

AN EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT OF A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY-BASED  
SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT LEADERS

By

Meredith Anne Whitley

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## ABSTRACT

### AN EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT OF A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY-BASED SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT LEADERS

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Over the past 25 years, there has been a call for change within American higher education, with an increasing number of foundations, national organizations, and individual researchers pushing for institutions of higher education to become more involved with the surrounding communities and American society (Campus Compact, 2011; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). In response to this call for a more engaged campus, colleges and universities have begun to seek out partnerships with community agencies, organizations, and other groups (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996), as well as invest in many different forms of engaged scholarship. One form of engaged scholarship that is becoming increasingly prevalent in institutions of higher learning is that of service-learning, which merges academic study with meaningful service in the community (Butin, 2010; Eyler, 2009). Service-learning has been incorporated into a wide range of fields, although the field of kinesiology has not yet embraced service-learning as a common pedagogical practice (Watson, Hueglin, Crandall, & Eisenman, 2002). In order to increase the prevalence of service-learning courses within kinesiology, it is necessary for research to be conducted on courses within this field. This dissertation examined one physical activity-based service-learning course within kinesiology. The primary purpose of the study was to explore the impact of this course on the undergraduate students enrolled, with a focus on personal growth, academic and intellectual development, and social and community engagement. The secondary purpose was to explore how these changes occurred during a physical activity-based service-learning course. These aims were addressed through a semester-

long qualitative study, with in-depth interviews with six undergraduate student leaders and the course instructor, along with reflections completed by the students and the primary investigator in the role of a participant observer. The data were analyzed with a combined nomothetic and idiographic methodological approach, with commonalities and patterns being identified across participants in addition to the individual characteristics, experiences, and outcomes for each individual participant (Dunn, 1994; Gould, Tuffey, Udry, & Loehr, 1997). Results revealed that the participants all experienced growth and development from their experiences in the service-learning course, including leadership development, improved interpersonal skills, increased knowledge of social justice issues, and enhanced self-understanding. However, the participants varied significantly in terms of the number, depth, and complexity of these proximal outcomes, with the variance largely explained by the students' predisposing factors (e.g., race, gender, previous volunteering experience), the service-learning experience variables (e.g., feedback from the course instructor, effort level of students, integration of course content and service-learning experience), and the mediating variables (i.e., quality and quantity of reflection and cognitive complexity). These findings led to new insights within the field of service-learning as well as a deeper understanding of previous findings, resulting in a refined comprehensive theoretical framework that can be used by researchers, practitioners, administrators, and funders for the study, practice, and funding of service-learning. Along with a detailed discussion of this theoretical framework as it relates to the study and practice of service-learning, other practical implications of this dissertation are explored, including the design of coach education and mentoring programs and the potential impact on the field of kinesiology.

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I dedicate this dissertation to my family. To my Dad, who taught me the value of hard work, belief in self, and doing what is right. To my Mom, who inspired me to cherish the art of learning and taught me how to see the good in everything. To my sister, whose passion, bravery, and sense of purpose drove me to seek out new experiences, find my own voice, and follow my dreams. To the love of my life, who has taught me the true meaning of friendship, inspired me to be a better person, and brought a refreshing sense of awe, wonder, and adventure to my life.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The historical link between higher education and American society has begun to erode over the past few decades (Harkavy, 2004; Holland, 1997; Weigert, 1998), with members of the academy and a number of external foundations and national organizations labeling these institutions of higher education as irrelevant when it comes to America's most pressing civic, social, economic, and moral issues (Boyer, 1996; Kellogg Commission, 1999). This criticism has led to a call for change within higher education, with a push to reevaluate the priorities of America's institutions of higher education and refocus the efforts of these institutions on engaged scholarship and involvement with the surrounding communities and America's democratic mission (Campus Compact, 2011; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). Some institutions have responded to this call for a more engaged campus, with a renewed emphasis on institutional citizenship, campus-community initiatives, and civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). There has also been an expansion of partnerships between colleges and universities and community agencies, organizations, and other groups (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996), resulting in more engaged campuses that integrate research, teaching, and service (Sandmann, 2008).

There are many forms of engaged scholarship beginning to take hold in colleges and universities throughout the United States, ranging from community-based participatory research to volunteerism. Another form of engaged scholarship is service-learning, which is an offshoot of experiential education, with roots in the work of John Dewey (1933, 1938), Jean Piaget (1972), and David Kolb (1984). Unlike other forms of experiential education, service-learning merges academic study with meaningful service in the community (Butin, 2010; Eyler, 2009).

There are a range of definitions and conceptualizations of service-learning (e.g., Howard, 1993; Jacoby, 1996; Rhoads, 1997), but the most commonly cited definition is:

Service-learning [is] a course-based, credit-bearing, educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, p. 112)

Although there was initial resistance to the inclusion of service-learning courses within higher education (Butin, 2010; Gray et al., 1998), this form of experiential education has received strong support from the government (Jacobson, Oravec, Falk, & Osteen, 2011; NCSA, 1990; NCSTA, 1993) and students in higher education have shown an interest in becoming involved in their communities through service (Kielsmeier, Scales, Roehlkepartain, & Neal, 2004; Skinner & Chapman, 1999). This has led to an increase in the number of service-learning opportunities on college and university campuses over the past two decades (Howard, 2001; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000), which suggests that service-learning is becoming more accepted and supported within higher education.

As this interest and involvement in service-learning has grown, researchers have examined the potential for service-learning to positively impact the undergraduate students who participate in these courses. A fairly consistent pattern has emerged from the growing body of research and evaluation studies on service-learning courses in a variety of disciplines, with effects being found in three key domains: personal growth (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007; Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997; Jacobson et al., 2011), academic and intellectual development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Strage, 2000), and social and community

engagement (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Prentice, 2007; Simons & Cleary, 2006). Several reviews have been written on the topic of service-learning within higher education (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001), with the overall conclusion that service-learning courses have the potential to positively impact all of the individuals involved, including the students, faculty members, and community members, as well as the institutions of higher education and the communities involved in these initiatives (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000). Altogether, service-learning is seen as a critical component in the shift towards a more engaged campus (Boyer, 1996; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Holland, 1997).

While service-learning courses have been incorporated into a wide range of fields (e.g., nursing, nutrition, teacher education), the field of kinesiology has not yet embraced service-learning as a common pedagogical practice (Watson, Hueglin, Crandall, & Eisenman, 2002), with the notable exception of physical education teacher education (PETE) programs. This form of pedagogy has been recognized as a way for PETE programs to meet many of the standards outlined in the NASPE/NCATE Guidelines for Teacher Preparation in Physical Education (NASPE, 1998; Watson et al., 2002). One example of a service-learning course within PETE that meets the requirements of a true service-learning experience is a course entitled, “Health and Physical Education for Children,” where the undergraduate student leaders taught physical education to African American and Latino children from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Meaney, Bohler, Kopf, Hernandez, & Scott, 2008). As part of this course, the undergraduate student leaders were required to reflect on their experiences through daily logs and weekly reflections, and the course content and the service-learning experience were integrated throughout the entire course.

Unfortunately, experiences such as the course described above are not readily available within the field of kinesiology at many institutions of higher education (Cutforth, 2000). This is surprising because many of the undergraduate students within kinesiology are going into human service professions where practical experience in the community can be invaluable (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, certified athletic training, physical education) (Bishop & Driver, 2007; Prentice & Garcia, 2000; Strage, 2004; Watson et al., 2002). Sport, physical education, and physical activity contexts provide rich environments to engage undergraduate students in their communities, helping them not only serve others but also learn the most effective ways to enhance health and maximize personal development.

Despite the lack of kinesiology-based service-learning courses outside of PETE, this does not mean that Kinesiologists are not engaged in their communities. There are a number of kinesiology-based outreach programs throughout the United States that bring undergraduate students into the community (Hayden, 2010; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001). However, these programs often focus on the community members being served during this experience (e.g., the children learning sport skills, the youth becoming more responsible within their community), without much focus on the undergraduate students' experiences as leaders in these programs. Without the requisite academic support and guided reflection for the undergraduate students, these programs cannot be classified as true service-learning experiences, even though they have been shown to be quite effective in having a positive impact on the community members who are being served (Hellison & Walsh, 2002). To be labeled as a true service-learning course, the service must be part of the course objectives and fully integrated into the course through assignments that require reflection on the service and are evaluated by the instructor (Campus

Compact, 2000; MJCSL, 2001; Weigert, 1998). However, there are not many kinesiology-based programs that can be classified as service-learning courses based on these guidelines.

In order to change the climate of kinesiology and convince the administrators and faculty that there is a need for undergraduate students to have more opportunities to engage in meaningful service-learning experiences within kinesiology, service-learning courses must be studied in great depth. While supporters of service-learning are able to describe the changes they have seen in their undergraduate students in these courses, faculty and administrators want evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of service-learning (Astin et al., 2000). Because the adoption of an innovative practice such as a service-learning course generally results in greater effort and commitment for faculty members, it is critical that they have the following: (a) reason to believe in the efficacy of service-learning, (b) strong staff support, and (c) support from the institution through the faculty reward system (Astin et al., 2000). The last point highlights one of the greatest barriers to the adoption of service-learning courses, as service has often received diminished attention and value when it comes to faculty promotion and reward; over the past few decades, teaching and research have become the main priorities for faculty members at numerous institutions (Fitzgerald, Allen, & Roberts, 2010; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). In order for colleges and universities to revise their faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure guidelines to include outreach and service as critical elements in the faculty reward system, there must be strong evidence that demonstrates its effectiveness (O'Meara, 2005; Westdijk, Koliba, & Hamshaw, 2010). So there is a critical need for research to be conducted on kinesiology-based service-learning courses, as this will provide the evidence desired by these institutions, administrators, and faculty. In addition, with increasing calls for accountability in higher education in general, it is scientifically important for

kinesiology-based service-learning courses to be evaluated to show that their courses influence undergraduate students in the ways they were intended (Carey & Schneider, 2010). This dissertation was designed to address this gap in the literature, focusing on one specific physical activity-based service-learning course within kinesiology that had not yet been evaluated with respect to the impact it had on the undergraduate students enrolled in it.

## **Purpose**

The primary purpose of this dissertation was to explore the impact of a physical activity-based service-learning course on the undergraduate student leaders enrolled in the program, with a focus on personal growth, academic and intellectual development, and social and community engagement. A secondary purpose of this study was to explore *how* these changes occur. Given the distinctive nature of students' experiences in service-learning courses (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan, Strage, & David, 2004), there was a focus on exploring the individual characteristics, experiences, and outcomes for each individual participant as well as identifying the commonalities and patterns across all of the participants. These issues were addressed through a qualitative study that was conducted during a semester-long physical activity-based service-learning course. In-depth interviews were conducted with the undergraduate student leaders and the course instructor. Additionally, Reflection Journals were used to allow for in-service and post-service reflection by the undergraduate student leaders. The investigator also served as a participant observer throughout the program, providing insights and reflections on the undergraduate student leaders enrolled in the course.

## **Strengths, Limitations, and Assumptions**

The strengths of this dissertation begin with the design and methods used. This study was distinct in that it used a theoretical framework as a guide for the data collection design,



resulting in a systematic, rigorous assessment of the selected service-learning course. By using this model as a guide, this study addressed the most consistent criticism of past service-learning studies: the lack of a strong theoretical and conceptual foundation (Billig, 2003; Bringle, 2003). Additionally, the undergraduate student leaders' characteristics were measured before entering the service-learning course, which lessened the chance of limited or overstated conclusions that often occur because the researchers do not examine these individual differences prior to the students' participation in the service-learning course (Aronson et al., 2005). Another methodological strength was the primary investigator's role as a participant observer. This prolonged engagement enabled the investigator to learn the culture of the setting, contextualize the data collected, and build rapport with the undergraduate student leaders, leading to more open conversations during the post-service interviews (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition to the investigator serving as a participant observer, the course instructor was also interviewed following the completion of the course. By collecting data from these two sources, the study was not reliant exclusively on students' self-reporting, which has been identified as yet another weakness of research conducted in the service-learning field (Aronson et al., 2005).

Along with the strengths within the data collection portion of the study, the analytic approach that was taken is also a strong point of this investigation. Unlike most studies within the service-learning field that tend to be based on group-level analytical procedures, this dissertation used a combined nomothetic and idiographic methodological approach (Dunn, 1994). This allowed the investigator to search for commonalities and patterns across participants while also identifying the unique characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of each individual participant (Dunn, 1994; Gould, Tuffey, Udry, & Loehr, 1997). This combined analytic

approach sets this dissertation apart from the majority of studies within the service-learning field, and enhances the likelihood that this dissertation will advance previous research within the general field of service-learning, and more specifically, within the field of kinesiology-based service-learning.

Finally, this study was conducted by an investigator from an outside university, rather than from the university in which the service-learning course was based. Although the investigator was a participant in the program, she was not involved in any way with the evaluation of the students in the course under study. This, coupled with human subjects' protections about voluntary participation, allowed the undergraduate student leaders to feel like they could be completely forthcoming in discussing their experiences in the service-learning course and what they did or did not learn through these experiences.

The limitations of this dissertation included the idiosyncratic and contextualized nature of the physical activity-based service-learning course under study, the small sample size, the short time frame (one semester), the focus on short-term impacts, and the lack of a control or comparison group (Argosy Foundation, 2007; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Furco, 2003; Furco & Billig, 2003; Jacobson et al., 2011; Vogelgesang, Ikeda, Gilmartin, & Keup, 2002). Additionally, there was the potential for self-selection bias entering into the service-learning experience as well as social desirability bias throughout the study, including responses in the interviews and Reflection Journals (Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson, 2005; Furco, 2003; Jacobson et al., 2011). It is also possible that the participants may have had expectations of the service-learning experience that could have confounded their responses during the pre-service interviews (Hecht, 2003a). As for the assumptions, this study assumed that the participants were honest in their responses during the interviews and Reflection Journals and that the participation of the investigator in the service-

learning experience created a stronger relationship between the investigator and the participants, leading to more openness throughout the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this review is to provide a comprehensive summary of the literature on service-learning within higher education, specifically within the field of kinesiology, and to describe the physical activity-based service-learning course that was the focus of this study. The chapter begins with an overview of the historical link between higher education and society, followed by an explanation of the contemporary definitions of service-learning within higher education. Following this explanation, an overview of the research on the impact of service-learning is then presented, including the key studies that have shaped the research and programming within this field. After this broad look at the field of service-learning within higher education, the research on service-learning within kinesiology is presented. Some of the kinesiology-based service-learning courses in existence are described, with one service-learning course examined in detail, given that this program was the focus of this study. This chapter concludes with an overview of the rationale for this study.

#### **Historical Link Between Higher Education and Society**

“Higher education and the larger purposes of American society have been – from the very first – inextricably intertwined” (Boyer, 1994, p. 48A). In fact, Benjamin Franklin published a pamphlet in 1749 entitled, *Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*, where he described the importance of educating the youth of America to be prepared to serve their country; in his words, American citizens must have “an inclination joined with an ability to serve,” and he believed that this training was the responsibility of the academy (Best, 1962, p. 150). This connection between higher education and American society began as early as 1636, with the belief that colonial colleges would prepare civic and religious leaders for leadership

during that time (Boyer, 1994). Following the American Revolution, institutions of higher education continued to have a strong connection with the purposes of American society. A prime example is the founding of institutions such as Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1824, as this was seen as a response to the need for “builders” to help America construct railroads and bridges. With the Morrill Act of 1862, land-grant colleges and universities were created with the founding purpose of service, with Michigan State University being the first of these great land-grant universities (Harkavy, 2004; Widder, 2005). These institutions focused on greater access to education, advancement of democracy, and improvement in the mechanical, agricultural, and military sciences (Harkavy, 2004). This connection between higher education and America’s democratic mission continued into the 1900s, with the formation of an academic brain trust to help President Franklin D. Roosevelt address America’s economic collapse and the creation of the Peace Corps in the early 1960s that inspired college students to help improve the world (Boyer, 1994).

Unfortunately, this connection between higher education and American society has begun to erode over the past few decades (Harkavy, 2004; Holland, 1997; Weigert, 1998). Higher learning institutions have been criticized about this decline, and some critics claim that higher education is irrelevant when it comes to the nation’s most important civic, social, economic, and moral issues (Boyer, 1996; Kellogg Commission, 1999). While there is still a strong rhetoric of service and community engagement at many higher education institutions, especially in the institutional mission statements (Astin, 1997; Harkavy, 2004), teaching and research have now become the main priorities for faculty members at numerous American institutions (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Holland, 1997). A strong indicator of this shift in priorities is the fact that many institutions now focus on disciplinary research and teaching for faculty promotion and reward,

with service often receiving diminished attention and value (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). In fact, in 2001, Gibson conducted a study on civic engagement within higher education, and she found that the rhetoric of higher education far exceeds its performance in this critical area. Blending the words of Checkoway and Mattson with her own, Gibson (2001) observed:

Other higher education leaders have echoed Derek Bok's concern that universities are disassociated with the civic missions on which they were founded – missions that assumed responsibility for preparing students for active participation in a democratic society and developing students' knowledge for the improvement of communities. Currently, it is "hard to find top administrators with consistent commitment to this mission; few faculty members consider it central to their role, and community groups that approach the university for assistance often find it difficult to get what they need." In short, the university has primarily become "a place for professors to get tenured and students to get credentialed." (p. 11)

This gradual shift in priorities has resulted in a call for change within higher education, as critics contend that the needs of American society are no longer being met through these institutions (Boyer, 1996; Fitzgerald et al., 2010). Over the past 25 years, a number of foundations, national organizations, and individual researchers have focused their efforts on changing this trend and stimulating American higher education to actively seek out engaged scholarship and involvement with the surrounding communities and American society (Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). This call for change began with the founding of Campus Compact in 1985, which is a national coalition of college and university presidents who are dedicated to promoting engaged scholarship (Campus Compact, 2011; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). During the 1990s,

there were many reformists who joined this movement, with the late Ernest Boyer leading the way. Boyer (1990) believed that teaching, research, and service were not mutually exclusive. Other scholars agreed, calling for a broader definition of scholarship-based teaching, research, and service (Braxton, Luckey, & Helland, 2002). This led to a focus on engaged scholarship, where teaching and research within the institution is connected to and integrated within the surrounding community. Boyer (1994) challenged institutions of higher education to integrate service within teaching and research in this way, as he believed this would lead to a more engaged campus that addresses societal issues and is once again relevant and meaningful to the surrounding community and American society. Along with building a stronger connection to the community and addressing societal needs and concerns, Boyer (1996) also believed that integrating service into teaching and research would lead to a more effective and influential classroom and laboratory. This call for a more engaged campus was echoed by fellow scholars (Jacoby & Associates, 2003; McCall, Groark, Strauss, & Johnson, 1998), and the American Association of Higher Education even dedicated its 1995 annual conference to the “Engaged Campus” (Holland, 1997). In 1999, the Kellogg Commission published an influential report that described a vision of institutions of higher education as engaged campuses with engaged scholarship in the classroom, in research, and in the community.

Over the past 15 years, some institutions of higher education have responded to this call for a more engaged campus, although there has not yet been a complete shift in the focus of most institutions of higher learning. For those colleges and universities who have responded to this challenge, there has been a renewed emphasis on institutional citizenship, campus-community initiatives, and civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). This has led to broader conceptualizations of academic scholarship, including the scholarship of engagement that

integrates research, teaching, and service (Sandmann, 2008). In fact, some land-grant colleges and universities actually revised their faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure guidelines to include outreach and service as critical elements in the faculty reward system (O'Meara, 2005; Westdijk et al., 2010). Michigan State University was one of the first land-grant universities to undertake such a reform agenda (Michigan State University, 1993), with a number of colleges and universities following in its footsteps (e.g., North Carolina State University and the University of Minnesota) (North Carolina State University, 1994; University of Minnesota, 2003). This institutional reform has been supported by a number of federal programs (e.g., HUD Community Outreach Partnership Centers, America Reads) (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Additionally, there has been increasing support for experiential and active-learning strategies (e.g., internships, volunteering, service-learning) where students have “hands-on” learning experiences in the community (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). To enable these experiences, there has been an expansion of partnerships between colleges and universities and community agencies, organizations, and other groups (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Driscoll et al., 1996), resulting in more engaged campuses throughout the U.S. Although these partnerships take many forms within and between campuses, an increasingly common partnership is service-learning (Campus Compact, 2000; Driscoll et al., 1996).

### **Service-Learning in Higher Education**

Service-learning emerged amidst the activism on college campuses in the 1960s and 1970s, along with the formation of the Peace Corps in 1961 and the Volunteers in Service to America in 1965 (Jacobson et al., 2011; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). In addition to these political ties, service-learning has its roots in the work of John Dewey (1933, 1938), Jean Piaget (1972), and David Kolb (1984), researchers who believed that true, long-lasting education and



learning comes when students are actively involved in their own learning. Service-learning rests on theories of experiential learning, which were initially articulated by Dewey (1938) and later expanded upon by Kolb (1984). Experiential learning is seen as a cyclical process of experience and reflection, where the learner interacts with the world and then reflects on these experiences, ultimately integrating new learning into old constructs. While there are a number of forms of experiential education, including cooperative education and internships, service-learning emerged as an offshoot of experiential education that merges academic study with service in the community (Eyler, 2009).

There are a range of definitions and conceptualizations of service-learning (e.g., Howard, 1993; Jacoby, 1996; Rhoads, 1997), with some focusing on service-learning as a pedagogical strategy, others conceptualizing service-learning as a philosophical stance, and still others seeing it as an institutionalized mechanism (Butin, 2010). However, this dissertation will draw from a commonly cited definition from Bringle and Hatcher (1995) that has garnered support over the past 15 years:

Service-learning [is] a course-based, credit-bearing, educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (p. 112)

This definition is seen as a model in the field of service-learning, as it balances and links service and learning in a meaningful way (Butin, 2010).

Elaborating on this definition, Weigert (1998) identified six key elements that are endemic to the service-learning experience. These six elements are helpful in distinguishing

between service-learning and other types of experiential education, such as volunteerism and community service. The first three elements focus on the community part of the experience: students provide a *meaningful service* that meets a *need* or *goal* that is *defined* by the community. In other words, the students are not simply working on a project in the community that is insignificant, does not meet a need of that community, and was defined by their professor or someone else who is not seen as a community member. The next three elements of a true service-learning experience focus on the classroom, with the service being part of the *course objectives* and integrated into the course through assignments that require *reflection* on the service. Ultimately, these assignments must be *assessed* and *evaluated* by the professor, so that the students receive feedback and are evaluated based on their service, learning, and reflection. So in Weigert's (1998) eyes, true service-learning occurs with meaningful service that meets a need in the community that was identified by that community, and this service must also be linked with the course objectives through continual reflection and assessment.

In the early 2000s, Campus Compact (2000) and the Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning (MJCSL, 2001) further expanded on the definition of service-learning that was originally proposed by Bringle and Hatcher (1995) and later extended by Weigert (1998). These two organizations conceptualized service-learning with the "4 Rs": respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection. The first of these criteria – *respect* – highlights how students must always be respectful of the circumstances, beliefs, and lifestyles of those they are serving. Additionally, the service must not simply benefit the students, but it must also provide a meaningful and relevant service to the individuals being served. This focus on *reciprocity* is similar in nature to the community focus within Bringle and Hatcher's (1995) definition as well as the critical elements presented by Weigert (1998). Moving on to relevance, Campus Compact

(2000) and the MJCSL (2001) explained how the service must be *relevant* to the course content. This will help students engage with the learning material outside of the classroom, perhaps reinforcing the students' learning or even leading to further questions on the learning material. The final criteria – *reflection* – must also be part of the service-learning experience. Reflection helps students engage with the complexity of the experience, process the course content in a more meaningful way, and even think about their own circumstances, beliefs, and lifestyles in comparison with those from the service-learning experience. Researchers have found that service-learning without reflection often leads to less significant learning outcomes, if any at all (Eyler, Giles, & Schmiede, 1996). If the “4 Rs” are in place – respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection – and are strongly supported, both Campus Compact (2000) and the MJCSL (2001) would define this as a true service-learning experience.

**Growth of service-learning.** Initially, postsecondary institutions were largely ambivalent towards service-learning. While some of this resistance was due to the institutional focus on objective science and the lack of institutionalized budget line items (Butin, 2010), researchers have found that the most significant barrier to expanding and sustaining service-learning in higher education has been faculty resistance (Gray et al., 1999). Faculty members have shown skepticism towards service-learning as a pedagogy, and they have also shown reluctance in investing the additional time that is necessary to teach a strong service-learning course (Gray et al., 1998). Despite this resistance from institutions of higher learning and the faculty within these institutions, the federal government has been overwhelmingly supportive of service-learning. This includes the enactment of the National Community Service Act in 1990 and the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (NCSA, 1990; NCSTA, 1993), and, even more recently, the United We Serve program created by President Barack Obama (Jacobson

et al., 2011). Along with this governmental support, young people have shown a renewed interest in becoming involved in their communities through volunteerism and service, with studies estimating over half of all young people participating in voluntary service each year (Kielsmeier et al., 2004; Skinner & Chapman, 1999). In fact, Putnam examined this resurgence in 2000:

This development [of increasing volunteerism] is the most promising sign of any that I have discovered that America might be on the cusp of a new period of civic renewal, especially if this youthful volunteerism persists into adulthood and begins to expand beyond individual caregiving to broader engagement with social and political issues. (p. 13)

This resurgence among young people in America combined with the governmental support and the growing pressure from foundations, national organizations, and individual researchers (e.g., Boyer, Kellogg Foundation) has resulted in an increase in the number of service-learning opportunities on college and university campuses (Howard, 2001; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). While this does not mean that service-learning has become institutionalized, it does mean that service-learning is becoming more accepted and supported within higher education. In fact, service-learning is a critical component in the shift towards a more engaged campus, as this form of experiential learning is compatible with the scholarship of engagement that is so often the mission of institutions of higher learning (Boyer, 1996; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Holland, 1997). Service-learning is “a way for universities to meet a community’s needs by combining students and academic resources to address local problems” (Stevens, 2008, p. xv). In essence, service-learning has the potential to positively impact all of the individuals and systems

involved, including the students, faculty, community members, surrounding community, and supporting institution (Astin et al., 2000).

