

Community Service-Learning Program Evaluation Report for 2010 – 2011

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Prepared by: Catherine Somerville & Kendell Banack

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Introduction

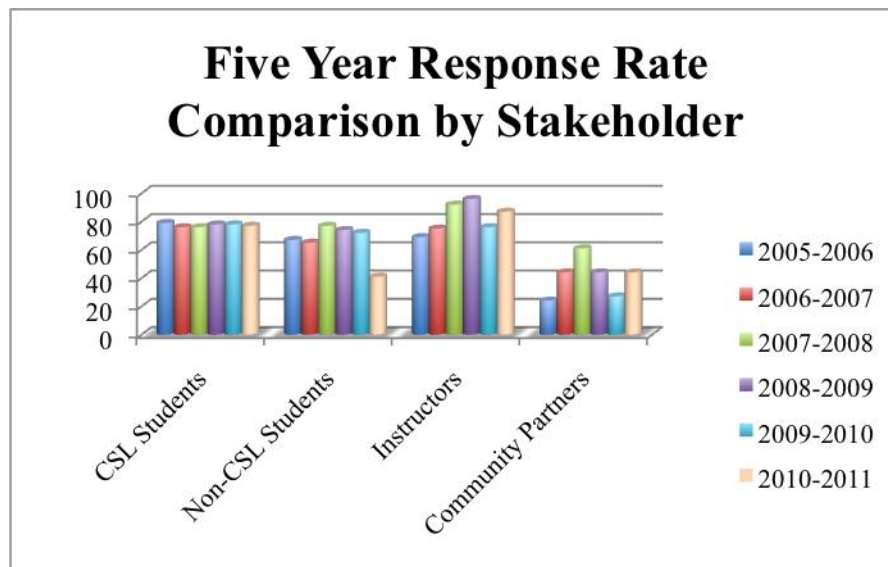
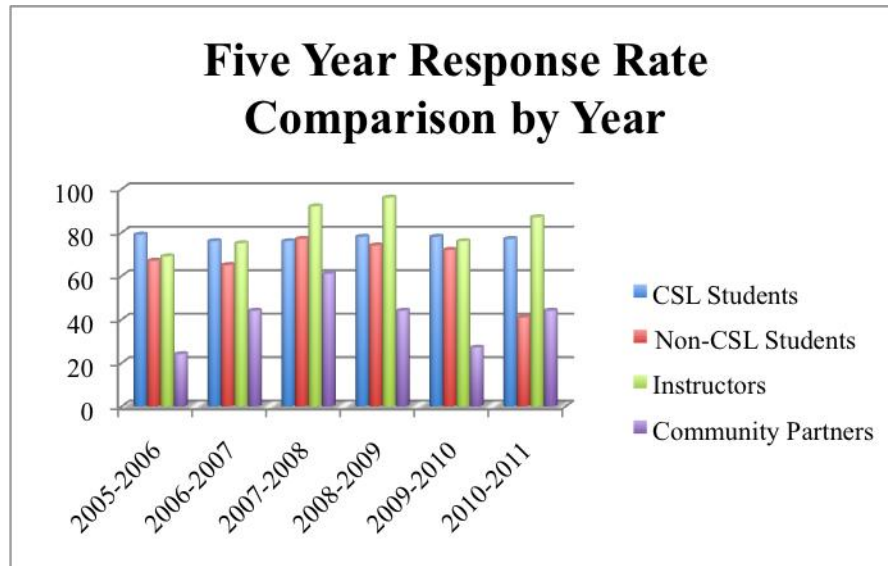
The 2010-2011 academic year was the sixth year of evaluation for the Community Service-Learning (CSL) Program at the University of Alberta. This report highlights key findings related to the implementation and outcomes of CSL in the 2010-2011 academic year. Evaluation data were collected from students participating in the CSL components of courses, students not participating in the CSL components of courses, instructors of courses with CSL components, as well as community partners. In addition to the key findings observed this year, this report is focused on what we identified as a major goal of the 2010-2011 evaluation program: to understand students' perspectives on *the most meaningful* and *most challenging* aspects of their CSL experiences. Finally, this report integrates findings of previous evaluations in order to compare and contrast findings from the 2010-2011 academic year to those of the previous five years.

