time Demands

Among these many benefits, however, my observations of MUCEP revealed a few

potential drawbacks to the WAC/service-learning partnership. First, because MUCEP included

numerous reading and writing assignments in addition to outside service hours, it required a

significantly greater time commitment from students than their other college courses. These time

demands were frustrating for some students because they felt the amount of credit hours they

earned for MUCEP did not reflect the workload. When I asked Henry and Cassie during our final

interviews if they would recommend the course to others, both reported they would not. Henry

said,

> the amount of work is not proportionate to 3-credit hours … the subject matter isn't hard, but making you digest a book every two weeks and write a four to six-page Journal every other two weeks as well as in-class writings … I think it should be a 5-credit hour class … Especially if you're gonna have 35 and 45 hour volunteer requirements, and then the amount of papers you have to write. (Int. 3)

Cassie's response was similar: "Most of my time this semester was spent working on this class—

more than a 5-credit hour class I took. And that's really frustrating when the work you do doesn't

reflect in your credits" (Int. 3). Other students, like Alison and Lucas, noted that the course was

difficult and time consuming but "worth it" (Alison, Int. 3). For this reason, it appears that

courses which combine WAC and service-learning are likely best suited for students with a

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certain level of prior dedication to the subject matter or the maturity to realize that learning is separate from credit hours awarded. As Lucas said, "It's not for everybody" (Int. 3). Other programs might also consider adjusting the amount of credit hours a course like MUCEP can fulfill.

Several students also noted that the frequency of the Journals became problematic, complaining that they were "repetitive" (Henry and Cassie) or "redundant" (George and Lucas). Alison, George, Cassie, and Henry all noted that the short number of service hours that occurred between Journals often felt insufficient for giving them enough material to write about. Henry remarked that he would sometimes exaggerate some of his service experiences in the Journals in order to "draw these 'insightful' conclusions from not very insightful things" (Int. 3). Cassie responded to this problem by copying sections from earlier Journals into later Journals because she felt that, besides in the "Synthesis" sections, she had nothing new to say (Int. 3). She also said that sometimes she grew "concerned" during her service because she would find herself searching for or even "creating" situations to write about in future Journals rather than focusing on tutoring the students to the best of her ability (Int. 2).

Part of the reason students may have found the Journals "repetitive" is because they may not have fully understood the reasons the Journals were recurring or why the kinds of thinking the Journals encouraged are important in the field of public service. Similarly, while the students felt they learned a lot about local issues and community organizations through writing their Formal Proposals, none appeared to make the connection that the assignment was structured like a grant proposal—a genre of writing they will most certainly need to know if they choose to pursue jobs in public service (as many MUCEP students hope to do). Henry, for example, thought that the structure of the Formal Proposal was a "weird way to write a paper," not in no

way significant beyond that (Int. 3). While it would certainly be beneficial for students to be made more aware of what genres of writing look like in the field of public service, it is difficult to imagine where conversations on genre would fit in to a course already so packed with material.

VI. CONCLUSION

This final chapter provides an overview of how WAC and service-learning worked together in the MU Community Engagement Project. I show how WAC's emphasis on frequent, genre-specific assignments as well as opportunities for revision helped facilitate students' growth as servers and citizens. I discuss also how the service-learning component of the class met and transcended the goals of traditional WAC programs. I also consider potential areas for further research regarding similar WAC and service-learning partnerships.

How WAC Facilitated the Goals of Service-Learning

David Jolliffe argues that one of the most powerful ways WAC theory and practice can support service-learning is through WAC's "awareness of genre" (103). As WAC proponents know, different genres have the power to generate and shape different kinds of knowledge, which Jolliffe suggests might help service-learning faculty and administrators consider "*why* they ask students to produce writing in some genres and not others" (103). Because MUCEP is a writing-intensive course, and thus subscribes to WAC theory and practice, Dr. Foley has developed writing assignments with an understanding of how the genres in which her students write have the potential to shape student knowledge within the field of public service. As my second section of analysis shows, MUCEP assignments facilitated Dr. Foley's goals of creating more thoughtful and active servers in the community by enabling students to see social problems as systemic while simultaneously facilitating meaningful, reciprocal relationships with community members, showing examples of successful social action, and empowering students to continue serving in the community after the course had ended.

As Herzberg and other proponents of critical literacy suggest, students cannot effectively think about social change until they learn to question the larger systems in place that perpetuate

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social problems (Herzberg 43). This emphasis on interrogating larger social structures resonates deeply with Freire's philosophy of education, specifically his ideas about the development of a critical consciousness (Deans 39). Deans points out, however, that, for Freire, a critical consciousness is only half of a two-part dichotomy—it must be paired with action in a "recursive, ongoing" process (41). He writes, "As with Dewey, the truly educative experience [according to Freire] motivates further inquiry and action" (41). Thus, WAC's emphasis on short, frequent writing assignments that encourage certain ways of thinking within an academic discipline provide an ideal platform for practicing continuous reflection and action in service-learning. While educators can encourage the development of a critical consciousness through a variety of academic genres (as Herzberg does in his service-learning course at Bentley College), the genres of writing students worked with in MUCEP were unique in that critical reflection was paired with direct action recursively in every single assignment. Even as students were writing about the systemic nature of social problems, they were encountering and writing about successful solutions to those problems. Moreover, they were continuously writing *themselves* into the solutions and eventually creating unique plans for social action on their own. The ongoing interplay between reflection and action in these assignments likely contributed to the students' feelings that even the small actions they were taking at their service sites were making some kind of impact on the systemic issues they were learning about.

