

## Service as Text: Making the Metaphor Meaningful

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*The primary audience for this article are faculty who utilize or wish to utilize a service-learning pedagogy. One of the most effective ways for faculty to conceptualize and operationalize this pedagogy is to configure the service activity as an actual course text. When service is conceived in this way, faculty are implicitly prompted to answer the two questions that should frame any service-learning course: (1) What type of service text should I assign, and (2) How will I meaningfully incorporate the service text with other texts utilized in the class? This paper uses interdisciplinary theory to help faculty formulate detailed responses to each of these crucial questions. In doing so, it focuses on the "learning" side of the service-learning equation.<sup>1</sup>*

From a faculty perspective one of the most constructive ways to conceptualize service-learning is to refine the pedagogically purposeful metaphor "service as text" (Morton, 1996; Varlotta, 1996). Unfortunately, service-learning's own theory is insufficiently developed to explicate this metaphor. Therefore, a related theoretical framework—interdisciplinary theory—is, for two reasons, an appropriate choice:<sup>2</sup>

1. Interdisciplinary theory introduces an assortment of terms—"partial," "full," "narrow," and "broad"—that can help faculty contemplate and, ideally, answer the question: What type of service text should be utilized in this course? Faculty may assign, for example, a one-time or short-term project, dubbed a "partial" text; or, they may expect students to uphold an ongoing service commitment, labeled a "full" text. Additionally, faculty may require a "narrow" service text in which all students work on related projects at the same agency, or "broad" texts in which each student works on a unique service project.
2. Interdisciplinary theorists utilize terms like "multidisciplinary," "crossdisciplinary," and "interdisciplinary" to describe and differentiate various types of disciplinary integration. Because service itself is not a discipline, interdisciplinary's terminology—one that reflects the integration of *disciplinary* perspectives—is not completely transferable to service-learning. When service is configured as a text, however, the prefixes of interdisciplinarity's terminology ("multi," "cross," and "inter") can be affixed to the root word "text" to answer the question, How will the service text be meaningfully integrated with other course texts

(e.g., films, books, journal articles)? A cross-textual course, for example, will integrate the service text more fully than a multitextual course but less fully than an intertextual one.

This paper does more than simply raise the pedagogical questions that too few have posed. It uses interdisciplinarity to offer viable answers.

### What Types of Service Texts are Feasible?

Interdisciplinary theory can help faculty conceptualize at least four types of service texts. Two types of service texts may be described by invoking the "broad" and "narrow" rhetoric of interdisciplinarians Van Dusseldorp and Wigboldus (1994), the other two by employing the "full" and "partial" terminology of William Newell (1998).

#### *Broad or Narrow Service Texts*

For Van Dusseldorp and Wigboldus (1994), a "broad" interdisciplinary course pulls together a wide range of disciplines. An example of such a course is one that draws from a liberal arts discipline like philosophy, a natural science like chemistry, and a social science like anthropology. Such a diversity of disciplines entertain a broad range of inquiries, coin and utilize a broad variety of terms, and construct a broad assortment of arguments. A "narrow" interdisciplinary course, on the other hand, pulls together a more related set of disciplines. An example of this type of course is one that draws from three natural sciences, e.g., biology, chemistry, and physics.

Though service itself is not a discipline, interdisciplinary terminology can provide service-learning instructors with two important options in course design. First, faculty may choose to design and teach a "broad" service-learning class in which individual

students or student groups are engaged in very different types of projects. In a broad class, faculty may allow each student to choose a unique service-learning project, or cluster students in groups and assign a different project to each group (e.g., one group of students may be working with homeless men at a local shelter, a second may be volunteering at a YWCA's outreach program that assists survivors of domestic violence, and a third group may be supervising after school programs at a junior high school).