To those of you who are past or current CSL students, instructors, or community partners, or those of you who are newly exploring community service-learning concepts, we hope that you enjoy the following evaluation information, which further shows CSL to be an engaged and meaningful approach to teaching and learning, but also one that merits consistent reflection.

For further inquiries into previous CSL evaluation reports or CSL opportunities through the U of A, please refer to our website at <http://www.csl.ualberta.ca>.

Evaluation Methods and Response Rates

Data were gathered at the end of the fall and winter terms from instructors, CSL students, non-participating CSL students, and community partners involved in CSL courses. Evaluations were distributed to students and instructors in their respective classes during the last two weeks of the regular semester, in both the fall and winter terms. Community partners received surveys first by mail and later by email. Please refer to the figures below for survey response rates (expressed in percentages) from 2005 to 2011.



Evaluation 2010-2011

Statistics at a Glance

CSL Students

- 459 registered in CSL component of course
 - 77% completed surveys
 - 85% in a CSL course for the first time
- Gender: 78% female, 21% male
 - Age: 69% 22 years or younger
 - Mean years of post-secondary completed: 2.8
 - 15% working towards CSL certificate
- 91% learned a lot overall
 - 85% would recommend CSL to peers
 - 70% developed transferable skills
 - 63% indicated that community placement enhanced understanding of course
 - 77% indicated that course work & instruction enhanced understanding of community
 - 64% indicated that they received appropriate guidance from community partner

Non-CSL Students

- 737 registered in CSL courses
 - 41% completed surveys
 - 80% in a CSL course for the first time
- Gender: 64% female, 36% male
 - Age: 69% 22 years or younger
 - Mean years of post-secondary completed: 2.7
 - 10% knew of CSL component pre-enrollment
- 87% learned a lot overall
 - 47% would recommend CSL to peers
 - 23% regret decision not to participate
 - 26% indicated that being in a class with a CSL component enhanced learning
 - 49% indicated that being in a class with a CSL component led to understanding of how they can contribute to social change
 - 45% indicated that being in a class with a CSL component led to understanding of complexities of social issues

Instructors & Courses

- 34 different instructors
 - 87% completed surveys
 - 27% taught a CSL course for the first time
 - 46 courses
- Gender: 61% female, 34% male
 - Mean years of teaching: 12 years
 - For 34%, CSL was a mandatory part of the course
 - 39% of instructors sessional or contract
- 88% indicated that students learned a lot overall
 - 98% would recommend CSL to peers
 - 78% indicated that they provided students opportunities to reflect on learning
 - 93% indicated that CSL helped students develop transferable skills
 - 95% indicated that CSL helped students understand how to contribute to social change

Community Partners

- 102 community partners
 - 44% completed surveys
 - 49% were first time CSL mentors
- Gender: 78% female, 13% male
 - Mean years in non-profits: 8
 - Mean number of students mentored: 4 students
 - 76% said "Yes" when asked if students completed their projects
- 96% indicated that students learned a lot overall
 - 91% would recommend CSL to peers
 - 76% indicated that they provided students opportunities to reflect on learning
 - 91% indicated that CSL helped students develop transferable skills
 - 93% indicated that CSL helped students understand how to contribute to social change

Description of Participants

Since the inception of the CSL Program in 2005, the number of participating students, instructors teaching courses with CSL components, community partners, courses with a CSL component, and departments offering at least one course with a CSL component have all more than doubled. Community organizations associated with the CSL Program seem to be increasing both in number and in diversity as new CSL courses require additional and fitting community placements. Following this overview of demographic and general findings is a more in-depth exploration of the survey findings, including aspects of the CSL Program that students found to be most meaningful and challenging. The report concludes with a section outlining future direction and recommendations aimed at helping to sustain the CSL Program.