**Service-learning courses in higher education.** While there are some areas of study that may seem well-suited to service-learning, such as teacher education (Potthoff et al., 2000; Wade & Yarborough, 1997), service-learning actually occurs in a wide range of fields, including occupational therapy (Greene, 1996), nursing (Juhn et al., 1999), child development (Fenzel, 2008), nutrition (Nwakwe, 1999), pharmacy (Osborne, Hammerich, & Hensley, 1998), and politics (Markus et al., 1993). For example, in one single-semester service-learning course at Widener University, students collaborated with community members to examine the intricacies of the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit, and then the students worked with local legislators to address the community members' concerns about this aspect of Medicare (Barnett, Silver, & Grundy, 2009). Conversely, in the Citizen Scholars Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, students took part in a scholarship-supported, service-learning based, academic leadership program for two full years (Polin & Keene, 2010; University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2010). Unlike the previous example, this program was a full curriculum with a required four-course sequence, numerous co-curricular activities, and the expectation that every student would participate in a minimum of 240 hours of community service. With just these two examples, it becomes clear that the range of service-learning courses can vary widely, from a single assignment within one course to an entire course that focuses on one specific project to even longer endeavors that have students serving a variety of organizations in the surrounding community (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998).

## **Service-Learning Theoretical Framework**

As a field, service-learning research is still relatively underdeveloped, although the quality and quantity of research on service-learning has increased considerably over the past 20 years (Eyler, 2011). During its infancy, the studies on service-learning were largely descriptive in nature, without much theoretical development or theoretically-based empirical research (Eyler et al., 2001). These studies often utilized a range of methods and study designs to investigate service-learning in a variety of disciplines (Eyler et al., 2001), which resulted in a diverse literature without much clarity or cohesion. Additionally, these small, independent research studies attempted to fill large gaps in knowledge about the impact, implementation, and institutionalization of service-learning (Furco & Billig, 2003). More recently, there have been stronger evaluations of service-learning, such as those by Bringle, Philips, and Hudson (2004) and Eyler and Giles (1999), along with summaries of studies (e.g., Eyler et al., 2001) and volumes of collected research (e.g., Furco & Billig, 2003). However, despite these efforts to gather and disseminate the knowledge of service-learning within higher education, there is still much to be done. As Billig (2003) summarized:

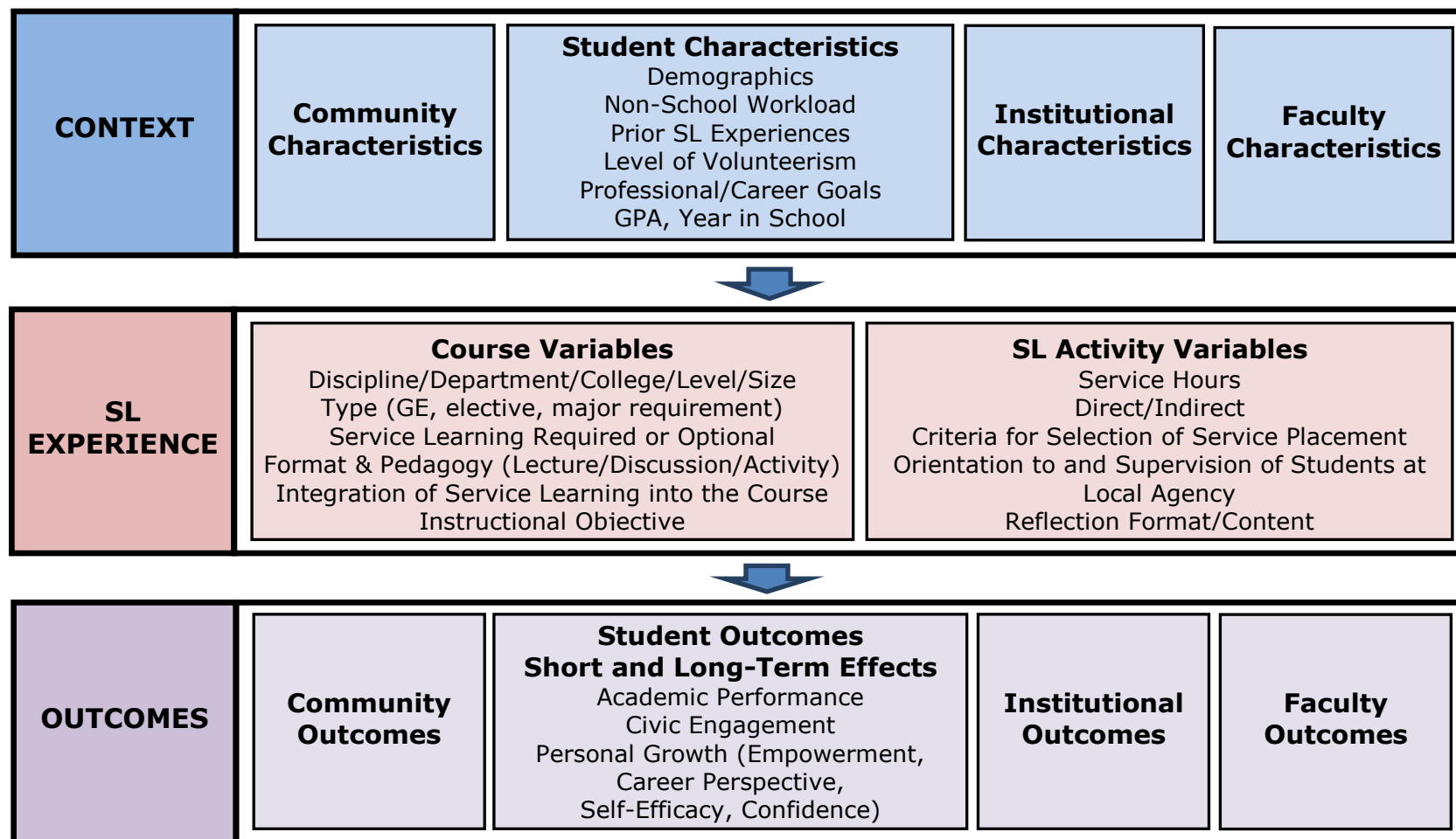
The vast majority of published studies on service-learning are of program evaluations or anecdotal descriptions, not research. Having a body of evidence comprised primarily of evaluation studies severely limits the ability to make generalizations about service-learning impacts and restricts the ways in which the studies can be used to improve practice. Furthermore, program evaluations are less likely to be built on strong theoretical foundations... Finally, the definitions of service-learning being used, the program designs being studied, and the populations of students and community members

being examined vary so broadly that the discussion of service-learning research must always occur in the midst of multiple qualifying statements. (p. vii)

These issues have led to a call for more rigor in service-learning research from both researchers (Aronson, 2006; Astin et al., 2000; Eyler, 2002a; Hecht, 2003b; Ziegert & McGoldrick, 2004) and governmental and funding agencies (Boruch et al., 2003; Myers & Dynarski, 2003).

In response to this call for more rigor, two conceptual models of service-learning were developed based on a variety of theoretical perspectives and domains of inquiry, including human development (e.g., Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, constructivism, experiential learning), business and management theory, cognitive psychology, and the neurosciences. The first model was proposed in 2004 by Roldan and colleagues in an effort to design a framework that would allow for the systematic study of service-learning in a variety of disciplines (see Figure 1). This model began with a look at the context of each service-learning course, where four domains of study were defined: community characteristics, student characteristics, institutional characteristics, and faculty characteristics. Roldan et al. (2004) believed that these four domains have a significant impact on the actual service-learning experience. The next step in the model then focused on the service-learning experience, which included specific course variables (e.g., discipline of the course, whether the course is required or optional) and a range of service-learning activity variables (e.g., direct vs. indirect service-learning experience, quality and quantity of student reflection). These experiences then lead to a number of possible outcomes that can result from service-learning courses, which were grouped into the four domains of study described in the first part of the model: community outcomes, student outcomes, institutional outcomes, and faculty outcomes. With the creation of this model, Roldan and colleagues (2004) believed that researchers would be able to study service-learning

Figure 1. Roldan, Strage, and David (2004) service-learning theoretical framework.



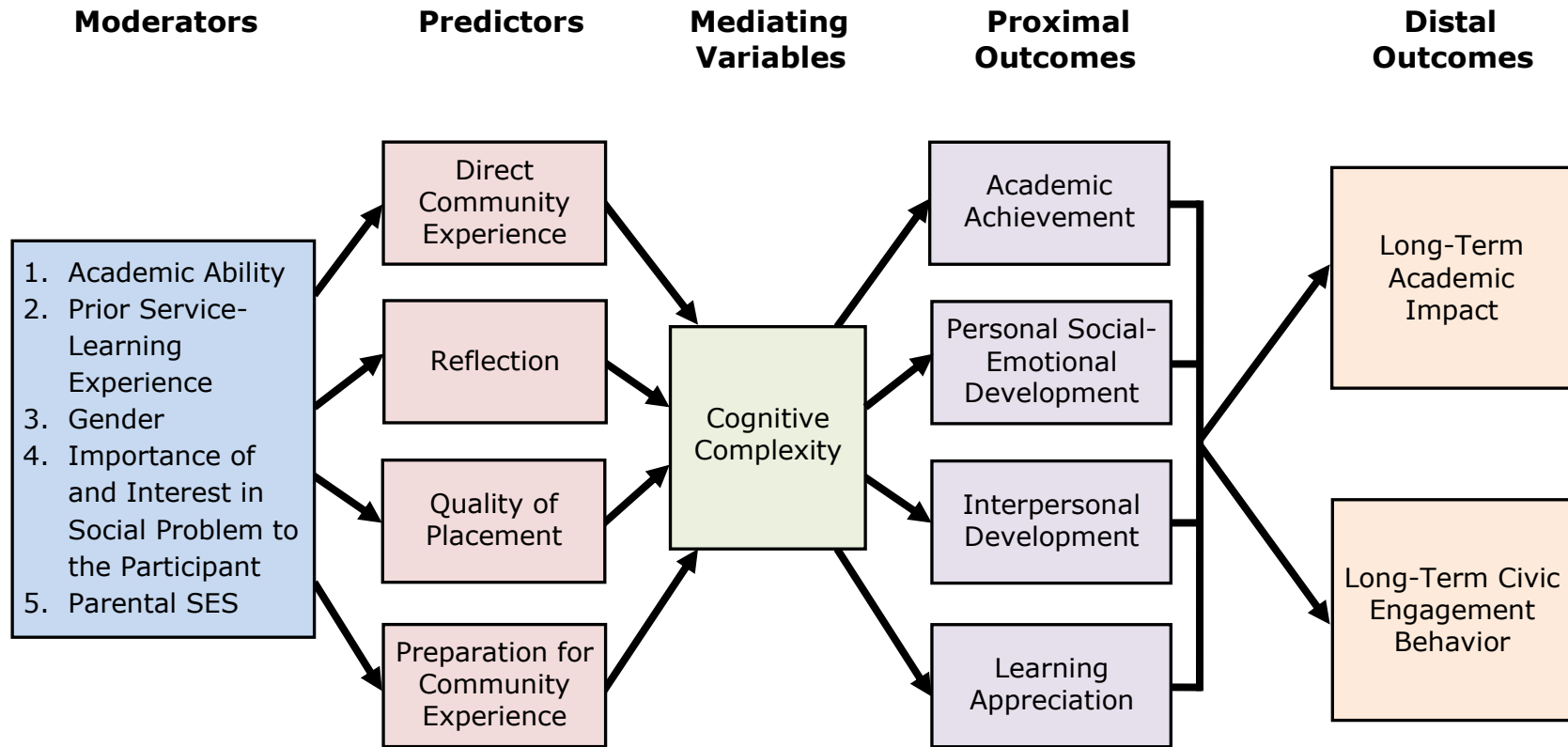
Notes: Reproduced with permission. For interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this dissertation.



courses with more rigor while practitioners could also use this framework to help guide programmatic efforts across disciplines and institutions. All in all, this model would lead to stronger programs that have a greater impact on all parties involved. This framework was transformational in the field of service-learning. The descriptive studies from the past were often more focused on discipline-specific program designs and student outcomes, which did not provide much guidance for programmatic efforts across disciplines and led to a scattered body of research. Roldan and colleagues (2004) were able to address these issues with this conceptual model.

These issues were also addressed by Aronson et al. (2005), who developed a process model of service-learning. Unlike the previous model by Roldan and colleagues (2004), this conceptual model was less focused on the practice of service-learning and much more focused on using the model to assess the relative contributions of each part of service-learning on the outcomes of interest (see Figure 2). In particular, the model focuses on both proximal (e.g., student interpersonal development) and distal (e.g., long-term civic engagement) outcomes of student learning courses, as well as predictors of these outcomes (e.g., degree of student reflection on the experience). Moderators (e.g., student gender) and mediators (e.g., cognitive complexity or the student's ability to think in complex ways) of the hypothesized predictor-outcome relationships are also identified. The key contribution in this model was the inclusion of cognitive complexity as a mediating variable which accounts for the relationship between the moderators and predictors of service-learning (independent variables) and the proximal and distal outcomes of service-learning (dependent variables). Along with the addition of cognitive complexity to the model, there were other differences between the models of Aronson et al.

Figure 2. Aronson et al. (2005) service-learning theoretical framework.



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(2005) and Roldan et al. (2004), such as the distinction between proximal and distal outcomes in the model conceptualized by Aronson and colleagues (2005).

These two theoretical models of service-learning (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004) were used to create a new theoretical framework of service-learning specifically for this dissertation, as the investigator recognized the contributions of each model. The comprehensive theoretical framework created for this dissertation is presented in Figure 3, although for the purpose of this study, the focus was on the undergraduate students enrolled in the service-learning course. Therefore, Figure 4 provides a much more detailed, student-focused version of this model. This theoretical framework will be discussed in the following sections.

**Context.** The context of a service-learning experience can have a significant impact on the outcomes that may occur, as Eyler (2002b) has suggested. Aronson et al. (2005) labeled these variables as moderators, given that these variables “appear to moderate the relationship between service-learning and various outcomes” (p. 150). In the overall framework (see Figure 3), there are five categories of independent variables within the context of service-learning: institutional characteristics, community characteristics, community partner characteristics, faculty characteristics, and student characteristics. Narrowing in on the student characteristics (see Figure 4), it is likely that each student will have certain predisposing factors that may influence their experience during the course and their learning outcomes upon completion. These predisposing factors include basic demographics, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and cultural background. For example, several research studies have found that female students experience stronger effects of service-learning when compared with male students (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Along with basic demographics, researchers have found that students experience greater benefits from service-learning when they

Figure 3. Comprehensive physical activity-based service-learning theoretical framework.

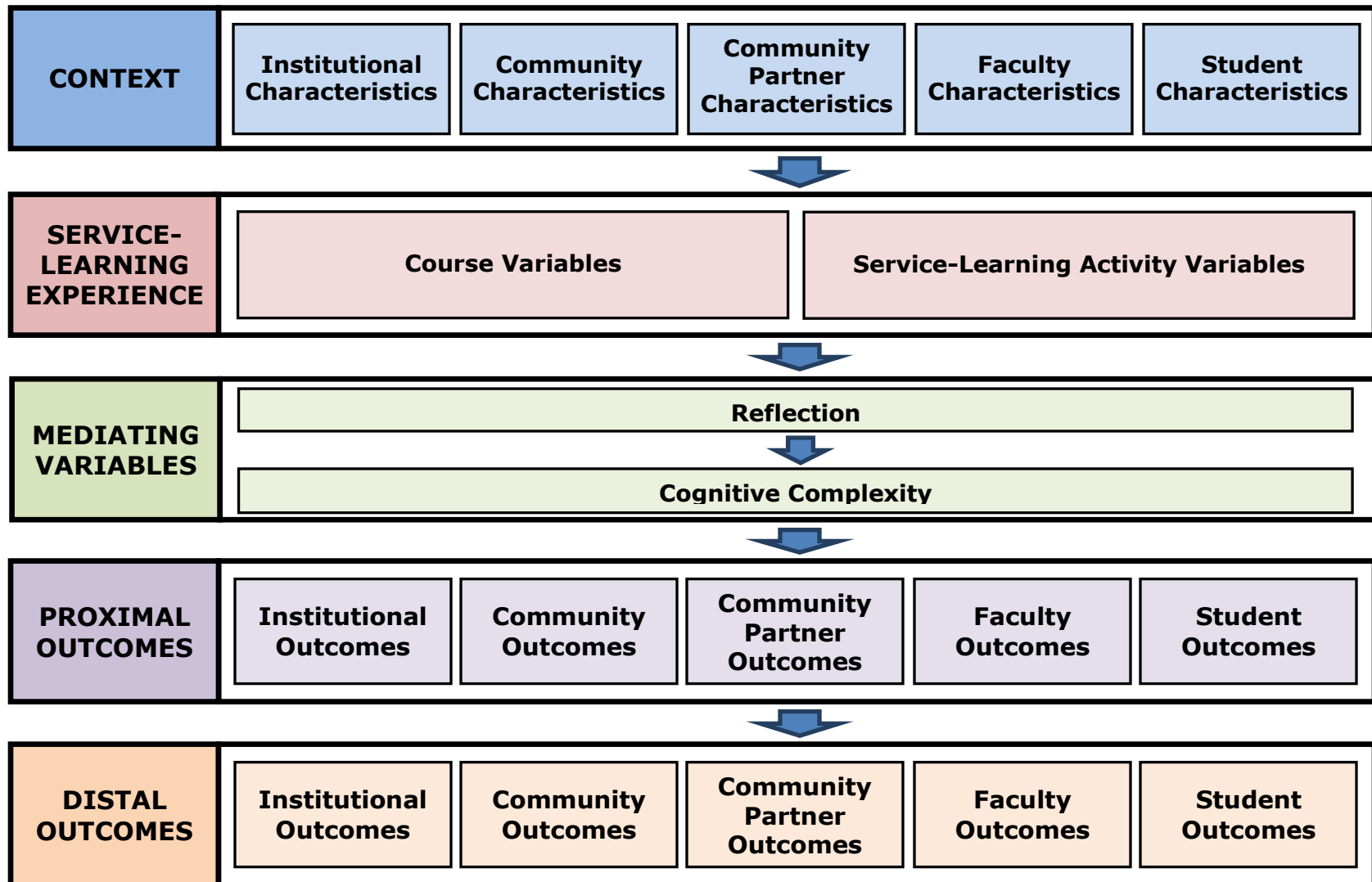
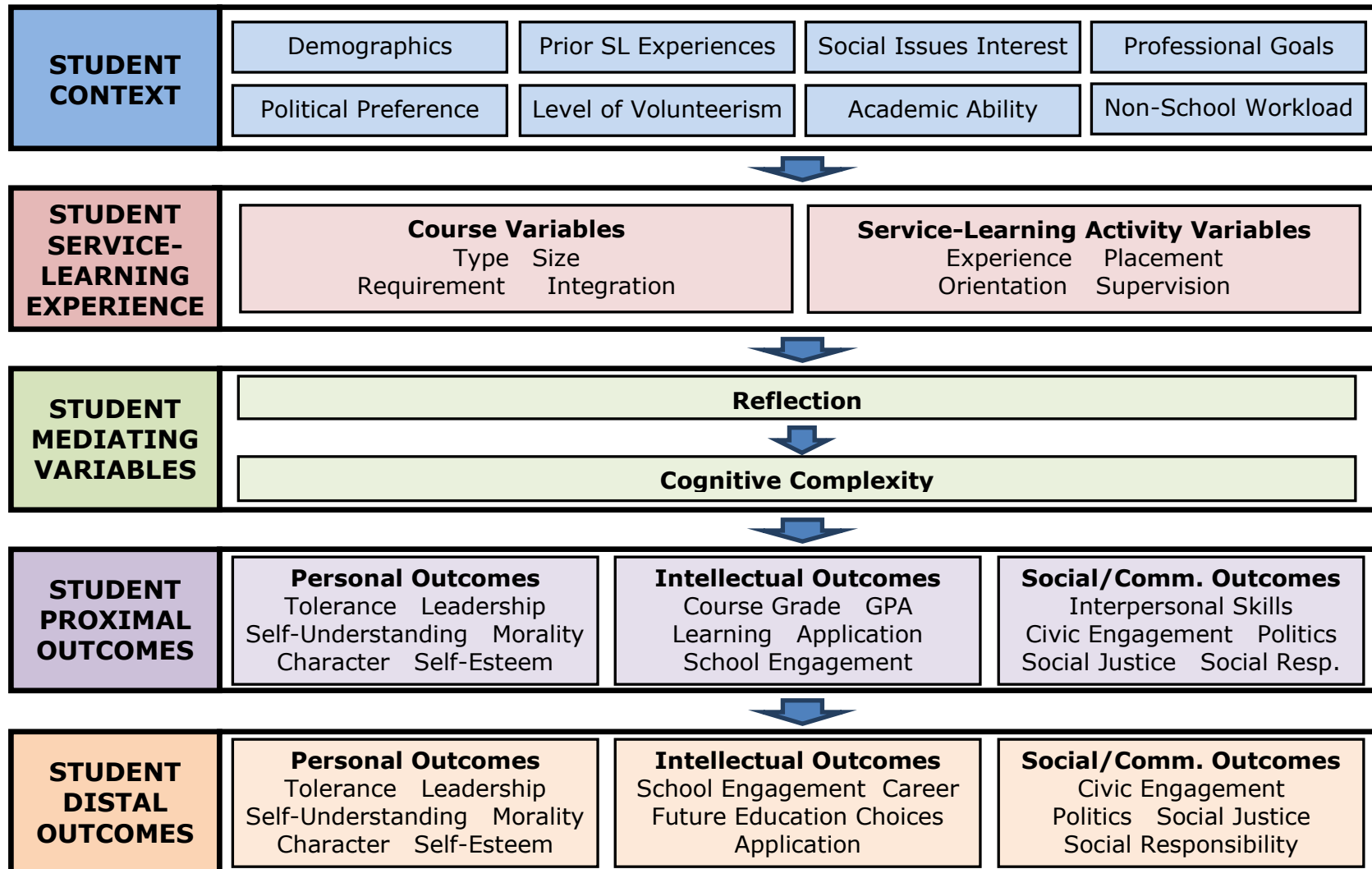


Figure 4. Student-focused version of the comprehensive physical activity-based service-learning theoretical framework.



have strong academic abilities (e.g., higher grade point averages) and when they believe that the social issues being addressed in their service-learning course are interesting and important (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Finally, students who have had previous service-learning experiences have been shown to have very different outcomes when compared with students who have not had similar experiences (Astin & Sax, 1998); this could also be expected from students who are currently volunteering in the community versus those who are not currently involved in the surrounding community.

**Experience.** In addition to the participant characteristics cited above, the characteristics of service-learning practice can lead to different outcomes (Astin et al., 2000; Conrad & Hedin, 1980; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998); in essence, not every service-learning experience is alike. For example, one service-learning course might focus on students becoming involved in the daily operations of a homeless shelter while another service-learning course may ask students to serve as student teachers at a local elementary school. Given the wide range of disciplines and types of service-learning courses as well as the range in quality within each program, there is substantial variance between each program's characteristics and, ultimately, the program outcomes (Moely, Furco, & Reed, 2008).

The characteristics of service-learning were divided into two categories for this study's theoretical framework – course variables and service-learning activity variables – which Aronson and colleagues (2005) called the predictors of service-learning's effect. Course variables are those that characterize a complete service-learning course, including the discipline, department, college, and/or level of the course. In order to accurately interpret the outcomes of a specific service-learning course, it is important to understand the discipline and/or department where this course is situated, as this will have a significant impact on the program's goals, content, and

design (Roldan et al., 2004). Additionally, the size of a course could impact the student-related outcomes from the service-learning experience, as a smaller class may lead to greater opportunities for discussion, reflection, and individual attention (Roldan et al., 2004). Along with the discipline and size of the course, the service-learning experience can be heavily impacted by the type of course (e.g., whether it is part of the general education curriculum, a requirement for a specific major, or an elective in which students choose to enroll); the type of course could be associated with different levels of intrinsic motivation, enthusiasm, and interest in the service-learning experience (Roldan et al., 2004). While this has not yet been studied in great depth, many researchers believe that a significant variable could be whether students are forced to take part in a service-learning experience if they enroll in a class or if the service-learning experience is an option and is not required for all students in the course (Billig & Furco, 2002). The final variable of a service-learning course in its entirety is how much the service-learning experience is integrated into the instructional objectives for the course. This was highlighted as one of Weigert's (1998) six key elements of the service-learning experience: how the service needed to be an integral part of the course objectives. The degree of integration will likely have an impact on the service-learning experience and, ultimately, on the student outcomes that result from this experience.

As for the course-embedded service-learning activities that are also part of the overall service-learning experience, these begin with the amount of direct community experience that students have, including both time spent in service activities and whether the students are working directly or indirectly with the clients (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004). Knutson Miller, Yen, and Merino (2002) have found that students who have direct contact with clients in their service-learning activities have a stronger service-learning experience and have

greater outcomes in academics and civic engagement. Additionally, the time spent in performing service and whether this service involves direct contact with community members has a significant impact on the student outcomes (Astin & Sax, 1998; Morgan & Streb, 2003). Interestingly, both Roldan and colleagues (2004) and Aronson et al. (2005) included the importance of selecting strong service placements, as this can have a significant impact on the quality of service-learning experiences (Hecht, 2003b). A quality placement includes sufficient support for students at the service-learning site, along with the provision of responsibilities that the students can see are meaningful to the community partner (Eyler, 2011). Students need to feel a sense of ownership towards their service-learning experience and feel as if they have a voice that is valued (Morgan & Streb, 2003). Additionally, a quality placement is associated with service-learning activities that the students perceive as interesting, important, and challenging (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998); in other words, students need to be engaged in the service-learning experience, believe in the work they are doing, and feel as if their voice matters. Along with the quality of placement, another important service-learning activity variable is the preparation of students before the service-learning experience (orientation), as students who are more prepared for the experience are more likely to have positive outcomes (Morgan & Streb, 2003). Finally, strong faculty supervision throughout the experience is necessary to ensure a high-quality experience for the students (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999). While supervision provides the opportunity for observation and feedback from faculty that is so important for student learning and reflection, it also results in more contact and stronger relationships between students and faculty, which has been shown to be associated with positive outcomes for students (Pascarella, 2005).



All of these characteristics of service-learning practice must be addressed by service-learning practitioners and evaluated by service-learning researchers, as these characteristics can have a significant impact on the outcomes of service-learning.

**Mediating Variables.** The missing links in the conceptual model outlined by Roldan and colleagues (2004) are the mediating variables, which can help to explain how or why effects may occur through service-learning experiences. Both reflection and cognitive complexity are critical mediating variables that can determine the ultimate impact of service-learning. The sections below will examine these two mediating variables.

