

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CASE METHOD RESEARCH & APPLICATION

## Editorial

### Letter from the Guest Editors' Desks

Welcome to the first special issue of the International Journal of Case Method Research & Application – IJCRA. The issue is devoted to the topic of service-learning – an interactive teaching methodology that is closely aligned with a number of the primary objectives of WACRA®, the World Association for Case Method Research & Application, the parent organization for IJCRA. These mutual objectives include: (1) advancing the use of the case method in teaching, (2) encouraging research using the case method; (3) coordinating case writing and case application activities; and (4) encouraging cooperation between the public sector, the business community, and other case-oriented professions.

Service-learning is a form of case method teaching. In this issue, many of the authors have referred to their service-learning exercises as the “live case” approach. While there may be disagreement as to whether the term “case” is applicable to every service-learning project (the term “exercise” may be more appropriate for some), the term “live case” is drawn from the fact that service-learning projects require students to engage with real-world organizations in real-time projects. In the figurative sense of the word, the cases are *alive* – the organizations are functioning, the issues are changing, the data are only as good as the students who are working on the project, and there are no known answers at the commencement of the case. Service-learning projects are interactive – stated simply, they are “cases gone live.”

Service-learning is a teaching tool that is currently receiving a high level of international exposure. As you will read in two of the papers in this issue [Kenworthy-U'Ren, Petri, & Taylor and Beachler, Petri, Euler, Rinck, & Taylor], the research and practice of service-learning is increasing. As a way to stimulate future research, papers in the issue include ideas for future research, views for extending service-learning projects, and ways to apply service-learning at the institutional-level. There is a clear need for future research in this area; as such, one of the goals of this special issue is to increase readers' interest in the theoretical, empirical, and practical aspects of service-learning.

Three papers are dedicated to explaining specific case writing and case application activities [Seeger; Papamarcos; and Sigler]. Our intention in including these papers was to stimulate replication and adaptation of these course-specific exercises. The examples in this issue are primarily drawn from business administration. However, service-learning generally, and the projects specifically, are applicable across disciplines (e.g., history, art, sociology, psychology, engineering, education).

The overarching goal of most service-learning programs and projects is to encourage institutions, faculty members, and students to become more engaged with the local community. Engagement at the institutional level is the focus of three papers in this issue [Steinberg, Kenworthy-U'Ren, Desplaces, Coleman, & Golden; Kenworthy-U'Ren, McStay, & U'Ren; and Beachler, et al.]. Engagement at the faculty and student levels through course specific projects are discussed in several papers. Service-learning engagement issues and the strengths and challenges of running effective programs and projects are presented.

Our intention in this special issue was to present a set of papers that covered a broad range of the components and applications of service-learning pedagogy. The first three papers present the context, the second three focus on examples of service-learning class projects and finally, we include three papers with examples of institutional-level service-learning engagement.

## CONTEXTUAL PAPERS

Amy Kenworthy-U'Ren, Alexis Petri, and Marilyn L. Taylor: **Components of Successful Service-Learning Programs: Notes from Barbara Holland, Director of the U.S. National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.** This paper presents one expert's views on the required components of successfully designing and implementing an interactive teaching pedagogy called service-learning. The paper is largely drawn from an interview with Barbara Holland, a respected pioneer and international advocate for service-learning and university-community engagement. The paper aims to provide interested faculty with both a better understanding of what service-learning is as well as an overview of the student, faculty, community partner, and institutional motivations and commitments related to service-learning program success.

Gregory Berry and Marilyn L. Taylor: **Service-Learning as an Instructional Tool for University Educators: The Case Method on Steroids.** It has been suggested that the service-learning experience represents *live cases* (i.e., real world, real time) as students actively assist local small businesses and non-profit organizations in becoming more effective and successful [Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2000]. This insight raises questions about the application of service-learning as a teaching tool when compared with the more traditional approaches to teaching cases and with the case research process. This paper examines and compares the service-learning experience with the use of existing case studies as a teaching approach. Service-learning and case-research methodology in general are also compared. Service-learning appears to have some advantages over the use of cases in the classroom (e.g., increasing students' learning).

Laurie N. DiPadova-Stocks and Victor L. Brown: **Service Learning and the Conspiracy of Courtesy.** Service-learning in higher education has successfully focused on its advantages as a rigorous academic pedagogy for student learning. While the benefits of service-learning for students and faculty enjoy wide acclaim, the impact on recipients of service has not received as much attention. This paper explores barriers to service-learning success, described as the "conspiracy of courtesy": interaction dynamics whereby participants courteously, politely, and silently disrupt or even render useless the service project by declining to share vital information.