To determine whether or not to use a broad approach to service-learning, faculty might consider some of the pros and cons associated with this approach. On the positive side, numerous university-community partnerships can be forged through a broad service-learning class that engages various community-based organizations (CBOs). Hence, this approach may work well for urban universities surrounded by a plethora of agencies that need and request volunteers. Here, faculty can use service-learning to address the multiple and disparate issues emerging in the community. Potentially, then, the broad approach is both advantageous to the community and professionally stimulating to faculty as it requires them to integrate into their course students' experiences from a wide range of service sites and projects.

On the negative side, the communication and coordination involved in multiple placements can be very time consuming. Because supervision, agency expectations, hours of operation, and potential risks vary from site to site, faculty must spend a great deal of out-of-class time communicating with each site supervisor. In addition, faculty must spend a great deal of in-class time allowing students from various sites to "bring others up to date" on what they are doing, who they are serving, and what it is they are learning.

As opposed to the broad course, a "narrow" service-learning course requires all students to work on the same or related projects at a single agency. This approach may be appropriate for universities situated in small towns or rural areas in which community-based agencies do not abound. In these areas, a single agency might be able to tackle more issues or serve more clients when twenty college students commit to working with their particular program(s).

There are logistical and academic advantages associated with a narrow service-learning course. In terms of the former, the service in a narrow class is typically easier to coordinate than the service in a broad one. Similarly, it is easier for a professor to maintain communication with a single CBO than with multiple ones. From a learning perspective, a narrow class is likely to create a "connected" ambience as a cohesive community of learners reflects on

its common service text. Here, each student in the class has an informed understanding of what his/her classmates are doing at the agency, and all students know the key issues, concerns, and "players" at the site. Reflection in a narrow course may be deeper and more analytical, as cursory updates, summaries, or introductions are precluded in this arrangement.

The major disadvantage associated with narrow courses is that accountability and responsibility are diffused. In narrow classes where twenty students serve at the same site, it may be difficult for both the agency director and the course instructor to differentiate each student's service effort. Therefore, the agency director must continuously ensure that each student is pulling his/her own weight at the site. At the same time, the faculty member must make sure that all students are engaged in educationally purposeful service that augments both individual and communal learning.

The terms "broad" and "narrow" remind faculty that they can weave service into coursework in at least two very different ways—requiring a common service text or assigning students to (or allowing them to choose) individual service texts. The broad-narrow differentiation provides pedagogical options rather than pedagogical prescriptions. No hierarchy is implied in these options: a broad class may be best suited for some faculty, universities, students, and communities, while a narrow class may be a better fit for others.

#### *Partial or Full Service Text*

While Van Dusseldorp and Wigboldus (1994) theorize the broad and narrow forms of interdisciplinarity, William Newell (1998), another interdisciplinarian, describes the "partial" and "full" approaches. From this view, a "partial" course integrates its constitutive disciplines on a "component level." A partial course may integrate the *terminology* of each constitutive discipline to answer a course question, or the *research techniques* of each to conduct a class experiment, or the *key readings* from each discipline to explore an issue. A "fully" interdisciplinary class, on the other hand, would integrate all (or most) of these components during the course of the semester. In a fully interdisciplinary sociology/psychology class that explores a complex theme like ethnic prejudice, for example, an instructor might first assign key "ethnic" readings from each discipline. The instructor may then compare and contrast the disciplinary terminology utilized throughout the readings. After students have mastered a basic understanding of fundamental terms and prevalent theories, the instructor may prompt them to generate the types of questions or arguments posed by psychologists and sociologists who study ethnic prejudice.

Finally, the faculty member might expect students to propose or conduct an interdisciplinary experiment informed by the theories, data, terminology, and questions they have studied all semester.

In applying Newell's terminology to service-learning, a "partial" service-learning course may draw from one or two short but potentially intensive service projects. A women's studies course that requires all students to visit a battered women's shelter on a designated weekend and explain (in class) how their service experience helps them to understand "co-dependency" and "material power" may be labeled a partial service-learning class.