**Reflection.** The student outcomes that result from service-learning are not determined purely from the student characteristics and service-learning characteristics described in the previous sections; in fact, reflection has been shown to be the most important part of the service-learning experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Steinke, Fitch, Johnson, & Waldstein, 2002). Reflection is a strategy where students integrate and make meaning of their service-learning experiences through activities such as faculty-led discussions, discussions among students, and written assignments (e.g., journals, papers, essays) (Ash et al., 2005; Eyler, 2011; Jacobson et al., 2011). While the goal of each reflection activity may vary depending on the course content, service-learning site, and time in the semester, the overarching goal of reflection activities is for students to integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content and the experiences they are having at their service-learning sites (Ash et al., 2005). As Eyler et al. (1996) concluded from their review of service-learning experiences, “it is critical reflection...that provides the transformative link between the action of serving and the ideas and understanding of learning” (p. 14). Ash and colleagues (2005) explained that guided reflection helps “students – individually and in groups – examine their experiences

critically and articulate specific learning outcomes, thus enhancing the quality of their learning and of their service” (p. 51). So without careful reflection, meaningful learning may not occur and the student outcomes may be drastically different (Ash et al., 2005; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Despite the importance of reflection, it is sometimes seen as the most difficult component of service-learning, as the development and implementation of reflection activities and the strategies to evaluate these reflective processes can be quite challenging for faculty overseeing service-learning courses (Ash et al., 2005; Rogers, 2001). However, if rigorous reflection is supported throughout a service-learning experience, this can lead to enhanced cognitive complexity, which is the next step in the theoretical framework of service-learning that is being presented.

***Cognitive complexity.*** Cognitive complexity was included in the conceptual model of Aronson and colleagues (2005) because of the belief that “service-learning impacts proximal and distal outcomes because it improves the capacity of students to think in complex ways” (p. 152). The case for cognitive complexity actually draws from the work of Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984), and Boyer (1990), who believed that real-world experiences and active learning environments enhanced students’ critical thinking skills. So if service-learning experiences are well-designed (e.g., significant direct contact with the client, integration of course content with service-learning experience) and provide strong reflective activities, students can develop critical thinking and meta-cognitive skills that can lead to powerful proximal and distal outcomes (as can be seen in Figure 4) (Aronson et al., 2005; Ash et al., 2005; Thomas, 2007). Through high-quality service-learning experiences with an adequate quantity of quality reflective activities, students confronted with challenges to their worldviews may examine alternative perspectives and may even develop more complex capacities for judgment (Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999); in

essence, the capacity for cognitive complexity is enhanced. However, if service-learning experiences are not well-designed and do not optimize each of the course and service-learning activity variables that were addressed in the previous section, it is probable that the critical thinking may not change; thus, the outcomes from service-learning will be diminished (Ash et al., 2005).

**Outcomes.** Beginning with the overall service-learning theoretical framework in Figure 3, there are a range of potential outcomes for students as well as participating faculty members, the academic institution, the community partner, and the surrounding community at large. While most of the research on outcomes has focused on the students, it is still important to recognize that potential proximal and distal outcomes may occur within other individuals and systems (Cruz & Giles, 2000). For faculty, service-learning may lead to a different approach to teaching course material, developing strong relationships with students, and forming relationships with community partners that could lead to community-based research projects (Jacobson et al., 2011). As for the participating college or university, service-learning can help to meet the institutional missions that often focus on community engagement and service (Jacobson et al., 2011). The communities in which the service-learning is organized may benefit through the provision of enhanced services for its citizens, collaboration between institutions and community organizations, and a stronger sense of community that develops through these projects. Finally, for the community partners, service-learning projects may lead to the provision of resources (e.g., time, specific skills, new ideas, knowledge) and services that may not have been available otherwise (Jacobson et al., 2011; Stevens, 2008).

Narrowing in on the outcomes for students participating in service-learning, a fairly consistent pattern has emerged from the growing body of research and evaluation studies

demonstrating a small but significant impact on students, including personal, academic and intellectual, and social and community engagement outcomes (Eyler, 2011). Key review papers have summarized these student outcomes through the examination of a number of small-scale university programs (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Eyler et al., 2001). Although many of the studies included in these reviews were conducted over a single semester with preexperimental designs and/or were largely descriptive in nature, these findings have held up in large-scale studies with stronger designs and more comprehensive samples (Astin & Sax, 1998; Bringle et al., 2004; Gray, Heneghan, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000; Raman & Pashupati, 2002). The majority of this literature on the effects of service-learning on students has been grouped into three general areas: personal outcomes, academic and intellectual outcomes, and social and community engagement outcomes. These outcomes range from proximal outcomes, which are measured immediately following service-learning experiences (e.g., leadership development or social self-confidence), to distal outcomes, which are long-term changes in attitudes, behaviors, or cognitions (e.g., long-term intellectual impact or long-term civic behavior) (Aronson et al., 2005). The theoretical framework in Figure 4 separates out the proximal and distal outcomes; while this is a laudable goal, the majority of studies have focused on short-term impact (proximal outcomes), with less known about how service-learning can influence lifelong attitudes, behaviors, or cognitions (Eyler, 2011). For this reason, these studies will be discussed together, with the findings separated by the three general areas: personal outcomes, academic and intellectual outcomes, and social and community engagement outcomes.

***Personal outcomes.*** Evaluations of service-learning courses have found that participation in these programs can result in significant personal growth and development. This category of student outcomes is often measured through interviews (Baldwin et al., 2007), pre-

and post-program assessments (Fenzel, 2008), self-report questionnaires (Jacobson et al., 2011; Simons & Cleary, 2006), and reflective papers (Baldwin et al., 2007). Participation in service-learning has been associated with increases in both religious tolerance and racial tolerance (Bringle & Kremer, 1993; Eyler et al., 1997; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Myers-Lipton, 1996). Additionally, studies have shown that undergraduate students have become more sensitive to and aware of diversity following their service-learning experiences (Baldwin et al., 2007; Driscoll et al., 1996; Fenzel, 2008; Greene, 1996; Simons & Cleary, 2006). Researchers have also found improvement in the areas of leadership development, assertiveness, moral development, and character development (Gorman, 1994; Jacobson et al., 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004), along with changes in self-understanding, self-esteem, and increased belief in personal efficacy (Eyler et al., 1997; Jacobson et al., 2011; Kendrick, 1996; Raman & Pashupati, 2002).

***Academic and intellectual outcomes.*** This is the most widely measured outcome of service-learning experiences, often measured through broad indices of academic outcomes, such as grade point average and course grades (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Markus et al., 1993; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Researchers have found that service-learning can lead to enhanced grade point averages (Astin & Sax, 1998; Gray et al., 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000) and achievement of curricular goals of the courses (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Strage, 2000). Additionally, students have been shown to become more engaged with and committed to their education following participation in service-learning courses (Sax & Astin, 1997).

***Social and community engagement outcomes.*** Social and community engagement outcomes are the third category that has been shown to be related to participation in service-learning. This category has been measured with self-report questionnaires (Diaz-Gallegos,

Furco, & Yamada, 1999), interviews with members of community organizations (Vernon & Foster, 2002), and even open-ended questions in surveys (Steinke et al., 2002). With respect to social outcomes, students have shown improvement in interpersonal skills, pro-social reasoning skills, and social self-confidence (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Juhn et al., 1999; Osborne et al., 1998; Simons & Cleary, 2006). As for civic engagement, researchers have found that service-learning can lead to an increase in feelings of civic responsibility (Astin & Sax, 1998; Myers-Lipton, 1998) and civic engagement (Prentice, 2007; Rice & Brown, 1998; Simons & Cleary, 2006; Warchal & Ruiz, 2004). In fact, some studies have shown an increased interest in and commitment to social justice (Fenzel, 2008; Roschelle, Turpin, & Elias, 2000) as well as increased political awareness and political participation skills (Eyler et al., 1997; Simons & Cleary, 2006). Overall, students have been shown to become more committed to community work, feeling an increased sense of social responsibility and a belief that they can help others in need (Driscoll et al., 1996; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Kendrick, 1996; Markus et al., 1993; Nwakwe, 1999).

### **Service-Learning Within Kinesiology**

Transitioning to a focus on service-learning within the field of kinesiology, there is enormous potential for service-learning to have a significant impact on undergraduate students in this field, especially those who are going into human service professions, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, personal fitness training, certified athletic training, and physical education. Through hands-on experience with community members, undergraduate students' participation in service-learning courses can lead to enhanced knowledge of course content, practical experience with clients, and even awareness of new careers or fields of study within

kinesiology (Bishop & Driver, 2007; Prentice & Garcia, 2000; Strage, 2004; Watson et al., 2002). As Nendel (2011) highlighted, service-learning is:

An invaluable tool to enhance the learning potential for our students as well as to help them develop a sense of building a good society through their works of service. At the same time, we will be able to fulfill our institutions' responsibility to use our resources to bring about positive change in the world we live in and to improve the lives of those in our communities. (p. 20)

With this in mind, there is a growing belief that service-learning courses within kinesiology, physical education teacher education (PETE), and other sport-related fields are the way of the future (Scraba, 2011). There are some universities beginning to recognize this potential of service-learning, with service-learning courses being added to the curriculum of several kinesiology and physical education programs (Watson et al., 2002). However, the overall field of kinesiology outside of PETE programs has not yet embraced service-learning as a common pedagogical practice. According to Watson and colleagues (2002), "public awareness regarding the potential for service-learning pedagogy within the HPER [health, physical education, and recreation] professions remains limited" (p. 50).

This does not mean that kinesiology-based outreach programs are absent in communities throughout the United States. In fact, there are a large number of practitioners and researchers who design, implement, and evaluate kinesiology-based outreach programs in the field, but it is a stretch to define these programs as service-learning courses; often, they do not meet the definitions of service-learning presented earlier in this review (e.g., Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; Campus Compact, 2000; MJCSL, 2001; Weigert, 1998). For example, the responsibility-based sport programs run by Martinek (Martinek et al., 2001; Martinek, McClaughlin, & Schilling,

1999) and McCarthy (Hayden, 2010) bring undergraduate and graduate students into the community to serve as co-facilitators of their programs. The primary focus of these programs is having a positive impact on the lives of the children and youth who participate in the program; thus, the experiences of the undergraduate students are not the priority, with very little emphasis on the academic portion of the experience (e.g., guided reflection, integration of course content, reading material). In the program organized by Martinek and colleagues (2001), the undergraduate students were actually volunteers, with some using the experience to fulfill field requirements for undergraduate courses while other students were simply volunteering their time. While these programs have been shown to be quite effective in changing the lives of the young children and youth who participate (Hellison & Walsh, 2002), these programs cannot be classified as true service-learning experiences for the undergraduate students.

Within the field of physical education teacher education, service-learning has been recognized as a pedagogical strategy that meets many of the standards outlined in the NASPE/NCATE Guidelines for Teacher Preparation in Physical Education (NASPE, 1998; Watson et al., 2002). In the words of Watson and colleagues (2002), “the pedagogy of service-learning provides PETE educators with valuable methods by which to prepare physical educators for today’s ever-diverse schools” (p. 53). With this recognition, there have been more service-learning courses within PETE programs as compared to the general field of kinesiology. For example, Meaney and colleagues (2008) described and evaluated a physical education service-learning course and its impact on preservice educators’ cultural competence. This service-learning experience was part of a course entitled, “Health and Physical Education for Children,” and the undergraduate student leaders taught physical education to African American and Latino children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This study met the requirements for a true



service-learning experience, with the undergraduate students participating in a course where the course content and the service-learning experience were integrated; the students also engaged in reflection through daily logs and weekly reflections. The findings from this study demonstrated how the undergraduate students' understanding of underserved children was broadened and their preconceived stereotypes were altered. Additionally, the students improved in their language and communication skills as teachers. In addition to this successful service-learning course, LaMaster (2001) described another program where undergraduate students majoring in PETE traveled to an urban high school to teach physical education. These undergraduate student leaders were supervised by high school teachers at the site, leading to helpful feedback from these teachers that improved the undergraduate students' teaching abilities.

These two examples demonstrate how powerful service-learning can be within a kinesiology or physical education course. Unfortunately, there is still a need for more opportunities to engage in meaningful service-learning experiences within kinesiology (Cutforth, 2000). One problem is that some programs are defined as service-learning courses when they are actually volunteer opportunities. For example, Kahan (1998) described a partnership between an undergraduate course and an alternative high school, where the university students enrolled in a physical education teaching methods course and taught physical education at the alternative high school. Although the article highlights the importance of service-learning, Kahan (1998) admits that "technically, this program cannot be termed service-learning...because the service component is not aggressively pursued and is a means to an end: practical field experience for preservice students" (p. 46). Similarly, Cheffers (1997) and Miller, Bredemeier, and Shields (1997) described programs for physical education teachers where undergraduate students teach physical education in at-risk elementary schools and high schools, but the "service-learning"

component was not strong in either of these programs. Another issue with service-learning within the field of kinesiology is that the majority of articles that focus on service-learning are constructed with practitioners in mind, either explaining *how* to facilitate a kinesiology-based service-learning course or describing a service-learning course that was implemented (Cucina & McCormack, 2001; Moorman & Arellano-Unruh, 2002). While this may be helpful for practitioners who are interested in implementing service-learning courses, there has not been very much research on the quality of kinesiology-based service-learning courses and the potential impact on the undergraduate students as well as the participating faculty, institution, community partner, and the surrounding community. Bringing in the theoretical framework presented in Figures 3 and 4, it would be helpful for researchers to examine each component of a kinesiology-based service-learning course to better understand the context, the service-learning experience, the mediators, and the proximal and distal outcomes. This is a critical gap in the literature on service-learning, and it has a significant impact on the institutionalization of service-learning within the university setting; in order to convince faculty, administrators, and funders that service-learning is linked with a stronger impact on student learning, faculty productivity, and institutional and community change, research studies must be conducted that examine kinesiology-based service-learning courses in greater depth (Astin et al., 2000). This dissertation was designed to evaluate one specific physical activity-based service-learning course, with the hope of providing more information about the impact of this experience on the undergraduate students enrolled in this course and to facilitate the theoretical and empirical knowledge base about how service-learning can be used in kinesiology.

## Service-Learning Course

This section will explore the physical activity-based service-learning course that was the focus of this dissertation. This course was first implemented during the spring semester in 2011, so this dissertation studied the second iteration of the course in its present format. Although the course was developed based on the instructor's general experience in community-based programs and some literature in the field of service-learning (Hellison et al., 2000), the course will now be described in line with the theoretical framework presented in Figures 3 and 4 in order to take a more systematic, rigorous approach towards studying the service-learning course. This section will begin with a description of the participating institution, community, and community partner. Next, the service-learning course will be described, with a focus on the faculty characteristics, course type, and service-learning activity variables. The section will finish up with an examination of the mediating variables and potential outcomes.

### **Context.**

***Institutional characteristics.*** The service-learning course under study was a credit-bearing internship that was housed within a public, metropolitan university on the west coast of the United States. Enrollment at this university tends to be approximately 30,500 students, including around 5,000 graduate students and 25,000 undergraduate students, with over 90% of the student population coming from the same state<sup>1</sup>. The undergraduate student population is quite diverse, with the following average breakdown of populations: over 30% white (non-Latino), 25% Asian, 12% Chicano/Mexican American, 9% Filipino, 8% Latino, and 6% African American.

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<sup>1</sup> To protect the confidentiality of the service-learning course and the individuals involved, references have not been cited for some of the numerical data in this section. The investigator has the references available but they will not be shown in the public domain.

The mission statement of this university focuses on the creation of a respectful learning environment that prioritizes a quality higher education for all individuals representing the area and state in which it is located, as well as the nation and the world. Along with university-wide goals focusing on student, faculty, and staff recruitment, retention, and development, the university also highlights the importance of service in the surrounding community; this goal is for the university *to serve the communities in which its students and faculty are engaged*. So service is included as part of its strategic plan in fulfilling the university's mission. With over 500 service-learning courses and recognition by the Carnegie Foundation as an institution committed to engagement, this university does not just profess to be an engaged campus; in fact, it has responded to Boyer's (1996) call for a broader definition of scholarship and the push for higher education to become more invested in the most pressing civic, social, economic, and moral issues in the United States.

***Community characteristics.*** The university's campus is located in a populous city on the west coast of the United States. The majority of residents identify as either white (non-Latino), Latino, Asian, or African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The city's poverty rate is between 10% to 15%, with an unemployment rate close to 10% and a high rate of homelessness.

***Community partner characteristics.*** The community partner for the service-learning course is a public high school serving grades 9 through 12 that is approximately 6 miles away from the university's main campus. There are approximately 850 students making up the diverse student population, with Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, and African American students forming the largest ethnic groups (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011b). During the 2008-2009 school year, over 70% of students were eligible for the Free or Reduced Price Meal

Program, and approximately 50% of the student population was designated as English Language Learners.

***Faculty characteristics.*** The instructor (“Program Director”) of the service-learning course is a tenured faculty member within the field of kinesiology. For more than 10 years, this individual has been involved with physical activity-based programs that focus on youth development in the communities surrounding his affiliate institutions, both during his doctoral work and as a faculty member. Ever since arriving at his current institution, he has organized and facilitated a number of physical activity-based programs within the community; almost every semester, the Program Director has involved undergraduate and graduate students from his affiliate institution in his work with community partners. Originally, these were community service opportunities where the students volunteered their time, but approximately five years ago, this became a community-based internship where undergraduate students received credit through their participation as assistant instructors. Although this was informal at first, the Program Director refined the experience and actually created a new course in the spring semester of 2011, which was a 600-level, 3-credit course. This course was designated as a university-level service-learning course that helped the university work towards its mission of being an engaged campus.

***Student characteristics.*** Over 90% of the general student population at the university is designated as in-state students, and the undergraduate student population is quite diverse, with a significant percentage of students identifying themselves as white (non-Latino), Asian, Chicano/Mexican American, Filipino, Latino, and African American (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011b). As for the students enrolled in the service-learning course each semester, these are undergraduate students majoring in kinesiology with plans of going into a

range of kinesiology-based fields, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and the medical field. These students are typically in their fourth year of higher education, with the majority graduating during the year they are enrolled in this course. Given that the students were the focus of this dissertation, these student characteristics were part of the data collection for this study, with much more information collected and analyzed to determine the impact on the students' service-learning experience and outcomes.

**Service-learning experience.** The service-learning course is held at a local high school twice a week during a 93-minute physical education class. The class has roughly 50 high school students who are required to participate in a minimum of two years of physical education during their high school careers, which means that the majority of students are either freshmen or sophomores. Each semester, approximately 15 high school students are selected to participate in the university-run, kinesiology-based, physical activity program, with the program lasting for 12 to 14 weeks. The service program (SP) was designed by the Program Director and was first implemented during the spring semester in 2011. This is actually an updated version of a program based on the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model that the Program Director designed and facilitated earlier in his career, with a focus on helping participants envision, explore, and contemplate meaningful possible futures decisions. To give a brief overview, the TPSR model is a humanistic, student-centered approach that uses physical activity as a tool to help students become more personally and socially responsible in their lives and their community (Hellison, 2011). The SP is an extension of TPSR, using some of the formatting and underlying values that comprise the TPSR model, while making some changes to the purposes, goals, and day-to-day implementation of the program (see Table 1). The SP includes TPSR's focus on building strong instructor-student relationships that value the

Table 1

*TPSR and Service Program Similarities and Differences*

	<b>TPSR</b>	<b>Service Program</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	To teach participants to take responsibility for their own well-being and for being sensitive and responsive for the well-being of others.	To help participants envision and explore their positive possible futures.
<b>Convictions</b>	Integration of life skills into the physical activity content, transference of these skills beyond the program, gradually shift responsibility to the participants, and maintain relationships with them from a strength-based approach.	Same as TPSR.
<b>Goals</b>	Respect for the rights and feelings of others (Level 1), effort and teamwork (Level 2), self-direction and setting goals (Level 3), helping and leadership (Level 4), and the transference of these four goals outside the gym (Level 5).	Balance hoped-for selves and feared-selves, as suggested by the theory of possible selves; become aware of and enhance personal leadership skills, responsibility, and work-related techniques; and chart the procedural knowledge for first a career in kinesiology followed by their own career(s) of choice.
<b>Lesson Format</b>	Relational time, awareness talk, physical activity lesson, group meeting, reflection time.	Same as TPSR, however a mentoring session is combined with the TPSR reflection time.

*Note:* Taken from the syllabus of the service-learning course.

individuality of each student and focus on each student's emotional, social, and physical well-being and development (Hellison, 2011). Another similarity is the fact that both TPSR and the SP are empowerment-based, with the high school students given opportunities to have a voice in the program's direction, take leadership positions within the program, and evaluate themselves and the program throughout the semester. The SP adds to these features by also helping the participants "explore, become aware, and self-evaluate experiences related to contemplating their

possible futures,” as explained in the course syllabus. In essence, this program was designed with the overall goal of helping participants explore and prepare for their possible futures, which is an extension of the original TPSR model.

**Course type.** Going back to the detailed theoretical framework in Figure 4, the course type has a significant impact on the undergraduate students’ outcomes. The service-learning course is a credit-bearing course within a kinesiology department. The course tends to have six to eight undergraduate students enrolled. For all kinesiology majors at this university, the undergraduate students are required to enroll in a senior research course; however, students have the option of taking this kinesiology community-based internship course in substitution of their senior research experience. These students have to apply for this option, and the Program Director then interviews each student during the first week of the semester. Following the interviews, students are asked to submit an essay where they answer the following questions: (a) Why do you want to do this? (b) What do you want to do for a career? (c) What is your grade point average? and (d) What is your experience with youth? The Program Director then chooses six to eight undergraduate students whom he feels fit the best with the program goals and the needs of the program (e.g., the need for a student who can teach dance in the program). Generally, about 20 students in total apply for this opportunity. In the eyes of the Program Director, most students are motivated to participate in this program as a means to avoid the senior research course, although the students often have additional motives as well, ranging from an interest in gaining applied experience in the field to working with underserved youth in the community. The course readings assigned for the undergraduate students include a youth development and physical activity book by Hellison and colleagues (2000) and two articles written by the course instructor describing the SP and its theoretical background (see Appendix



B). As can be seen from the projected student learning outcomes outlined in the course syllabus (see Table 2), the objectives focus on the integration of course content with the service-learning experience; in fact, outside of an initial preparatory meeting held at the beginning of the semester, the students do not meet with the professor off-site at any other time during the semester to discuss the readings and course content in a typical academic setting. Instead, the students are completing the course readings during their own time, reflecting on these readings and their own experiences at the service-learning site through weekly Reflection Journals, and then using this information in their role as assistant instructors in the program.

***Service-learning activity variables.*** Moving to a focus on the service-learning activity variables within the theoretical framework, it is important for the students to receive adequate preparation prior to their service-learning experience. Before the SP begins at the high school, the undergraduate student leaders meet one time with the Program Director off-site and begin to prepare for the program. This preparatory meeting includes a brief class discussion about the service-learning site, the format of the SP, and the students' thoughts and feelings regarding this experience. The students also begin reading the course text – *Youth Development and Physical Activity: Linking Universities and Communities* – by Don Hellison and colleagues (2000) as a means of preparing for the service-learning experience.

An overview of the SP follows, which is quite different from traditional physical education classes. This program incorporates martial arts, weight training, dance, and fitness into the sessions, with the overarching purpose of helping the high school students envision and explore their positive “possible futures” (e.g., exploring potential careers, options in higher education, goals in life). As for the goals of the program, along with promoting physical activity and physical education, the program is designed to (a) help the high school students balance

Table 2

*Projected Student Learning Outcomes*

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Create developmentally appropriate physical activity-based lesson plans that reflect the components, strategies, and philosophy of the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model (TPSR) and the service program (SP).</li><li>2. Understand the goals, strategies, and phases of the SP.</li><li>3. Plan and teach TPSR-based physical activity lessons with outcomes in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.</li><li>4. Be able to explain and teach various kinesiology concepts through TPSR.</li><li>5. Understand and implement a progression of the four SP phases.</li><li>6. Demonstrate knowledge and proficiency in the various physical activities taught in the program.</li><li>7. Reflect on and analyze the various SP and TPSR concepts.</li><li>8. Challenge current professional goals and processes for including social justice and other community-based work in your future.</li><li>9. Mentor high school students in helping envision their positive possible futures.</li><li>10. Understand the connection between TPSR and SP to the field of youth development.</li></ol>
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*Note:* Taken from the syllabus of the service-learning course.

hoped-for selves and feared-selves, as suggested by the theory of possible selves; (b) help the high school students become aware of and enhance personal leadership skills, responsibility, and work-related techniques; and (c) help the high school students chart the procedural knowledge

for first a career in kinesiology followed by their career(s) of choice (see Table 1). During each session, there are a combination of large group activities (warm-up, stretching, martial arts, and weight training), small group activities (stations with different activities, such as dance and fitness), and self-directed activities. Throughout these group activities and self-directed activities, the undergraduate student leaders are participating with the high school students, at times leading the high school students through activities while at other times, the undergraduate student leaders help the high school students learn how to lead themselves. Overall, the activity portion of the program is filled with a lot of energy as the undergraduate student leaders try to create a fun, exciting atmosphere for the high school students. Following the activity portion of the program, the group then debriefs in one large circle, reflecting on the quality of that session and the high school students' performance with respect, effort, self-direction, and/or leadership. During this group meeting, the students' voices are heard before the undergraduate student leaders' and the Program Director's voices, serving as another means of empowering the high school students to take ownership of the program and their performance in the program. Following this group meeting, there is a time for reflection and mentoring. This is an opportunity for the undergraduate student leaders to meet with their one or two high school "mentees" they are matched with for that entire semester. During this time, the focus is on the high school students' performance in the program *that day*, their overall growth in the program, and their exploration and preparation for their possible futures, which ties into the overarching goal of the SP. This is the most critical time in the SP each session, as this is when the undergraduate student leaders build relationships with the high school students and are able to serve as mentors to the high school students as they contemplate their possible futures and begin to take responsibility for their paths in life.

While the basic format of the SP does not change very much throughout the semester, the goals of each session do change as time passes. There is an overall progression over the 12 to 14 weeks of the SP, with four sequential phases occurring that have different goals and strategies associated with each phase (see Table 3). In addition to the overall progression of the SP through these phases, the program is also adaptive to the observations from the undergraduate student leaders and the Program Director. Before and after each session, the undergraduate student leaders and the Program Director meet as a team to discuss the status of the SP and any issues, concerns, or ideas that the undergraduate student leaders may have. Throughout the SP, and especially during these meetings, there is an understanding that the undergraduate student leaders are working in partnership with the Program Director, with both parties being equally responsible for and invested in the program's success. This means that there is regular dialogue between the Program Director and the undergraduate student leaders, and feedback from the students often leads to changes being made within the SP. In other words, the students have an important, meaningful role within the SP where their voices are valued. The undergraduate student leaders are also very active in the program, resulting in a sense of ownership towards the SP. The final variable within the service-learning experience is the supervision that the undergraduate student leaders receive from the Program Director. Because he is present at each and every session, the undergraduate student leaders receive feedback during their meetings before and after the sessions as well as through their Reflection Journals.