Students

There are two groups of students associated with the CSL Program. First are the *CSL Students* defined as those students who participate in the CSL portion of a course and engage with a community project under the guidance of a community partner. Second are the *Non-CSL Students* defined as those students who enroll in a course with an optional CSL component and elect not to participate in the CSL component of the course, meaning that non-CSL students do not engage in community projects outside of the classroom. In some courses, there is a cap on the number of CSL students permitted; therefore, some non-CSL students may have wished to participate in the CSL component of the class. Please refer to Table 1 for the number of CSL and non-CSL students from 2005 to 2011.

Table 1. Number of CSL and Non-CSL Students from 2005 - 2011

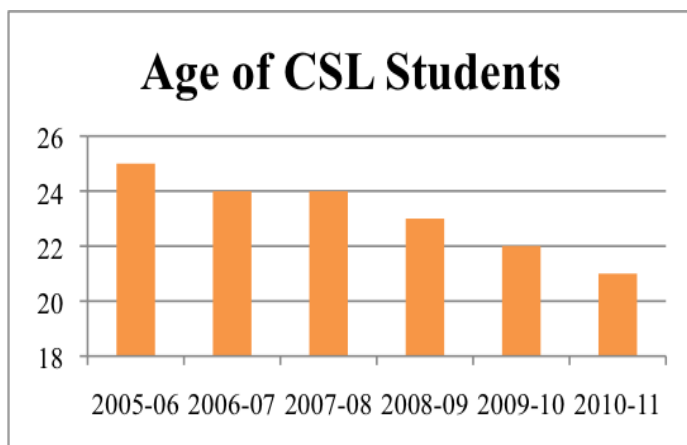
	Number of Students						
	Total Students in CSL Courses			CSL		Non-CSL	
Year	Total Students	<i>New Students</i>	Percent of Students Participating	Total CSL Students	<i>New CSL Students</i>	Total Non-CSL Students	<i>New Non-CSL Students</i>
2005-2006	230	--	59%	136	--	94	--
2006-2007	342	--	53%	180	--	162	--
2007-2008	499	--	60%	298	--	201	--
2008-2009	551	505	55%	302	265	249	--
2009-2010	524	464	55%	287	253	237	211
2010-2011	1196	980	38%	459	390	737	590

Notation: -- missing data regarding how many were new to CSL

- **Profile of CSL Students**

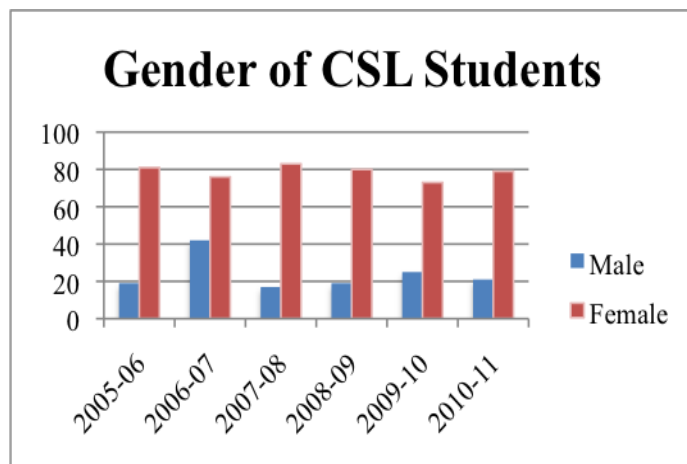
Figures 1, 2 and 3 illustrate the trends in the profile of CSL students over the past six years of evaluation. Key findings from this year's evaluation are presented in bulleted points to the right of each figure.

Figure 1.



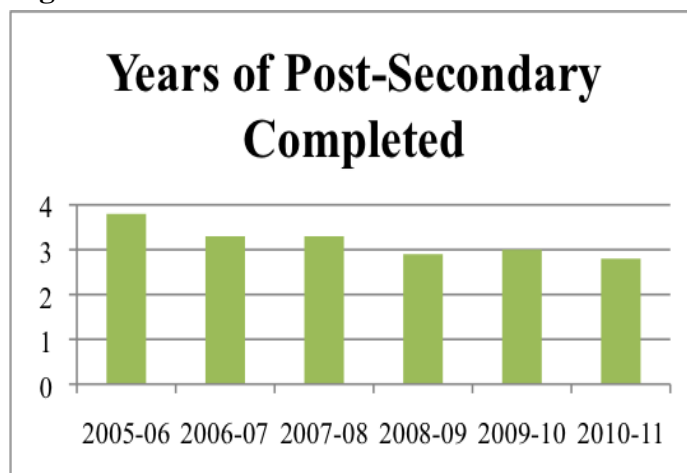
- The majority (51%) of CSL students were between the ages of 20 and 22.
- There has been a steady decline in the average age of CSL students since 2005. This may be due to an increase in the number of introductory level courses offering a CSL component.