Additionally, in keeping with WAC theory and practice, the genres assigned in MUCEP encouraged students to think and communicate like activists (rather than uncritical "do-gooders" or isolated academics), which helped them develop ethical relationships with members of the community and offered them the confidence and tools to continue pursuing social action after the end of the semester. Through reading the personal stories of activists like Kozol, Farmer, and

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others, and then being asked to write similar stories of their own, students became more aware of what ethical community relationships look and feel like. As my second section of analysis shows, MUCEP students began to understand "service" as deeply intertwined with the development of genuine, "give-and-take" relationships with the community rather than acts fueled by noblesse oblige. Because the Journal assignments asked students to tell personal stories, research systemic social issues, and articulate their future service goals all in one document, they began to see critical connections between all three concepts. Thus, the relationships students made in the community not only worked to break down stereotypes and other barriers of difference, but they also helped humanize the students' critical analyses of larger social problems *and* allowed students to see real social change at micro-levels of interaction. Then, at the end of the semester, the Formal Proposal assignment offered students practice with a genre of writing that has the potential to do real work in the world.

Furthermore, as the students noted, the ability to revise their writing throughout the semester proved essential in the development of their thinking about social problems. As apparent in the third section of analysis, had students not been given the opportunity to revise the Problem Definition portions of their Formal Proposals, their research would have lacked focus and their ideas about particular social problems would have been broad and underdeveloped. The revisions gave students the opportunity to deepen their research and refine their thinking. Additionally, the chance to revise bolstered students' confidence about their writing and helped them see that learning about a social problem is an ongoing *process*, just as is the act of researching and writing a paper for class.

How Service-Learning Met and Transcended the Goals of WAC

Parks and Goldblatt argue that the changing conditions of our culture have presented new sets of challenges for students in both their working and civic lives (339). They write that students must now "learn abilities" to help them navigate "multiple career changes, new roles in marriage and community life, and forbidding political crises in the environment, economy, and social justice" (338). These new demands, they suggest, mean that WAC programs can no longer limit themselves to "the rhetoric of academic fields and majors" (339); rather, writing programs must reconceptualize WAC "to reach beyond university boundaries" (338).

MUCEP writing assignments, in their marriage of WAC elements and service-learning content, addressed the challenges Parks and Goldblatt refer to. Whereas traditional WAC courses emphasize critical thinking within the disciplines, MUCEP assignments called students to think critically about pressing social issues and then actively apply that knowledge in real-world situations. The assignments then pushed students one step beyond critical thinking by calling them to creatively generate new ideas for solving the social problems they witnessed in the community. Moreover, whereas traditional WAC courses offer students practice writing in the genres of a certain discipline, the MUCEP Formal Proposal gave students the opportunity to learn a genre that has the power to create change in the larger world, and, for some students, the opportunity to see that their writing can actually make a difference in the lives of others. As George noted in our final interview, "Some people may be like, 'Oh, you're not gonna be able to change the world,' but I mean you really can change the world … you really can make a difference" (Int. 3).

Also important to note here is that the service component of MUCEP provided a context for students to develop strong relationships with experts in their areas of interest and also

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increased their motivation to use their newly acquired research skills in contexts outside of the classroom.

Suggestions for Further Research

The MU Community Engagement Project and other courses like it are full of possibilities for continued research. I would have liked to follow the student participants for a period of time after the end of the semester to see if and how ideas from the course surface throughout their college careers and beyond. Further research on the role of narrative storytelling in the field of public service would also be beneficial in considering why and how service-learning instructors can use the genre to inculcate a certain kind of thinking. Additionally, since I observed MUCEP in the fall of 2014, the course has been split into two sections with fewer students in each, so it would be interesting to see how class size affects student experience in this and other service-learning courses. Finally, I would have liked to look more closely at how instructor feedback on each writing assignment affected (or did not affect) the way students conceptualized social issues, relationships in the community, or their own roles as participating citizens.

Though WAC and service-learning have remained as largely separate entities in higher education, the MU Community Engagement Project stands as a unique intersection between these two educational reform movements. As this study shows, WAC theory and practice can support the goals of service-learning by teaching students discipline-specific modes of thinking and communication. At the same time, service-learning has the power to carry WAC beyond university boundaries by bringing students face-to-face with members of the community and teaching the critical/creative thinking and writing skills necessary to solve real-world problems. Indeed, the writing assigned in MUCEP in many ways adds a third dimension to the traditional

writing-to-learn/learning-to-write paradigm—a dimension that might accurately be described as

"writing-to-serve."