**Mediating variables.** The most important factor for undergraduate student leaders in service-learning is the mediating variable of reflection, where the students integrate and make meaning of their experiences through a variety of activities. For the service-learning course, the undergraduate student leaders complete three documents each week that provide an opportunity

Table 3

*Four Phases of the Service Program*

Phase One:

- Introduce the service program
- Learn about and experience the various physical activities
- Introduce the field of kinesiology and the Mentoring Time

Phase Two:

- Set goals in the program
- Take on leadership roles in the program
- Learn about steps to a future in kinesiology

Phase Three:

- Advance in goal-setting and leadership skills
- Explore the idea of potential future “hopes” and “fears”
- Link the steps to a career in kinesiology to any career(s) choice

Phase Four:

- Learn about “outside the gym”
- Balance potential “hopes” and “fears”
- Advance in the steps needed for your career(s) of choice

*Note:* Taken from the syllabus of the service-learning course.

to reflect on their experiences in the SP as well as the readings from the course text and additional articles. These documents will be described in the methods section of this dissertation, as these were evaluated as part of this study.

Moving on to the second mediating variable for students, critical thinking and meta-cognitive skills can be enhanced through participation in a service-learning course, provided that the service-learning experience is well-designed and the reflection activities are effective. So as the undergraduate student leaders participate in the SP, interact with the high school students, complete the readings for the course, and, most importantly, reflect on these experiences through their guided reflections in the Reflection Journals and on their own, their critical thinking and meta-cognitive skills should be enhanced.

**Outcomes.** The projected student learning outcomes identified by the Program Director in the course syllabus can be seen in Table 2. These outcomes focus on learning the course content, which is comprised of the following: (a) the TPSR Model; (b) the format, theoretical background, and implementation of the SP; and (c) the application of kinesiology principles in general, as well as the connection to the field of youth development. There is also a focus on applying these concepts in a real-life setting and learning how to mentor high school students. Throughout this experience, the undergraduate student leaders reflect on their own professional goals and feelings about community-based work. Because these are the projected student outcomes identified by the Program Director, this dissertation did not focus specifically on these outcomes, as this would have influenced the direction of this study. Instead, this dissertation focused on the student outcomes identified in the theoretical framework presented in Figure 4, which led to a greater understanding of the proximal outcomes that occurred from undergraduate student leaders' participation in this service-learning course, including both expected and unexpected outcomes.

### **Rationale for the Present Study**

The SP is a physical activity-based service-learning course within the field of kinesiology that provides a meaningful opportunity for undergraduate students to get involved in their community and learn more about the field of kinesiology through practical experience, faculty supervision, and guided reflection. Unfortunately, experiences like the SP are not readily available within the field of kinesiology at many institutions of higher education (Cutforth, 2000). The institution that houses this particular service-learning course places a high value on service in the surrounding community, with hundreds of service-learning courses helping the university fulfill its mission to be an engaged campus. However, this is atypical in the world of

higher education, as many institutions prioritize teaching and research over service and community engagement (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Holland, 1997). This is especially true when it comes to faculty promotion and reward, with service often receiving diminished attention and value at this time (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). While some institutions have revised their faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure guidelines to include outreach and service as critical elements in the faculty reward system, there are still many institutions that have a strong rhetoric of service and community engagement without the requisite support and action that would lead to a truly engaged campus (Astin, 1997; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010; Harkavy, 2004; O'Meara, 2005; Westdijk et al., 2010). Without strong institutional support, faculty members are unlikely to pursue research and teaching with substantial service and community engagement components, as the adoption of innovative practices like service-learning courses generally require greater effort and commitment from the faculty members. By developing, implementing, and evaluating service-learning course(s), faculty members could be in jeopardy of faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure if they are working at an institution that prioritizes teaching and research, as they may have devoted a significant portion of their time to the service-learning course(s) that are not valued in that setting. Therefore, in order for the faculty members to be interested in pursuing these opportunities for engaged scholarship, specifically that of service-learning, they must have the following: (a) support from the institution through the faculty reward system, (b) strong staff support, and (c) reason to believe in the efficacy of service-learning (Astin et al., 2000; Bringle, 2003; Eyler, 2002b; Gray et al., 1999). The last point highlights the need for evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of service-learning (Astin et al., 2000; Gray et al., 1998). In order for institutions, administrators, and faculty to fully embrace and promote service-learning in the field of

kinesiology, there is a need for kinesiology-based service-learning courses to be examined in great depth.

Interestingly, the majority of articles that focus on service-learning within kinesiology are constructed with practitioners in mind, either describing *how* to facilitate a kinesiology-based service-learning course or describing a service-learning course being implemented (Cucina & McCormack, 2001; Moorman & Arellano-Unruh, 2002). Therefore, a critical gap in the literature is the need for well-designed studies that examine service-learning courses within kinesiology in great depth. This dissertation was designed to address this gap by focusing on one specific physical activity-based service-learning course within kinesiology. Unlike other kinesiology-based programs, this course is one that meets the actual criteria for service-learning, based on the definitions described earlier in this review by Bringle and Hatcher (1995), Weigert (1998), Campus Compact (2000), and the Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning (2001).

Along with the potential for this dissertation to demonstrate the powerful impact of a kinesiology-based service-learning course on its undergraduate student leaders, this study will also advance previous research within the general field of service-learning. One of the most consistent critiques of past service-learning studies has been the lack of a strong theoretical foundation, resulting in purely anecdotal descriptions that are neither systematic nor rigorous (Billig, 2003). In the eyes of Bringle (2003), the most significant problem within the field of service-learning is the lack of theoretical and conceptual models that are used to guide the research and practice of service-learning courses. This critique from both researchers and practitioners within service-learning matches the trend within educational evaluation overall, where there is an increased emphasis on evaluation methods that use a theoretical framework



(Aronson et al., 2005; W. T. Grant Foundation, 2004). In response to these critiques, this dissertation used the theoretical framework presented in Figure 4, resulting in a systematic, rigorous assessment of the service-learning course. By using this model as a guide for data collection, this study examined each part of the service-learning course for the undergraduate student leaders: the context, the service-learning experience, the mediating variables, and the proximal outcomes. This allowed the service-learning course to be framed within the larger context of service-learning research and programming, leading to a more systematic and complete knowledge base about the effectiveness of service-learning courses, specifically within kinesiology (Howard, 2003; Roldan et al., 2004).

By examining the entire service-learning experience with this theoretical model, this study also addressed a significant methodological problem within the field of service-learning: the fact that many research studies do not address whether the student outcomes are due to the service-learning participation, characteristics of the participants, or a combination of these two factors (Aronson et al., 2005). This has resulted in a number of studies with limited or overstated conclusions because the methods did not examine the student characteristics that may have predisposed some students to certain outcomes. In this study, the experiences of the undergraduate student leaders in the service-learning course were studied at all levels, from the context (institutional characteristics, community characteristics, community partner characteristics, faculty characteristics, and student characteristics) to the students' experiences in the program to the students' perceived outcomes. Data were also collected from the Program Director of the service-learning course and the primary investigator of this study, so that the study was not reliant exclusively on students' self-reporting. This reliance on self-reporting has been identified as yet another weakness of service-learning research which was addressed in this

study (Aronson et al., 2005). The investigator's role as a participant observer also allowed the primary investigator to build rapport with the undergraduate student leaders, leading to more open conversations during the post-service interviews (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Additionally, this experience led to the investigator's ability to contextualize and triangulate the data that were collected through the interviews, Reflection Journals, and post-service reflections (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995), leading to a more systematic and complete understanding of the undergraduate student leaders' experiences from and changes within this service-learning experience.

Along with the methodological approach, another strength of this dissertation was the analytic approach that was taken at the conclusion of the data collection period. In general, most studies within the service-learning field tend to be based on group-level analytical procedures, leading to the grouping of data across participants to determine commonalities or to find patterns across all of the participants (Dunn, 1994). These procedures have led to concerns about the validity of inferences drawn from these "group-level analyses when applied at the individual level" (Dunn, 1994, p. 378). To address these concerns, this dissertation used a combined nomothetic and idiographic methodological approach to allow the investigator to search for commonalities and patterns across participants while also identifying the unique characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of each individual participant (Dunn, 1994; Gould et al., 1997).

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

#### **Participants**

Undergraduate students enrolled in the service-learning course were asked to participate in this study. During the semester under study, eight undergraduate students enrolled in this course. These students were kinesiology majors, with all of the students in their final year of study at the university with plans to go into fields such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and coaching. The students were all over 18 years old with the ability to speak and understand conversational English. While all eight students chose to participate in the study, two of the students did not complete the final two pieces of data collection: the post-service reflection and the post-service interview. During the analysis phase of the study, it was determined that these two pieces of data were the most informative, descriptive, and reflective data for the six other participants who successfully completed the study. Given the richness and depth of these final two pieces of data, the two participants who did not complete the study were not included as part of the final sample. Hence, the six participants who completed all of the assessments made up the sample for the present study.

In addition to the students, the course instructor was also recruited to participate in the study, as he also served as the Program Director of the SP. This individual was a faculty member with over 10 years of experience designing, implementing, and evaluating physical activity-based programs in the community where undergraduate students are involved.

#### **Procedure and Instrumentation**

The overall data collection plan can be seen in Table 4, with each level of the service-learning theoretical framework (see Figure 4) connected to specific measures in this study.

Table 4

*Data Collection Plan*

<b>Level</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Measurements</b>
<b>Student Context</b>	Demographics Academic Ability	Demographics Questionnaire
	Political Preference Prior SL Experiences Level of Volunteerism Social Issues Interest Professional Goals Non-School Workload	Pre-Service Interview – Student
<b>Student Service-Learning Experience</b>	Course Type	Official Course Description Participant Observation Notes
	Service-Learning Activity	Reflection Journal Participant Observation Notes
<b>Student Mediating Variables</b>	Reflection	Reflection Journal Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale Participant Observation Notes
	Cognitive Complexity	Reflection Journal Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale
<b>Student Outcomes</b>	Personal Outcomes	Reflection Journal Participant Observation Notes Post-Service Reflection Post-Service Interview – Student Post-Service Interview – Program Director
	Academic/Intellectual Outcomes	Reflection Journal Participant Observation Notes Post-Service Reflection Post-Service Interview – Student Post-Service Interview – Program Director
	Social/Community Outcomes	Reflection Journal Participant Observation Notes Post-Service Reflection Post-Service Interview – Student Post-Service Interview – Program Director

Given the exploratory nature of the study and small number of participants involved, qualitative methods in the form of interviews and journaling were used, with all of the interviews conducted by the investigator due to her knowledge of the interview guides, familiarity with the research topic, and preparation to probe with follow-up questions (Krueger & Casey, 2008). The vast majority of the assessments used in this study were qualitative in nature, largely due to the fact that there are a wide range of student outcomes associated with service-learning, making it difficult to measure all of the possible outcomes; this is especially relevant given the fact that service-learning within the field of kinesiology has not been studied in great depth, so previous literature cannot be relied upon for determining the best measures (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Furco, 2003; Howard, 2003). Selecting quantitative measures is even more difficult because many of the student outcomes are unintended and unanticipated, so the tests that are selected at the beginning of the study may result in a limited understanding of the full impact of the service-learning experience (Berman, 1990; Furco, 2002; Gray, 1996). Additionally, students benefit uniquely from the same service-learning experience, so one battery of tests may not be effective in measuring the outcomes for every student in the program (Furco, 2002). Another issue related to quantitative methods within this field revolves around the instrumentation, with a number of instruments that are not applicable to service-learning participants, very few instruments designed specifically for service-learning that have high reliability and validity, and a reported lack of well-tested instruments and protocols that can capture multiple student outcomes (Billig, 2000; Furco, 2002, 2003; Gray, 1996; Waterman, 1997). Finally, six students in the course made any type of quantitative data analysis very limited.

In contrast, researchers have found that qualitative methods such as student reflections can lead to “rich and detailed data to study both the overt elements of students’ experiences and

observations as stated in their own words as well as the underlying assumptions about or orientations toward identity, relationship, and community” (Cooks & Scharrer, 2006, p. 46). So instead of relying on self-report quantitative measures, which often confuse student satisfaction with student learning (Eyler, 2000), this study used interviews and journaling for more in-depth and fine-tuned analysis. This provided rich information about *what* the students learned, *how* they learned or changed, and *why* they think this occurred. This approach resulted in a more complete understanding of each student’s experience in the service-learning course, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the outcomes that each student reports (Eyler, 2000, 2011; Waterman, 2003). Additionally, since the data collection involved both student interviews and journaling, this compensated for students who may be more comfortable and/or skilled writing about their experiences compared with those students who may prefer to discuss their experiences in person.

Permission to conduct this investigation in conjunction with the service-learning course was obtained from the investigator’s Institutional Review Board and from the Institutional Review Board at the Program Director’s university. As for recruiting the student participants, once the Program Director chose the eight undergraduate student leaders to participate in the service-learning course for the semester, the investigator then met with the students. Students were informed of an incentive for participation, which was a \$15 iTunes gift card in appreciation of their volunteer participation, which was given to each student upon completion of the final interview. For those students who chose to participate in the study, informed consent documents were signed at this time (see Appendix A). Additionally, for those student participants, a demographics questionnaire was distributed in order to collect descriptive information on some of the predisposing factors (“context”) of the service-learning theoretical framework (see Figure

4), including age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, and academic performance (see Appendix B). These surveys were administered by the investigator.

**Demographics questionnaire.** The demographics questionnaire was developed based on previous demographics questionnaires utilized in other service-learning studies, including the 1994 Student Information Form by Astin and colleagues (2000), as well as the United States Census from 2010 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2011). Data collected through this questionnaire included age, gender, race, and both past and present academic performance.

**Pre-service interviews.** Following these preliminary procedures, individual interviews were conducted with the undergraduate student participants before the service-learning course began. Each of these interviews was held in a private room at the university. Prior to the start of the interview, the participants were reminded of the purposes of the study as well as their confidentiality rights, the option of leaving the interview at any time, and the ability to refuse to answer specific questions. The interviews followed a semi-structured format (Kvale, 1996), with questions designed to further explore the context of the service-learning experience, including (a) past volunteering or service-learning experience, (b) professional goals and non-school workload, (c) past experience working with youth, (d) political preference, (e) experiences with and perceptions of the community, (f) reasons for enrolling in the course, (g) prior knowledge of course content, (h) personal goals for the experience, and (i) anticipated challenges (see Appendix B). In essence, these interviews allowed the investigator to explore the scope, nature, and quality of students' thoughts and feelings about the service-learning experience, the community surrounding the service-learning site, the high school students at the service-learning site, and the course content. These questions were based on the two models of service-learning cited earlier in this study (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004), along with a variety of

research studies (e.g., Astin et al., 2000; Astin & Sax, 1998; Baldwin et al., 2007; Eyler & Giles, 1999; LaMaster, 2001).

**In-service Reflection Journals.** As part of the service-learning course, the undergraduate student leaders were required to complete a Reflection Journal each week that was comprised of three separate items: half-page reflections, program observations, and mentoring session observations. This structured journal allowed the Program Director to direct the students' attention to issues and questions that will help to connect the service-learning experience with the course content and course learning objectives (Rama & Battistoni, 2001), thereby helping the students reflect on their experience. As was discussed earlier in this dissertation, reflection is the critical link between the action of serving and meaningful learning (Eyler et al., 1996), and it has been suggested that this is the most critical element in the service-learning experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Steinke et al., 2002).

More specifically, the half-page reflections were driven by questions from the Program Director about the readings, the students' experiences in the program, and the students' personal philosophies and beliefs (see Appendix B). A few example questions are: (a) compare the clubs described in the chapter to your field site program, (b) what qualities (e.g., skills, values) contribute the most to becoming an effective youth development leader? and (c) which of the following key criteria for state-of-the-art youth development programs have you experienced in your field site program? These questions changed each week based on the assigned readings. The second document was the program observations, which the students completed each week based on the two 93-minute sessions that were held during the week. The same prompts were used each week throughout the entire program (see Appendix B). The goals of these prompts were for the students to reflect on the overall functioning of the program as well as specific



changes that the undergraduate student leaders may have seen in the high school students. Additionally, the students were encouraged to think about how this experience has contributed to their own lives. The final piece of the weekly Reflection Journal was the mentoring session observations, which focused on the goals for *each phase* of the SP. As presented earlier in Table 3, the SP is organized by four phases with specific goals and strategies in each phase. For the mentoring session observations, the students were asked to reflect on the mentoring time they had with their two high school “mentees” at the end of each session, and answer specific questions about the phase the program is in at that time of the semester. So during Phase One of the program, the questions focused on the goals and strategies the undergraduate student leaders would have during the mentoring time; these questions then changed when the program transitioned into Phase Two of the program. The specific questions related to each phase can be found in Appendix B. These three documents that made up the Reflection Journal and the questions that served as prompts each week were generated by the Program Director, and were based on his own experiences as a teacher in higher education.

In this study, the Reflection Journals were used for ongoing assessment of the students’ reflections throughout the semester as they integrated their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content and the experiences they were having at their service-learning site (Ash et al., 2005). Along with providing a detailed description of the students’ experiences and subsequent reflections throughout the semester, the Reflection Journals were also analyzed for the quantity and quality of reflection and cognitive complexity demonstrated each week. This was achieved with the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, which was a Likert scale developed by Taylor (1991), with the question wording slightly revised to fit the program under study. While this scale has not been validated, it was recommended by Taylor

(1991) as a way to measure reflection and cognitive complexity in students enrolled in service-learning courses. Each week, the students' Reflection Journals were evaluated based on five questions (see Appendix B), thereby providing a quantitative measurement of the degree of reflection and cognitive complexity in the Reflection Journals each week of the service-learning course. The Reflection Journals were also used to measure course fidelity, as the undergraduate student leaders explained what occurred during each session of the SP.

**Participant observations.** The primary investigator of this study was a participant in the SP, allowing the investigator to also serve as a participant observer chronicling the events of the service-learning experience as related to the experiences of the undergraduate student leaders (see Appendix B). This led to a journal of reflective observations from each session, with a focus on the undergraduate student leaders' actions, statements, questions, and attitudes. This also included an account and interpretation of what the investigator observed during each session with respect to the undergraduate student leaders' interactions with the high school students (focusing solely on the undergraduate student leaders in the observations) and the undergraduate student leaders' participation in the planning meetings with the Program Director *before* each session begins as well as the debriefing meetings with the Program Director *after* each session ends.

**Post-service reflection.** At the conclusion of the service-learning course, the students were asked to complete a post-service reflection, which was a longer reflection where the students answered a number of questions about their experience in the SP, the format of the course, their personal growth, and general societal issues. The students were also encouraged to make recommendations during this time. These reflection questions were drawn from a variety of empirical and applied articles and books (e.g., Cooper, n.d.; Stevens, 2008; West as cited in

Stevens, 2008). Assigned at the end of the course, this final reflection piece provided the students with an opportunity to reflect on the semester-long experience and review their weekly responses in their Reflection Journals; by taking a step back from the weekly programming and reviewing past journal entries, the students were able to offer new insights, thoughts, and/or feelings about their experience in the service-learning course.

**Post-service student interviews.** Following the post-service reflection, the students were then asked to take part in individual interviews as a follow-up to their written responses. These interviews were based on each student's Reflection Journal and written response to the post-service reflection, so the interview guides were constructed when the post-service reflections were submitted following the conclusion of the service-learning course (see Appendix B). The goal of these interviews was to obtain more in-depth information about specific topics that the students may have highlighted in their Reflection Journal and/or post-service reflection, so the interviews were semi-structured to enable the investigator to ask probing questions when necessary (Kvale, 1996; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

**Post-service Program Director interview.** Along with interviewing the students and analyzing their Reflection Journals and the post-service reflection, the Program Director was also asked to participate in the study. A limitation of previous studies was the fact that the data were only collected from the students, so the possibility for triangulation between sources was not possible (Furco, 2003). By including the Program Director in the study (as well as the investigator as a participant observer), there is additional evidence to corroborate the student interviews and reflection data.

Prior to the start of the service-learning course, the investigator set up an individual meeting with the Program Director, where the overall study and the Program Director's role in

the study were described, along with assurance that participation was voluntary and he could remove himself from the study at any point. At that point, the Program Director agreed to participate, so the informed consent document was signed at that time, although the interview did not occur until the service-learning course was complete. Following the conclusion of the service-learning study, the post-service interview was scheduled with the Program Director only *after* the post-service interviews with all of the student participants had been completed. This was an opportunity for the Program Director to discuss his perceptions of the students' engagement with the course material, enthusiasm towards the experience, learning throughout the semester, and overall performance in the program (Barnett et al., 2009; Simons & Cleary, 2005; Stevens, 2008). Additionally, this was an opportunity to reflect on his overall satisfaction with the course and his role as the Program Director (Simons & Cleary, 2005). The questions in this post-service interview guide (see Appendix B) were generated from a variety of sources (Barnett et al., 2009; Simons & Cleary, 2005; Stevens, 2008).

### **Data Analyses**

The quantitative information collected from the demographics questionnaire were analyzed (using the 19<sup>th</sup> version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and summarized, with the means and standard deviations reported where appropriate.

The data analysis was a combination of an idiographic approach and a nomothetic approach (Dunn, 1994). These procedures were determined to be the most appropriate for the present study, given the need to find patterns and commonalities across the participants as well as identify the unique characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of each individual participant (Dunn, 1994; Gould et al., 1997). With the focus on individual student characteristics, experiences, and outcomes in the theoretical framework that is used in this study (see Figure 4),

taking a purely nomothetic approach with a hierarchical content analysis of the questions asked across all participants would be insufficient.

For the analysis procedures, the data were comprised of eight sources: demographics questionnaires, pre-service interviews, in-service Reflection Journals, the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, in-service participant observations, post-service reflections, post-service interviews, and the post-service interview with the Program Director. The audio-recordings of the interviews with the students and the Program Director were transcribed verbatim and then checked for accuracy. Once these preliminary procedures were complete, the idiographic approach was used to examine the individual students' experiences in the service-learning course and the outcomes of each student (Dunn, 1994). Following extensive study of each participant's demographics questionnaire, pre-service interview transcript, in-service Reflection Journal, Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, in-service participant observations, post-service reflection, post-service interview transcript, and the post-service Program Director interview transcript, idiographic profiles were created for each participant. These profiles were 10 to 20 page summaries of each student's experience in the service-learning course and how this experience may have changed him or her. The theoretical framework previously presented in Figure 4 in the literature review was used as a guide for the organization of each idiographic profile, including a presentation of the context, the service-learning experience, the mediating variables, and the outcomes for each individual student in this study. The primary investigator created these profiles, given her knowledge of each participant through her experience in the service-learning course, her participation in all of the interviews, and her role as a participant observer. Following the creation of each idiographic profile, the secondary investigator reviewed each profile with respect to each participant's data set, serving as a

“critical friend” in the data analysis process. When differences arose between the primary and secondary investigator, the data were reviewed and discussed until consensus was found (Kvale, 1996). At that time, a third investigator conducted a peer debrief for each idiographic profile (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Altogether, trustworthiness and validity were enhanced through triangulation, with multiple coders and the inclusion of a peer review (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

As for the nomothetic approach, the primary and secondary investigators began by independently performing comprehensive deductive and inductive analysis procedures using constant comparison and critical reflection to guide the process (Kvale, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Pooled data derived from all participants and all measures were deductively organized into each level of the model: context, service-learning experience, mediating variables, and proximal outcomes. Then, the process of open coding began by identifying the raw meaning units (quotes or paragraphed quotes that capture one particular thought) with more focused coding through the creation and organization of lower order themes. The raw meaning units and lower order themes emerged from the data inductively. After the lower order themes were identified, both deductive and inductive methods were utilized for the higher order themes through a two-step process: (a) the lower order themes that naturally coalesced under existing higher order themes, as outlined in the theoretical framework (e.g., political preference, service-learning orientation); and (b) the remaining lower order themes coalesced under newly formed higher order themes that emerged from the data inductively. At each level of analysis, the two researchers followed an iterative consensus validation process, and when differences arose between the researchers, the transcripts were re-read and discussed until consensus was reached (Kvale, 1996). Additionally, the same

investigator who served as a peer debriefer during the idiographic analysis served in this role once again throughout the analysis and in the final stage of analysis (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Overall, the issues of trustworthiness and validity were ensured through: (a) prolonged engagement and persistent observation; (b) triangulation, with multiple coders for the raw meaning units, first order themes, and higher order themes; (c) the process of iterative consensus validation; and (d) the inclusion of a peer review throughout the analysis procedures (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND SPECIFIC DISCUSSION

The results will be presented in two forms, beginning with the nomothetic methodological approach and followed by a presentation of the idiographic profile of each participant. In order to protect confidentiality, the participants have been given pseudonyms and certain identifying information has been withheld. Given that this dissertation utilized multiple sources of data collection as one form of triangulation (in addition to multiple voices), a matrix was created in Table 5 to provide corroborative evidence of this triangulation (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002). This matrix was guided by the theoretical framework in Figure 4 of Chapter

Table 5

*Matrix of Findings and Sources for Data Triangulation*

<b>Sources of Data</b>	<b>Levels of Theoretical Framework</b>			
	Context	Service-Learning Experience	Mediating Variables	Proximal Outcomes
Demographics Questionnaires	X			
Pre-Service Interviews – Student	X	X		
Reflection Journals	X	X	X	X
Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale			X	
Participant Observation Notes	X	X		X
Post-Service Reflection	X	X	X	X
Post-Service Interviews – Student	X	X	X	X
Post-Service Interview – Program Director	X	X	X	X



2, with each source examined based on the main levels of the theoretical framework: context, service-learning experience, mediating variables, and proximal outcomes.

### **Nomothetic Approach**

With the nomothetic methodological approach, deductive and inductive analysis procedures were used to find patterns and commonalities across the participants (Dunn, 1994; Gould et al., 1997; Patton, 2002). As described earlier in this dissertation, the theoretical framework presented in Figure 4 served as a guide to the deductive analysis procedures, although new patterns and themes also emerged from the data through inductive analysis procedures. In this section, the data will be presented according to each main level of the theoretical framework: context, service-learning experience, mediating variables, and proximal outcomes. In each section, the applicability of the theoretical framework will be assessed according to the findings from this study, with any new patterns and themes discussed in addition to the themes in the theoretical framework which were not present in the data. Despite this focus on the theoretical application, this is not a scientific test of the theoretical framework, given that it was used as the guide for the deductive analysis procedures.

**Overview.** With 542 typed pages of data, there was a tremendous amount of information collected through eight sources in the study: demographics questionnaires, pre-service interviews, in-service Reflection Journals, the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, in-service participant observations, post-service reflections, post-service student interviews, and the post-service Program Director interview. The pre-service interviews lasted an average of 25 minutes while the post-service interviews with the undergraduate student leaders lasted an average of 43 minutes, with the post-service interview with the Program Director lasting 46 minutes. The analysis yielded 964 raw meaning units, which collapsed into 168 lower order

themes. These lower order themes were then organized into 62 higher order themes, all of which coalesced into 17 domains that were either previously identified in the theoretical framework (see Figure 4, Chapter 2) or emerged inductively from the data.