Figure 2.



- 79% of CSL students in 2010-2011 were female and 21% were male.
- There was a continuation of this trend of a high proportion of females to males enrolling in CSL components of courses.
- 2010-2011 male participation marked a decline of 16% from the 2009-2010 year.

Figure 3.



- The average number of years of post-secondary education completed to date by CSL students was 2.75.
- The subtle trend of decreasing total number of years of post-secondary completed continued into the 2010-2011 year. Along with trends in age, this may be attributed to the levels at which CSL courses are offered.

- **CSL Students Working Towards the Certificate in Community Engagement and Service-Learning**

Of the 354 CSL students that responded to surveys, 15% indicated that they were working towards the CSL Certificate. Of these respondents, 81% were female and 55% were between the ages of 20 and 22. Interestingly, the majority (26%) of CSL students who were working towards the Certificate had completed three years of post-secondary; however, the next largest group of respondents (23%) indicated that they had completed less than one year of post-secondary. This may be due to an increase in the number of introductory level courses offering a CSL component, where younger students with less post-secondary completed may be making plans early in their university career to work towards the CSL Certificate.

CSL Instructors and Courses

In the 2010-2011 academic year, nine new instructors integrated CSL components into their courses. There were a total of forty-six courses that offered a CSL component, which marks a 39% increase from 2009-2010. This year, the percentage of courses that contained a required CSL component decreased somewhat. Please see Table 2 for an overview of the total number of CSL instructors, new instructors, courses, and departments.

Table 2. Number of CSL Instructors, Courses, & Departments Offering a CSL Course

Year	Total Instructors	New Instructors	Courses (number of graduate or combined undergraduate/graduate courses indicated in parentheses)	CSL Required in Course	Departments
2005-2006	12	--	13 (-)	2	7
2006-2007	15	--	16 (3)	5	11
2007-2008	15	10	25 (5)	7	11
2008-2009	23	11	27 (7)	10	14
2009-2010	27	8	33 (8)	17	20
2010-2011	34	9	46 (9)	10	24

Notation: -- missing data regarding how many were new to CSL
 - missing data regarding number of graduate courses

Community Partners

The number of community partners has more than doubled since 2005: 102 community partners participated in CSL in 2010-2011. Although there has been a large increase in the number of students participating in the CSL components of courses over the past six years, the total number of community partners has not increased at the same rate. This is because of two deliberate changes to how the CSL Program and community partners work together: each project now includes on average a slightly higher number of students (often working in teams), and some community partners are hosting more than one group of students (sometimes for different projects). This results in community partners receiving more student contribution through their involvement with CSL. The number of community partners engaged with CSL over the past six years is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Number of CSL Community Partners

Year	Total Community Partners
2005-2006	42
2006-2007	57
2007-2008	67
2008-2009	86
2009-2010	94
2010- 2011	102

Findings

General Findings

The previous section provides a general overview of the results of this year's evaluation across all stakeholders. These results indicate two major trends in the general views of the CSL program held by CSL students, instructors, and community partners, including:

- The vast majority of respondents indicated that students learned a lot overall through the CSL program, and
- Most of these respondents would recommend participation in the CSL program to their peers.

In this section, we present how CSL students, instructors, and community partners perceived the learning and development experiences of students during their engagement with CSL. Please see Table 4, below, for an overview of findings in this area.