Using the same women's studies example, a "full" course would assign a semester-long project that requires students to visit the shelter regularly throughout the term. Rather than use service as a one-time text to interpret two terms (co-dependency and material power), a full course might utilize the service text to explore major terms, key theories, prominent experiments, hallmark writings, significant data, etc.

Like the broad and narrow types described above, advantages and disadvantages are associated with partial and full service texts. One of the most appealing features of a partial course is that the service component has a clearly identified beginning and end. This can be seen positively for a number of different reasons. First, the brevity of this type of service may make it low-risk for students who are ambivalent or skeptical about serving. Partial programs that require a relatively small commitment may provide students who would otherwise not serve an opportunity to experiment in a service-based activity. Second, the brevity of a partial program lends itself to the "retreat-style" format that many students enjoy. Partial courses, for example, may require students to spend a weekend, a spring break, or a holiday vacation participating in a service project. If they stay together on or near the site, students may forge long-lasting bonds as they work, relax, retreat, and recreate together. Third, partial programs may force faculty, students, and community partners to set realistic expectations for the program. Typically, it is easier to determine what feasibly can be accomplished during a weekend program than during a semester-long project. Fourth, faculty frequently find it easier to arrange and/or obtain university assistance for short-term projects than for semester-long ones. On many campuses, for instance, it is possible for students to secure the use of university vehicles for short-term service retreats. Moreover, these particular types of service activities (i.e., retreats, alternative spring breaks, urban plunges) are often supported, both financially and logistically, by university offices that promote ser-

vice programs.

Despite the advantages mentioned above, there are at least two critical limitations associated with partial programs. First, it may be difficult for students to establish and maintain relationships with the servees. The clients at a homeless shelter, for example, may be hesitant to engage in any type of meaningful conversation with students who are only scheduled to work for a day or two. On a related note, it may be the case that the types of projects undertaken in partial classes are superficial. It is doubtful that students can complete any type of meaningful project if they are spending only one or two days at the service site. Substantive projects that potentially have long-lasting benefit typically require more time than a partial class model affords.

"Full" service-learning classes may avoid some of the problems mentioned above. First, a full class is more likely to sustain the server-seeve relationship as it requires students to visit the same agency throughout the course of an entire semester. Second, these long-term commitments lend themselves to more substantial community projects. Students who serve regularly at a local agency may become an integral part of that environment. Without regular volunteers, many agencies would find it difficult to maintain the programs and services for which they are responsible. Finally, a full class may create a "service habit." By serving continuously throughout the term, students may come to see service not only as something they do now, but also as something they want to continue.

On the down side, student interest may periodically wane during a full semester project. To reduce the likelihood of diminishing interests, faculty must creatively revisit the service text throughout the course. For example, faculty might need to dedicate a portion of class during week one, four, eight, and twelve to discussing the service text and its relationship to other course materials. Such discussions can be stimulating, but time consuming as well.

As introduced in Part One, interdisciplinarity's "broad and narrow" and "full and partial" terminology helps faculty conceptualize and then choose various types of service texts,<sup>3</sup> thereby addressing the question, What type of service is best? To help faculty answer the second question, How can the service text that I have chosen be integrated with other course texts, we now turn our attention to other terms utilized in the interdisciplinarity literature.

### **How Can the Service Text Be Integrated With Other Course Texts?**

According to Markus, Howard and King (1993), service-learning is grounded upon the notion that

community-based service (i.e., practice) is integrated with in-class academic work (i.e., theory) so that each will inform, confirm, and challenge the other:

We found that the academic payoffs of having students engage in community service are substantial when the service activity is integrated with traditional classroom instruction. The key word here is *integrated*. The kinds of service activities in which students participate should be selected so that they will illustrate, affirm, extend, and challenge material presented in readings and lectures. (p. 417)

These service-learning educators rightly accentuate the importance of integration, but they neither fully describe the multiple ways integration occurs nor carefully theorize the intricate ways it can be conceptualized.