Overall, the undergraduate student leaders enjoyed the service-learning course, with the participants expressing their belief in the value of the SP and the feeling that they made a difference in the lives of the high school students. The service-learning course was well-designed, meeting many of the requirements for a quality service-learning experience, including a high degree of integration between the course content and the service-learning experience, meaningful roles and responsibilities for the participants, and a high degree of direct contact between the participants and the high school students. Although there were some feelings of frustration, particularly related to the degree of feedback students received on their Reflection Journals and their performance in the SP, overall, the service-learning course was viewed as a positive experience for all of the participants. In fact, all reported positive outcomes from their experience. This was especially true for those who demonstrated a greater interest in learning and a willingness to give more effort in the service-learning course, suggesting that, like in many courses, the more effort students put forth, the more they were able to gain from the experience. While there was not as much reflection or critical thinking as is desired in an optimal service-learning course, most of the participants still felt as if they learned more through this experience than in the traditional classroom. In fact, all of the participants reported learning the most from the hands-on experiences during the SP, which they rarely experienced in the traditional classroom. This matched the findings of Cohen and Kinsey (1994), who reported that more learning occurred in service-learning courses than in traditional classrooms, especially related to knowledge that was applicable in the students' personal and professional lives. The most

frequently cited student proximal outcomes from this study were that of leadership development, improved interpersonal skills, increased knowledge of social justice issues, and enhanced self-understanding. These outcomes will be explored in greater depth in a later section, as the results will now be presented according to the theoretical framework from Figure 4 of Chapter 2.

**Context.** This level of the theoretical framework provides an overview of the predisposing factors that may have influenced the participants' experiences during the service-learning course and their learning outcomes upon completion. Beginning with the basic demographics of the participants, there were three males and three females between the ages of 22 and 27 ( $M = 24.64$ ,  $SD = 2.09$ ). Five of the six participants were full-time students, with the participants' average grades in high school ranging from C+ to A+ and their average college grade point averages ranging from C to A-. There was only one "traditional" undergraduate student within the group who did not work during college and did not attend community college before enrolling in college. The other five participants attended community college and four of these participants also worked throughout their college experience, with three participants also commuting to college. All of the participants were majoring in kinesiology with an emphasis in neuromuscular science and plans to attend graduate school. There were a variety of future career goals among the participants: physical therapy, occupational therapy, coaching, and medicine. Only three of the six participants had parents who were still together at the time of the study while all six participants had siblings. Given that socioeconomic status is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation, these three factors are presented in Table 6. Two participants identified themselves as Caucasian with the other four participants identifying with other races (Mexican American, African American, Filipino). English was the native language for most of the participants, with just two participants reporting English not being their

Table 6

*Socioeconomic Status of the Participants' Parents*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Father's Highest Level of Formal Education</b>	<b>Mother's Highest Level of Formal Education</b>	<b>Profession of Father</b>	<b>Profession of Mother</b>	<b>Estimate of Parents' Total Gross Income in One Year</b>
John	General Educational Development test	Some college	Air Traffic Controller	N/A	N/A
Amanda	College degree	Some college	Teacher	Grocery Store Manager	\$75,000-\$99,999
Shayna	Some college	General Educational Development test	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sean	General Educational Development test	Some high school	Army	Caregiver	\$30,000-\$39,999
Jill	Post-Secondary Technical or Trade School	Post-Secondary Technical or Trade School	Factory	Factory and Gardener	\$50,000-\$59,999
Anton	Elementary school	Post-Secondary Technical or Trade School	Mattress builder	Hospital House-keeper	\$75,000-\$99,999

native language and one of these participants being born outside of the United States.

Interestingly, only two participants described their political preference as “liberal” and one participant identified himself as a “conservative,” while the other three participants were either uninterested in politics or saw themselves as being “in the middle.”

As for past experiences that could have prepared them for their service-learning course, three participants spoke extensively of coming from an underserved background, with some of the participants even sharing how they had participated in programs similar to the SP targeting underserved youth in their own neighborhoods and schools. None of the participants had prior experience in a service-learning course, although all of the participants reported at least some experience working with young people, with four participants reporting a breadth of experience. This coincided with five of the participants sharing their excitement and interest in working with kids, with three participants specifically sharing how they were motivated to help young people. As for previous volunteering experiences, there were a wide range of experience levels, from participants with a lot of experience to those with none at all. All in all, this was an incredibly diverse sample outside of their shared kinesiology majors, with a variety of demographic variables and previous experiences shaping each individual participant.

**Service-learning experience.** With substantial variance between each service-learning course's characteristics and, ultimately, the program outcomes (Moely et al., 2008), the data associated with this specific service-learning experience were explored in-depth.

**Course variables.** Beginning with the *course variables* characterizing the service-learning course, this was a youth development course for three credits within a kinesiology department. Eight students enrolled in the course, although only six participants completed the study. As is reflected in the projected student learning outcomes listed in the course syllabus (see Table 2, Chapter 2), the course content was comprised of readings and reflections surrounding youth development, kinesiology, physical education, physical activity, community development, and social justice. Given that there was not a separate time when the undergraduate student leaders met with the Program Director to discuss the course readings and

service-learning experience (outside of an initial preparatory meeting at the beginning of the semester), the service-learning experience was well integrated into the instructional objectives for the course. The final variable of the service-learning course within the theoretical framework was whether or not the course was required for the participants to take. All of the participants were in their final year of college and needed to take the senior research course in order to graduate. Because this kinesiology community-based internship course was approved to serve as a substitution for the senior research course, which was difficult to take due to capacity limitations, it was likely that many of the participants felt as if they had no choice in enrolling in this service-learning course. However, when they were asked about their reasons for enrolling in the course during the pre-service interview, only two participants explained how they needed the course for graduation, with most of the participants identifying a number of reasons why they chose to enroll in the course. Two participants felt the service-learning course would be enjoyable, with Jill describing how “it sounded really fun.” Three participants shared their interest in helping others through the service-learning course, with Sean explaining his motivations in great depth:

For me, growing up, I didn't really have any dad, 'cause my mom and my dad separated when I was 5, so I don't really have a dad and so I'm really close with my mom and with my sisters and as I grow up, I realize these kids needs a role model. Especially the kids around where I live, they're really poor and I wanna make a difference to the kids, you know, what I learn in life, so that they won't become unfortunate in the future and they can have a future also.

Several of the participants also talked about enrolling in the course for professional reasons, such as gaining more experience working with young people and learning interpersonal skills.

According to Amanda, “I think that it’s a great experience, not only for resume-wise but just to really work with kids and to help the community.” Shayna described how her motivations for enrolling in the course changed as she learned more about the SP:

Initially, [I enrolled] because of the class requirements, but looking into it, I just wanna give back. I wanna learn how to be more of a leadership figure, and it’s just something that I think I’ll learn more for in the future. Gain more experience. Something like this just really impacts me.

***Service-learning activity variables.*** Shifting to the *service-learning activity variables* within the theoretical framework, all of the domains and the higher order themes are presented in Table 7. The most significant findings will now be explored in more depth, beginning with the amount of preparation the participants received prior to the start of the SP. When the participants were asked in both the post-service reflections and the post-service interviews whether or not they felt prepared before the SP began, almost all of the participants had conflicting responses, sharing how they felt both prepared and unprepared at the start of the service-learning experience. This may have been due to some participants’ inexperience with young people and with underserved communities, making them slightly unsure about their ability to be effective as undergraduate student leaders and nervous about the overall experience. Other participants felt as if there was a tremendous amount of programmatic information in the course syllabus and readings, making it extremely difficult to learn everything before the SP began. However, once the programming began, they realized they were more knowledgeable than they initially predicted, with the ongoing programming helping them learn additional strategies. As for the usefulness of the course readings, most of the participants believed these readings helped prepare them before and during the SP, although they acknowledged that the readings could have

Table 7

*Service-Learning Activity Variables*

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Higher Order Theme</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Number of Raw Meaning Units</b>
Orientation	Felt prepared before SP began	6	27
	Felt unprepared before SP began	5	22
	Felt prepared during SP for sessions	6	20
	Felt unprepared during SP for sessions	4	5
Experience	Strong connection with high school students	6	28
	Poor connection with high school students	3	4
Placement	Belief in positive impact of SP	6	119
	Good attitude towards the SP	6	51
	Value the experience	6	47
	Question impact of SP	5	20
	Sense of competence	4	14
	Negative feelings towards the SP	4	12
	Sense of being challenged	4	5
	Sense of ownership	2	3
	Voice being valued	2	3
Supervision	Not enough feedback or support	6	32
	Unproductive relationship	2	10
	Good relationship	4	4
	Enough feedback and support	1	2



been more helpful at times. In Shayna's words:

The readings were helpful for me because they provided examples and experiences of other mentors who had been through the process. I was able to use the book for ideas and it helped me structure my discussions and thoughts. I liked how the book provided different experiences and circumstances because it taught me how to address issues if they did arise. It was also helpful because it gave me ideas about how to initiate conversations with the students and it provided tips with how to keep conversations interesting.

One recommendation that was highlighted by half of the participants centered on the need for more discussions surrounding the course readings, as this rarely occurred during the semester. This was confirmed by the Program Director, who shared how "we didn't talk about the readings. That was just sort of something we did outside [of the SP]." While there were questions about the weekly course readings in the Reflection Journals the participants answered, they did not receive specific feedback from the Program Director on their responses to these reading-based questions. Therefore, the participants felt as if discussions with their peers and the Program Director would help them gain a deeper understanding of the course readings and how these readings applied to the SP. The Program Director seemed aware of the need for more focus on the course readings during the service-learning course, although he acknowledged the difficulties with timing and programming in the following statement: "Maybe I need to do more talking about the readings with [the participants], but it's such an intense experience that I need to get into what we're doing with the kids [high school students] and what they're gonna be doing, what activities they're gonna be running." This comment suggests that teaching service-learning courses, like the one studied in this dissertation, may be particularly challenging, as it

was difficult for this full-time faculty member to devote the time required to design and implement an optimal service-learning experience for the undergraduate students (e.g., facilitating discussions about the course readings) while simultaneously ensuring that the service being delivered to the high school students was of sufficient quality to provide a positive experience. This highlights the fact that the Program Director was implementing the service program *in addition* to serving as the course instructor for the service-learning course, which is generally not the case for service-learning course instructors. Often, these instructors are able to focus solely on the service-learning course, with their students participating in service activities in the community that are supervised by other individuals. Instead, the Program Director in the service-learning course under study had more responsibilities than are typically taken on by service-learning course instructors.

The next domain within the *service-learning activity variables* centers on the experience students have in the service-learning course, beginning with the quantity and quality of contact the undergraduate student leaders had with the high school students and the community members. While there was not any contact with community members in this service-learning experience, there was a tremendous amount of direct contact with the high school students, because the participants helped lead the high school students through physical activity stations and they were also matched with high school student mentees for the duration of the SP. Although the SP sessions were only twice a week during a single semester, the undergraduate student leaders each accumulated between 35 and 40 hours of direct contact with the high school students, with many of the participants building close relationships with their high school student mentees and strong connections with some of the other high school students as well. There were still a few instances where the participants struggled to connect with the high school students.

For example, the investigator explained how “Anton didn’t have the greatest connection with the kids.” However, this was not typical, with the majority of the undergraduate student leaders building strong relationships with at least some of the high school students.

The next domain within the *service-learning activity variables* is the quality of the placement, which is based on whether the undergraduate student leaders felt as if the service-learning experience was interesting, important, and challenging. Given that all six participants continually referenced their belief in the positive impact of the SP, with 81 raw meaning units coalescing under this higher order theme, it was clear that the participants believed the SP was doing important work. In Sean’s words, “the [high school] students are learning to be more respectful and work hard in everything that they do,” while Jill shared how they “are definitely getting a better sense of their future.” In her post-service reflection, Shayna expressed how “it was really great being able to be part of a program that allowed [high school] students to feel empowered.” Overall, the participants truly believed that they were having a positive impact on the high school students, which resulted in a positive attitude towards the SP. In fact, many of the participants shared their feeling that the service-learning course was an innovative course where they were able to work with high school students in a new setting. All of the participants also shared how this experience was meaningful to them, with Amanda explaining how “this project was very meaningful because it allowed me to work with kids who were in need of leadership and role models.” Sean described how “this experience was personally valuable to me because I was able to make a difference in the life of some kids in the program.” According to the theoretical framework, it is also critical for the participants to feel challenged by the service-learning experience, although only three participants described the experience as

challenging, with one participant acknowledging that he did not feel challenged in this course. This may be an area for improvement in this service-learning course in the future.

The final domain included in this level of the theoretical framework is the quality of supervision from the Program Director. Most of the participants felt as if the Program Director provided adequate supervision in general, with some of the participants highlighting their appreciation of the Program Director's autonomy-supportive instruction style ("empowering us as mentors") and others speaking of his strong leadership skills. Two participants also spoke about how the Program Director served as a model for them, helping them learn how to structure their own activity stations and becoming better leaders and teachers. For example, Anton shared how he learned "how to structure my workouts that I taught by observing [the Program Director] and adding my own spin or variation." While the participants identified these positive attributes related to the Program Director's supervision, all six participants also identified the need for a greater amount of feedback delivered by the Program Director. Beginning with the need for more feedback on the Reflection Journals, the majority of the feedback was only provided when the participants had not completed their Reflection Journals appropriately (e.g., skipping questions, not writing enough) or they were not achieving the desired outcomes in their mentoring sessions (e.g., completing a specific phase in the SP). However, the participants were interested in receiving more detailed feedback on the formatting of the Reflection Journals as well as hearing the Program Director's responses to their writing. Because the participants had to complete the program observations and mentoring session observations each week, this was an opportunity for the Program Director to critique the participants' performance in the SP as a leader and a mentor as well as answer any questions and concerns the participants shared in these observations. Additionally, the participants answered questions each week based on the course

readings, which often asked the participants to explore their own personal belief systems and philosophical orientations. Some of the participants expressed frustration that the Program Director did not provide feedback related to this content. The participants also expressed interest in receiving more guidance and feedback on their overall performance in the SP. While the Program Director provided some feedback in the pre- and post-session meetings (e.g., ways to teach the stations, ideas of how to connect with the high school students), some participants were interested in receiving more individualized feedback so they could learn even more from the Program Director. Shayna expressed her feelings below:

The only constructive criticism I have was for him to give more feedback on my performance. I feel like it would have helped me improve my leadership and role as a mentor. At some points I was unsure about what he wanted in our papers and what we should have discussed within our mentoring sessions. Giving us a sense of guidance would have made the mentoring session run a lot more smoothly.

This focus on feedback was the participants' greatest critique of their experience in the service-learning course, although it is interesting to note that the participants never specifically requested more feedback from the Program Director *during* the service-learning course, which prevented any changes from being made during the semester under study. When the Program Director was asked about the overall lack of feedback related to the Reflection Journals, he explained how these documents were used to ensure that the participants were completing the course readings and to help him track their progress in the mentoring sessions. In his words, "I skim through the reflections on the readings, because that's the least important to me. I just want them to understand that there's literature in this area and you need to read about it and write and show me that you are engaging in it." With a busy academic schedule and the responsibility of

implementing the SP each week (unlike many service-learning course instructors who simply teach the course), the Program Director did not have the time to provide written or verbal feedback for each individual participant every week. While this general lack of feedback seemed to have a negative impact on the participants' experience in the service-learning course, with some participants even identifying how their learning and their ability to reflect may have been limited because they did not receive enough quality feedback, it is important to note that this is based on the participants' *perception* of the appropriate quantity and quality of feedback. A possible explanation for the participants' need for more feedback could be related to their status as part of the millennial generation, with research suggesting that the millennial generation has a higher need for more frequent and immediate feedback (Billings & Kowalksi, 2004). Additionally, the Program Director highlighted the fact that the participants in this service-learning course struggled more than his previous students in completing the Reflection Journals *on time* and in a *comprehensive* manner. In his words, "my big struggle was the assignments [the undergraduate students] lacked in turning in." It is possible that these participants were less personally responsible when compared with previous students in the Program Director's service-learning course, suggesting that the participants' effort may have been a barrier as well. The importance of personal responsibility will be explored in the next section.

***Student variables.*** Three higher order themes emerged from the data that were not in the proposed theoretical framework (Figure 4, Chapter 2). Interestingly, these higher order themes were related to the participants' affect, behavior, and cognition throughout the service-learning course. While previous service-learning studies focused on the influence of students' predisposing factors (*student context*) on their experience in the service-learning course and their outcomes upon completion, once the service-learning course is under way, researchers have

focused on the role of the course instructor, the design of the service-learning course, and the implementation of the service-learning activity (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004).

Although there has been a discussion about the impact of these *course variables* and *service-learning activity variables* on the students, there has not been a focused discussion surrounding the role of the students *during* the service-learning course. The three higher order themes that emerged from the data in this dissertation suggest that students may play an active role in their experience in the service-learning course and their outcomes upon completion. The first higher order theme was the participants' perception of the service-learning experience as an educational opportunity, where they may or may not be able to learn valuable skills, strategies, and information. While the majority of the participants viewed the service-learning course and the SP as opportunities to learn and improve, there were a few participants who were unsure of how much they would learn. Two students in particular shared in the pre-service interviews their belief that their previous experiences with young people had prepared them for this experience, leading to questions of whether they would actually learn anything new from this service-learning course or from the SP. Additionally, one particular student struggled with the youth development approach in the SP, voicing concern over whether this approach was effective in his Reflection Journals and openly resisting this approach in the SP at different times throughout the semester. The second higher order theme within the new domain of *student variables* was the participants' level of effort, including the participants' engagement in the service-learning course and the SP and their leadership efforts throughout the semester. Three participants were highly engaged, providing suggestions for program implementation, arriving at each session prepared as a station leader and mentor, and approaching each session with a good attitude and high energy levels. Conversely, three participants were much less engaged, with some giving less overall

effort in the program implementation and others not participating in the pre- and post-session meetings held with the undergraduate student leaders and the Program Director as a means for program planning and debriefing. This was a significant issue for one particular student, who often stretched and even spoke with others during these pre- and post-session meetings, requiring the Program Director to frequently request his undivided attention. The final higher order theme that was not in the proposed theoretical framework was the adaptability and receptivity of the participants. Three participants emerged as individuals who were unable to adapt and respond to the high school students within the SP, including unrealistic expectations of the high school students' athletic abilities leading to overly complicated and difficult activity stations that the high school students could not complete. While some of these participants slowly changed as the semester progressed, there was one particular participant who openly resisted any changes to his approach. Additionally, some of the participants were also insensitive to the tough experiences of the high school students and were unable to empathize with these students. This is demonstrated in the following participant observation by the investigator from the seventh week of the SP, where one of the undergraduate student leaders was frustrated with a high school student for her lack of effort:

During the post-session meeting afterwards the session, [the participant] was very vocal with her frustration with [the high school student] and her belief that the high school students just need to try hard, and that isn't too much to ask. It was clear that [the participant] was frustrated, annoyed, and all together unhappy with [the high school student's] efforts and her attitude. There was no sense of understanding or attempt at understanding [the high school student's] current life situation and why she was acting the way she was.



Similarly, the Program Director questioned whether one of the undergraduate student leaders was “sensitive enough to the kids’ situations and what they’re dealing with, what that life is like, what life is like for that age for these specific kids...? I think she fell kind of short a little bit with that.” Interestingly, the three participants who were the most rigid and unreceptive during the service-learning course were also the undergraduate student leaders with the most experience working with youth prior to the SP. So it is possible that these individuals were less open to change because they felt as if they were prepared for this experience and did not need to change their approach.

**Mediating variables.** Without an adequate quantity of quality reflection throughout the service-learning experience, students are unlikely to integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content and the experiences they are having at their service-learning sites (Ash et al., 2005). Students are also unlikely to undergo critical thinking activities where they examine alternative perspectives and develop more complex capacities for judgment, leading to enhanced cognitive complexity (Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Therefore, it was important for the undergraduate student leaders in this service-learning study to undergo a sufficient quantity of quality reflection, leading to a high degree of cognitive complexity, or else meaningful learning may not occur and the outcomes may be significantly diminished (Ash et al., 2005; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Eyler et al., 1996). In the present study, the participants’ Reflection Journals were analyzed for the quality and quantity of reflection and cognitive complexity demonstrated each week through the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale (Taylor, 1991). The scores are presented in Table 8. While the overall rating for the entire semester was 7.15 out of a possible score of 10, suggesting that the participants demonstrated moderate reflection and cognitive complexity in their Reflection Journals, the last two questions

Table 8

*Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale Results*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student focus on the specified questions and use specific and concrete detail to develop the answers?	8.46	1.18
On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student express himself or herself clearly?	8.77	0.73
On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree were the entries both directly and indirectly attentive to the focus of this course?	8.04	0.74
On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?	5.74	0.99
On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experience?	4.76	0.89
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7.15</b>	<b>0.76</b>

were the most discerning. In response to the fourth question specifically about reflection, the average rating was just 5.74. The rating for the final question about cognitive complexity and critical thinking was even lower, with the participants earning an average of 4.76 out of a possible score of 10. This suggests that the participants did not reflect as deeply or as often as is optimal, leading to lower scores for cognitive complexity as well. The participants were also asked in the post-service interviews to rate the quality and quantity of their reflection throughout the semester, leading to an average self-rating of 6.83 ( $SD = 1.47$ ) out of 10. The participants were also asked to rate the quality and quantity of their reflection specifically when they were completing the Reflection Journals each week. The participants gave themselves an average

self-rating of 5.67 ( $SD = 2.07$ ) out of 10. These self-rating scores suggest that the participants were aware that they were not reflecting as frequently or as deeply as they could have, and they were also aware that their level of cognitive complexity was not as high as was desired. This was a concern raised by the Program Director in his post-service interview, as he struggled with getting some of the undergraduate student leaders to answer all of the questions and go into as much depth as he wanted in the Reflection Journals (as previously discussed). In all of the years he has overseen undergraduate students in his various youth development programs, he explained how he has never had this type of issue before. Despite these concerns, the participants still felt as if they reflected more during this service-learning course than the more traditional class, as described by Shayna:

I can reflect on it [this service-learning experience] more, because we're reading something I can apply towards the program, whereas when I'm reading something in anatomy or physiology, it's kinda hard to apply because I don't know what's going on internally, I guess you could say.

While two of the undergraduate student leaders believed the Reflection Journals did not cause them to change their behavior in the SP nor did it impact their learning, four participants felt just the opposite. According to Sean, "the reflections each week have change the way I acted in the program because by writing the reflection, I was able to focus on what I needed to do or what to implement during the activities." Anton agreed with this statement, sharing how "the journals kept track of what was going on in the program, therefore being able to write about and refer back to them ensured that I would change things up if something did not work, or not repeat the same thing more than once."

**Proximal outcomes.** There are a range of possible outcomes for students participating in service-learning courses, with the majority of the literature grouping these effects into three general areas: personal outcomes, academic and intellectual outcomes, and social and community engagement outcomes. While there are both proximal and distal outcomes, only the proximal outcomes were measured in this study. The higher order themes are presented in Table 9, with the most significant outcomes being explored in more depth in the following subsections.

***Personal outcomes.*** This domain had the greatest number of raw meaning units (127), suggesting that the participants felt as if they learned the most within this domain. The higher order theme with the greatest support of any outcomes in this study was that of leadership, with all six participants discussing how their leadership skills developed through this service-learning course. According to Jill, “I feel more competent in my leadership skills,” while Anton shared how “this experience has helped me develop better leadership skills.” Along with these general statements about leadership development, the participants identified a number of ways in which they felt their leadership abilities improved, which may reflect the fact leadership is a multifaceted and complex skill and position and is seldom precisely defined in the youth development area (Baker, 1997). So the participants’ leadership development included the ability to motivate others and serve as both a role model and a mentor to the high school students. Shayna described how she “learned that with enough motivation and encouragement, these students would be willing to work with us. I’ve also learned that by being reassure[d] that they are doing a great job, it encourages them to try new challenges.” The participants also shared how they improved their teaching skills and learned how to structure a physical activity program to work with the high school students’ range in abilities, which are additional components to leadership development. As early as the fifth week of the SP, Sean was aware of

Table 9

*Proximal Outcomes*

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Higher Order Theme</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Number of Raw Meaning Units</b>
Personal	Leadership	6	45
	Self-understanding	5	20
	Self-esteem	5	14
	Sensitive to and awareness of diversity	2	12
	Awareness and knowledge of career path	4	11
	Self-regulation	3	5
	Racial tolerance	1	5
	Belief in personal efficacy	2	3
Academic / Intellectual	High course grade	5	5
	Low course grade	1	1
	Application of knowledge	6	22
	Achievement of curricular goals	6	18
Social / Community Engagement	Interpersonal skills	5	29
	Knowledge of social justice issues	5	27
	Commitment to community work	4	19
	Pro-social reasoning skills	3	12
	Social self-confidence	2	7
	Increased sense of social responsibility	2	7

his development as a teacher through the service-learning course: “By working with the students, I am gaining more and more experience and improving my teaching skills.” In addition to leadership development, most of the participants experienced enhanced self-understanding, with Amanda describing how the service-learning experience “taught me a lot about myself as well as others.” The participants spoke of an enhanced awareness of their personal values, with some participants acknowledging that their beliefs and values were strengthened through this service-learning course. Anton described how he still holds “the same values as before, however, I also feel that they have been strengthened. It makes me feel proud that I hold the values that my parents have shown me.” In addition to enhanced self-understanding, four participants also highlighted their improved self-esteem as a result of this service-learning experience, with Anton sharing how “I feel proud of myself going through this experience” and Amanda explaining how “this youth work has allowed me to feel comfortable in my own skin.” Shayna explored this topic in more depth below:

[The service learning course] definitely helped me be more confident in what I’m doing, because I always second guess myself. I’m always afraid of putting myself out there. I’m always afraid of trying something new. But just being able to improve that with younger students...showing them that it’s ok to make mistakes actually makes me realize, like yeah it is actually ok to make mistakes, because it’s part of being human, you know? So I think that’s helped me build my confidence.

***Academic and intellectual outcomes.*** When the participants’ college grade point averages at the university (in the form of a range) were compared with their final grades in this service-learning course, three of the participants earned higher grades than their average while two participants earned grades at the “high” end of their average range and one participant

earned a grade lower than his college average. The participants also reported that the projected student learning outcomes of the service-learning course (see Table 2, Chapter 2) were largely achieved, with the participants learning about a range of theoretical and pedagogical concepts and how to implement these strategies. There was also a focus on the application of knowledge acquired during the service-learning course, including the implementation of the TPSR Model and the utility of their kinesiology degree. According to Amanda:

I have learned that majoring in kinesiology allows you to explore a variety of careers. I never realized how wide the field was until I taught the students about it and I was shocked with all the different careers that you could pursue once you obtain a degree in kinesiology.