## EXAMPLES OF CLASS PROJECTS

John A. Seeger: **Yes, Students *Can* Write Good Service Learning Cases.** Many educators doubt that students have the requisite skills to write good cases; while that may be true for many, it is not true for all. This paper reports the experience of one educator using a case writing assignment in a graduate level course. The assignment yielded high quality cases. Service-learning projects, where students wrote about non-profit organizations that needed help to define and solve problems, provided the context for many successful cases. The associated challenges, strengths, and limitations of this assignment are discussed.

Steven D. Papamarcos: **Founding the New York Brewing Company: Taking Service-Learning to the 'Next Level'.** This paper describes a service-learning engagement completed in 2001 by MBA students at St. John's University, New York. The service-learning team assisted an entrepreneur in the establishment of the New York Brewing Company (NYBC). Industry, marketing, operations, and financial analyses were performed by student-consultants working closely with the client. By 2006, NYBC had grown into the United States' only African-American owned and operated brewing company with regional or greater distribution. Useful as an integrative case study in entrepreneurship, this project is illustrative of what the author has termed service-learning's "next level" – dynamic, cross-functional engagements resulting in structural change.

Tracey Honeycutt Sigler: **Live Case Studies in Organizational Change: Learning About Change through Student Philanthropy and Service-Learning.** Students in an undergraduate course on Managing Change participated in a philanthropy service-learning project with local non-profit organizations to: (1) learn about the organizations, (2) help the organizations create grant proposals, (3) create plans for desired changes in the organizations, and (4) award grants to the organizations. To

create recommendations for change, students had to gather information about the organizations that would be provided by the author in a traditional case. The live case studies helped students to see that real organizational change is ambiguous, complicated, and challenging.

## DESCRIPTIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Margery Steinberg, Amy Kenworthy-U'Ren, David Desplaces, Susan Coleman, and Robert Golden: **A Service-Learning Approach to Community Economic Development: The University of Hartford Micro Business Incubator.** The Upper Albany Micro Business Incubator (MBI) is a service-learning program that brings together university faculty, students, inner city entrepreneurs, and community organizations to create an environment of mutual learning, respect, understanding, and collaboration with the aim of community revitalization and economic development. The MBI offers students the opportunity to experience a live case with tangible results. This paper describes a "road map" for launching and managing this type of initiative.

Amy Kenworthy-U'Ren, Dell McStay, and Baden U'Ren: **Integrating Entrepreneurship, Business Planning, and Service-Learning: Preparing Students for Business Plan Composition and Community Engagement.** The following exercise describes the Bond University Business Plan Training Program. The program is grounded in entrepreneurship concepts and uses a teaching design called service-learning. The program was created as a partnership between the local Chamber of Commerce and Bond University with the aim of increasing sustainable economic development in the local community as well as student learning via real-world application of classroom-based knowledge. The exercise can be used in either business planning or entrepreneurship courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Connie Beachler, Alexis Petri, Mary Euler, Christine Rinck, and Marilyn L. Taylor: **Total System Integration for Academic Service-Learning: UMKC's SITC Experience.** *The Students in the City (SITC)* program at the University of Missouri Kansas City (UMKC) has made significant progress toward the academic service-learning (AS-L) goals established in 2002. In 2003, SITC received a three-year grant from the federal agency, *The Corporation for National and Community Service*. By 2005, the program had experienced substantial multi-disciplinary AS-L expansion. The evolution of UMKC's SITC program provides a benchmark for institutions intent on incorporating AS-L into courses in multiple disciplines. Among the lessons learned are the need for institutional support, role clarification, faculty and staff collaboration, community participation, and appropriate funding.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy this special issue as much as we have enjoyed bringing together and working with the authors on this collection of papers. As a final note to our editorial journey, we would like to thank WACRA® for the opportunity to collaborate on this special issue, to Hans Klein, the Editor-in-Chief, for his support, his interest in service-learning, and his tireless efforts in getting this special issue online. We would like to thank Denise Smith for her continuous prompt and professional assistance with our seemingly endless structural and formatting inquiries. We would also like to thank all of the authors who worked diligently to meet the publication deadline for this issue. Their commitment to producing high quality, informative, and thought-provoking papers for this special issue is a testimony to their dedication to the service-learning pedagogy.

Amy Kenworthy-U'Ren & Marilyn Taylor  
Guest Editors, IJCRA Special Issue on Service-Learning