Table 4. Perceived Contributions of CSL to Students' Learning in Multiple Domains Across Stakeholders (Percentage Agreeing with the Statement)

Value to Students	Stakeholders		
	CSL Students: Percentage Agreeing	Instructors: Percentage Agreeing	Community Partners: Percentage Agreeing
Community placement enhanced ability to understand course material	63.6%	83.0%	74.5%
Course work enhanced ability to understand community experience	77.4%	80.5%	76.6%
CSL helped to understand how to contribute to social change	78.2%	95.1%	93.6%
CSL helped to understand some of the complexities of social issues	79.6%	97.6%	91.4%
CSL helped to develop transferrable skills such as leadership, communication, research, and/or critical thinking skills	70.6%	92.7%	91.5%

CSL Students' Qualitative Responses

This was the first year in which we collected and analyzed open-ended survey questions that directly asked CSL students to reflect on the most meaningful and challenging aspects of their experiences. In order to obtain this data, students were asked the following questions on the surveys distributed at the end of each term:

1. What were the most meaningful aspects of your CSL learning experience this term? Why?
2. What were the most challenging aspects of your CSL learning this term? Why?
3. What other comments or feedback would you like to share about being in a course with a CSL component this term?

Responses to the first two questions were coded qualitatively. The following section outlines the major findings that emerged from this analysis. Many of these results echo the findings of the CSL Program's in-depth study of former CSL students' reflections (see *Educational, Personal & Vocational Impacts of Community Service-Learning: A Follow Up Study of CSL Student Experiences*).

Most Meaningful Aspects of CSL Experience

Our analysis of students' responses regarding the most meaningful aspects of their CSL experiences yielded six major themes.

- **Participation in CSL Provided an Opportunity to Build Relationships**
Engagement in the CSL learning experience provided students with an opportunity to build relationships with community partners, other members of the community, as well as with other students. Additionally, their experiences led to the development of connections to the community.

"I've made friends and connections with not only the other volunteers in my class but also the people who work at my organization."

"The most meaningful aspects are the connections made with my placement, my volunteer experience allowed me to meet new people who in the future can provide more involvement opportunities and other resources that can make university life more meaningful."

"The opportunity to build relationships with people in the organizations was a meaningful one. The practice of speech and interaction with a new person was an opportunity that doesn't happen everyday."

- **Engagement with CSL Provided Exposure to New Situations and Contexts**
CSL placements provided students with exposure to new situations, social problems, perspectives, and contexts that they may not have had an opportunity to experience otherwise. These experiences opened up new ways of thinking and seeing.

“Seeing/understanding the other side of the life of homeless people. Able to communicate and visualize the problems and issues confronted by a marginalized population. They have been important aspects because they have taught me and shown me different perspectives and ways to analyze about marginal groups from our society.”

“I found the most meaningful aspect of this experience was the hands on work and just really getting to know the guys that I worked with. Learning and understanding the perspectives from the residents at [the community organization] made a huge impact on the way I think about crime because it's so real, and it makes it so much more meaningful knowing that you are making a difference in the lives of these men.”

“Interacting with a group of people that the everyday occurrences of my life wouldn't otherwise provide for me. This was meaningful because it opened up my understanding of issues that I wouldn't otherwise have been appropriately able to understand.”

- **CSL Community Placements Increased Students’ Knowledge about Community Organizations and Social Issues** The experiences that students had through their participation in CSL led to an increase in knowledge about non-profit organizations. Additionally, students developed a deeper understanding of the complexity of social problems as well as how they can contribute to social change in their community.

“Working with my community partner... introduced me to many important issues that the organization faces, and gave me the proper mentorship to seek solutions to the problems.”

“Learning how I can contribute to social change, and an increased outlook on larger social issues. This is what had the greatest impact and what I enjoyed the most in the class.”

“I really gained a deeper understanding of the complexities of working toward social change that are inherent in the systems/structures within which we operate.”

- **Course-Community Connections Helped to Develop Skills and Knowledge** One of the meaningful aspects of CSL experiences that students mentioned was that they were able to gain practical, hands-on experience through their CSL placements. The correlation between coursework and CSL placements provided students with an opportunity to apply knowledge obtained in the classroom to a real-world setting. Students also indicated that the opportunity to reflect on the learning acquired in their CSL placements was a meaningful aspect of their experience and that this further led to the reinforcement of what they were learning in their courses. Finally, students were able to develop transferrable skills such as communication, organization, public speaking, confidence, and professionalism through their placements.