Four participants also reflected on how the service-learning course led to a greater awareness of their own future career paths, with Anton sharing how “this experience further reassured me that I chose the right career path.” Some of the participants were even considering a career change following their involvement in the service-learning course, such as Sean’s newfound interest in teaching. In his words, “because of this experience, I want to pursue a teaching career right after I get my degree in kinesiology.”

***Social and community engagement outcomes.*** Within this domain, the participants improved their interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate with young people and with a wide variety of people (e.g., gender, race) as well as building relationships with others. Amanda “learned how to interact with a variety of students. Each student is different and unique in their own way. I had to learn how to reach out to them with different approaches.” Later on, she described how she learned “how to establish trust and a relationship with complete strangers.” Shayna was one of three participants who reflected on learning how to be more

patient, explaining how “working with youth has taught me more patience.” The participants also spoke of developing stronger pro-social reasoning skills, which was another higher order theme cited by three participants. This ranged from being more open-minded to empowering young people, with the following quotation providing just a taste of the lessons learned by these participants:

I have learned that it is important to be open-minded from the beginning to end. I think it can sometimes be easy to make judgments about participants and to create certain feeling towards a student because of their attitudes or actions. However, I realized it’s important to evaluate the situation and to remember many of the students are dealing with deep rooted issues that may be causing them to act in a negative manner. I learned I need to be understanding and patient with all of the students and to always look them in the eye when talking to them because they deserve just as much respect as I do.

Other themes that emerged within this domain included an increased commitment to community work, with four of the participants sharing how they were interested in volunteering in the future, whether with underserved students or in a similar program. In particular, Jill shared how “I would be interested in doing this type of work in the future. I really like to see how you can positively affect someone else’s life.” Shayna also commented on how she “would like to continue to volunteer in underserved communities.” Along with an interest in volunteering in the future, five of the participants also became more knowledgeable of social justice issues through this service-learning course. Anton reflected on this in great depth in his post-service reflection:

From the readings, I can say that in most instances it is more complex than just being in a bad neighborhood. I mentored good kids, but I can’t control what they do outside of

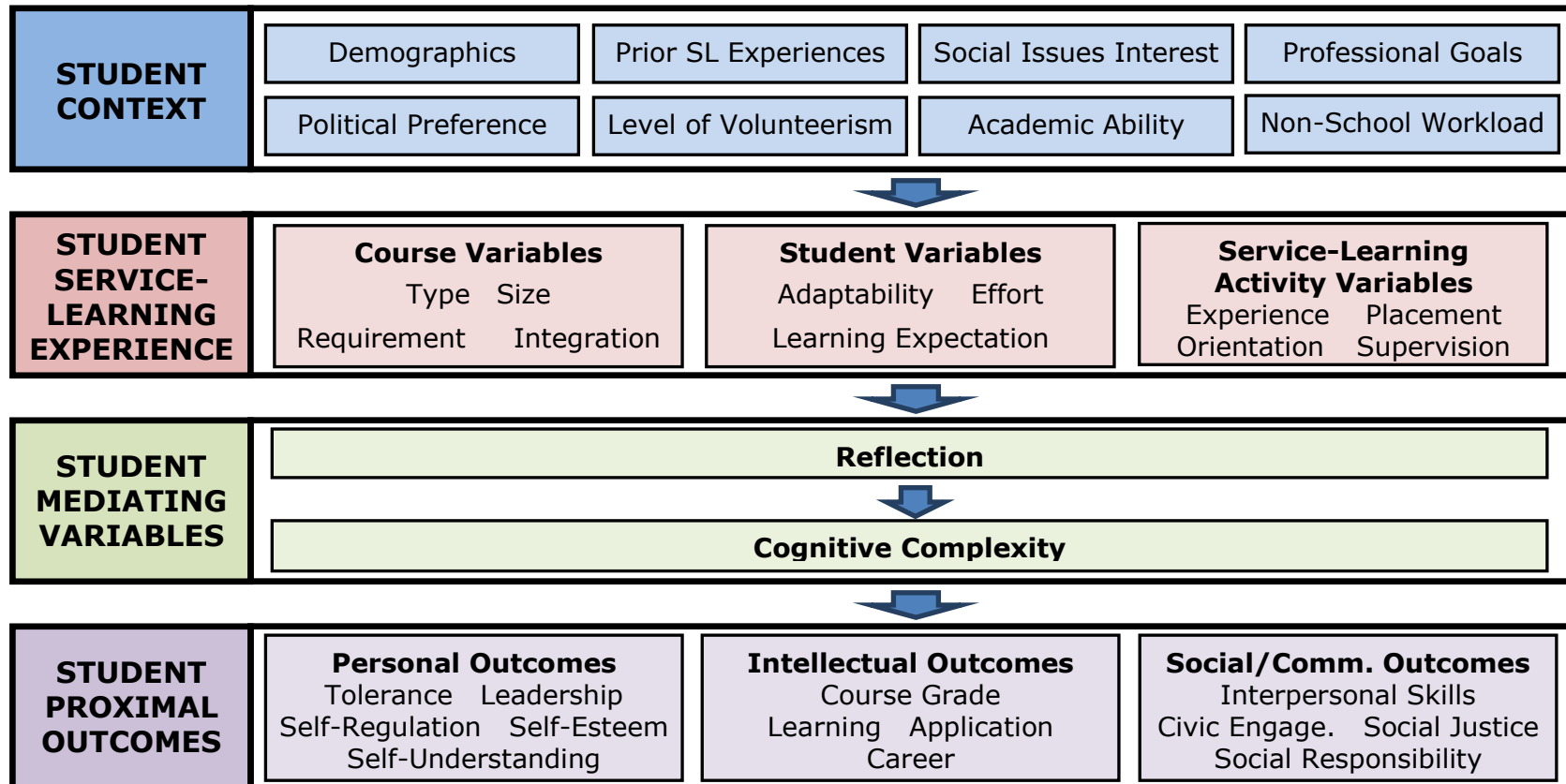


school. I don't know specifics, but maybe their parents didn't push them hard enough to do well in school, or never bothered to ask how school was going, maybe they had friends who were bad influences. The answer may lie in the school system itself. What are school districts doing to help these kids out? From some of the things they said, it seemed that some teachers didn't care about the students, they simply told them what to do. One thing that could be done is to somehow implement these youth development programs as afterschool programs that are fun. Another thing is to educate those in power to allocate funds for such programs.

In this comment, Anton mentioned many of the lower order themes within this higher order theme of social justice knowledge, discussing potential issues within the high school students' home life and education as well as possible concerns related to their environment and the surrounding political environment. Similar to Anton, many of the students felt as if there needed to be more outreach programs similar to the SP. According to Amanda, "if more programs were implemented, students might be able to get the support and help they need." Overall, the participants felt as if they were more knowledgeable about the lives of the high school students with whom they were interacting in the SP, with a better "sense of what students go through during high school" and the "unimaginable" issues they may have been experiencing.

**Summary.** When examining these results relative to the theoretical framework presented in Figure 4 of Chapter 2, the findings largely supported this theoretical application with the exception of a new domain – *student variables* – within the second level of the theoretical framework (*service-learning experience*). A revised theoretical framework is presented in Figure 5, reflecting the changes that will be discussed in the following section based on the

Figure 5. Revised student-focused version of the comprehensive physical activity-based service-learning theoretical framework.



findings from this dissertation. This will serve as the theoretical framework from this point forward.

The participants comprised a diverse group of undergraduate students in relation to their basic demographics, (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status) as well as their political preferences, previous volunteer experiences, and non-school workload. The students were all average to good students who were majoring in kinesiology, interested in attending graduate school, and shared similar professional goals. These academic abilities and professional goals were predisposing factors associated with greater benefits from service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Interestingly, none of the participants reported previous service-learning experiences, although some as youth had taken part as “participants” in community service programs that were similar in nature. Also, none of the participants were able to identify any social issues being addressed by the SP *before* the program began, which highlights their unfamiliarity with these issues and perhaps their discomfort with discussing and examining difficult social issues. While researchers have found that students experience greater benefits from service-learning when they believe that the social issues being addressed in their service-learning course are interesting and important (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999), this cannot be explored in this study because of the participants’ naiveté and inexperience. Overall, these findings related to the *student context* within the theoretical framework certainly impacted each individual student’s experience and, ultimately, their outcomes from the service-learning course, but because this was such a diverse sample with just six participants, it was difficult to find any significant themes attributing the predisposing factors with the participants’ experience in the service-learning course or their outcomes upon completion. The individual experiences of

the participants based on these predisposing factors will be explored in more depth in the idiographic profiles of each participant.

As for the *service-learning experience* level of the theoretical framework, this was a credit-bearing course with a small class size in which most participants chose to enroll, although it is probable that most participants felt as if the course was compulsory, because it was a proxy for the required senior research course. While the type of course (e.g., whether it is part of the general education curriculum, a requirement for a specific major, or an elective in which students choose to enroll) has been associated with different levels of intrinsic motivation, enthusiasm, and interest in the service-learning experience (Billig & Furco, 2002; Roldan et al., 2004), most participants were vocal in the pre-service interviews and other data sources about their interest, excitement, and motivation to participate in this service-learning course. Therefore, the concerns with student interest, enthusiasm, and motivation related to a “required” course were not applicable in this study. Given that the service-learning course was housed in a kinesiology department and focused on topics within this area, this likely had a significant impact on the student outcomes, as there was not a tremendous focus on political awareness and participation in the course content nor were there any student outcomes related to this topic (Roldan et al., 2004).

The participants generally felt prepared at the beginning of the SP, despite the typical feelings of trepidation and confusion, which the participants felt was to be expected when implementing an unfamiliar program with underserved youth. This is especially true for those participants without much experience with volunteering, working with young people, and/or interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Once the SP began, the undergraduate student leaders did not have any contact with community members at the service-learning site,

which is certainly an area for improvement for the service-learning course. However, the participants did have significant direct contact with the high school students, building strong relationships with many of these young people. This high degree of direct contact positively impacted the participants' experiences in the service-learning course, which supported previous research findings (Aronson et al., 2005; Knutson Miller et al., 2002; Roldan et al., 2004). The participants also shared their belief that the service-learning activities were interesting and important, with all of the participants truly valuing their individual roles within the SP. These findings suggest the participants believed in the work they were doing, which has been shown to lead to a better experience in the service-learning course and more positive outcomes (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Hecht, 2003b).

Three unexpected themes emerged from the data which were not in the initial theoretical framework but have since been added to the revised version in Figure 5, along with the creation of a new domain – *student variables* – within this level of the theoretical framework. Beginning with the educational experience of the participants, some students approached the service-learning course with an expectation of learning a variety of skills, strategies, and information from the experience, with this interest in learning continuing throughout the service-learning course. However, some participants were unsure of how much they would learn from the experience, with one participant even resisting when asked to learn about and implement a youth development approach in the SP. The two participants who demonstrated the least interest in learning from the service-learning course or in the SP were the same two participants who reported the least significant outcomes in the post-service reflection and the post-service interview. This suggests that the students' interest in and expectation of learning in a service-learning course may have an impact on their learning throughout the service-learning experience

and their outcomes upon completion. The second higher order theme within this new domain involved the degree of effort put forth by the undergraduate student leaders. Specifically, there was a division between those participants who were truly engaged in the service-learning experience, providing a high degree of effort in every session of the SP and actively participating in the pre- and post-session meetings, while other participants were less engaged in the SP, not giving as much effort and passively participating in the pre- and post-session meetings. Given that a higher degree of effort when engaging in a task is likely to lead to a more positive experience, greater learning, and more significant outcomes, students' effort may be critical to their service-learning experience, their ability to reflect and think critically, and their proximal and distal outcomes. Along with the students' level of effort exhibited in the service-learning course, the findings from this dissertation indicated that those students who were more adaptable and receptive to changing their affect, behaviors, and cognition may have had a more positive experience in the SP, leading to more significant outcomes at the end of the service-learning course. The potential impact of students' adaptability and receptivity in service-learning was previously mentioned by Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) in their analysis of students' cognitive processes throughout a service-learning experience. They reported that students transitioned from a "shock" phase during the first three weeks of their service-learning experience into a "normalization" phase, when the students began to adapt to their new circumstances. However, some of the students did not enter this second stage of development because of their inability to adapt to these new experiences, leading to fewer positive experiences in the service-learning course, less meaningful learning, and fewer significant outcomes. These findings match the results from this dissertation, as there were three participants who were unable to adapt and respond to the high school students as easily as the other participants,

leading to generally more negative experiences in the SP, greater frustration with the service-learning course, and fewer and less significant outcomes from this experience. Overall, this new domain within the second level of the theoretical framework (*service-learning experience*) provides a new understanding of the role of the students in service-learning courses. Previous studies focused on the service-learning course design, implementation, and supervision, with most of the analysis of student affect, behavior, and cognition (as well as degree of reflection and cognitive complexity) linked with the course design, implementation, and supervision (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004). However, the findings from this dissertation suggest that previous studies may have overlooked the personal responsibility of students to actively participate in their service-learning experience, with little focus on students' *interest in learning*, *level of effort*, and *degree of adaptability* prior to and throughout the service-learning course. The results from this dissertation suggest that students' personal responsibility may be an important factor to consider when implementing and studying service-learning courses.

Continuing with the discussion surrounding the fit of the theoretical framework based on the findings from this dissertation, this service-learning course was well integrated with the course content, which has been shown to a critical component in service-learning (Weigert, 1998). However, the most consistent complaint voiced by *all* of the participants was the lack of feedback from the Program Director, with most of the participants sharing their interest in learning even more from the Program Director's knowledge and expertise. Unfortunately, the participants never shared this interest in receiving more feedback *during* the semester under study, instead revealing this in the post-service reflection and the post-service interviews. This focus on the quantity and quality of feedback is supported in the literature, as Greene and Diehm (1995) have shown how students in service-learning courses who receive more written feedback

on their reflective journals had significantly greater awareness of their learning than those students who only received a check mark for completion. Quality guidance and feedback has also been highlighted as a critical part of a successful teaching-learning environment in higher education (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004; Hounsell, 2003; Hounsell, McCune, Hounsell, & Litjens, 2008). Within the field of service-learning, research findings have demonstrated how quality feedback from service-learning course instructors has a positive impact on the students' use of new skills in the service-learning activities, commitment to service, and overall learning (Greene, 1996; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Subramony, 2000). The quality of instruction is also related to the students' awareness of problems and their ability to solve these problems in the service-learning activities (Batchelder & Root, 1994). Because the service-learning course in this dissertation did not meet in a separate classroom for instruction (outside of the initial preparatory meeting at the beginning of the semester), the feedback from the Program Director at the service-learning site (in the pre- and post-service meetings) and through the Reflection Journals was critical to the participants' experience in the service-learning course. This included the participants' performance in the service-learning activities, their reflection in the pre- and post-service meetings and the Reflection Journals, and their demonstration of cognitive complexity in these settings. Given the design of this service-learning course, the main opportunity for reflecting *in depth* and developing critical thinking and meta-cognitive skills was the Reflection Journals. Ideally, the Program Director would have provided written and verbal feedback encouraging students to (a) examine their experiences critically (Ash et al., 2005); (b) integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content and the service-learning experiences (Ash et al., 2005); and (c) examine alternative perspectives (Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999). The participants' interest in receiving more feedback from the Program



Director could be related to their status as part of the millennial generation, with research suggesting that these students need more frequent and immediate feedback (Billings & Kowalksi, 2004). Regardless of the reasoning behind the need for more feedback from the Program Director, there was also a problem with some of the undergraduate student leaders not completing the Reflection Journals as expected, with numerous questions skipped, answers with just one or two sentences, and numerous times when the Reflection Journals were submitted late or simply not submitted at all. While this was not an ongoing issue for most of the participants, two participants consistently struggled with sufficiently completing the Reflection Journals, which negatively impacted the amount of reflection and cognitive complexity throughout the semester. Without an adequate quantity of quality reflection and critical thinking, the frequently cited shortcomings include reinforced stereotypes, unchallenged assumptions, and superficial analysis leading to simplistic solutions to complicated issues (Conrad & Hedin, 1990; Stanton, 1990; Strand, 1999). Although there were suboptimal levels of reflection and critical thinking in this service-learning course, the scores on the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale did indicate that this was not a significant issue. However, this is certainly an area for improvement in this service-learning course, which is not uncommon because reflection has been shown to be the most difficult component of service-learning (Ash et al., 2005; Rogers, 2001).

Transitioning to a look at the final level of the theoretical framework examined in this dissertation – the *proximal outcomes* – the majority of the findings were already part of the initial theoretical framework (see Figure 4, Chapter 2), although there were two new proximal outcomes that will be examined in this section. Beginning with the *personal* domain, all of the participants experienced significant leadership development, although the participants defined leadership in a variety of ways (e.g., teaching ability, role model, mentor). Leadership

development through service-learning has been well-supported in the service-learning literature (Astin & Sax, 1998; Keen & Keen, 1998). These findings may reflect the numerous leadership opportunities for the undergraduate student leaders in the SP, ranging from co-instructors of the activity stations to mentors and role models. In order for the participants to feel as if they improved their leadership skills, it was critical for them to serve in leadership roles, which were readily available in this service-learning course. The participants also demonstrated enhanced self-understanding, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, including an increased awareness of and belief in their personal values and an enhanced sense of their personal effectiveness. While it is possible that further reflection and critical thinking could have led to even more significant changes in these areas, especially related to the clarification of their personal values and beliefs (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997; McEwen, 1996), the course readings and service-learning experience still enabled many of the participants to change in these areas. These results support previous findings related to enhanced self-understanding, self-esteem, and personal efficacy as a result of service-learning (Astin et al., 2000; Keen & Keen, 1998; Rice & Brown, 1998). Another theme that emerged from the data was an increase in tolerance, including an increased sensitivity to and awareness of diversity as well as disproven stereotypes. Once again, these findings support previous literature indicating improvements in tolerance and diversity (Baldwin et al., 2007; Boyle-Baise & Kilbane, 2000; Driscoll et al., 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Hesser, 1995; Keen & Keen, 1998; Simons & Cleary, 2006). One area that was not included in the initial theoretical framework was that of self-regulation. Several participants in this dissertation reported improvements in self-regulation components, including goal setting skills, work ethic, and time management. This outcome may be related to the goals, content, and design of the service-learning course, as there was a significant focus on the TPSR Model and

the importance of goal setting and effort (Hellison, 2011). This supports previous findings that the goals, content, and design of a service-learning course have an impact on the participants' proximal outcomes (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004). While there were expectations of improvements in the participants' moral and character development, these themes were not present in the findings for this dissertation. The investigator does not have a good explanation of this lack of findings, other than the possibility that few moral or character development issues arose during the service-learning course that tested the undergraduate student leaders, causing them to specifically reflect on these types of issues.

Shifting to the outcomes within the *academic and intellectual* domain, all but one of the participants' course grades either improved or were at the high range of their college grade point averages, which matches previous research findings on academic performance in service-learning courses (Astin & Sax, 1998; Gray et al., 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). However, the impact of this service-learning course on the participants' overall grade point average following this experience could not be measured due to the length of the study and the fact that all but one of the participants were graduating after the semester under study. The participants felt as if they reached most of the curricular goals (listed in the course syllabus as the projected student learning outcomes, see Table 2, Chapter 2) and they also reported learning a great deal. The participants also shared how the majority of this acquired knowledge could be *applied* in their future personal and professional lives. These findings match a host of previous studies that have found evidence of meaningful learning from service-learning courses that eventually can be applied to other settings (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Miller, 1994; Strage, 2000). While there was no evidence of enhanced engagement with and commitment to their university or their education in general (Sax & Astin, 1997), it is possible this was because there

were no class sessions held on the university campus and there was not much focus on the participants' engagement at the university. The final outcome within this academic and intellectual domain was related to the participants' enhanced awareness and knowledge of their career paths. Interestingly, this theme was listed in the initial theoretical framework in Figure 4 of Chapter 2 as a distal outcome that may occur from service-learning, but it appeared as a proximal outcome in the findings for this dissertation. It is likely that the SP's focus on possible futures and the exploration of career options for the high school students may have caused the participants to focus on their future careers more than the typical service-learning experience. Additionally, with five of the participants graduating after the semester under study and the sixth participant graduating after one more semester, it is likely that the participants' upcoming entry into the professional arena was weighing heavily on their minds, leading to more of a focus on their potential career options. This matched previous findings that service-learning can help students begin constructing their adult occupational identity (Batchelder & Root, 1994), although this occurred much earlier than expected in this service-learning study (by the end of the semester).

Within the final domain of *social and community engagement*, the only area that was missing from the data was political participation (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler et al., 1997; Prentice, 2007; Simons & Cleary, 2006), although this finding could be expected due to the content and goals of the service-learning course under study (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004) and the fact that the majority of the participants were not very politically oriented at the beginning of the service-learning course. However, most participants reported significant improvement in their interpersonal skills, including their ability to interact and build relationships with a wide variety of individuals, improved pro-social reasoning skills, and enhanced social self-confidence.

These findings provide additional support for previous service-learning studies documenting students' improvement in communication skills (Meaney et al., 2008), pro-social reasoning and decision-making skills (Batchelder & Root, 1994), and increased social self-confidence (Astin & Sax, 1998; Osborne et al., 1998). The participants in this dissertation also became more knowledgeable of social justice issues, including a deeper understanding of the issues present in underserved communities and an increased awareness of the need for outreach programs and education in general. This also includes a greater awareness and understanding of the racial achievement gap and the socioeconomic status achievement gap in the United States (Hernandez, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2011a), with a more comprehensive understanding of *why* these gaps exist and the potential solutions for reducing these disparities. These findings match previous research suggesting that service-learning courses help students become more knowledgeable of the problems facing their communities and the nation (Astin & Sax, 1998; Batchelder & Root, 1994), more aware of their position in society (Rice & Brown, 1998), and more interested in and committed to exploring social justice issues and acting on potential solutions (Fenzel, 2008; Roschelle et al., 2000). Along with becoming more knowledgeable of social justice issues, the participants also reported increased feelings of social responsibility, including an interest in serving their community in the future and a commitment to working with young people in the future. Previous studies have reported similar findings with enhanced feelings of social responsibility (Eyler & Giles, 1999), including an increased awareness and involvement in their community (Driscoll et al., 1996), increased commitment to service (Giles & Eyler, 1994; Hesser, 1995; Keen & Keen, 1998; Markus et al., 1993), and a stronger belief that people can effect change in their communities (Giles & Eyler, 1994). Overall, the majority of the participants experienced enhanced feelings of civic engagement

related to their intended participation and contribution in the community through future service, although the other aspects of civic engagement (e.g., voting, staying politically informed) were not evident in the participants' proximal outcomes.

### **Idiographic Profiles**

Each student's experience in a service-learning course is based on a wide variety of factors, as outlined in the revised theoretical framework presented in Figure 5. The idiographic methodological approach was selected to be part of the analytic process in order to identify these unique characteristics, experiences, and outcomes of each individual participant in the service-learning course (Dunn, 1994; Gould et al., 1997) and, in the spirit of qualitative inquiry, to provide a more holistic view of each student's experience. Each idiographic profile was created with the revised theoretical framework in Figure 5 serving as a guide to the organization and presentation of the data, resulting in the following subsections for every participant's profile: context, service-learning experience, mediating variables, and proximal outcomes. This allowed the theoretical framework to be analyzed relative to each participant's experience, which is discussed in the final subsection of each idiographic profile. While this close analysis of the theoretical application for each idiographic profile was helpful in determining the utility of the theory for organizing and explaining each student's service-learning experience, the design of the study did not allow for a scientific test of the theoretical framework, given its initial use for data organization.

**John.** The eight sources of data specific to John in the study totaled 102 typed pages. John's interviews were the longest of the participants, with the pre-service interview lasting 47 minutes and the post-service interview lasting 81 minutes.

**Context.** John was a 27 year old Caucasian male who spoke both English and Spanish, with English being his native language. At the time of the study, he was a full-time student in his final semester before graduation. When he was asked to describe his childhood, John shared how he has “always been poor. I started my first business at 13...’cause I needed clothes.” John also focused on the instability in his family life, with his father leaving when he was just four years old. His mother soon remarried someone else in the military, who legally adopted John along with his younger brother and sister. His family’s military involvement led to frequent moves during his childhood. “I was born in Iceland, I was raised in...three cities in Texas. Tennessee, two there. Then one in Florida. I was all over the South.” According to John, “with the military, they don’t choose really ritzy neighborhoods to put bases up. It’s always bases right next to where the latest shooting has gone down. And [one time] I lost a couple friends on a basketball court.” John even “joined a gang for a little while” in his youth, although this gang involvement was cut short with another move. John described his parents as “an absolute wreck, they were a mess. They were all into everything that you don’t do with kids around...I was a party favor at late night things.” The highest education his stepfather completed was at the high school level, taking the General Educational Development test and then going into the military for some time before eventually becoming an air traffic controller. John’s mother received some college education after graduating from high school, although her current profession was not reported on the demographics questionnaire.

During high school in Florida, John maintained an A to A+ average while participating in the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) all four years. Because the ROTC required each participant to complete 100 hours of volunteer work each year, John was actively involved in a number of volunteer experiences during his high school years, including Habitat for Humanity

and visits with veterans in nursing homes. These volunteering experiences taught him that there were different perspectives and opinions from those of his parents and grandparents. During high school, John left home at 15 and lived on his own from that time forward, which may be due to his unstable home life and his strong belief in self. These experiences may have also influenced John's philosophical stance towards personal development and society at large, demonstrated by the following statement written by John in the third week of the SP:

I do not naturally believe that kids are underserved by society. I do believe that they can be destroyed by irresponsible individuals that influence the kids though. Society has bent over backward for kids to fund things never before imagined by a free society and what has happened has been the embracing of a free pass for parents to wash their hands of responsibility of what their children do...Parents tend to translate personal failure as a projection into some type of abuse, verbal or physical that children can then accept as "normal" and continue to perpetuate that cycle via their peers. The kids behavior goes unchecked by parents who have checked out of the situation and becomes fostered and reinforced by peers that have the same problems, giving them purpose, albeit a misguided one.

This statement suggests that John's childhood and his family life had a significant influence on his philosophical outlook, ultimately leading to a strong belief in personal responsibility, particularly when it came to parents raising their children and not relying on society to hand them a "free pass." As will become clear in a later section, this belief in personal responsibility and repudiation of social responsibility may have had a tremendous impact on John's experience in the service-learning course and his subsequent outcomes (or lack thereof).