Interviews

"Alison." Interviewed September 30, November 13, December 15, 2014.

"Cassie." Interviewed October 2, November 13, December 16, 2014.

"George." Interviewed October 2, November 10, December 16, 2014.

"Henry." Interviewed September 30, November 10, December 18, 2014.

"Lucas." Interviewed October 3, November 12, December 16, 2014.

"Sophia." Interviewed September 30, November 10, December 18, 2014.

Dr. Foley. Interviewed October 22 and December 15, 2014.

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Organization and Service Profile:

Length: 3-4 pages (12-point font, one inch margins)

This paper requires you to learn more about your organization and the people that it serves. You will need to interview the staff at your service site to get some of the information. You also might read annual reports, blogs, newsletters, news reports, whatever it takes to become informed about who you are working for, the population they serve, and what your organization is trying to achieve. You will need to do research for this paper, use a minimum of three sources, and provide a bibliography (MLA format). Each paper should include the following (please use the topic headings in your paper exactly as shown below):

A. Vision, Mission, and Goals of Community Organization and Population Served:

What is the agency trying to accomplish? What is the philosophy of the organization? What is its organizational structure? Research your agency/organization, interview your supervisor, and give a thorough and thoughtful description of your service site.

B. Description of the Population the Organization Serves:

What population does your office serve? What are their needs and challenges?

C. My Role Within the Community Organization:

What is your job? What responsibilities will you have? What are the organizations expectations of you? What will you contribute?

D. My Future Learning and Explorations:

What do you hope to learn? What skills would you like to develop? What issues do you hope to explore?

MUCEP Journals:
Guidelines and Suggestions

Purpose:

The purpose of your journal is to keep a record of your service and what you have learned. In addition, it is a record of your progress and provides us a context for grading your service activities. The journals give you the opportunity to:

*describe what you are doing,
*discuss your personal reactions and growth,
*explore social issues and challenges and what you are learning about the community,
*tie what your are experiencing through your service into our readings, class discussions and lecture,
*plan your future goals for your service—both in terms of your own learning AND the ways in which you hope to impact the site where you are working.

Format:

1. 12 point type, one inch margins, name, public health or youth section, number of journal, date in upper right hand corner.

2. Length should be 4.5-6 pages. Points will be deducted for papers less than 4.5 or more than 6 pages.

Contents of Journal #1 (same as Journal #3):

Journal #1 will have four sections. Each section should be labeled with the following headings (or 10% will be deducted from your grade):

A. Summary
B. Personal and Educational Development
C. Synthesis
D. Future Goals

A. Summary (minimum 1 page):

Purpose of the Summary Section:

*Review what you are accomplishing and reflect on your contributions to the organization
*Provide an overview of your service activities
*Document your service so that we may assess your effort and your progress
Contents of the Summary Section:

*Topic sentence that provides an overview of the first few weeks you have served
*Specific details about the tasks you completed, activities you participated in, training you received (make sure the details are relevant and important—not every detail you can think of fulfills the purpose of the summary. Avoid a disordered "brain dump.")
*Concluding sentence that wraps up the section

Personal and Educational Development (1.5-2 pages):

Purpose of Personal and Educational Development Section:

*Provide a context for you to think about and articulate what you are learning and how you are personally developing at your service site
*Own your learning
*Explore and understand what you are experiencing by thinking about it from multiple perspectives and contexts
*Learn to provide specific examples to back up a generalized assertion
*Provide a discussion of your development so that we may assess your work

Contents of the Personal and Educational Development Section:

*Topic sentence that introduces the experience you will be discussing and what you learned from it
*A specific experience/example from your service from which you learned something. (Note: By specific example we mean something like—"last Wednesday several members of the Board visited our organization for a tour and report. It was my job to put together the presentation, create the agenda, and set up the meeting and tour. I did x,y, and z as well as a, b, and c. From this experience I learned …)
*Concluding sentence that sums up what you learned

Note: You should choose **one** topic and discuss in detail with a specific example or examples from your service. Tell a story of something that happened, use thorough, descriptive detail, and draw conclusions.

Some of the topics and issues you may explore include:

*critical thinking—problem solving, practical deliberation and speculative thought
*self-esteem—sense of personal worth and competence
*sense of usefulness, or satisfaction in doing something worthwhile
*consciousness of personal values and beliefs reinforced in action
*openness to new experiences
*ability to take responsibility
*experiencing new identities
*exploration and experience of professional skills in the working world
*exploration of an academic major
*understanding and appreciation of people of diverse backgrounds and life situations
*understanding of citizenship and citizen responsibility

*ethical and moral development
*occupational contacts and skill enhancement
*observing and learning about effective leadership

C. Synthesis (1.5-2 pages):

Purpose of the Synthesis Section:

*Engage in a specific discussion of an important theme/themes discussed in your texts and in class
*Tie in service-work to class work
*Explore what you have learned in your reading and apply it to your service
*Explore what you have observed in your service and discuss how that facilitates netter understanding of your reading.
*Think, make connections, draw conclusions
*Use specific examples to support general assertions

Contents of Synthesis Section:

*Thesis sentence(s) that introduces both the theme from our reading that you will be writing about and how that ties to your service
*A minimum of a paragraph in which you describe and detail what you have observed and experienced through your service that reflects and ties to the theme you have discussed
*A minimum of a paragraph in which you discuss how the two tie together and what you have learned

Note: You will be required to thoroughly discuss/paraphrase/quote readings and lecture topics and tie them to your service. This will show that you read it and engaged in critical thinking.

