

Washington State University

College of Education

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Will defend the dissertation

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Time: 10:00 A.M.

Location: Zoom by request

Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend

**SERVICE LEARNING IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION: A
COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY AND META-ANALYSIS**

Chair: Kira Carbonneau

Service learning (SL) is often considered a powerful way of reforming education practices by connecting communities and schools. The majority of colleges and universities in the U.S. offer students some form of SL experience during their undergraduate education. Students who take SL courses in college have demonstrated gains above and beyond those of their peers in academic learning, civic engagement, social skills development, and attitudes toward themselves and toward learning, but these reported gains are wildly inconsistent. The varied strategies used across collegiate SL are thought to be a leading source in this disparity. Recommended strategies for SL, such as the National Youth Leadership Council's Standards for Quality SL Practice (SQP), are abundant, but often they are vague and have garnered little-to-no empirical support for enhancing the effect of SL on undergraduate student outcomes. To better understand the SQPs, this dissertation consists of two concurrent phases. Phase 1 represents a meta-analytic review of the effect that SL has on students and the 5 outcomes listed above. Moderator analysis was also conducted to evaluate the effect of the SQP on student outcomes. Results indicated that SL has a generally positive effect on student outcomes ($d = 0.37, p < .001$), with attitudes toward self (ATS) demonstrating the largest effect ($d = 0.41, p < .001$) followed by social skills outcomes (SSO; $d = 0.37, p < .001$), academic achievement outcomes (AAO; $d = 0.33, p < .001$), attitudes toward school and learning (ALO; $d = 0.33; p < .001$), and civic engagement outcomes (CEO; $d = 0.28, p < .001$). Further

analysis revealed that the aggregated effect was moderated by several study-level factors. Disaggregated results were limited but are reported. Phase 2 consists of a collective case study of 11 undergraduate SL instructors. Instructors described their SL courses through surveys and interviews, and course documents and syllabi were analyzed when available. We found that instructors were not familiar with recommended SL strategies, but most used several strategies that they believed met the given standards. Implications and future directions are also explored.