“Being able to apply what is learned in a classroom setting to better the community. Not just learning to do well on the exam but to be able to do a good job on the project. Seeing firsthand (truly experiencing) the challenges and frustrations discussed in class.”

“Noticing how course material applied to my experiences at my placement because it made the issues we learned in class real, and I could see first-hand how people are affected by poverty and addiction.”

“Having some tangible and practical application/experiences to reflect on.”

“The most meaningful aspects were the application of communications and public speaking. These are 2 things you need to learn from experience and CSL provided a great opportunity to do so. I now feel more confident with my communication and public speaking skills.”

○ **Experiences Gained through CSL Lead to Personal Transformation**

Students indicated that their engagement in CSL had a range of impacts on their personal outlooks, values, and interests. These included the reduction of stereotypes and prejudices that students had toward certain communities and individuals, a change in perception, as well as an increase in compassion and empathy. Additionally, students suggested that participation in CSL afforded them opportunities to reflect on their personal career goals and directions.

“Having the chance to work with kids was a great experience. The education program at the university doesn't allow for the opportunity to apply your learnings early in the education program. The CSL experience allowed me to reassess myself as a student and build on my direction as a future teacher. By being a leader, I had the chance to animate discussions, activities, and aid personal growth of others. This made me feel appreciated, and that I was making a difference”

“Just how broad and far-reaching the issues I was to deal with really were, it was eye-opening and really changed my outlook.”

“Seeing/understanding the other side of the life of homeless people. Able to communicate and visualize the problems and issues confronted by a marginalized population. They have been important aspects because they have taught me and shown me different perspectives and ways to analyze about marginal groups from our society.”

○ **Meaningful Community Projects Engendered a Sense of Contribution**

Students felt that they made a contribution to the community and that the projects they completed were meaningful.

“The project I was working on was meaningful to me. The aspects of research and the morality of the [project] fit with my personal beliefs and it was always exciting to know that what I was doing was making a positive change.”

“The practical application of course work. Also the ability to work with and contribute to an actual project.”

“I feel that helping in the community was much more valuable and meaningful than a single research project.”

Most Challenging Aspects of CSL Experience

Eight overarching themes emerged from the analysis of student responses to the question: what were the most challenging aspects of your CSL experience?

○ **Difficulties with Communication**

Analysis of student responses indicated that communication was one of the most challenging aspects of the CSL experience. Students felt that communication between themselves and community partners, as well as communication between community partners and instructors, did not occur frequently enough, and sometimes was less effective than needed. Furthermore, the communication of the expectations for students in their community placement projects was sometimes inadequate, and the precise direction of their projects was sometimes unclear. Some students noted that a lack of communication between instructors and community partners regarding the community projects contributed to challenges in balancing the expectations of these stakeholders.

“Communication among me, my instructor, and the facilitator at the placement could have been more frequent and clear, I feel. I think adding goals or guidelines to each visit would have helped me more in assessing or evaluating what I learned. I understand that part of the freedom and flexibility was given to us so that we could make our own goals, but without guidelines.”

“There was a tension between our CSL partner's expectations and those of the instructor.”

“There was zero communication between the case worker and community advisor and I regardless of attempt to contact. They didn't contact us early enough in term after our meeting/interview.”

○ **Logistical Difficulties**

CSL students indicated that logistics, including scheduling conflicts, the limited times that volunteer hours could be completed, the distance that had to be traveled in order to get to the community placement, and transportation difficulties were challenging aspects of participation in CSL.

“I think it was the scheduling. We had the ability to do our hours at a set time each week, but would not have completed them unless we went on a weekend (had choice of two weekends) which I found difficult, as I had committed to volunteering elsewhere before the term had even begun during one of the weeks. My experience would have been much better with more time options.”

“The most challenging aspects of my CSL learning experience was coordinating a time for my placement. The organization I worked with had specific hours which were hard to meet if you were working.”

“Getting to placement location. I do not have a vehicle so it was a long bus/walk to volunteer.”