D. Future Goals (1 paragraph):

Purpose of the Future Goals Section:

*Taking ownership ad responsibility for your learning
*Reflecting on and articulating what you want to learn and how you want to develop while you serve
*Thinking seriously about the impact you want to have on your organization
*Tracking your progress towards the goals you have set

Contents of the Future Goals Section:

*Topic sentence in which you provide an overview of what you will discuss in the paragraph
*Reflection on the ways that you want to impact your service site—what you hope to accomplish and what you want to get done that will forward the mission of the organization
*What important issues do you want to learn about and what professional skills do you want to explore?

*What you are doing or will do to reach these goals

Contents of Journal #2 (same as Journal #4):

Journal #2 will have four sections. Each section should be labeled with the following headings (or 10% will be deducted from your grade):

A. Summary
B. Personal and Educational Development
C. Synthesis
D. Future Goals

A. Summary (minimum 1 page):

Purpose of the Summary Section:

*Review what you are accomplishing and reflect on your contributions to the organization
*Provide an overview of your service activities
*Document your service so that we may assess your effort and your progress
Contents of the Summary Section:

*Topic sentence that provides and overview of the first few weeks you have served
***Specific details** about the tasks you completed, activities you participated in, training you received (make sure the details are relevant and important—not every detail you can think of fulfills the purpose of the summary. Avoid a disordered "brain dump.")
*Concluding sentence that wraps up the section

B. Community Issues and Challenges (1.5-2 pages):

Purpose of Community Issues and Challenges Section:

*Explore essential information about the community and individuals your organization serves
*Become a more informed and thoughtful server
*Better understand your organization, its connection to the community and its mission
*Serve your organization more effectively
*Practice researching important issues

Contents of Community Issues and Challenges Section:

*Thesis statement in which you outline the topic you have chosen, how it ties to your organization and who it serves, and an overview of the information you will present
*Facts, figures, implications about the issue you have researched. Define the issue and discuss it based on your research.
*How this issue ties to the organization that you are serving and also into your service activities
*Concluding sentence.
*Works Cited/Bibliography (Use MLA format. Three sources minimum)

Note: It is very important in this section of your journal to consider not only your individual placement site, but also the way in which the community at large, the state, and our nation experience these challenges. It is our expectation that you will ask questions, interview people, seek out information, statistics, data, and definitions, read the news, search the internet. In other words, in this section, you will have to seek out information. Some of the topics you may wish to explore include:

*Who does your non-profit/school/school/government site serve and why is it needed?
*Why are you needed?
*Who are you working with?
*What are the challenges your population faces?
*What are the public policy or political issues that are most important in your site?
*What are the social justice, accessibility, equality issues you are witnessing?
*How do we as a society try to meet the various needs of fellow members of our community?
*What challenges do your colleagues at the non-profit/school where you are working for face each day?
*How do they try to meet the needs of their clientele?

C. Synthesis (1.5-2 pages):

Purpose of the Synthesis Section:

*Engage in a specific discussion of an important theme/themes discussed in your texts and in class
*Tie in service-work to class work
*Explore what you have learned in your reading and apply it to your service
*Explore what you have observed in your service and discuss how that facilitates netter understanding of your reading.
*Think, make connections, draw conclusions
*Use specific examples to support general assertions

Contents of Synthesis Section:

*Thesis sentence(s) that introduces both the theme from our reading that you will be writing about and how that ties to your service
*A minimum of a paragraph in which you describe and detail what you have observed and experienced through your service that reflects and ties to the theme you have discussed
*A minimum of a paragraph in which you discuss how the two tie together and what you have learned

Note: You will be required to thoroughly discuss/paraphrase/quote readings and lecture topics and tie them to your service. This will show that you read it and engaged in critical thinking.

D. Future Goals (1 paragraph):

Purpose of the Future Goals Section:

*Taking ownership ad responsibility for your learning
*Reflecting on and articulating what you want to learn and how you want to develop while you serve
*Thinking seriously about the impact you want to have on your organization
*Tracking your progress towards the goals you have set

Contents of the Future Goals Section:

*Topic sentence in which you provide an overview of what you will discuss in the paragraph
*Reflection on the ways that you want to impact your service site—what you hope to accomplish and what you want to get done that will forward the mission of the organization
*What important issues do you want to learn about and what professional skills do you want to explore?
*What you are doing or will do to reach these goals

MUCEP Formal Proposal:

The purpose of this paper is to challenge you to use your experience and expertise to solve the social problems you have been observing this term. Create and propose a program that will in some way solve or at least help to solve the social problem you have chosen to research for this paper. Be sure to set goals and then discuss what programming should be implemented to reach them.

