Business and Community: Integrating Service Learning in Graduate Business Education

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ABSTRACT. For the past five years at the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver a community service or service learning component has been included in the Values in Action class (now Values–Based Leadership), a core MBA course that integrates ethics, law, and public policy perspectives on business issues. This paper summarizes the educational philosophy and the mechanics of this required component. Few empirical studies have been conducted to gauge the perceived value and impact of a service learning requirement on students. Thus, several surveys were conducted to understand better the choices made by students as well as the impact of the requirement on students. Preliminary results reveal generally a positive effect on students, including some evidence that such a service learning requirement may influence students to make a greater lifetime commitment to community service.

Key words: community service, MBA curriculum, service learning, values

The best businesses have perhaps always understood that they are part of a larger community. Such businesses have behaved in ways that benefit their firms and their communities. Likewise healthy individuals have understood that they are part of a community, behaving in ways that benefit themselves and their communities. Whether motivated from self–interest, civic duty, group loyalty, or religious dictates, community responsibility is understood as part of a good life.

In the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver, there is a clear recognition of this relationship and responsibility. This is reflected in the mission statement of the College and the graduate curriculum.

Please supply author biography

The mission of the Daniels College of Business is to foster Enlightened Practice, Professional Achievement and a Commitment to Community among those engaged in management and the business professions.

For the past eight years a community service or service learning component has been included in Values in Action (now Values–Based Leadership), a core MBA course that integrates ethics, law, and public policy perspectives on business issues. This paper summarizes the educational philosophy that led to the inclusion of service learning, the mechanics of the required component, and some of what we have learned to date.

Service learning is increasingly recognized as a legitimate part of a business education (Collins, 1996; Papamarcos, 2002). Service learning is being integrated as a legitimate pedagogical approach in business disciplines such as accounting (Gujarathi et al., 2002; Rama et al., 2000), marketing (Petkus, 2000), management (Godfrey, 1999), project management (Brown, 2000), and economics (McGoldrick et al., 2000). Moreover, service learning is used to increase effective communication skills (Tucker and McCarthy, 2001) and the development of civic values (Morgan and Streb, 2001; Hepburn, 1997). Yet, there has been little empirical data collected in terms of the value and impact on students. This paper includes a modest effort to explore some of the empirical questions related to service learning. We will first describe the program and service learning requirement at the Daniels College of Business and then summarize several surveys we have conducted related to the service learning requirement.

Community service or service learning *(what we do)*

Our service learning requirement is a very modest attempt to engage students with their communities. We require that students spend 8–10 hours (essentially one day) during the quarter "giving back to the community." They are allowed rather wide latitude in choosing an activity. They reflect on the experience in preparing a brief paper, and they share their experience and reflections with others on the last day of class. One student chose to assist at the St. Francis Center, which is a day shelter, providing an array of services for the homeless. The student tutored several homeless individuals. His final comments reflected some frustration. "The experience has left me feeling discouraged and disappointed with the current system that our society operates under. People like Eric have so much potential and their lives are wasted. . . . If it had not been mandatory, I wouldn't have done it. The experience was eye opening and depressing, which is probably why people don't do it more often." Another student volunteered as a mentor at an urban middle school. The reaction was quite different from the previous example. The student said, "I did not choose to volunteer my time because it was an assignment; I did it because helping others is a part of me. Others might have felt it was a burden, while I feel it's joy."

In the past several years we have shifted the name for this activity from "community service" to "service learning." Either appellation is appropriate, but we have changed the name to more clearly reflect our goals. "Community service" captures nicely our attempt to have students engage in activity that serves the community, although it may connote something punitive. Since reflection and learning are important aspects of the experience, we shifted to "service learning" to capture more clearly these aspects of the activity. The language from the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 reflects aspects of our service learning requirement.