When service-learning pedagogues fail to explicitly define “integration,” they are unlikely to answer—or even pose—the critical “how-to-integrate” question. Unless this question is thoughtfully entertained, curriculum revision is impeded. After all, faculty who are new to, or skeptical of, service-learning are unlikely to redesign a course around an underdeveloped concept (i.e., integration). Simply “telling” faculty to integrate service into their course is insufficient, as most instructors want to hear “how” integration can be structured. Interdisciplinarity terminology may help faculty answer this “how-to” question.

#### *Overview of Interdisciplinary Terminology*

Interdisciplinarians theorize integration by conceptualizing the relationship between the various disciplines utilized in their class (Newell & Green, 1982). They use the term “multi-disciplinary” to describe a class where several disciplinary perspectives are introduced but not integrated. They use the term “crossdisciplinary” to describe a class where one discipline is used to analyze another. A crossdisciplinary class integrates the disciplines more fully than a multidisciplinary one. But in a crossdisciplinary class, one discipline operates as the tool of analysis, and the other as the subject of analysis. Because the former is utilized as the lens, or the frame of reference from which the other is interpreted, evaluated, or judged, it maintains a position of power or privilege throughout the course. Unlike the crossdisciplinary course that habitually valorizes one discipline over the other(s), however, an “interdisciplinary” class uses each discipline to confirm and challenge the other discipline(s); no single discipline is habitually privileged (i.e., immune to scrutiny) as each is, at one time or another, the probe and the probed.

Again, because service is not a discipline, per se, this terminology is not completely transferable to service-learning. However, when service is configured as a text, the prefixes of interdisciplinarity’s terminology (“multi,” “cross,” and “inter”) can be affixed to the root word “text” to describe three types of textual integration:

1. Multitextual integration—the service text is an optional one that is recommended, but not required, for the course.
2. Crosstextual integration—service is a required text, but it often becomes subordinate to the theoretical text(s) in the course.
3. Intertextual integration—the service text (as a form of practice) and the academic texts (as forms of theory) mutually inform each other so that neither habitually occupies a privileged position in the course.

These terms have theoretical and pedagogical importance for service-learning because they describe three forms of textual integration for faculty consideration as they design a service-learning course.

#### *The Multitextual Course*

As the prefix “multi” and the root word “text” denote, a multitextual service-learning course is one that utilizes several texts. In this particular type of course, service is a text that is recommended but not required. For example, a multitextual “World Religions” course may award extra credit to students who volunteer at faith-based centers associated with local churches, mosques, synagogues, or temples. In this case, the course requires all students to read excerpts from the Bible, the Torah, and the Koran and from secondary sources that analyze each of the primary scriptures, but only recommends a service text (i.e., volunteer participation in the faith-based groups) to give interested students the opportunity to experience how various faiths practice their religion. Here, the service text functions as an optional one: students explore it on their own time, outside the classroom. As such, it is not often integrated into classroom activities. It is unlikely, in other words, that faculty will rely explicitly on this text to illuminate key issues, themes, or details introduced in the primary scriptures or secondary sources. Thus, the service text itself is not carefully examined nor used as a pedagogical probe for analyzing other texts used in class.

The multitextual course is hardly an ideal one for integrating course theory and service-learning practice. Indeed, its failure to intentionally integrate the service text with other course texts makes its educa-

tional value suspect. Given its academic shortcomings, perhaps the multitextual course is best conceived as a gateway to service-learning. A new faculty member, or a service-learning novice may “test the *teaching* waters” by recommending service as an optional text. Similarly, first year students, or those new to service-learning, may use a multitextual course to “test the *learning* waters.” Clearly the multitextual type course is not the one toward which service-learning faculty should aspire. But it may be the one for faculty beginning their service-learning journey.