This should be a grass roots activity, occurring in our community, not a public policy paper. In addition, do not propose events or fundraisers, develop programs and projects that directly serve and engage the populations you discuss in your problem definition. This is not an event planning paper, it is a challenge to engage in community development.

Formal Proposal Format:

In your proposed program, be specific in terms of program activities, timetables, number of program personnel, etc. Use the following format, including the headings:

I. Problem definition (4-5 pages):

The problem definition should include significant research, both on the internet as well as library collections, and should include the following:

A. Background and Context: Set the stage for understanding the problem. What is its context? How did the situation develop?

B. Facts, figures, and implications: Present significant research information defining the problem, including facts, figures, and statistics that explain it. What is the issue or challenge, how and where does it occur, who does it affect? What are the statistics? What are the implications, and why is this problem of importance or significance? What makes this a problem that should be of interest to the people of this community? Is there a cost to our community associated with this problem? Is something already being done or planned to address this issue?

C. Effect on mid-Missouri and its citizens: What has occurred, or potentially could occur in our community because of the problem you have just defined?

II. Model Programs (2 pages):

What are the different programs in communities nationwide that you have encountered in your research. Give an idea how schools, non-profits or health care facilities have set ip programs to solve the problem you describe in Section I.

III. Proposed Program (5-6 pages):

A. Goals Statement: What are the goals of your proposed program? What do you hope to accomplish? Goals should be numbered and written in complete sentences (see sample paper).

B. Activities/Policies: How will you achieve these goals? What policies will you put in place or what activities will you do to accomplish your goals? Each activity you propose in your program should correspond directly (and numerically) to one of your goals in the goal statement. (see sample paper).

IV. Conclusion (1 paragraph):

Write a conclusion that takes into account what the problem is and sums up how you hope to solve it.

V. Works Cited/Bibliography:

You should include a *minimum* of 6 sources (no more than 3 from the internet, the other 3 must be sources from Ellis Library collections). Use standard MLA citation/notation guidelines. (Digital collections from Ellis Library are acceptable).

Special instructions: Your papers should be written in formal style (NO FIRST PERSON, no slang, no informal language). Use a works cited page; these papers will involve significant research, and that research should be appropriately documented. Plagiarism will be reported to the Vice-Provost of Undergraduate Studies, so be sure to use proper citations.

Problem Definition Assignment (Due November 12):

Purpose:

*To complete the first half of the formal proposal and begin thinking about your programmatic responses to the problem you have defined

Content of Assignment:

*Section I: Problem Definition from Formal Proposal assignment
*Outline of goals and activities
*Bibliography as defined in Formal Proposal assignment

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE CODING: INTERVIEW

Interviewee: Alison

Student in Dr. Foley's class (Public Health, Honors)/Second interview

Date and Time of Interview: 11/13/14, 12:30pm

Location: Bookmark Café, Ellis Library

Note: "J" refers to Johanna Saleska, "A" refers to Alison, the student participant. The codes are **bolded** in parentheses after the section of text to which they refer.

PARTIAL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT:

J: How has the course been going so far?

A: I really like it. I think it's been going well. I especially like the readings that we do in-class writes about. And I like my service site, so that's always good. **(Enjoying Service)**

J: Has anything been difficult?

A: I would say the big papers and the frequency of having to write so much. I haven't really taken a writing-intensive course before, so, it's just having the – I consider these papers long – and having them due kind of biweekly almost, usually. Like sometimes too it's hard because my service is flexible, so I have to make sure I'm going … like I can't concentrate my service in like one day and do a lot of service on that day – like I have to kind of spread it out so that I have topics to write about. **(Difficulties)**

J: What's difficult about writing the papers?

A: It's the frequency. And making sure that I'm doing things that are … these kinds of papers are hard to procrastinate on because they take so much time. Even writing them takes a while. Because I have to reflect upon things I haven't doing in a while … like service I haven't completed in a while. But overall I like the actual writing. **(Difficulties, Time Commitment)**

J: How has the service itself been going so far?

A: I think it's been going really well. They haven't had a lot of volunteers previously that actually committed a lot of their time and planned activities, even though my job as a volunteer is to come up with educational activities for the children to get them excited about the market, they haven't had experience in the past with volunteers actually conducting their own activities. They usually just kind of print things off the internet. So, they've responded well to my work. **(Addressing Community Needs, Feeling Useful)** I like interacting with the kids, too, now that they know me and I know them, it makes it's easier. When I come in, they come to me. I don't necessarily have to worry about so much getting the idea of what I'm doing out so that kids will come to me. **(Enjoying Service, Building Relationships)**

J: Can you talk more about the relationships you're forming with the kids at the market?