Service-Learning:
Is a method whereby students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities;
Is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program and the community;
Helps foster civic responsibility;
Is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the education components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled;
And provides structured time for students or participants to reflect on the service experience

This language rather nicely captures the components of our requirement: active participation, community needs, school setting, civic responsibility, and reflection and learning.

Pedagical approach *(how we do it)*

Consistent with a wider effort to provide an integrated MBA curriculum, we incorporated a community service or service learning component into the first of two required courses (Values in Action I and II). These courses integrated ethical, legal, and public policy perspectives around current issues in business, such as sexual harassment, discrimination, employee privacy, product liability (Values I) and corporate social responsibility, corporate governance, government regulation, philanthropy, campaign finance reform, media relations, crisis management (Values II). The current curriculum includes three courses that constitute a Daniels Core, required of all graduate programs. These courses include Values-Based Leadership, 21st Century Professional, and Global Information Economy. The first course replaces Values in Action I and includes a required service learning component of one days of service to the community. The previous Values II course has been reconstructed as Values in a Global Marketplace, but like Values II integrates legal, ethical, and public policy dimensions concerning global business issues.

General requirements

In Values-Based Leadership students engage in 8–10 hours of community service during the academic quarter. This not a significant amount of time, but we have found that given the academic demands on students and the short duration of a quarter (10 weeks), the requirement seems to be perceived as "reasonable" by the students. Students are allowed to choose the organization and activity that best fits their interests and time schedules, and students handle arrangements for their service activity. They are allowed to perform the service activity individually, as small groups, or even as an entire class. The Saeman Center for Professional Excellence, a unit of the Daniels College of Business, provides support and assistance for students in terms of finding projects. The Saeman includes a Volunteer Coordinator, who maintains a notebook of various organizations and activities for students who need some direction in finding a suitable project. This is especially helpful for international students who have limited experience and awareness of nonprofit organizations. Another source of projects is Graduates Involved in Volunteer Experiences (GIVE), an organization that is organized and managed by graduate students at the Daniels College. Upon completion of the service, students are required to submit a brief written report (3–5 pages) and orally share their experiences and reactions on the last day of class. For example, one Executive MBA student chose to volunteer for Meals on Wheels. He delivered hot lunches on three occasions. His final reflections included the following: "Today's business climate for executives doesn't allow much time for volunteer work. . . . It's not always easy to find the time to go out of the way to show you care for the people of your community. This experience showed me that I have to find the time."

Activities

Students choose a wide variety of activities and organizations, generally from nonprofit organizations but also public schools and government agencies. Generally we prefer that students engage in "front-line" activity, some aspect of direct service provided by the organization. Examples of activities include preparing or distributing meals to the homeless, working on the construction of a new home for Habitat for Humanity, or being a presenter in the public schools for Junior Acheivement. We generally discourage filing and office work or even the direct application of their business skills to an organizational need, such as assisting in the development of a business plan or developing a spreadsheet for some accounting problem. While applying their business skills in ways that assist the business development of organizations is important and worthwhile, we prefer that students have experience with the immediate and direct needs provided by their chosen organizations. Other examples of activities range from childcare to care of the elderly, from home construction to trail maintenance, from helping adolescents at risk to assisting with the Special Olympics.

We are quite flexible in terms of what is accepted as community service, and generally we tell students our criterion is "anything that gives back to the community or contributes voluntarily to the improvement and well-being of the community." Such activity may or may not be associated with a formal organization. For example, some of the more unusual but acceptable activities have included clearing snow from the walks of elderly neighbors during a very bad snowstorm, taking homeless individuals to lunch, and cleaning trash from a stretch of river commonly used by campers and fly fishermen. In the case of the snow shoveling, the student was invited for coffee by several of his elderly neighbors, whom he was not acquainted with prior to the service activity. He connected with his community in a way he had not previously experienced. Perhaps the most important aspect here is that we allow students the autonomy to choose the organization and activities that fit their individual interests and schedules.