### *The Crosstextual Course*

Recognizing the inherent problems associated with a course that merely recommends service, faculty may design a “crosstextual” course in which service is required. As a required text, the service is integrated more fully with other course texts than would be in the multitextual class. By definition, however, crosstextual integration always precedes in a unilateral direction, usually theory to practice: theory  $\Rightarrow$  practice. When a crosstextual course promotes a theory-to-practice translation, the theoretical text(s) take academic priority over the service text. In other words, theory is utilized to probe, scrutinize, and critique practice (i.e., the service text), but the service is not similarly utilized to analyze and scrutinize the theory.

Professional experience at service-learning meetings and conferences suggests that many service-learning courses fall into a crosstextual category that privileges the academic text over the service text. In these courses, faculty instruct students to apply classroom theory to their out-of-classroom experiences. This seems especially common in upper-division theory courses that provide in-depth analysis of a specific perspective, such as “John Dewey’s Theory of Education” or “Marxist Interpretations of Culture.” In such courses, faculty ask students to use theory to analyze and dissect that which they observe and experience at the service site. Here, faculty may ask students to answer questions such as: “What advice would Dewey offer to improve the academic and co-curricular programs featured at the school being served”? Or, “Drawing from the three Marxist theories discussed this semester (classical, neo, and feminist Marxism), which one could be used to revise Food Bank X’s mission statement to shift the emphasis from its ‘Lunch Line’ program to its counseling outreach program?” Ideally, students’ responses to such question not only augment their own learning but also may improve the contribution the students make to the organization being served.

Neither of the aforementioned examples illustrates another type of crosstextual course—one

much less common—that requires students to translate practice to theory: practice  $\Rightarrow$  theory. This type of crosstextual course would habitually use the service text to test theory. The theoretical text in this case is the subject of inquiry. It is scrutinized by the service text that operates as the tool of analysis. This practical probe of the theoretical may be catalyzed by regularly posing questions such as these: Based on your concrete experience at High School X, describe two or three ideas that Dewey’s theory of democratic education ignores or trivializes. Or, based on your personal work with female clients at the food bank, how do real life identities—those constituted by race, socioeconomic class, and sexual orientation—challenge the foundational assumptions of classical Marxism? How can Marxist theory be improved to take into account such complex identities? If feasible, students might share their responses (to these questions and others posed throughout the course) with the organization being served.

Regardless of the academic direction (theory  $\Rightarrow$  practice or practice  $\Rightarrow$  theory) instructors of a crosstextual course should insure that all participants (students, CBOs, clients, etc) potentially benefit. After all, mutual benefit or reciprocity is a cornerstone of service-learning. Mutual benefit does not mean, however, that all participants give and receive the same exact things. The benefits that students experience in service-learning (e.g., increased comprehension of course material, more developed critical thinking skills, growing interest in their academic major) may vary significantly from the benefits enjoyed by the agency (e.g., more one-on-one attention with clients, timely delivery of programs, additional staff hours). Nevertheless, it is imperative for faculty to insure, ideally in collaboration with the community organization, that some benefits accrue for all service-learning participants.

The chart on the following page provides a comprehensive overview of crosstextuality by combining the types of service texts introduced in Part One with the more common theory  $\Rightarrow$  practice course described above. The chart first defines four forms that the crosstextual course may take (partial and narrow, partial and broad, full and narrow, and full and broad), provides a concrete example of each, identifies the audience to whom this particular option may appeal, and summarizes a few of the strengths and weakness associated with each.

### *The Intertextual Course*

The third type of textual integration that faculty might choose for their service-learning course is “intertextual” integration. In an intertextual course, service and theory are mutually informing. Neither the theoretical text nor the service text habitually

FIGURE 1

Overview of Four Types of Theory  $\Rightarrow$  Practice Crosstextual Courses.