A: Yeah! There's one girl in particular … She comes to every market, and her mom is a teacher at the community Montessori school, and she had come to previous markets and actually planned an activity one time that had kids taking fruit and vegetables and making stamps with them. So like dipping them in paint after having them cut and making flower prints, like bell peppers look like flowers. And so her mom's really engaged in the market, and so I think that contributes to the girl's response to always wanting to come to the educational activities or whatever I have going on. But I think having her come to those attracts other kids coming over because it makes

it more comfortable for them. So I really like seeing her every week. And she get's really excited. Like one week I wasn't there, and the next week she was like, "I looked for you and didn't see you!" (laughs). And so I think that makes my job, coming up with activities, more exciting because I know the children actually like to do them, which was my goal. Instead of forcing them to learn things, I wanted them to actually enjoy it. **(Building Relationships, Addressing Community Needs, Enjoying Service, Telling Stories)**

J: Do you feel like you're making an impact there?

A: Yeah. I think that a lot of times parents are like, "I didn't even know the Farmer's Market was doing this … this is a good idea … " They'll tell me it's a good idea to have this. And it wasn't my idea, but it's just that the Farmer's Market hasn't focused a lot on this program. They just got a bunch of grant money, so that kinda helps, they're starting to think about more what they can do with it. **(Addressing Community Needs, Feeling Useful)** But, I think that the children are liking it. They come back. And one time I did face painting because I really like to paint. And that was kind of my incentive when I didn't know the children at the market to get the educational booth known at the market. So I had free face painting if they completed a scavenger hunt activity where they had to ask different vendors about where their food came from. They really liked that, and I'm surprised how many children hadn't had their faces painted before. And so they would come back and ask me to paint with them more because that's something I really like to do, and I feel like they can see that I really enjoy painting. So it makes them excited about doing that. So I try to make artsy activities. **(Building Relationships, Enjoying Service, Creativity)**

J: Do you feel like your learning anything from the service experience?

A: I've learned a lot about what interests children because when I first started working at the market there was community organizations that came in and set up the activities themselves, and some of them I could tell they didn't really cater the activity to what children would like to do. And I think that's really important – you can't force knowledge on someone or something. They actually have to want to learn. **(Addressing Community Needs, Defining "Service")** And so finding ways to get them excited about learning something was kind of a challenge that I hadn't really done before. I've babysat in the past, where I always do what the kids wanna do, but it's not like I'm focusing on teaching them something. So I think I had an idea in mind that I wanted them to take away, it was just having them want to take that … (laughs) … so that's kind of a learning experience. **(Building Relationships, Defining "Service")** Also, I didn't realize how hard, like *labor intensive* some of my responsibilities would be at the market. Like cleaning up from the market and such, there's a lot of heavy lifting with the tents for the booths and a lot of stuff that goes into storage has to be packed in a precise way, and I think that's kind of improved my work ethic too. **(Difficulties)** Like I don't want to slow down their system. I actually want to contribute to helping clean up, and I feel like if I take my time, or if I'm don't know where things go and I have to ask, that slows them down. And then I'm not helping, I'm only taking away from cleaning-up time. And so that's improved my work ethic, and kind of my attention to detail. Because I don't have to keep asking them where things go. **(Feeling Useful, Defining "Service")**

J: Do you see yourself continuing to volunteer with the Farmer's Market after the semester is over?

A: I think I would. It honestly just depends on what I'm doing next semester and if anything conflicts. I really enjoy doing it. **(Enjoying Service, Serving Long-Term)** The only problem

I'm running into is waking up early on Saturday mornings (laughs), because that's the one day I can sleep in. So it's a little bit of a struggle. Because I wake up usually at 6 to get there … depending on if I need to get materials together for the activity … usually around 6 though on Saturday mornings. That's usually the day I can sleep in … so that's really the only challenge. The timing of it. I think I'd continue though. I really think my service is meaningful, so.

(Difficulties, Time Commitment).

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE CODING: OBSERVATION FIELD NOTES

Dr. Foley Lecture, Week 10, 10/27/2014, 1:00pm

Note: The codes are **bolded** in parentheses after the section of text to which they refer.

On the PowerPoint projector screen as I walk in is the heading:

MUCEP Formal Proposal: If you were in charge of the world, what would you do?

As per usual on Mondays, Dr. Foley asks about the weekend. This past weekend was homecoming, so Dr. Foley asks if anyone has any "homecoming adventures" they would like to share. No one is speaking up. "How was your weekend?" she asks again. Somewhere near the front says, "Awesome." And Dr. Foley asks "why?" The student says something about getting to go to the game. Dr. Foley asks if anyone was in Addison's when it was "busted into" by a vehicle. Some of the students laugh and say the suspect was running for some office seat. Another student says he was there and that some people were actually seriously injured. He acted as a "first responder" and Dr. Foley has everyone in the class clap and cheer for him. **(Building Relationships, Storytelling, Having Fun)**

Dr. Foley talks about how she spent the weekend cleaning out sewage that backed up onto her first floor. After telling the story in some detail, she says her carpets are gone and most of her furniture, "but I do have insurance," she says. **(Storytelling)**

Dr. Foley moves on by asking, "What did we learn from the Poverty simulation?" She says first they'll talk about the simulation, then they'll move on to proposal writing.