Final report

Students are required to submit a paper that includes (1) a brief description of the organization: mission, age, funding sources, full-time and volunteer personnel; (2) a brief description of their specific activity; and (3) reflections and critical evaluation. We consider the last section to be the most important. We ask students to connect their experience with various themes of the course: Aristotelian virtue ethics, social contract and Hobbes, fostering "social capital" as developed by Robert Putnam, Benjamin Barber's concept of citizenship and community responsibility, ethical responsibilities from utilitarian and duty-based perspectives, and connections with their ideas of personal and professional responsibilities as a business person. As an example of integrating the concepts and theories, one student observed, "The investment of social capital is in full gear at the Food Distribution Center." Another student who volunteered at the Denver Rescue Mission stated, "While I feel Aristotle's words apply to me from the perspective of moral virtue, Barber's words reminded me of what it means to be a citizen in a free society." Another volunteered for the National Ski Patrol and related it to the mission of the Daniels College, saying, "I tend to think that this type of service coincides with the ethos of the Daniels College of Business. . . . They should want competent, caring, confident, and self-controlled people that have proven their ability to handle varied, changing, dynamic situations. I know the NSP has given me some of those skills."

The written report is due the last day of class, and on that day we spend two hours informally sharing their experiences and reflections about the activities. This last class has become one of the most meaningful and sometimes emotional sessions for the students (and faculty). Behind many of the chosen activities are personal stories, such as having a disabled sibling or being a battered spouse. The stories emerge naturally in such an environment, and the sharing seems to reinforce the commitment to future community service and the idea that as business managers and individuals there is a shared responsibility to be involved. The sharing also is consistent with our

pedagogical philosophy of a "learning community," shared responsibility in supporting the development and growth of one another. These are usually not formal presentations, but rather informal accounts of their experiences and reflections. The flow of the discussion seems best when individuals are allowed to share their experience as the "spirit moves them" during the two hour session.

Organizational context and culture

Our belief is that service learning requirement makes little sense and will have minimal impact if community service is not perceived as consistent with the values and mission the College, is not part of a broad commitment of the College to the community, and generally and integral part of the culture of the College. Thus we are involved in an ongoing effort to integrate ethics and social responsibility into the curriculum and life of the Daniels College. In the past few years Daniels has revised its mission statement to include community commitment as one of the three sides of its mission triangle. The College members (staff, faculty, and students) have always been involved in community service, but this mission statement formalizes and identifies the commitment. Community service is further reinforced in the Daniels' culture through a student managed community service organization, Graduates Involved in Voluntary Experiences (GIVE). This organization was originally created by the College to encourage volunteer activities, but it is now a student-managed group that organizes community service projects for graduate students. The entire university now has a day in the spring set asides as "community service day," and the Daniels College has taken a leading role in organizing the activities. The important point here is that the community service requirement is supported and reinforced by a college culture that embraces community service and volunteer activities as an important part of personal and business life.

Educational philosophy and assumptions
(why we do it)

The presence of a "values" component in the graduate curriculum is testimony to the commitment of the College to a wider view of business education. There is recognition that business has responsibilities to the larger community, and these responsibilities and values are expressed through ethics, law, and public policy. The values component also expresses a commitment to personal and professional development as part of the educational experience. The values courses are predicated on the notion of a "learning community," that is, that students and professors have shared responsibilities for the growth and development of each other as members of the community. Indeed, the fundamental purpose of Values-Based Leadership, and for that matter the entire MBA curriculum, is student growth, development, or positive change. As students are told, "If positive change from the educational experience is not occurring, then the classes are a waste of time." As John Dewey has succinctly expressed the point, ". . . life is development, and developing, growing, is life" (Dewey, 1915, p. 49).

The community service requirement provides an opportunity to grow both intellectually and emotionally. Among other learning objectives, the requirement is intended to make students more aware of the kinds of needs and problems to which nonprofit and public sector institutions attend. The experience is also intended to make students more aware of the challenges in terms of funding and staffing, as well as more aware of how business can be an active partner in dealing with community problems and needs.