Along with the above-mentioned difficulties with logistical aspects of placements, students specifically indicated that the amount of time that it took for the placements to start at the beginning of the term was a significant challenge. This created a time crunch as the end of the term to complete requirements for the placement and/or the course.

“It felt like my placement didn't really start until the end of October-it meant I had to condense a lot into November, which is already busy.”

“Getting started was the biggest thing. We have a limited amount of time to get our hours in but we were still getting training mid-October. I know there is a process we have to go through before our placements start it was just a little slow. It wasn't always easy finding something to write about for my CSL blogs especially when I didn't even start my placement yet.”

“Waiting for the police clearance took longer than expected, so there was not enough time left in the semester to actually plan my activities as well as I could have. I felt that it was rushed because I had to get it done by a certain date”

- **Engaging in Reflection**

CSL students indicated that it was sometimes a challenge to engage in the reflection activities and assignments in the course. (We should note that such a challenge is often welcome in CSL pedagogy.)

“One of the biggest challenges was reflecting in blog form on the CSL work itself (it didn't always come very easily).”

“Sometimes reflecting on the journals were a challenge.”

“Reflecting critically on my experiences.”

- **Connecting Community Placement to Material Covered in the Course**

Connecting the learning that was taking place in the community to the concepts and material covered in the course was a related challenge. Some students felt that limited learning was taking place at their community placement because of the lack of connection between the placement and their course.

“My placement was completely unrelated to the course material, there was misunderstanding with the community leader and how it should have related to the course. We had to go out of our way to find any connection to the course.”

“Trying to connect course material to the CSL component. I feel like there was a slight connection but if someone would have made it more clear that would have been appreciated and given me, perhaps, more motivation to continue volunteering.”

“It was difficult at times to make the connection between my placement and the course material.”

- **Experiencing New Things**

Experiencing new settings, contexts, perspectives, values, and opinions, and figuring out how to complete new tasks, while sometimes expressed as the most meaningful aspect of CSL (see previous section), were also expressed as challenges. Additionally, the increased awareness of social injustices and complexities of social problems were reported to be challenging for some students, as were their emotional reactions to certain difficult situations in their placements.

“That the population I was dealing with it was very different from the people that surround me. The conversations that I have with family and friends are not the same that I could have with them.”

“The most challenging aspects were hearing about the experiences of certain individuals. It was difficult to remain collected when hearing about what experiences some individuals have had to overcome.”

“Seeing poverty and the terrible situations in which the homeless of Edmonton find themselves in. I have never really been exposed to extreme poverty.”

“The organization that I was placed with had some values that were contrary to my beliefs. In order to complete my CSL component I had to overlook some occurrences that I am still unable to fully reconcile with my morals.”

- **Balancing Time Commitments**

A sixth challenge for CSL students that emerged through the analysis of written responses was balancing other commitments and responsibilities, such as course work, jobs, and other volunteer commitments, with the required CSL placement hours.

“Fitting in the community hours in addition to a full course load, work and volunteer commitments. Having only one day a week in a short time span to complete my hours created time constraints, but I still enjoyed my placement.”

“Time commitment. Working six days per week and balancing a full course load with volunteer work isn't easy.”

“Time commitment! It was more difficult than I expected to fulfill the hours requirements AND handle my other classes AND write all of the course papers AND do the readings AND work at my other job. I loved the experience but probably wouldn't do it again given the choice.”

○ **Differing Levels of Engagement Between Group Members**

Some students indicated that the group work required to complete their community projects was a challenge. Differing levels of engagement among students in a group posed a problem, as goals and expectations of each student were not aligned.

“My group mates, our different levels of interest in and engagement with the activities of our community partner-this made some of the group work difficult.”

“TIME and group work. There were 6 of us-very difficult to organize and coordinate. I found I did far more work than others and put in around 40 hours when 20 was the requirement. If I hadn't made an effort to coordinate my group's activities I feel nothing would have been accomplished.”

“Group work was one of the challenging aspects. Unfortunately, students are rarely provided with guidance on how to work in a group. Assumption that everybody knows that is often wrong.”