Partial & Narrow	<p><i>Definition:</i> All students are required to participate in the same one-time or short-term project. This project is analyzed by the theoretical texts used in the course.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> As a mandatory part of ECON 335, students participate in a five day alternative spring break project with Habitat for Humanity. Upon return, they are required to write an essay that addresses this question: How would the author of our textbook explain the purpose, importance, and problems of an organization like Habitat for Humanity?</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Upper class students who are capable of translating theory to practice in concrete ways.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> Short-term projects may be easier to coordinate than on-going ones. The shared service experience may strengthen relationships between students and facilitate class reflection.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> The service text itself is probed, but the instrument of analysis (i.e., the theory) remains untouched. Furthermore, this uni-directional translation of theory to practice is an “academic” exercise that may not significantly benefit the agency.</p>
Partial & Broad	<p><i>Definition:</i> Individual students, or student groups, choose or are assigned their own service project. This project is a mandatory one that will be analyzed by course theory.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Students in ECON 335 are required to choose a one-time service project from a “menu” supplied by the instructor. Students can work on their own project or work on a project with 2-3 other students.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Same as above.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> When students choose their own project, they may feel more ownership for it. This ownership may prompt them to see the relevance in the theory to practice translation.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> May be time consuming both logistically (generating lists of sites and communicating with personnel at those sites) and pedagogically (structuring reflection that focuses on multiple sites).</p>
Full & Narrow	<p><i>Definition:</i> For the better part of an entire semester, all students in the class serve at the same agency. The activities they perform are examined through the theoretical lens of the course.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Each of the students in ECON 335 works at a local food bank throughout the semester.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Students who have both the requisite academic skills and the time and energy to uphold an ongoing service commitment.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> Students share a common ongoing experience that lends itself to class discussion. The extended time they serve allows students to develop and maintain relationships with each other and the community partners they serve.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> May be difficult for commuter students. Some agencies cannot handle 20 students. Faculty and on-site supervisors must work at keeping the service meaningful. Long-term commitments can wane. Accountability and responsibility can be diffused when 20 students are serving the same site.</p>
Full & Broad	<p><i>Definition:</i> Each student or student group serves at a different agency. Numerous agencies are served by a single class.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> In ECON 335, students choose their own project and they work at the same site throughout the semester. If a student does not have a preference, the professor assigns him/her a site and a project.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Same as the Full and Narrow Course.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> Extended commitment allows relationships to develop between servers and servees.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> Difficult or time consuming for faculty to coordinate multiple projects. Students at one site may have no idea what students at the other sites are doing. This may interfere with quality classroom discussion.</p>

occupies the privileged position, nor is either immune from scrutiny or modification. Here, the terminology and theory from traditional texts (i.e., textbooks, films, novels, or course readers) are used to explain, support, and/or challenge practices or policies at the service site. Corespondingly, the service experience is used to confirm and/or contradict the theories and concepts presented in the course’s textbooks, films, journal articles, etc.

This does not necessarily mean that theory and

practice are eternally balanced, with each contributing equally to emerging perspectives. Because there will be times when theory needs to inform the practices unfolding at the site, and other times when service experiences are needed to challenge the presuppositions of theory, service and theory will alternately hold the position of privilege.

In an intertextual course, then, theory and practice critically inform each other so that a new, more comprehensive perspective emerges. Importantly, this

new perspective is not simply an additive one formed by the sum of its parts. Because an intertextual course uses the theoretical and service text as both the object and subject of analysis, each informs and ultimately improves the other. By refining both abstract theory and concrete practice, service-learning instructors and students become critical theorists and reflective practitioners. For these reasons, inter-

textual integration is arguably the model to which service-learning instructors should aspire. Given that this bilateral integration (theory ↔ practice) is complex, an intertextual course may be best utilized by veteran service-learning instructors who teach upper-division or applied theory classes. As in the previous section, I conclude this section with the same summary-analysis chart.