After graduation, John joined the Marine Corps to follow in the footsteps of his family, but he was dropped because of medical issues and “went through severe depression over it...because that was the only path I had designed.” In John’s eyes, he “was the weak link” of the family because he could not pursue a military career, as had been expected. This led to three years of partying and drinking while also working to become the youngest District Manager of Domino’s Pizza. However, he “threw that away” because of his drinking, which had escalated to the point of nearly being arrested for public intoxication and underage drinking. At that point, John was “saved” by rugby, with local rugby players getting him involved in the sport and encouraging him to pursue higher education on the west coast. John’s first step was to become an Emergency Medical Technician, which he achieved within six months, graduating at the top of his class. He soon realized the position was not a good fit for him, as he had learned just enough to keep someone alive but did not understand *why*. This yearn for knowledge inspired him to begin taking classes at a local community college, first majoring in economics and later in nutrition. During this time, John continued playing rugby and began coaching under-12, under-15, and under-17 rugby teams. This was his first experience as a coach, where he took a militaristic approach to coaching that stressed discipline and respect, with punishment given to the players when necessary.

After four years of classes at the community college while also coaching rugby, John transferred to the university under study, majoring in kinesiology with an emphasis in neuromuscular science. During his two and a half years at this university, he maintained a grade point average between 3.1 and 3.5 (B to A-). He also helped organize and lead the intramural rugby team, both setting up the design of the club and writing the constitution and bylaws. With his leadership, the club was accepted into Division II within one year, which John highlighted as

a remarkable accomplishment. His non-school workload was largely comprised of volunteering for the intramural rugby team, with no additional jobs or volunteering opportunities. He estimated that he made between \$10,000 and \$14,999 the previous year, although he was unconcerned with his monetary situation. This matched John's approach to volunteering:

I try to give more. Because I feel like there's not enough people that want things the right way or want things to be more fair, so I try to give more out of myself than I would need, 'cause I don't need everything I get. I'm very blessed, even though I live shitty and it sucks, but I'm blessed and I know I am, so I feel like giving my time to anyone, giving my time to the rugby team for free, for hours and hours and hours and hours, so they can learn one thing from me.

This quotation provides a glimpse into John's psyche, as it shows John's belief in self and his supreme confidence that his knowledge and experiences can benefit those around him.

John was graduating from college after the semester under study, with plans to pursue a medical degree later in life. He hoped to work as an Emergency Room doctor for a few years, and then transition into private practice for the foreseeable future. A career in medicine matched John's belief in self, as he felt he had the knowledge and capacity to help those around him. However, before he applied to medical school, John planned on running for Congress in a west coast state because he strongly believed that the medical legislation needed to be fixed. In his eyes, he could not be successful as a doctor if the medical legislation did not change, so he hoped to win a seat in Congress and stay in this role until he could fix this issue. When this topic was discussed in the interview, John was asked to share his political views, which led to a very long and in-depth discussion of his frustration with the government and his belief in the founding principles of the United States of America. He shared his conservative political beliefs and

explained exactly what he believed was wrong with the government and the country as a whole. In his opinion, there needed to be less government and more focus on the individual, allowing each person to be successful based on their own actions. When the conversation shifted to the topic of diversity, John explained that he is “probably a poster child for diversity, because I am from a military family, which there’s not many of them, at least not anymore.” John also shared the following story:

Growin’ up in the South, we grew up with kids down the street that were runnin’ around droppin’ N-bombs, talkin’ about beatin’ the crap out of someone for being black. For no reason. And everyone on my street, we didn’t care. We had black kids over at our house. So the other kids would come over and throw eggs at our house and shit like that. Who cares? That never mattered to us. We were never afraid of it.

It is interesting to note that despite being a white male, John viewed himself as someone familiar with diversity issues and a diverse individual himself. This suggests that John may have been unaware of the wide range in diversity, from race and ethnicity to gender and sexual orientation. In the pre-service interview, John also shared his frustration with the Program Director during the selection of undergraduate student leaders for the SP, as he did not appreciate the Program Director’s admission that he wanted to have a diverse group of undergraduate student leaders with respect to gender and race. John believed that was incredibly unfair, wondering “why would I show up to something that I don’t have to show up to, and then you’re just gonna tell me, ‘Well, thanks for coming in, but we needed this Asian guy. Or this Latino guy.’ That was not what I was down for.” This quotation suggests that John may be against social programs promoting affirmative action, which would match his belief in personal responsibility and his rejection of social responsibility.

***Service-learning experience.*** At the beginning of the semester, John demonstrated a strong understanding of the SP, the theoretical framework, and the TPSR Model in the Reflection Journals. It was clear he had reviewed the course readings and familiarized himself with the program design and implementation. In his words, “I do understand the Responsibility Model thing that we’ve been readin’ about. That makes sense, and I think that’s more military-esque than they’re willing to admit [laughs].” John went on to say, “I think they try to take a more civilian route about it and made it more, I would say touchy-feely, [laughs] much more than the military would be with you. They wouldn’t coddle you at any point.” Along with his understanding of the program design and implementation, John was also a confident individual in general, explaining that he “was prepared because I have the confidence to do it anyway,” even if he did not really understand “*exactly* how things are gonna play out.”

In his pre-service interview, John was only able to articulate one area where he thought he could improve during his time in the service-learning course. He felt that he may become more creative with planning activities because of the lack of space that comes with a crowded city. John also shared how “hands-on work is better for me” because it allowed him to experience more, although he did not articulate any other skills or concepts that he could learn from the service-learning course. As for his concerns before the SP began, John was worried about his interactions with the students in the SP, sharing how he hoped “that everything that I said makes sense when I get there. I hope that everything that I know to be truth in my life will make sense in their lives.” This quotation shows how John assumed he could help others with his knowledge and experience before the program began, without any acknowledgement that he may be able to help the students learn from the course content and not just from his own knowledge and experience. In fact, this matched John’s overall experience in the service-

learning course, as he was the only undergraduate student who was not open to feedback from the Program Director or learning more about the youth development approach. While the rest of the participants shared their concerns with learning the course content and successfully implementing the program, John was confident that he would be successful in implementing the SP and having an impact on the high school students' lives. When he was questioned about the potential challenges that may occur throughout the semester, he was only concerned with one possible challenge:

The kids not talking to their parents or not trying to involve someone else that is a guardian or a trusted confidant...but that's nothing I can touch. That's why it worries me, because I can't touch that. I can't...so hell yeah, that's gonna scare me, because you can't make people do what you want 'em to do.

Once again, this quotation demonstrates John's belief in self, as he was unconcerned with his ability to be effective but was simply worried that the parent-child relationship would be unhelpful.

Before the SP began, John was the only undergraduate student who expressed concerns about whether or not the SP would have an impact on the high school students, although he also had high hopes for the SP. "I hope the kids we chose for the program enjoy it. It's only the second year it has existed but it has great potential to be a large successful program at a local school." These hopes were realized midway through the SP, with his Reflection Journal in the ninth week stating that "our program seems to be on track to complete its goals which is considerably successful." Later in the program, John believed that the participants were getting a better sense of their futures:

They are much more willing to talk about their possible futures once they have had serious talks about what they mean and what they would be getting into. They are steadying their hands on a future they can attain and they want.

However, he also questioned the overall impact of the SP towards the end of the program, as he believed it was difficult “to reach out into the world of the kids that attend the program with the minimal time we have to work with them and the demands that face kids in these areas as their parents seem to be disconnected.” John also described the following concern:

[Some of the high school students] did not want to spend so much time on the college things and more on the fun stuff as the world is taking childhood away from kids faster than ever and they are caught in the middle. Some of them responded by leaving or not showing up as often as they should or dropped out due to outside influence and their only break from school in school was about future school.

One of his high school student mentees also had a very difficult semester, and so John questioned whether the SP was designed for students who were going through such tough experiences. He believed the SP was “designed for someone to come in and take some kids that are not considered at-risk, they would have to be kids that are kind of on the bubble, not at-risk.”

Despite the concerns John had about the effectiveness of the SP, he truly felt as if his role in the SP was meaningful and that his “actions had some effect.” He was one of the co-instructors of the martial arts station, which he led with a fellow undergraduate student. Along with leading this station, he served in the role of a mentor, describing this role as an “attempt to guide them [the high school students] to an understanding of what was expected of them in high school to move on into college or a trade.” John mentored two high school students during the SP: an interested and engaged Caucasian male student who became a strong leader in the SP and

an unengaged and struggling African American male student with a difficult life at home who stopped attending the SP towards the end of the semester. In the post-service interview, the Program Director acknowledged that John was matched with one high school student who was “tough,” describing how John had “one kid who was not doing well in his life, and you saw the kid’s faced deteriorating throughout the semester, and [John] actually offered to spend more time with the kid outside the program. He felt for the kid.” It was clear from the data collected that John truly cared about his high school student mentees and wanted to help these students become more successful in life. However, the mentoring relationship with these two students could be described as prescriptive (i.e., mentor as authority figure) rather than developmental (i.e., cooperative) (Morrow & Styles, 1995). When John spoke about the interactions with his students, the tone that often came across was one of authority and a top-down approach. Based on the Reflection Journals and the participant observations from the investigator, it became clear that John often led the mentoring sessions as an authoritarian leader, taking control of the discussions and asking the majority of the questions rather than engaging his mentees in conversations that were open and inviting. This matched the Program Director’s feeling that John struggled with the youth development approach, unable to “comprehend” empowerment and instead taking a “militaristic, top-down approach” where he was in control of the mentoring sessions. This struggle with empowerment was demonstrated in the martial arts station early in the SP during the first student-led station. John chose to teach a new skill in the station that day, resulting in the need for him to teach more than the high school student leader. When the Program Director questioned John about his behavior and his inability to step back and empower the high school student to take the lead, John was defensive and was not open to receiving or discussing this feedback. This struggle with empowerment was also demonstrated in the

following scenario, which John described in his Reflection Journal in the tenth week of the SP: “[High school student mentee #1] had two moments this last week that he was defiant and needed to be stood up to in kind and he responded by deferring to cooperation after words and voices were a bit heated [between us].” This prescriptive mentoring relationship certainly had an impact on John’s experience in the SP and the subsequent outcomes from this experience, as John did not seem interested in learning how to take a youth development approach as a mentor; instead, John believed he needed to impart his knowledge and experiences to his two mentees, “convey[ing] life lessons that I had to learn the hard way to kids who could hopefully learn by proxy, rather than make the same mistakes.”

Shifting to John’s overall experience in the service-learning course, he was the only participant who did not talk about his enjoyment of the SP and his overall experience in the service-learning course. While the other undergraduate student leaders discussed their interest in the readings, the high school students, and the SP as well as their overall enjoyment, John avoided this topic in both the post-service reflection and the post-service interview. John was also the only student who shared how he did not feel as if he was involved in the planning of the SP, which was connected with his semester-long struggle with the Program Director. In his opinion, “any time I would make a suggestion, it would be pushed down [by the Program Director] for a second before he even thought it through.” This feeling of not being heard was also recorded by the investigator in the participant observations, as she saw John getting frustrated at different times when he tried to share his opinion with the Program Director. Not only did this have a negative impact on John’s experience in the service-learning course, but it may have impacted his involvement in the pre- and post-session meetings, when the undergraduate student leaders would meet with the Program Director to discuss the SP



implementation. After the first few weeks of the program, John spoke less and less in these discussions, often ending his mentoring sessions (which occurred at the end of the program) a few minutes late, so that he would not be present for the majority of the post-session meetings. This led to frustration from the Program Director, who believed that John needed to be present for these meetings. John's disregard for these pre- and post-session meetings fit with his disinterest in learning from this experience or changing his behavior in the SP.

Perhaps the most frustrating part of this service-learning course for John was the overall lack of feedback from the Program Director. "We didn't get feedback on anything," whether it was the Reflection Journals or the program implementation. John felt that it would have been helpful to receive detailed feedback from the Program Director, especially regarding the Reflection Journals, as he believed that these written responses were closely related to his final course grade. So "feedback, period, would be helpful on anything we wrote." John also believed that it was very difficult to "make a good grade" in the course, as "there are no grading rubrics or explanations of progress in grade form. While this is a volunteer program, not making a certain grade could affect my entire life and future." This became an even greater issue at the end of the semester, as John did not receive the grade he wanted and exchanged emails with the Program Director to share his frustration and confusion. Interestingly, John was one of only two students who were worried about their grades in the course, with other students focusing on the lack of feedback negatively impacting their experience in the SP and their ability to reflect and learn during the semester.

***Mediating variables.*** Throughout the semester, John did not engage in as much quality reflection as some of his classmates in the service-learning course. In his post-service interview, when he was asked to rate (from 0 to 10) the quality and quantity of his reflection throughout the

semester, he gave himself a 7, suggesting that he believed he had engaged in a moderate level of reflection. He then explained how he had reflected more in this course than the typical in-class experience, “because I actually had trial and error that I could play out in front of me, and immediately I could adapt and then remember that right away.” However, when he was asked to think about the quality and quantity of his reflection when completing the Reflection Journal each week, he gave himself a 2 out of 10. This is similar to the findings from the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, which was used to evaluate the Reflection Journals each week of the SP. John’s Reflection Journals received an average rating of 4.69 in response to the question: “On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?” This was the lowest average score for the undergraduate student leaders for this particular question, suggesting that John reflected the least in his Reflection Journals. Similarly, John’s demonstration of critical thinking and cognitive complexity were not very high, with his Reflection Journals receiving an average rating of 4.59 in response to the question: “On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experiences?” As for the overall rating based on the five questions in the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, John’s Reflection Journals earned an average of 6.22 out of 10, which was the lowest overall score for the participants in the study.

The weekly Reflection Journals were comprised of three separate sections – half-page reflections in response to the course readings, program observations, and mentoring session observations – so it was necessary to evaluate the reflection and cognitive complexity demonstrated by John within each section. Interestingly, he provided the most in-depth responses to the course readings, although the degree of reflection and cognitive complexity varied from week to week. Some weeks, John would simply answer the prompts provided by the

Program Director, describing the course readings in great depth but not showing any measure of reflection or critical thinking. However, there were times when he disagreed with the course readings, at which time he would simply state that the author was wrong and then describe his own thoughts and perceptions, making it clear that he was right. For example, during the fourth week of the SP, John described how his “personal philosophy does align with the ideals implied in this chapter. Sadly it seems that this author is completely resigned to programs as the answer when the involvement of parents and the community are the answer to me.” Then, he proceeded to focus on his own beliefs, instead of reflecting on the differences between these perspectives and considering the ideas and opinions of others in relation to his own beliefs and experiences. During the eleventh week, he stated that he “completely disagree[s] with [the author’s] mind set.” This response matches the Program Director’s experiences with John, as he described in the post-service interview how John “was very rigid and not open-minded about how to go about leadership and teaching kids and empowering them in different ways.”

Shifting to John’s completion of the program observations and mentoring session observations each week, he admitted in the post-service interview that he “just included what we were *supposed* to talk about, not what all we [actually] talked about” with his two high school student mentees. This suggests that John was just completing the program observations and mentoring session observations for the course grade and to please the Program Director, and not to help him reflect on and critically think about the program and his mentoring sessions. John was the only student who admitted completing the Reflection Journals mostly for the course grade, at times excluding information from the Reflection Journals because it was irrelevant to his grade in the course. This is demonstrated by the fact that John only answered the following optional question in the program observations *one* time out of 12 opportunities during the

semester: “What contributions has this youth work made to your life?” Similarly, John only answered the following optional question in the mentoring session observations *one* time out of 12: “Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?” In essence, John was doing the bare minimum when it came to completing the weekly Reflection Journals. The Program Director agreed with this assessment in his interview, describing how he struggled at the beginning of the semester in getting John to answer all of the questions in the Reflection Journal. The Program Director also described John’s Reflection Journals at the end of the semester, when “there was like a month when [John] didn’t turn in assignments, and the last few of them, they’re just like one-liners.” To provide a better understanding of this, below are the questions and John’s responses from the mentoring session observations during the tenth week of the SP:

*Q) How did you connect Levels 3 and 4 to your kinesiology experiences?*

*A) I did not do this.*

*Q) How did you create discussions about careers in kinesiology?*

*A) I did not do this.*

*Q) In what ways did you connect goal-setting and leadership with the physical activities to being successful in kinesiology?*

*A) We did not do so in our mentoring time.*

*Q) What did you chart for the kinesiology “procedural knowledge”?*

*A) Nothing*

*Q) What details did you learn about the participants?*

*A) I learned that the issues in [high school student mentee #1’s] life are much more complicated than something that this program can effectively assess and it seems that trust has somehow been lost with some important people in his life so he has shut out everyone.*

*Q) Is there anything else you would like to write about the mentoring session?*

*A) Not yet*

Similarly, below are the questions and John's responses from the program observations during the last week of the SP:

*Q) How did the participants respond to the instructors and the program? Include their behaviors and attitudes.*

*A) Successful class and goodbyes were exchanged. The kids were pretty hopeful that the next group will be as engaged as this one was.*

*Q) How did the participants handle their responsibilities?*

*A) They did so.*

*Q) Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?*

*A) I would hope so. They know that they are welcome to continue next semester and may expressed interest in this.*

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) BLANK*

*Q) Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.*

*A) BLANK*

When John was asked in the post-service reflection whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals changed the way he acted in the SP, he responded: "No, they did not." Likewise, when John was asked whether the weekly Reflection Journals had any impact on his learning, he responded: "No, they did not." John was one of two students who felt as if the Reflection Journals had no impact on his behavior in the SP or his overall learning in the service-learning course. All of this information suggests that John did not reflect as often or as deeply as is desired in an optimal service-learning course, which had a negative impact on the level of cognitive complexity he experienced and, ultimately, on his proximal outcomes from the service-learning course, which are explored in the following section.

***Proximal outcomes.*** Overall, John shared how he did not think that his experience in the service-learning course had much of an impact on him. In his opinion:

[My peers in the service-learning course learned] more from this than I would, because I've already learned a lot of it. I wasn't there to learn more, I was there to practice, basically. Not so much trial and error learn. Practice what I have, what skills I've developed along the way, and see what would work.

This belief, shared in the post-service interview, highlighted how John was not open to experiencing any substantial personal growth from this service-learning course. This was evident even before the SP began, when John admitted that he did not feel as if he could learn much from this experience. It was possible that John's difficult background and psychological issues (e.g., concern over authority, fear of relinquishing control to others) led to the creation of a protective barrier comprised of a strong belief in self and supreme confidence bordering on arrogance. This protective layer was probably built during John's tumultuous childhood and was strengthened when he left home at 15 and was later rejected from the military. During the service-learning course, John engaged in the least amount of reflection and cognitive complexity of any of the undergraduate student leaders, which may have been due to his fear of opening the door to his own past and insecurities. When John was asked in the post-service reflection whether he learned anything about social responsibility or social justice, he provided the following explanation:

Social responsibility should not be the goal, in my opinion. The empowerment of the individual, not the collective, is what our country is about. Social responsibility completely ignores the rights and respect belonging to the individual and hence our society is living with "occupiers" that want to collapse our system for a glorious utopia that can never exist.

In this statement, John refused to acknowledge the possibility that society and those around him were responsible for his own health and well-being. If John were to entertain this possibility, he may have realized that society failed him in his childhood, as he alluded to a chaotic and abusive childhood where he had to protect himself. Instead of entertaining this possibility, John held onto his strong beliefs and focused on the responsibility of *each individual* for their lives and their families. In this way, John was undervaluing social responsibility and celebrating personal responsibility, which matched his own life and how he took control when his family and society at large were unable to fulfill their responsibilities. With this in mind, it was not surprising in the post-service interview when John explained how his “views did not change much.” John’s “confidence is still strong, if not stronger since completing this program as I did exactly what I set out to do and did not have any reservations that I wasn’t doing the right thing.” Similarly, he believed that he did not learn “many new things about working with youth groups as I have done this most of my life, just not in the school setting.” So John was convinced that this service-learning course did not have much of an impact on his own life, which matched his expectations before the SP began.

There were still a few areas where John felt he actually *did* learn. Within the personal domain, he realized that it was important “to be motivated yourself [as a leader] or nothing will happen.” Through his work with the high school students, John also learned that “people respond to leadership when it is presented to them,” as he felt that many of the students took advantage of the leadership opportunities presented to them in the SP and developed into stronger leaders as a result of these experiences. In the participant observations, the investigator also noticed a slight change in John’s leadership throughout the semester, beginning with a forceful, militaristic approach with each and every high school student and ending with a slightly

more nuanced approach in response to individual students' learning and communication styles. For example, if there was a student who was unsure about participating in martial arts, John was not as forceful and demanding at the end of the SP as he was at the beginning. However, this change in leadership style was very slight and was inconsistent throughout the SP, even in the last few sessions. Additionally, John seemed to be unaware of this change, convinced that he was an excellent leader who did not need to take a youth development approach in order to have a positive impact on the high school students. Another area where John may have changed was self-awareness, as he learned "that I still take people's reactions to me as a personal failure if they are negative, in some cases." This was in reference to his high school student mentee who struggled throughout the semester, ultimately dropping out of the program by the end of the SP. Despite this realization, John explained that this was "not at all my fault...since there is no recourse in the program designs" for working with this type of student. In essence, John blamed the design of the SP for this situation, without any consideration that he could have done more as a mentor.

Moving on to the academic and intellectual domain, John earned a B average in this course, which was at the lower end of his overall college grade point average (B to A-). While researchers have shown that service-learning can lead to better grades (Astin & Sax, 1998; Gray et al., 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000), John's experience in this service-learning course was far from optimal, with low expectations going into the experience and minimal reflection and cognitive complexity throughout the semester. Therefore, it is not surprising that John was the only participant who did not receive higher grades than his average college performance. As for the intellectual outcomes, John "learned about the TPSR for the first time this semester. I had never heard of anything like that outside the military training that I took in high school, but it



seems a civilian way to do a similar thing.” Interestingly, John did not feel as if this was new information that he did not know before the service-learning course, but that the TPSR Model was similar to the military, just simply presented in a more “civilian” way. This was yet another indication that John was unwilling to admit that he had learned much, if anything, from this service-learning course. John then discussed how he may be able to use this model in the future with young people. In one of his Reflection Journals, he shared the following: “Now that I have the understanding of the model that I learned here I can use what I learned from my own wreck of a childhood to help him [a struggling young person outside of the SP] understand things better.” John also acknowledged how he enjoyed seeing “a lot of theories in action...a lot of biomechanical theories in practice [in the SP] that we only discuss in class, I got to see firsthand.”

Within the final domain of social and community engagement, John was the *only* participant who did not express an increased commitment to community work. Similarly, he was the *only* participant who did not talk about gaining an increased knowledge of social justice issues from this service-learning course. In fact, he had a strong response to the “underserved” label for the high school students being served by the SP:

The students we had in the class were better off than the ones I grew up with, but we were never called disadvantaged. The facilities at the school are far and away better than the ones I recall from my experiences in high school. If they are disadvantaged, it is because of their parents doing, not that of the community that takes very good care of them.

John also did not appreciate the focus on social justice throughout the course, explaining how “social justice...means equality...That’s another reason why it [the school] becomes a multicultural mess, because you make it equality. That means everyone has to be the same.”

***Theoretical application.*** Upon examination of John’s idiographic profile relative to the theoretical framework, the theoretical application explains John’s experience in the service-learning course as well as the general absence of significant proximal outcomes. John was a white male student who held conservative political beliefs with no expressed interest in the social issues being addressed in the SP, which are all characteristics shown to decrease the effects of service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). While he was a good student with a variety of volunteer experiences, all of which have been shown to increase the effects of service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Gray et al., 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000), John was an overly confident individual who did not expect to learn anything from this service-learning course. This attitude seemed to be a significant barrier to John’s ability to view this service-learning course as an opportunity to learn. Although John believed that the SP was an important program that positively impacted most of the high school students, he was the only participant who did not admit that he enjoyed the experience or that he found the SP interesting. This suggests that the SP was not a high quality placement for him, which served as yet another barrier to any positive outcomes (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Mabry, 1998). Additionally, John referenced the lack of feedback from the Program Director as a significant problem for him, which matched previous findings that low quality feedback from course instructors negatively impacts students’ learning, knowledge of skills, and commitment to service (Greene, 1996; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Subramony, 2000). While John seemed to be overly critical of the Program Director when compared with other participants’ reports, John’s *perception* of his interaction with the Program

Director was what truly mattered relative to his personal experience in the service-learning course.

Along with these predisposing factors and John's overall service-learning experience, the quality and quantity of John's reflection and degree of cognitive complexity were extremely low throughout the service-learning course, which negatively impacted his ability to learn from this experience, as supported by previous studies (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Mabry, 1998). It seemed as if John did not think seriously about his personal experience in the service-learning course, instead focusing on the knowledge he could "impart" on the high school students and criticizing the SP, the Program Director, and the reading material whenever he experienced or read something that challenged his own experiences and beliefs. Instead of processing novel information through thoughtful reflection and critical thinking, John held onto his presuppositions, allowing these experiences to simply reinforce his existing stereotypes, which matches earlier findings within the service-learning field (Eyler, 2002c; Scheckley, Allen, & Keeton, 1993). Overall, the theoretical framework provided a strong explanation for John's idiographic profile and the resulting proximal outcomes (or lack thereof), with some of the factors (e.g., little reflection, low expectations of learning from the experience) having a more significant impact than others.

**Amanda.** The eight sources of data specific to Amanda in the study comprised 98 typed pages. In the pre-service interview, she spoke for 21 minutes, while the post-service interview lasted 28 minutes.

**Context.** Amanda was a 22 year old female who was a full-time student at the university under study in her fifth and final year of school. She was a Mexican American with English as her native language. Amanda's parents emigrated from Mexico, having her and her siblings "at

a young age.” Later in life, her father went back to school in America, earning his college degree and becoming a teacher. His experience in higher education and his occupation as a teacher led to an overwhelming focus on education in her household, with her father making it clear that “you go to school or you don’t have my support.” Her mother also enrolled in some college courses, with her full-time occupation as a grocery store manager. Amanda estimated that her parents’ total gross income during the previous year was between \$75,000 and \$99,999, which was the highest parental income reported by the undergraduate student leaders in the study. As she talked about her childhood and her family, it became clear that Amanda grew up in a loving family that was emotionally and financially stable.

Growing up in a small town on the west coast, Amanda did well in school, earning a B average during her high school years. Athletics was a constant presence in her life, with softball being her primary sport during adolescence. Amanda saw herself as an athlete who was driven to excel in sport, with her parents supporting her athletic endeavors. Once she enrolled in college, Amanda walked onto the varsity softball team as a freshman, going on to receive a scholarship for all four years of eligibility. This resulted in a very busy schedule as a college student-athlete without time for a job, leading to an estimated total gross income of less than \$6,000 during the previous year. Amanda was the only undergraduate student leader in the study who was a “traditional” college student, enrolling immediately after high school, living on campus, participating in college sports, and not working during the academic year. Unlike some of the other undergraduate student leaders, she did not work or attend community college before enrolling, which explains why she was the youngest participant in the study. While at college, Amanda maintained a grade point average between 2.6 and 3.0 (B- to B), majoring in kinesiology with an emphasis in neuromuscular science. When Amanda was asked about her

plans for the future during the pre-service interview, she expressed interest in attending graduate school for physical therapy, even though she understood that she would have to take several prerequisite classes following her graduation. However, in her post-service reflection, Amanda shared an interest in “becoming a behavioral analyst to help children and individuals with developmental delays excel in a social environment.” It is possible that her experience in the service-learning course impacted her professional goals, although this will be discussed in a later section.