Someone responds to her question with "it's hard." Dr. Foley says, "It's hard … It's hard out there! ... who agrees?" Nearly everyone raises a hand. Another student says, "even if you have the resources, there isn't enough time to get things done." Another mentions the difficulty in accessing help from agencies. Dr. Foley says that even though Columbia has over 300 agencies to help people in poverty, it's very difficult for the people to actually access those agencies. **(Systemic Problems, Empathizing)**

Another student says, "it's easy for things to go wrong." Here. Dr. Foley says, "When sewage bubbled up in my home, what did I have?" She goes on to list things like "insurance" and "Money for a deductable." … "I'm fine," she says. "But what about people who are living on the very edge?" **(Synthesizing, Storytelling)**

She asks, "Who had disaster strike during the simulation?" … "Who lost their home?" Several people raise their hands. Dr. Foley calls on Lucas who talks about how his family ran out of bus passes and couldn't get to work in order to make the money to pay their bills, and they lost their home. **(Storytelling, Empathizing)**

Another student says her father became violent and had to go to prison while she was left trying to pay bills—Even though in the simulation she was a teenager, because her name wasn't on any of the bills, she was unable to pay them and they lost their home. **(Storytelling, Empathizing)**

Dr. Foley asks, "Who went to jail?" A handful raise hands. "How many of you got in trouble for leaving your children home alone and had to go to jail because of it?" More hands raise. "These are real case studies," she says. **(Empathizing)**

Dr. Foley also asks if anyone got themselves into trouble by not getting receipts. One student says her family had to repay bills they'd already paid because they didn't have their receipts—they didn't know they needed them or even think to ask. Dr. Foley says there's one simulation organizer who makes it her mission to teach college kids that they need to ask for receipts. During simulations she'll often find some way to make them pay extra if they don't have receipts, etc. Dr. Foley says it's a "little trick she likes to play," and that its sort of a "motherly tough love approach" to teaching students to ask for receipts. **(Building Relationships, Learning from Others)**

Dr. Foley asks, "How many people went Bankrupt?" … "How many people lost their homes?" … "How many people couldn't pay their bills?" Handfuls of students raise their hands after each question. **(Empathizing)**

Dr. Foley says, "When you write your journals, think about how *Nickle and Dimed* and the poverty simulation tie together." **(Synthesizing)** She reminds students the most of the people who helped run the simulation either struggled themselves to get out of poverty, or are still struggling to get out of poverty and that most of them have college educations. She says the text and the simulation should help them "contextualize" what it means to be in poverty and would "make great synthesis material." **(Synthesizing)** She also says, "think of the people you're working with and where they are in life." **(Empathizing, Building Relationships)**

She asks if anyone has any further questions or comments about the simulation before asking, "How many of you found the simulation frustrating?" Almost everyone raises a hand … "How many though it was worthwhile, though?" Again, almost everyone.

Dr. Foley transitions to discussing the MUCEP formal proposal by first reminding students when it is due: At the end of the semester during finals week—"this is your final" for the class, she says.

She says that the proposal is split into two parts. The first part is due November 12th (about 3 weeks from now), and is the "Problem Definition and Outline of Proposal," which offers students the opportunity to think ahead about the kind of research they need to do in order to support the kind of programming they want to propose. **(Research)**

She says they second part of the paper—the formal proposal—is due at the end of the semester. She says she will collect the first half of the assignment and "edit them up" with comments and suggestions. She says she will be grading "every single one." (After she says this, Rebecca, who is sitting to my right leans over and says "Thank god."). Dr. Foley goes on to say that she will edit, critique, and make suggestions on the first half of the assignment so that students can make the necessary changes for their final formal proposals. **(Grading, Writing Feedback)**

"Too often," says Dr. Foley, "when we think about challenges, we say, 'wow—someone ought to do something about that.' … Well—something ought to be done, and you're the ones who ought to do it!" She says, "it's up to us" to make these kinds of changes and "programmatically react to a problem." … "So, why?" she asks. **(Empowering Students)**

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Dr. Foley switches the Powerpoint slide to a list that begins with the word "Leadership." Dr. Foley says that "Leadership" is the first reason they should be reacting to problems through programming. She says, "All of you are intelligent and amazing" and that the students "have been given the gifts." She asks, "Now—what will you do with them?" **(Empowering Students)**

The next thing on the list is "Community Development and Problem Solving." Dr. Foley says that it's not enough to volunteer somewhere a few times a week and expect change to occur. She says that she can think of multiple examples of real programs that were conceptualized and carried about by MU students that have made a tremendous impact on the community. She tells the students to "Think about how [they] can contribute." **(Empowering Students, Addressing Community Needs, Creating Social Change)**

Next on the list is "Critical Thinking and Professional Development." Dr Foley says that down the line in job interview, grad school applications, etc., "people will ask you to talk about their personal professional development. She says that this assignment gives the students the opportunity to tell those people specifically what kinds of service they did and problems they saw, how they proposed solutions to those problems and sent them to the actually organization, and how the organization is using those suggested solutions in some way. **(Personal Development)**