Besides the cognitive change, there is an emotional component to the community service experience. In some respects this may be a more significant and more long-lasting aspect of the learning. Broadly speaking, students invariably find their service a meaningful and moving experience. Compassion and sympathy are deepened, a sense of appreciation for their own advantages and abilities occurs, and a greater sense of sharing and helping results from the experience for many. Ram Dass and Paul

Gorman capture the nature of service: "It all seems natural and appropriate. You live, you help. When we join together in this spirit, action comes more effortlessly, and everybody ends up nourished" (Dass and Gordon, 1990, p. 5). Again as Dewey has stated, "In the last analysis, *all* that an educator can do is modify stimuli so that response will as surely as is possible result in the formation of desirable intellectual and emotional dispositions" (Dewey, 1915, p. 180). The service learning component is specifically tied to several themes and assumptions of the course: community citizenship and experiential learning. These themes will be developed briefly.

Community citizenship

A fundamental organizing concept for the course is community. We are constantly trying to encourage perspectives that see businesses and individuals as part of a larger community. With membership in a community comes responsibilities. Students read selections from Benjamin Barber's *Aristocracy for All*, emphasizing that community service can be viewed not merely as voluntary contributions of free individuals, but as a responsibility of good citizens. We introduce students to Robert Putnam's concept of "social capital" from his new book *Bowling Alone* (2000) and show a video clip where Putnam promotes the concept in Ranier, Washington. The idea is that by strengthening relationships and the norms of a community, all benefit. Part of building social capital is a strong sense of community service and civic engagement.

Experiential learning

Another fundamental assumption is that development and change is best achieved through action or experiential learning. An appreciation for community service is best fostered by engaging in service, not just reading and talking about the idea. We ground this notion in reading from Aristotle (Book II, *Nicomachean Ethics*). One central idea of Aristotle is that virtue (excellence) is achieved by doing or through practice.

Virtuous activity achieves both personal happiness and community well being. For Aristotle the happy person is the virtuous person. The virtuous person is the *poli*tical person (engaged successfully in her "*polis*"). Indeed many, if not most, of the moral virtues require a community of others in practicing or exercising virtue – e.g. generosity, truthfulness, friendliness, or righteous indignation, to name a few. While a habit cannot be established by one community service project, we provide an environment where students have an opportunity to engage in the practice and hopefully gain greater appreciation for the value and satisfaction of community service.

Research *(what we have learned about service learning)*

It has been more than eight years since we integrated the service learning or community service learning requirement into the values course, so we thought it time to begin collecting information about the requirement and the impact on students. We had numerous questions. What kinds of organizations are students choosing for their service? What kinds of activities are they doing? Do they find the requirement meaningful? What kind of impact does the requirement have? What kinds of connections do the students make to theoretical concepts introduced in class? Since international students comprise about a quarter of the graduate student population, we are also interested in different cultural perspectives that students might have.

What follows is a preliminary report on our findings. We collected survey data from a sample of students in their last quarter of their MBA program. We also surveyed a sample of entering students to make some comparison of community service commitment. We also did content analysis of final reports or service learning papers from a sample of students from four different sections of the Values in Action class. Finally data was collected from alumni as well as matriculating students of the Daniels College of Business.

Graduating student survey

Integrative Challenge is a capstone course that all MBA students were required to take during the last two quarters of their program of study. A total of 71 Integrative Challenge students completed the survey.

We were interested in the nature and extent of community service *experience prior to enrollment* in the Daniels College. Consolidated survey results reveal that in the five years before students entered their graduate education, 58% had volunteered 1–2 times per year, while 23% had volunteered 3–5 times per year. Only 15% had no volunteer experience. The average number of hours volunteered by each student was about 37 hours per year. Students volunteered most for health and human service organizations, followed by educational and recreational organizations. The most common work performed was educational assistance/tutoring and event management/participation. Only 3% had volunteer experience that was outside their home country, and 55% had made financial donations to a service organization.