○ **Need for Meaningful and Relevant Community Projects**

A final challenge mentioned by CSL students was the ability of community partners to prepare and support them in their projects. This sometimes resulted in a lack of meaningful tasks for students to complete, leaving them wondering how much they were needed by the organization and how much they were learning from their involvement.

“Being placed with an organization where it seemed my help was never actually needed. Never got to help do any volunteer work that was described as the organization's goals. Instead was usually doing pointless busy work.”

“Although I fully support the CSL program and got a lot out of the experience, I was not completely satisfied with the organization that I was paired with. The director of the organization was very disorganized and I sometimes felt that the work I was doing was not very useful to the community. I felt there was a disconnect with the kind of work that I thought I would be doing and what I actually had a chance to do.”

“Not having much to do at my placement was challenging, in that I felt there was very little learning taking place. I was given basically nothing to do while there, which did not produce a meaningful experience.”

Assistance and Support from CSL Staff

Instructors and community partners were asked if the CSL staff provided adequate assistance and support in integrating CSL into their courses and organizations, respectively. 90% of instructors and 81% of community partners answered “Yes” when asked if they felt that they received the appropriate amount of assistance from CSL staff.

Knowledge of the Aims of CSL Prior to Involvement

The evaluation data suggests that there is an inconsistency across instructors, community partners, and CSL students in the knowledge about the aims of CSL prior to involvement. 95% of instructors and 85% of community partners answered “Yes” when asked if they knew enough about the aims of CSL prior to involvement, however, only 43% of CSL students responded in this way. This suggests a need for the CSL Program to further support instructors and community partners in conveying the goals and expectations of CSL to students.

Conclusion

This report was aimed at summarizing data from the past six years of evaluation, as well as presenting comparisons and contrasts between the 2010-2011 academic year and those previous. Tremendous growth occurred in the number of students enrolled in CSL courses, including both CSL and non-CSL students. An increase in the number of instructors, courses, and departments offering CSL courses was observed as well. In comparison to the previous five years, CSL students appear to be younger on average and have completed fewer years of post-secondary education. More females than males participate in CSL, and it will be interesting to see if this trend changes over time. The perceived value of CSL to students is clearly identified by CSL students, instructors, and community partners.

This was the first year that CSL student responses to open-ended survey questions regarding the most meaningful and challenging aspects of their CSL experiences were collected and analyzed. Major themes emerged following the analysis of this qualitative data that will be helpful in sustaining, strengthening, and improving the U of A CSL Program in the future.

Future Directions and Recommendations

Suggestions for the 2011-2012 Evaluation Process

1. Try to identify barriers for student participation in CSL by analyzing non-CSL student qualitative data.
2. Streamline the tracking of new and continuing community partners in order to better evaluate the impact of experience and time on partner experiences.
3. Streamline the tracking of new and continuing instructors in order to better evaluate the impact of experience and time on instructor experiences.
4. Maintain the use of the Scantron®-scorable surveys that were utilized in the 2010-2011 evaluation year.

Recommendations for the CSL Program

1. Try to improve communication between all stakeholders. The success of the program would be assisted by early and ongoing communication among CSL students, instructors, and community partners. This would likely reduce many of the logistical difficulties that CSL students encounter when engaging in their community placement.
2. Focus on alleviating select logistical challenges, namely transportation and scheduling. Students found it challenging to get to their placements (due to both the distance that students needed to travel to placement locations as well as access to transportation). It was also difficult in some instances to find a middle ground between the differing scheduling needs of organizations and students. Assistance in these areas of community placements, including support for students as they make their placement choices at the beginning of the term, would further enable successful outcomes for all CSL participants.
3. Better prepare students for unfamiliar situations that they may encounter during community placements. A recommendation would be to revise materials and procedures that prepare students, emotionally and physically, for their placements. This should include attention to environments where specific kinds of risks or challenges may be encountered.
4. Encourage instructors and community partners to spend the time needed to clarify their expectations of students, both to each other and to students.
5. Reduce the amount of time it takes for students to begin actively participating in their placements. The time that it takes for criminal record as well as child welfare checks is largely out of the control of CSL staff; however, ensuring that students initiate the process as early as possible may relieve the time crunch that some CSL students experienced.