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Service-learning, community engagement, community partnerships; these are all concepts that have become a part of the lexicon in higher education institutions. Service-learning is a growing part of the curriculum but the question is how do we make it work and make it count. This book is a collection of case studies of service-learning programs in design, architecture and planning. The chapters examine the different ways in which these concepts are being implemented in a number of institutions. According to the co-editors, the “critical question for us is how to deal with the boundaries that separate community and university as well as the boundaries of class, race, gender, age and all the others in service-learning programs” (p. 3). The authors use case studies to provide analysis, reflection and discussion of how programs have responded to these questions.

The collection is organized around specific questions in the service-learning dialogue going from how to develop partnerships and acknowledge the communities we work with, to reflecting on the impact of service-learning and then confronting roadblocks both outside and within the academy.

The book is a great resource for any academic trying to develop and set out on a service-learning program with their students. It contains several examples of successes and challenges in service-learning programs. The information, although coming specifically from design and planning, can be easily applied to other programs.

The book is divided into four parts. The first section, on ‘seeing the other’, is a discourse not only on race and ethnicity but also looks at dialogue and partnership building across race and between institutions and communities. The range of articles in this section covers topics that look at different ways and models for acknowledging and involving communities in service-learning projects. The chapters examine some of the intricacies and delicacies of partnership development in service-learning programs. The authors also discuss how critical pedagogy in service-learning can be used to engage communities and expand consciousness of students about race and class.

Part two is about learning to reflect and evaluate. This section re-enforces the importance of reflection and evaluation in service-learning projects. The typology created by Susan Harris and Clara Irazabal (p. 112) for evaluating service-learning projects is a useful guide for any academic developing a service-learning program, as sometimes the question of the nature of the service learning and how it impacts learning gets lost in the dialogue. Students are seen in these studies reflecting on social and cultural issues and their own positionality.
The third section of the book examines the interaction between institutions and communities. It provides examples of how service-learning programs can be developed through identifying community needs and working with communities to resolve those issues.

The last section, on confronting academic boundaries, looks at the impact that service-learning could have on the academic process and explores some of the difficulties in trying to negotiate across institutional and disciplinary boundaries. Papers in this section provide examples of academia working in partnership with communities to resolve community design and planning needs.

Missing in the collection is the area of personal development or transformation that takes place in students as a result of their participation in service-learning programs as well as models for assessing student learning in these programs. Nonetheless, this book makes a valuable contribution to the field by discussing and showcasing a number of service-learning programs and models that an academic could use in developing their own programs and partnerships. It is an exciting addition to the field of service-learning and a very great resource for any academic developing a service-learning program as part of their curriculum. Students, researchers and community partners in the field of service-learning will find the information very useful.

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