We were also interested in the *kinds of organizations and activities* chosen by students *during their residency* with the Daniels College. The survey revealed that during their Daniels' enrollment, students focused their volunteer activities most on health and human service and educational organizations, followed by recreational organizations. A more detailed summary can be seen in Tables I and II. As can be seen in Table II, the most work performed in any category was for construction/home improvement, followed by event management/participation and educational assistance/tutoring. In both tables the total exceeds the number of subjects since the survey allowed for multiple responses to the question

We also wanted to assess the *perceived impact* of the service learning requirement. As seen in Table III, almost half reported both an "increased recognition of the level and kinds of needs that exist" and "increased awareness of how individuals and business are involved in community service," while one-third reported a "realization of personal satisfaction for community service activity." For example, one student observed,

TABLE I
Organization type for service learning during MBA
(graduating students)

Organization type	Number
Educational	23
Recreational	11
Political/Legal	1
Environmental	6
Animal	2
Arts and Humanities	4
Religious	5
Health and Human Service	43
Other – Home Construction	3

TABLE II
Type of service performed during MBA
(graduating students)

Type of service	Number
Food service	10
Disabilities assistance	9
Educational assistance/tutoring	17
Counseling	5
Event management/participation	24
Construction/home improvement	25
Outdoor improvements	13
Business/professional services	11
Office/Clerical	3
Other – Cleaning	1

"This experience was an eye-opener for me. Volunteering and helping others made me feel better about myself (as opposed to watching TV and sleeping all day on Saturday), but I also realized that Habitat for Humanity is not a charity giving free handouts." Another student who delivered meals for Meals on Wheels said, "I am continually surprised at the fact that we live in one of the wealthiest countries/societies in the world, and yet we still have seniors who cannot afford a hot meal each day!" Additionally, 23% indicated that the service learning did "not really affect [their] perspective." The "no effect" responses should not necessarily be interpreted negatively, since these respondents may have a very positive attitude about service learning, but because of their experience they may not feel the MBA requirement significantly changed their perspective. It would be useful to clarify the question in future surveys to distinguish those who experienced a negative change from their service, compared to others experiencing no change or a general positive change. Two-thirds of the students surveyed felt that the community service requirement was about right, while interestingly 20% thought it was not enough.

The graduating students were asked about their *community participation after their Daniels' education*, and 76% indicated that they would make it a consistent part of their life. The annual average number of hours that each student said they would volunteer in the future was about 55 hours. This compares to an average of 37 hours per week for the same group prior to their enrollment in their graduate program, a rather significant increase of nearly 50%.

Male and female student comparison. Males indicated that in the five years prior to their Daniel's enrollment, the average number of hours volunteered by each student was about 34 hours, compared to about 43 hours for females. After their Daniels' education, males indicated the

TABLE III
Effect of community service (graduating students)

Effect on perspective	Number	Percent
Increased recognition of needs	34	48%
Increased awareness of involvement	33	46%
Personal satisfaction	25	35%
No effect	16	23%

annual average number of hours volunteered would be about 58 hours, compared to about 54 hours for females, indicating a possible greater impact of the program on males. In addition, 72% of males said they would make community service a consistent part of their life, while 88% of females said the same.

U.S. and international students. There are dramatic differences between U.S. and international students in terms of their involvement and perceptions about community service. Several international students commented that community service was rare in their societies. In the five years prior to Daniels, U.S. students volunteered about 43 hours a year, while international students volunteered about 23 hours a year. Further 72% of U.S. students thought that the service learning requirement was about right, compared to 56% of international students. When asked about the effect on attitudes, only 4% of U.S. students indicated no effect, compared to 19% of international students. When asked about making community service a consistent part of their life, 83% of U.S. students answered affirmatively, while only 63% of international students answered the same. As seen in Figure 1, international students were less likely to indicate an increase in community service after graduation.

