



International Service Learning

By Mary Price, Center for Service and Learning and Stephanie Leslie, Office of International Affairs
Volume 1. Issue 4

The [Association of American Colleges & Universities \(AAC&U\)](#) recognizes service-learning and study abroad as two of the ten [high impact practices](#) that prompt deep, integrative learning among students. While each of these pedagogies is powerful on its own accord, new research demonstrates that combining these engaged pedagogies, what is termed "[International Service-Learning \(ISL\)](#)", provides enhanced benefits to students beyond that brought forth by either of the pedagogies alone.

IUPUI stands on the cutting edge with a handful of other campuses that are developing best practices in teaching, assessment and research associated with ISL. The Center's leadership and cultivation of scholarly practice is best seen in the recent publication of the [first volume dedicated to research on ISL](#). The volume brings together the work of twenty-two scholars in order to more explicitly define ISL in relation to existing pedagogies, evaluate conceptual frameworks to effectively guide practice and assessment, as well as develop a broad research agenda to advance scholarship in this area.

International collaboration in teaching, research and civic engagement is predicated on building a strong system of support for faculty, staff and students. To provide this for the IUPUI community, the CSL has developed a strong collaborative relationship with the Office of International Affairs (OIA). OIA has identified service learning as a key strategy to assist students in making meaningful connections to and in their host communities while they are abroad. [Of IUPUI's sixty-five overseas programs more than 30% of them include service learning, the most of any IU campus.](#) The addition of ISL to existing study abroad programs has been transformational. Students no longer "float above" their host community but become engaged in issues of concern to that community. They are able to relate to community members not only as students but as partners in addressing issues of public concern.

The AAC&U's Civic Engagement Working Group (Musil, 2009: 57) notes five key questions and associated learning outcomes that span the practices of service learning, and more broadly civic engagement, with global learning and diversity education. These include:

- *Knowledge of self* (Who am I?)
- *Communal/Collective Knowledge* (Who are we?)
- *Empathetic Knowledge* (What does it feel like to be them?)
- *Intercultural Process Knowledge* (How do we talk to one another?)
- *Applied/Engaged Knowledge* (How do we improve our shared lives?)

Service-learning courses, and ISL programs in particular, generally require additional faculty/staff time, energy and resources to develop, manage and maintain. *Both CSL and OIA offer a range of instructional and programmatic resources for faculty and staff interested in developing ISL programs.* To build community and information sharing among instructors and program directors, the two units have teamed up to implement a community of practice devoted to ISL called the [ISL Teaching and Learning Circle](#). The group currently has ten active members utilizing ISL at both the graduate and undergraduate levels of the curriculum. The group meets monthly to discuss readings, issues of practice, develop and evaluate assessment methods and research in a supportive environment. New comers are always welcome to drop in. To learn more about upcoming topics or the faculty involved this group and their project visit: <http://csl.iupui.edu/osl/isl.asp> or contact Mary Price at price6@iupui.edu.

References:

Bringle, R.G. and J.H. Hatcher. (2010) International Service Learning. 3-28 in *International Service Learning: Conceptual Frameworks and Research*. Eds. R.G. Bringle, J.A. Hatcher and S.A. Jones, Stylus Publishing: Sterling, VA.

Musil, K.M. (2009) Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility. 49-68 in *Civic Engagement in Higher Education*, ed. Barbara Jacoby. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.