She says, "many individuals have fallen in love with their ideas … I encourage you to fall in love with your idea too." **(Empowering Students)**

Last on the list is "Taking the Next Step." Here Dr. Foley talks about the community leadership seminar course and the non-profit internship opportunity. She says, "we have funds in our department" to help make student proposals into a reality. She says, "If you have an idea you love, why don't we make that happen?" She says they can turn a student's proposal into an internship and also offer small amounts of funding. **(Empowering Students, Creating Social Change)**

The next slide reads, "How do I choose my topic?" Dr. Foley says that as she talks, students should start thinking about possible ideas: "Let this mull around in your mind," she says. She says that the topic, first, should "be relevant" to the students' service area. She asks, "Where are you serving?" and calls on a girl near the front who is serving at Boys and Girls Club. Dr. Foley says that her project therefore should involve that demographic. Another student says he is working at Adult Day Connection. Dr. Foley says one possible thing he might research would be "how Alzheimer's patients are worked with" in other places and how they are effected and what changes need to occur, etc. Another student is working in a childcare facility with low-income autistic children. Dr. Foley throws out another idea ("these are just ideas") about how she might look at the transition for autistic children from support at the program where she works to kindergarten at public schools and what that transition looks like and whether or not change could be implemented. **(Helping Students, Synthesizing, Research)**

She says that they will have a workshop on Wednesday to help students choose a topic. She also says that proposals shouldn't be something like, "We need more playground equipment." … "Of course we need more playground equipment—everyone needs more playground equipment," she says. She tells them to propose something that's not so obvious. **(Creating Social Change)**

She says that the issue should "be something you really care about," and that students probably have done research in other courses about policies that they could apply to this proposal, but that they shouldn't do that. She says if they don't truly care about the project, it will take them twice as long to write and will be twice as boring. She says if they really care about the issue and their idea, the proposal will be "easy to research and fascinating." **(Empowering Students, Research)**

She says, "There are very few things in like that are worthwhile that don't take a great deal of hard work … The work will be a great joy if you care about it. " She says, "That's what this assignment is for … Think about it." **(Empowering Students, Having Fun)**

The next part of the Powerpoint reads, "A Persuasive document." Dr. Foley says that the proposal should be persuasive and should show "you know what you're talking about." She says if they want someone to "buy in, give money, or support" the cause, it must be persuasive. In order for a proposal to be persuasive, it must show significant data and detail, that other agencies and organizations nationally have dealt with this problem, and that the student has "a good idea for solving/alleviating this problem" that takes into account research, experience, and model programs. The proposal must also show that the goals are "reasonable and attainable," otherwise the proposal will not be persuasive (Here, as an example, Dr. Foley says the Service-Learning program at MU began with 15 students and has grown to thousands). She adds that each proposal should also include a "detailed, well-conceived set of activities for reaching these goals."**(Discussions of Genre, Helping Students)**

"These are a blast to read," she says. **(Having Fun)**

The next Powerpoint slide reads, "The Format for this Assignment." The bullet points below match what is in the course packet, and as Dr. Foley points out, is also on the Blackboard page for the course.

She points out that there are three sections: I. The Problem Definition, II. Model Programs, and III. The Proposed Program.

First she asks, "What is the community we're talking about here?"

No one answers.

"Is it Madison, Wisconsin? … Is it Peoria, Illinois? … Anyone have any idea? … Could it be *Columbia?* … Is that okay with you all?" Dr. Foley says that Columbia, Missouri is the community they should be considering for their proposal ideas. She says that the problem definition should include the "Who, what, where, when, why, and how" of the problem. For an example, she talks about Alzheimer's patients. She says that is this is a student's topic, the prob. Def. should discuss what the disease is, how it is diagnosed, who it effects, what the financial implications are for the patient and their families, what the effect is on the community and citizens, if there are enough resources, if there is enough support for families, etc. **(Addressing Community Needs)**

For the "Model Programs" section, Dr. Foley says that students can learn from looking at other programs in other parts of the country or internationally. She says that looking at these programs will help students build off information that already exists and to "contribute to existing ideas."

She adds, "And you all have ideas to contribute." **(Empowering Students, Addressing Community Needs, Learning from Others)**

For the "Proposed Program" section, she says students should list goals and the specific activities that need to be done in order to help make those goals come true.

Here, Dr. Foley apologizes for "doing all the talking" and reminds students they will workshop these proposals later in the week.

The final section is the "conclusion" where students will "tie it all together."

The last section Dr. Foley talks about is the "Bibliography." She says students will need 5 sources minimum and at least two of them need to be from the MU Library Collections. She asks if anyone has used the library and one student talks about how "awesome" the online chat with a librarian is. Dr. Foley says the library is beautiful place and the librarians can help students save hours of research for this project. She also says that students shouldn't stop at five sources if their research is incomplete: "You're done researching when your done researching," she says, "That could be 10 sources, or 20 sources … it might be five, but I doubt it." **(Research, Helping Students)**