Explaining these differences requires more careful and thorough assessment of cultural differences and perceptions. It may be that the cultures from which the international students come do not emphasize community service. For example, one international student said in her final reflections, "During my lifetime, I have never seriously thought about community. I have cared for only my social career and status without feeling social responsibility for community and its members. I attribute this to my society which has been lack of social concept." It may be that the international students consider the requirement a U.S. phenomenon that does not readily transfer to their business and personal situations in their home countries. It may be that the international students view their service as contributing to citizens of a different country and hence not as meaningful as assisting others from their own communities. Further research could be designed to tease out answers to these questions.

Entering students survey results

The college conducted another survey of 124 entering students to gage their level of volun-
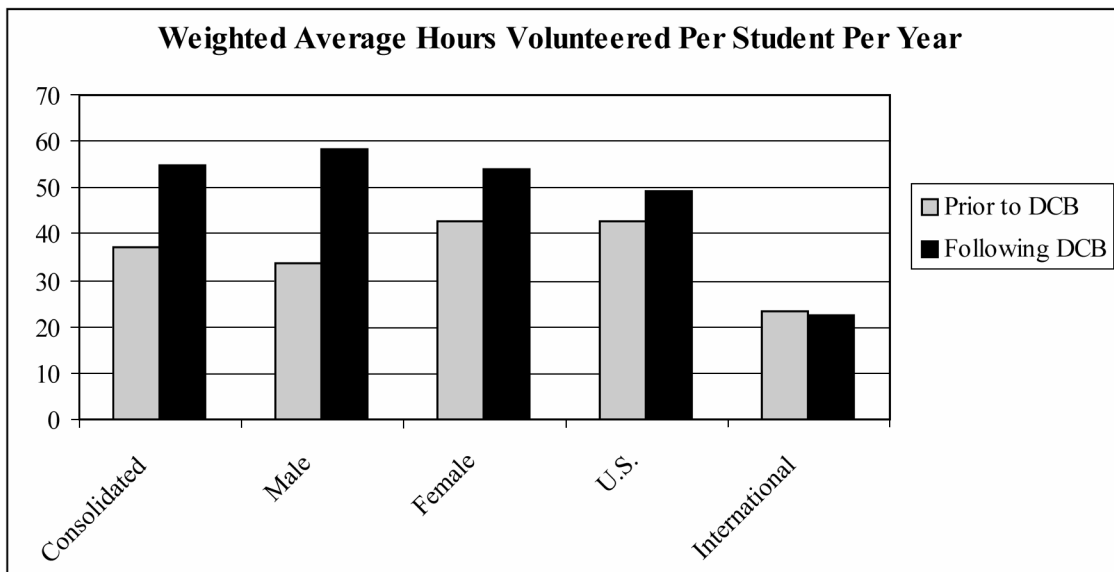

Figure 1. Integrative challenge/graduating students.

teerism and community participation over the five years prior to enrolling in their graduate business program. Consolidated survey results reveal that in the five years before students entered Daniels, 39% had volunteered 1–2 times per year, 36% had volunteered 3–5 times per year, and 24% had no volunteer experience. The average number of hours volunteered by each student annually was about 63 hours. Students volunteered most for educational organizations, followed by health and human services and recreational organizations. The most work performed in any category was for educational assistance/tutoring and event management/ participation. Additionally, 11% had volunteer experience that was outside their home country, and 55% had made financial donations. Interestingly, the percentage making financial donations was identical to the sample of graduating students.

Male and female comparisons. Males indicated that in the five years prior to their enrollment in Daniels, the annual number of hours volunteered by each student was about 65 hours, while females indicated an average of about 59 hours. Females strongly favored performing education assistance/tutoring and event management/ participation. In addition, 63% of females indicated they had made financial donations in the last five years, compared to 50% for males.