FIGURE 2  
*Overview of Four Types of Intertextual Courses.*

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Partial &amp; Narrow</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> All students participate in the same service activity. As a requirement of the course, this service text functions as both an object of, and tool for, analysis.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> All students in PHIL 465, “Theories and Political Activities of Liberal Philosophers,” spend their Fall Break at a non-profit residential center for pregnant, drug-addicted women. Upon return, they write an essay that explains (1) How their service supports &amp; challenges John Rawls’ notion of the rational, autonomous self, and (2) How Rawls’ theory of distributive justice could support and legitimize the center’s pleas for local and state subsidies.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Upper class students who are capable of translating theory to practice and practice to theory in concrete ways.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> Short-term projects are easier to coordinate than on-going ones. The shared service experience may strengthen relationships amongst students and facilitate a discussion that catalyzes the bilateral theory practice translation.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> To orchestrate effective bilateral theory practice translation, faculty must spend considerable time structuring the reflection process. Because this process is more than a mere academic exercise, on-site supervisors should also be included. Such inclusion takes time and energy to coordinate.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Partial &amp; Broad</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Individual students, or student groups, choose or are assigned their own service project. This project is a mandatory one that will analyze and be analyzed by course theory.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Students in PHIL 465 are required to choose a one-time service project from a “menu” supplied by the instructor. Students can work on their own project or work on a project with 2-3 other students.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Same as the partial and narrow course.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> When students choose their own project, they may feel more ownership for it. This ownership may prompt them to take the bilateral theory practice translation seriously. Both theory &amp; practice are potentially improved.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> May be time consuming logistically (generating lists of sites and communicating with personnel at those sites) and pedagogically (structuring reflection that focuses on multiple sites).</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Full &amp; Narrow</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Throughout the semester, all students in the class serve at the same agency. The uniform service text examines and is examined by the other texts utilized in the course.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Each of the students in PHIL 465 volunteers at the local NAACP chapter throughout the semester.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Students who have both the requisite academic skills and the time and energy to uphold the ongoing service commitment.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> Students share a common ongoing experience that facilitates the theory practice translation. Thus, learning is augmented and community practices may be improved. The extended time they serve allows students to develop and maintain relationships with each other and the community partners they serve.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> May be difficult for commuter students. Some agencies cannot handle 20 students. Faculty and on-site supervisors must work at keeping the service meaningful. Long term commitments can wane. Accountability and responsibility can be diffused when 20 students are serving the same site.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Full &amp; Broad</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Each student or student group volunteers (on an ongoing basis) at a different agency. The individual student maintains the same site assignment, but there may be numerous agencies served by a single class.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> In PHIL 465, students choose their own project and work at the same site throughout the semester. If they do not have a preference, the professor assigns a site and a project to them.</p> <p><i>Appropriate Users:</i> Same as the Full and Narrow Course.</p> <p><i>Pros:</i> Extended commitment allows relationships to develop between servers and servees.</p> <p><i>Cons:</i> Difficult or time consuming for faculty to coordinate multiple projects. Students at one site may have no idea what students at the other site are doing. This lack of familiarity may interfere with quality classroom discussion.</p>

## Conclusion

Service-learning educators can use interdisciplinarity to stretch the service-as-text metaphor. Such an alliance is extremely beneficial, for the following reasons:

1. *Along with the theory of reciprocity, interdisciplinarity helps to differentiate service-learning from other forms of service.* My visits to campuses throughout the country reveal that increasing numbers of students, faculty, academic administrators, and student affairs professionals are becoming generally familiar with “service-learning.” When I ask faculty and staff to talk specifically about service-learning pedagogy, however, there is often-times some hesitation or confusion. Presumably, this is because service-learning is still conflated (on some campuses) with community service and volunteerism. From an academic perspective, it is crucial to differentiate service-learning from community service and volunteerism, as the latter forms of service typically focus more on the service provided than on the learning potential (Furco, 1996). One of the most effective ways to help faculty structure the learning side of the equation is to prompt them to configure the service itself as a text. When faculty think about service as a text, they begin to address the pedagogical questions that frame this article.
2. *Interdisciplinarity illuminates numerous options in course design.* As argued throughout this article, service-learning pedagogy—as both an academic concept and an educational practice—is still under-developed. Most faculty, especially service-learning novices, do not have the time nor the training to carefully conceptualize the types of service options that might make sense for their particular course. Bearing these limitations in mind, the two charts offered herein (a) delineate eight distinct models of service-learning courses, (b) summarize the pros and cons associated with each, and (c) suggest the type of student for whom each course is appropriate. Ideally, these charts will assist service-learning educators to conceptualize and ultimately operationalize their own service-learning pedagogy.
3. *Interdisciplinarity creates—or at least augments—a vocabulary for service-learning faculty to use when describing their own teaching.* At almost every campus in the country, promotion and tenure decisions are based on three main criteria: research, teaching, and service.
4. *Interdisciplinarity introduces to established service-learning theorists and practitioners a set of concepts that they can use, refine, and further develop as they facilitate faculty development institutes, conference sessions, and professional workshops.* Simply put, conference and workshop attendees neither want a service-learning sales pitch nor a service-learning mandate. To use the words of one participant, “We want relevant information that will allow us to make decisions for our own students, classes, and universities.” The terminology introduced in this article should help faculty answer the following types of questions: Why should I utilize this type of pedagogy, what type of “extra” work will service-learning generate, what is the best way to ease into service-learning, and where should my students serve?
5. *Interdisciplinarity reminds senior administrators who call for service-learning that there is no simple or uniform way to implement a service-learning program.* As convocation addresses, commencement speeches, and orientation greetings make clear, some of the strongest advocates for service-learning on many campuses are university presidents, provosts, and deans. It is important that those who call for expanding service-learning to be in a position to contribute to setting its overall direction. Does the president or provost, for example, expect faculty to initiate on-going relationships with the community by teaching “full” service-learning courses? Or would campus leaders be equally satisfied with several one-day service projects where students log an eight-hour shift? If faculty opt for nar-



row projects that serve relatively few numbers of CBOs, are the deans and department chairs ready to field questions from “concerned” community members who want volunteers at their agency? Before university leaders rally the troops around service-learning, they first ought to inventory the types of service-learning options currently in place at their institution. Second, they should articulate their plan for the future, informing faculty about models that they would like them to offer. Again, the lists and taxonomies presented here can help leaders to review the current state of offerings and to plan—responsibly and realistically—for future directions.

As argued throughout this paper, interdisciplinarity does more than make meaning out of a metaphor. It prompts faculty to conceptualize and operationalize a pedagogy that can augment student learning, address real-life community needs, and enhance their own teaching skills. Ideally, then, this article can help faculty realize the pedagogical potential of the commonly invoked, but until now only dimly illuminated, service-as-text metaphor.

### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> This focus does not suggest that the learning side is more important than the service side of service-learning. Rather it identifies this paper as a pedagogical tool to help faculty choose a course design that augments student learning.

<sup>2</sup> “Interdisciplinarity” does not exist as a monolith. Indeed there are various, and at times, conflicting camps subsumed under this label. I want to be clear from the onset, however, that my particular deployment of the term connotes neither a rejection nor complete combination of the disciplines themselves. Accordingly, it should be explicitly distinguished from “adisciplinarity” and “transdisciplinarity.” Because adisciplinarians believe that disciplines are “misguided,” they attempt to abandon or completely dismantle them. Transdisciplinarians, on the other hand, believe in the unity of all knowledge; therefore, they want to create a meta or “superdiscipline” (See Newell & Green, 1982). Resisting the directions charted by each of these terms, I utilize “interdisciplinar-

ity” to denote the purposeful integration of disciplinary perspectives. For me, interdisciplinarity refers to the process of using more than one academic discipline to examine a question, issue, or concern too broad to be addressed by a single discipline. This definition is borrowed directly from J.T. Klien & W. Newell (1996).

<sup>3</sup> As will be delineated in forthcoming charts, these approaches can be *combined* in pedagogically-purposeful ways such that a faculty member can opt to teach a partial and narrow course, a partial and broad course, a full and narrow course, or a full and broad course.

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