Content analysis (student papers)

Another study was conducted from the required community service papers in the Values in Action class. Papers from four sections were analyzed for a total of 147 students. Consistent with results of the other studies, the data showed a preference of students for choosing human service organizations for community service. The response categories were somewhat different from the previously discussed studies, principally by breaking out the human service activities, such as organizations that assist the homeless and those that serve individuals with disabilities. Table IV summarizes these results. If you add human services, health, homelessness, and disabilities to

TABLE IV
Organization type for community service
(1998 student papers)

Organization type	Number
Homelessness	26
Disabilities	16
Education	25
Animal	3
Recreation	4
Health	10
Political/Legal	4
Environment	8
Human services	45
Arts	4
Other	2

make it more comparable to the categories of the studies discussed above, about 66% of students used a health and human service organization, compared to about 44% in the other studies.

Table V presents the kinds of activities performed for their community service. Again the response categories were slightly different, but overall there are similar results to the study of the graduating students in terms of a preference for construction, event management/participation, and educational assistance/tutoring, and direct client services.

Student papers were analyzed in terms of what connections students made to various theories and concepts presented in the Values in Action

TABLE V
Type of volunteer activity
(1998 student papers)

Activity	Number
Educational/Tutoring	18
Event management/participation	25
Construction/Maintenance	34
Outdoor/Environment	7
Professional/Business services	20
Counseling	2
Direct Client Services	34
Clerical/ Office	6
Other	1

class. We wanted to assess what concepts were most meaningful and relevant to students. These results are presented in Tables IV and VII.

Finally, the papers were assessed in terms of whether the community service experience was generally positive or negative. Of 130 papers analyzed, only one paper described the experience as negative. Typical was the following kind of comment, "It was a valuable experience that enabled me to make a connection between a business leader and the potential and actual positive impact that this person can have on their community." While there is no doubt a strong bias in terms of students wanting to impress instructors favorably by describing their experience as positive, the instructors tried to impress upon students that papers should be honest and open appraisals of the experience. Perhaps most telling is the comment of the student who did the content analysis of the papers. In her final report, she says, "By anonymously sharing in the students' experiences through reading papers, it gave me renewed faith in humankind. Most students found out something about themselves through the volunteer work. They truly enjoyed participating to help others."

Alumni and other surveys

A survey of alumni was also conducted. While the survey was done for other reasons, a question was included about whether the alumni had been a community volunteer in the past year. Of the 656 responses, approximately 67% said they had been a community volunteer. Expecting some falloff from intentions at graduation (76% of graduating students indicated that they would continue community service), two-thirds of alumni were actually engaged in community service.

In another sample of matriculating graduate business students, 386 responses were gathered. Consistent with findings of the previous studies discussed, 69% said they had engaged in community service in the last year. The most common organizations for service were human service and education. The most frequently mentioned activities were event management/participation, education/tutoring, and construction. The average number of hours per year was 59 hours for day students and 72 hours for evening students.

Summary and discussion

What general conclusions might we draw from these various data sources? A few of the rough and preliminary generalizations might include the following:

- Students generally report a *positive experience* from the community service or service

TABLE VI
Theories included in reflections
(1998 student papers)

Theory	Number
Kohlberg	4
Kant	19
Hobbes	11
Aristotle	14
Marx	2
Utilitarian	33
Barber/Putnam	27
Bible/Christianity	5
Rawls	7
Egalitarian	1

TABLE VII
Concepts discussed in reflections
(1998 student papers)

Concept	Number
Duty/Moral worth	46
Social contract	32
Common/Community good	25
Society and system	8
Happiness	6
Ideal society	2
Experience itself	2
Habit	6
International responsibility	1
Equality of need	6
Prisoner dilemma	3

learning requirement. Creating a positive experience for students can not only provide reinforcement for future community service, but including the experience in a professional program sends the message that service to the community is an important aspect of business responsibility and success.

- Community service as a part of the business school curriculum may increase the *future commitment* of students for community service. After completing the class service learning requirement and being part of a culture that emphasizes community service, over three-quarters of the sample of graduating students reported a commitment to make community service a consistent part of their life. Moreover, their commitment increased from an average of 37 hours annually before entering the program to 55 hours at the conclusion of the program. This point seems further supported by a survey of alumni, in which 67% reported engaged in volunteer in the past year.

- The kinds of organizations most preferred by students were *health and human services, education, and recreation*. The kinds of activities generally preferred were *construction, event management/participation, and education/tutoring.* These preferences were quite consistent across the various surveys. This information may be useful to those planning specific service learning activities for students. While students in the class were able to choose their organization and activity, some instructors may prefer to plan an activity for an entire class, and these results provide some indication of student preferences.

- *Gender differences* were observed, but the results were *mixed*. The sample of graduating students showed that 72% of men and 88% of women expected community service to be a consistent part of their lives. While this is a significant proportion for both genders, the higher levels for women would be consistent with more of a caring role on the part of women, and historically women have shouldered more of the volunteer service in communities. Yet the impact of service learning seemed more pronounced for men in terms of their future commitment. In the same graduating sample men reported an average of 34 hours before entering the program and 65 hours after the program. Women reported a higher of service level entering the program (43 hours), increasing to 59 after the program. An understanding of gender differences would seem to require a sensible theoretical framework and well-structured data collection in future research regarding gender.

- *International students* generally come with less community service experience, are affected less by the service learning experience, and are less committed to community service in the future. As seen in Figure 1, international students expected to engage in about the same number of hours before and after their service learning experience. Cultural traditions and expectations are likely important factors in these results. Moreover, while only 4% of U.S. students reported "no effect" from the service learning requirement, 19% of international students reported "no effect."

- Providing *theoretical concepts and frameworks* may be important in terms of helping students understand the role and importance of community service. From the various themes and concepts explored, students saw the most connections with the following: utilitarian ideas of promoting the greatest social benefit, Benjamin Barber and Robert Putnam's ideas about social capital and democracy, duty-based Kantian theory, Aristotle's idea of becoming virtuous by doing or practice, and Hobbes' idea of social contract and community good.

Conclusion

This paper has described the service learning or community service requirement at the University of Denver's Daniels College of Business, including the philosophical and pedagogical prin-

ciples that guide making service learning a requirement in the graduate business curriculum. We have also summarized data collected in terms of student choices and student impacts of the requirement.

Service learning is recognized as a legitimate part of a business education, as evidenced by programs at institutions such as the University of Michigan, the Wharton School, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bentley College, and the Loyal University of Chicago. Indeed, a special issue of the *Journal of Business Ethics* ("Community Involvement and Service Learning Student Projects") was published in 1996 to summarize different service learning initiatives.

Yet, there has been little empirical data collected in terms of value and impact on students. This paper has been a modest effort to explore empirically some of the questions related to service learning. Many of these questions may vary depending on the unique set of goals for the program and curriculum. Yet, there are common goals that could be assessed against experience. Sharing knowledge from such assessments may be useful in developing and improving service learning components of programs. For example, what kinds of programs seem to be most effective for international students? What kinds of programs seem to have the most lasting impact on a sustained lifetime commitment to community service? What programs make the best connections for students in terms of business involvement in community service? What kinds of theoretical and conceptual material make the best connections for students? The hope is that this paper may stimulate some interest in gathering information and sharing it with those interested in making service learning part of a business curriculum. Robert Coles (1993) puts the issue of service and education as follows:

> Our institutions of higher learning might certainly take heed, not only by encouraging students to do such service, but helping them stop and mull over, through books and discussions, what they have heard and seen. This is the purpose, after all, of colleges and universities – to help one generation after another grow intellectually and morally through study and the self-scrutiny such study can sometimes prompt (p. 148).

Acknowledgements

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