When Amanda was asked about her previous volunteer experiences during the pre-service interview, she described the clinics that her high school and college softball teams held for children who did not have softball equipment. She also described the university varsity softball clinics held specifically for participants of the Special Olympics, which she thought was a “really cool experience” that was “eye-opening,” as it helped her “really appreciate my abilities and the opportunities that I have.” Through these clinics, she learned to “really communicate with special needs children and to let them have a voice...and be empowered, regardless of their disability.” Amanda was also part of a leadership program during high school, where the high school students worked at local elementary schools to help young students learn how to read while also serving as mentors. While she received credit for this experience, she still felt that it was an educational experience for her. According to Amanda, “I’ve always enjoyed participating in community service programs...helping others always puts things into perspective for me and I enjoy watching others smile and reap the benefits when helped by the community.” Amanda had also spent a lot of her free time going to physical therapy sessions with her disabled cousin, “who made me want to come into the field of physical therapy.” She’s also been involved with his disability by distributing brochures, selling bracelets, and helping with an

organized walk each year. These volunteer experiences and the lessons she learned from these experiences indicated that prior to her involvement in the service-learning course, Amanda was interested in volunteering in her community, working with young people, and learning from these experiences. As for her political leanings, Amanda described herself as having a liberal mindset and approach to life, although she was hesitant to call herself a liberal when politics were discussed. In her words, “as far as politics go, I don’t really follow that. I haven’t really gotten to that point in my life yet.”

Amanda grew up in a “really small town” with “not a lot of diversity.” The majority of the population was Mexican or Mexican American, so it was a change for her to attend college and become part of the minority population. In her words, “I was just like, ‘Woa, what is this? I’m a minority here!’ [laughs] That’s how I felt, ‘cause I was definitely not a minority back home.” In the pre-service interview, when Amanda was asked about her participation in the SP, she shared her fears about her inexperience with diversity and the subsequent issues that could surface in her interactions with the high school students.

That was really intimidating, working in a program that was so diverse. I was really intimidated. I didn’t know how to approach these students and I thought that they would have a stereotype towards me, and so it was intimidating and I didn’t want to be the awkward person. So that was kind of nerve-racking at first.

While Amanda probably did not have much experience with individuals outside of her race, given her transition from being part of the majority population in her hometown to part of the minority population at college, it is also likely that Amanda held a narrow view of diversity. She volunteered with the Special Olympics, whose participants are viewed as diverse individuals, and in her volunteer work with softball clinics serving those who did not have access to proper

equipment, these under-resourced participants probably comprised a diverse group. One potential explanation for her concern about diversity in relation to the SP was that the majority of her volunteer experiences were part of team-sponsored events conducted for just one day. During these events, Amanda could have felt less personal responsibility for interacting with the young people, as there was no opportunity to develop long-term relationships with the young participants. Given that the SP prioritized the development of strong relationships with the high school students, Amanda could have felt more personal responsibility for her role as an undergraduate student leader, thus leading to her concern for her ability to overcome the diversity barrier.

***Service-learning experience.*** Amanda decided to enroll in the service-learning course because she felt it would be a “great experience, not only for resume-wise but just to really work with kids and to help the community.” For Amanda, this was another opportunity to get involved in the community and work with young people, similar to her past volunteering experiences. She also felt like the SP would let her see how coaching “feels” and if she enjoyed it, “then maybe coaching is something that I’d really want to take on” in the future. As for her expectations of the service-learning course, Amanda believed she would feel a strong connection with the Mexican or Latino high school students because she was Mexican American and was raised in this culture. Amanda was excited to help “these [high school] students create goals and to feel a sense of empowerment.” She was also “really intrigued by helping especially underserved communities and just having an impact on someone, because I’ve been impacted by a lot of people in my life, and I think it’d be interesting to actually be on the reverse side.” Overall, Amanda seemed motivated to help others through this service-learning course while

also being aware that this would allow her to learn more about her professional opportunities and build her resume.

When Amanda was asked in the pre-service interview what she could learn from this experience, she focused on “how to interact and socialize with other people, ‘cause sometimes...it’s hard for me to open up.” This included “talking to people with different backgrounds” and talking to people with a “different history” than her own. Amanda felt she needed to learn these interpersonal skills because she would have similar types of interactions in her future profession. Once again, this suggests that Amanda viewed the service-learning course not just as an opportunity to give back to the community and mentor young people, but to learn skills that would help her professionally in the future. It is probable that this attitude impacted her experience in the service-learning course, as she may have actively sought opportunities to improve specific skills and learn new skills when other undergraduate student leaders may not have. This is also a different approach to the service-learning course when compared with John, who was confident in his abilities and was not expecting to learn much from the service-learning experience.

Before the SP began, Amanda demonstrated a basic understanding of the SP and its theoretical framework in her Reflection Journal, although she did not go into as much depth as some of the other undergraduate student leaders. Despite this basic level of understanding, Amanda still felt “overwhelmed [at the beginning], because the program seemed intense and confusing.” She was worried she would be unsuccessful in implementing the four phases of the SP, as she had “never been a part of a program where I had to find creative ways to implement phases of a program in a manner that would be easy for students to understand.” In fact, Amanda was the only undergraduate student leader who expressed concern over her ability to be



effective, which may be correlated with her intense involvement in organized athletics throughout her entire life. Athletes, especially at the college level, often have externally imposed structures promoting conformity and dependence (Lanning, 1982), with times for meals, classes, practices, and studying planned for them. Her experience with regimented schedules and a focus on conformity and dependence may have caused Amanda to initially feel uncertain she could effectively find “creative ways to implement phases” of the SP. During the pre-service interview, Amanda also expressed fears that she “would be unsuccessful in establishing a relationship with the students,” with concerns that she “wouldn’t be able to connect with any of the students” or gain their respect. These initial fears were based on the fact that the students’ “high school was very different from the high school I went to,” so Amanda felt “intimidated by the students and the environment.” It is also possible that Amanda had often relied on her involvement in team sports to form relationships, with her admission in the pre-service interview that joining the varsity softball team in college helped her find friends. This service-learning course could have been uncomfortable for Amanda because she could not assume that relationships would easily develop with the high school students, especially when she was the instigator of these relationships and there was no common link through softball. In the past, she generally joined teams where there was a clear hierarchical structure and she was one of the youngest team members, allowing others to welcome her on the team and the relationships to develop naturally due to the shared interest in softball.

However, after the SP began, Amanda soon “realized it was a lot easier” than she had expected. She felt “comfortable initiating conversations and I had no problem finding ways to implement the phases during the mentoring session[s].” When she was asked in the post-service interview whether the Program Director could have changed anything at the beginning of the

semester to better prepare her for the SP, she explained how difficult it was to fully prepare students for this experience. She felt as prepared as she could have been before seeing the SP in action and meeting the high school students, and her trepidation over interacting and developing relationships with the high school students was a personal fear that could not have been prevented by the Program Director. As for her level of preparation throughout the semester, Amanda explained:

[The course readings were] helpful for me because they provided examples and experiences of other mentors who had been through the process. I was able to use the book for ideas and it helped me structure my discussions and thoughts. I liked how the book provided different experiences and circumstances because it taught me how to address issues if they did arise. It was also helpful because it gave me ideas about how to initiate conversations with the students and it provided tips with how to keep conversations interesting.

This suggests that although Amanda did not feel well prepared before the SP began due to her personal issues, she utilized the course readings to prepare her for the sessions and she also learned from the hands-on experience in the program.

From the very beginning of the SP to the end of the semester, Amanda clearly articulated the value she attributed to the program, which is a critical component in a student's service-learning experience. In the pre-service interview, Amanda explained how the SP could help the high school students "learn how to build relationships and to learn how to find a career path that is possible," both of which she believed were valuable for the high school students. In the Reflection Journal in the eighth week of the SP, Amanda described the powerful impact of the SP on the high school students up to that point in the semester:

I believe Phase Two is allowing the students to feel empowered and it is opening their eyes to a wide range of possibilities. The students who led the stations showed a sense of confidence and happiness, it was unlike anything I had ever seen. They all had huge smiles and lit up the room. It was awesome to see the students feel comfortable leading their peers and mentors. I believe they are getting a lot out of the program and they are starting to get a better sense of their future and all the opportunities they have access to. This program is empowering them and allowing them to experience what leadership and hard work feel like. I definitely think they will take a lot from the program and apply it to their future.

Later in the SP, Amanda reflected on how the high school students “are getting a better sense of their future and they are learning how to lead and follow in a respectful manner. The majority of the students seem open to applying what we learn in class to their everyday lives.” Despite the general feeling that the SP was having a positive impact on the high school students, there were times when Amanda questioned the overall impact of the SP. In the post-service reflection, she expressed concern that the end of the semester will cause “most of those students [to] go back to their normal lives...I don’t think the mentoring sessions were long enough to have an impact on the students in the class” over the long-term. She was also concerned that the “students we worked with are three years away from graduating,” so it is possible that “many of them will not remember the values we preached and taught” in the SP. Amanda shared similar concerns in her post-service interview, focusing specifically on the short period of time for mentoring. For example, she felt that goal setting was a skill that may not stay with the high school students over the long-term, as this is something that students need to be constantly reminded of. In her words, “one semester isn’t going to keep that [goal setting knowledge] there forever.”

Despite these reservations about the long-term impact of the SP, Amanda truly valued her role as a mentor of two high school students in the SP, seeing her responsibility as empowering and helping her two “students acknowledge and embrace their strengths and talents.” One of her high school student mentees was a reserved Asian female student who slowly came out of her shell during the SP, while her other high school student mentee was an intellectual and vocal Caucasian female student who was one of the most active high school leaders in the SP. Amanda built strong relationships with these two students, learning a lot about their lives outside of high school and encouraging the students to take on leadership roles within the SP. During the mentoring time, she focused on finding “ways to connect with both [of her] student [mentees] in an attempt to help them envision a possible positive future by incorporating values such as goal-setting, respect, effort, and leadership.” At the conclusion of the service-learning experience, Amanda felt “successful in implementing all phases of the program” with her high school student mentees and she also felt “successful in helping the students envision their possible positive futures by implementing the strategies of the TPSR and SP.” All in all, Amanda felt the SP was “very meaningful because it allowed me to work with kids who were in need of leadership and role models,” and she “really enjoyed being able to be a part of something bigger than myself and my career.”

Shifting to Amanda’s overall experience in the SP, she was a co-instructor of the cardio and spin station, where she worked with another undergraduate student to design the activities for each day. There were times when she was not as vocal in guiding the high school students who were in leadership positions at this station, which was highlighted by the investigator several times throughout the SP in the participant observations. Amanda also seemed focused on the level of effort and respect that the high school students were demonstrating each session

(e.g., negative attitudes towards hard work), which may be linked with her pre-service expectation that the biggest challenge would be getting respect from the high school students. In the pre-service interview, Amanda explained how the biggest challenge she expected to face throughout the SP was if the high school students were “disrespectful and if they kinda lash out and forget that there is that level of respect.” Her focus on effort and respect manifested itself in a few different ways throughout the service-learning course. First, there were times in the Reflection Journals when Amanda would focus on the number of problems caused by students and whether or not they followed directions during that week’s sessions. For example, in the eleventh week of the SP, Amanda answered the following question in this way:

*Q) How did the participants respond to the instructors and the program? Include their behaviors and attitudes.*

*A) The participants are continuing to cooperate and to be respectful to all of the leaders. They all work hard and make suggestions at our station when we ask them to. The students remained on task the entire session and we didn’t have any problems working with any of the students.*

Similarly, in the fourteenth week, she answered the same question in the Reflection Journal in a similar manner:

*Q) How did the participants respond to the instructors and the program? Include their behaviors and attitudes.*

*A) We didn’t have any problems with the participants this week. All of the participants responded to the instructors in a positive and respectful manner. All of them participated and followed instructions as they were given.*

These responses demonstrate how Amanda focused on the “problems” with the students and whether or not they were following directions, instead of highlighting what they were bringing to the SP. The focus on respect and effort became even more evident when one particular high school student gave hardly any effort or respect during two consecutive sessions. In response to this student’s lack of effort and respect, Amanda responded with frustration and annoyance even when she learned that this student had a difficult past and was currently struggling in other parts

of her life. Amanda's response indicated her lack of empathy and even insensitivity towards some of the high school students in the SP. The Program Director described this in his post-service interview:

[Amanda had] a little less patience...when [the high school student] was acting out, [Amanda's] like, "She needs a hard hand! You need to just tell her this is the way it's gonna be. She's gettin' coddled and she knows she can get away with crap."

The Program Director then explained how Amanda's response was "against the youth development" approach. The investigator confirmed this response through the participant observations, where it was noted that Amanda showed "no sense of understanding or attempt at understanding [the high school student's] current life situation and why she was acting the way she was." Interestingly, in her post-service reflection, Amanda even described this situation and then shared *how* she learned from this experience:

I experienced some frustration with students when they wouldn't participate and when they would have attitude towards the instructors. For example, in the beginning one of the students wouldn't participate without us constantly telling her to pick it up and she had a horrible attitude. In the beginning I wanted to just tell her flat out that she has a choice to be in the class and if she wasn't going to participate the door was open for her to leave. As a group we discussed the issue and we decided to work with her. I was frustrated because I felt she was bringing down her peers by creating such a negative environment. She also was setting a bad example for her peers and I was worried many students might follow if we didn't address the situation in a timely manner. I definitely learned how to be patient and I learned to control my frustration because toward the end

of the semester I learned to talk to the student and she really did participate a little more in the end.

It is possible that Amanda's vast experience in organized athletics could have negatively impacted her experience in the service-learning course with respect to her preconceived notions that the high school students should conform to the rules and expectations of the SP regardless of their own personal challenges (Lanning, 1982). In her world of competitive athletics, Amanda was used to being part of a hierarchical team structure where team members would follow the rules and expectations of the coach without any hint of disrespect or negative attitude. Therefore, it was difficult for Amanda to work with students who did not follow these preconceived notions, especially when the SP stressed a youth development approach with a focus on empowerment instead of discipline and direction. Despite this challenge, Amanda did become more open and receptive towards the end of the service-learning experience, sharing how she realized that she needed to show more empathy and develop a deeper understanding of the high school students' lives.

When Amanda was asked about her experience working with the Program Director, she described it as "a positive experience," with the Program Director making her "feel like an important aspect of the program" while "empowering us as mentors." Despite these positive remarks in her post-service reflection, Amanda rarely spoke during the pre- and post-session meetings with the undergraduate student leaders and Program Director, at which time the undergraduate student leaders were encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings about the SP. The investigator consistently noted her lack of engagement in these pre- and post-service meetings, which could be a reflection of her inexperience with leaders (e.g., her softball coaches) asking for feedback and direction from the "team." As for the degree of feedback received from

the Program Director, she felt that there was an overall lack of feedback given throughout the entire service-learning course, specifically related to the Reflection Journals. Interestingly, Amanda was one of two students who were worried about their grades in the course, as Amanda felt that the Reflection Journal was a critical component and without specific feedback from the Program Director, she was clueless as to the ultimate grade she would receive in the course. In her words, “I wish [the Program Director] would have told us...if we’re in the right area [when completing the Reflection Journal]...For all I know, I could get an F or a C, because he hasn’t said anything throughout the course [about the Reflection Journal].” Amanda believed that if the Program Director had provided adequate feedback on her completion of the Reflection Journals, she would be less concerned about her course grade throughout the semester. Amanda also felt that the lack of feedback from the Program Director negatively impacted her learning and performance in the SP, as she did not have specific recommendations given by the Program Director in response to her journal entries.

***Mediating variables.*** Overall, Amanda demonstrated a moderate level of reflection and cognitive complexity throughout the service-learning course when compared with her fellow undergraduate student leaders. When she was asked to rate herself on the quality and quantity of her reflection throughout the semester, she gave herself a 5 out of 10. As for the self-rating of her quality and quantity of reflection when completing the Reflection Journal each week, she gave herself a 6 out of 10. These ratings suggest that Amanda was aware of her moderate level of reflection in general and when completing the Reflection Journals. As for the findings from the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, Amanda’s Reflection Journals received an average rating of 5.68 in response to the question: “On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?” Interestingly, Amanda’s rating on the scale dropped to an



average of 4.83 in response to the question: “On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experiences?” As for the overall rating for Amanda’s Reflection Journal based on the five questions in the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, she earned an average of 7.39 out of 10.

These findings suggest that Amanda reflected slightly more than average in her weekly Reflection Journals, in which she answered each question in great depth each and every week. In fact, Amanda *always* answered the following optional question: “What contributions has this youth work made to your life?” Similarly, she only skipped the following optional question *two* times out of 12 opportunities throughout the SP: “Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?” The Program Director even discussed how Amanda “wrote extensively...she was carefully with her words and detail and went pretty much above and beyond the writing assignments.” In her responses, Amanda often reflected on her own life as well as the course readings, program observations, and mentoring session observations, although there were some weeks where she simply focused on the readings and listed exactly what happened during the program and mentoring sessions that week, without any attempt at engaging in deep reflection. Additionally, she did not demonstrate very much critical thinking in any of her responses. The quality and quantity of reflection and cognitive complexity are demonstrated in Amanda’s responses to the program observation questions during the twelfth week of the SP:

*Q) How did the participants respond to the instructors and the program? Include their behaviors and attitudes.*

*A) The participants responded to the instructors with respect and for the most part they all had positive attitudes and behaviors. Last week there were a couple of problems with some of the students not participating, however we have been working on getting them to participate and we are making it clear that they do not have to be apart of the program if they do not want to participate or cooperate with the leaders and instructors. The students seem to be adjusting to the run on*

*Thursdays, they have been working hard after they run and they are continuing to put forth 100% of what they can. I'm pleased with their performance and hard work.*

*Q) How did the participants handle their responsibilities?*

*A) The participants have been on task and most of them do what is asked of them. There are some students that need to be asked multiple times to get going but we are working towards improving their attitudes. Overall, most of the participants know what we expect and handle their responsibilities in a positive manner. We haven't had a lot of problems with the students handling their responsibilities. As a group we made the expectations and guidelines clear, and as a result the students are usually on task and ready to go.*

*Q) Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?*

*A) I believe the students are getting a better sense of their future. The charts that we created have helped the students put their goals and aspirations into perspective. The charts allow them to see exactly what they want to do and it also helps them remember what goals are important for them to strive for. It also reminds them to stay clear of things that will hurt their future and it keeps their mind focused on their overall goal.*

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) Nothing new has come up since my last reflection. I'm just grateful that I was given the opportunity to work with such an interesting and diverse group of kids.*

*Q) Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.*

*A) [A high school student] mentioned possibly having an end of the year party/potluck. I don't know if that is possible but she thought it would be awesome if we had a day that was self directed and at the end we shared snacks and celebrate the end of the first semester. Just a thought, I told her I would bring it up and see if that is at all possible.*

Below is Amanda's response to one question from the mentoring session observation in that same week:

*Q) How did you introduce the idea of having both "hopes" and "fears"?*

*A) I explained that when I was in high school I was overwhelmed by fears. I told them how I feared the future because I was unsure about what I wanted to do, what school I wanted to attend, I was worried about my grades, the SAT and so on. I then explained how I had to organize my thoughts and fears and take on step at a time instead of looking so far into the future. I explained how I sat down with my counselor and we worked together to create a plan that would keep me on track towards college. I explained how I continually asked questions and remained organized throughout high school and once I graduated I was ready for college and those fears went away. I explained how we all tend to have fears*

*because of uncertainty but there are ways to organize your thoughts and time in order to minimize the fear. As far as hopes go, I explained how my hopes were to get into a college of my choice and to graduate and obtain a degree. I explained how I organized my time and I continually asked questions and as a result I will be graduating in the spring. I really emphasized asking questions and utilizing the sources you have. I asked [high school student mentee #1] if she had any fears and she doesn't have any at the time. [High school student mentee #2] explained that her fear is not finding a job that will challenge her on a regular basis.*

These responses demonstrate Amanda's ability to moderately reflect on the SP without engaging in very much critical thinking, as she rarely took the perspectives of others or critically examined topics.

When Amanda was asked in the post-service reflection whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals changed the way she acted in the SP, she responded: "Not necessarily...the reflections just allowed me to highlight the important topics that arose and if I felt they were extremely interesting I would mention them again." Similarly, when she was asked whether the weekly Reflection Journals had any impact on her learning, she responded: "I don't feel they had an impact on my learning while I was doing them. I think they will be more helpful in the future when I look back and read about the different topics and experiences that occurred."

Interestingly, Amanda was one of two students who felt as if the Reflection Journals had no impact on her behavior in the SP or her overall learning in the service-learning course, although she did believe that the Reflection Journals may help her in the future.

***Proximal outcomes.*** Overall, Amanda believed her experience in the service-learning course helped her grow as a person and a professional. Beginning with the personal domain, there were significant improvements in Amanda's self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-understanding. In her Reflection Journal in the seventh week, Amanda shared how "this youth work has allowed me to feel comfortable in my own skin." Later on, in her post-service

reflection, she described how the service-learning course “taught me more about myself,” leading her to be “proud of who I am” and “more confident about who I am and what I believe in.” In her words, “this program allowed me to self-reflect” and it “reassured my beliefs and strengths as an individual.” It is possible that Amanda’s enhanced self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-understanding are connected with her strong identification as an athlete, as researchers have suggested that athletes like Amanda may experience delayed identity exploration and psychosocial development (Petitpas & Champagne, 1988; Phinney, 1989). Her lifelong involvement with athletics and her strong identity as an athlete could have prevented Amanda from exploring other parts of her identity and becoming more familiar and comfortable with whom she was as a person. Given that the semester under study was the first time that Amanda was not part of competitive athletics (as she had used all four years of eligibility and was in her fifth year of study), the service-learning course could have been her first time exploring her identity outside of athletics and without a team surrounding her.

Along with an increased level of self-understanding and improved self-confidence, Amanda also shared how she became more aware and tolerant of diversity issues. Up until her experience in the SP, she did not have much experience with diversity, acknowledging that this “was really the first time that I had taught and worked with such a diverse group of individuals.” In her words:

I learned that many of the students are different and unique in their own ways. Several of them came from a variety of backgrounds and many of them were dealing with issues unimaginable. In the beginning of the program I feel as though I was a little naïve because I didn’t have patience with students who wouldn’t cooperate or partake in the activities in a positive manner. However, over time I learned that many of the students

who didn't cooperate had problems and their attitudes were definitely a reflection of the issues that were going on at home.

In this quote, Amanda describes her growth throughout the semester, evolving from a person who was insensitive and uninterested in understanding *why* the high school students were acting inappropriately to a person with increased awareness and interest in understanding the high school students' lives. Amanda was aware of her personal growth, expressing how she was "extremely grateful that I was given the opportunity to learn about so many different and unique individuals." She also "learned that it is important to be open-minded...I think it can sometimes be easy to make judgments about participants...because of their attitudes or actions." Instead of following the stereotypes from her hometown, Amanda "realized it's important to evaluate the situation and to remember many of the students are dealing with deep rooted issues that may be causing them to act in a negative manner." After her experience in the SP, she felt "comfortable approaching all students regardless of race and gender" and she "didn't feel like there were any barriers due to stereotypes or prejudices." This was a significant achievement for Amanda, as this was one of her goals at the beginning of the service-learning course. She was aware of her inexperience with diverse groups of people, so she was truly thankful that she was able to learn from her experience in the SP. Amanda also reflected on how this would impact her in the future, as she now understood "how to work with a variety of people than just Latinos back home."

Shifting to the domain of academic and intellectual outcomes, Amanda earned an A in the course, which was much higher than her college grade point average (B to B-). This improvement suggests that she truly engaged in the course content and the implementation of the SP. Amanda shared how she learned "all the concepts involved in the phases" of the SP and she

learned how to connect “each of the phases with my students.” She also realized how the content and strategies she had learned in the SP were going to be useful in other areas of her life. For example, she commented on how “professionally, I think the [SP] experience will facilitate my success in the future when working with kids.” She also believed this knowledge would be helpful on a personal level. Additionally, there was tremendous growth related to her career, with a newfound understanding of the field of kinesiology. Specifically, Amanda had “never realized how wide the field was until I taught the [high school] students about it and I was shocked with all the different careers that you could pursue once you obtain a degree in kinesiology.” It is possible that Amanda’s awareness of these career opportunities within the field of kinesiology led to her interest in a new career at the conclusion of the service-learning course, as Amanda had changed her career focus from physical therapy to behavioral analysis. Her experience in the SP also “reassured me that I have a passion for working with kids and I plan on pursuing a career that will allow me to do so.” Given her focus on career exploration throughout the service-learning course and her ultimate decision to change her career focus at the end of the semester, it is possible that Amanda had also experienced delayed career exploration that is so frequent among college athletes (Hinkle, 1994; Petitpas & Champagne, 1988), with this service-learning course helping her jumpstart this exploration.

Within the social and community engagement domain, Amanda learned a tremendous amount. Before the SP began, she expressed an interest in improving her interpersonal skills, which she was able to achieve over the course of the semester. By the seventh week of the program, Amanda shared her observations related to her learning and development at that time in her Reflection Journal:

I'm really enjoying learning from my students, and I feel that I will take a lot from this program. I'm learning how to be open and how to establish trust and a relationship with complete strangers. This program is teaching me how to be a great listener and to really become involved and to CARE about what my students say and how they feel.

Along with learning to trust and becoming a better listener, she also “learned how to be patient and understanding to the needs of others.” This will be critical in her future profession, as “patience is something I will definitely need to have when working with special needs individuals and kids in general.” She also “learned how to interact with a variety of students. Each student is different and unique in their own way, [and so] I had to learn how to reach out to them with different approaches.” This was one of her greatest fears before the service-learning course began, and so this statement shows significant improvement over the course of one semester. These skills will also help her in the future, as she “will constantly be introduced to new and different people in the field” with whom she needs to find different ways to build a connection. In addition to these interpersonal skills, Amanda became more aware of and sensitive to social justice issues. During the second to last week of the SP, she shared how shocking it was to “hear about many of the issues that our participants deal with on a daily basis...I realized that many of the students have to work extremely hard compared to others because of their upbringing and environment.” Amanda became aware of these social justice issues through her interactions with the high school students in the SP and the eye-opening course readings:

There are definitely not enough out-reach programs aimed at helping students who are struggling with issues at home. In a chapter of the book we read, it discussed how troubled kids are easily given up on because it's easier to kick them out of the system

than to focus on their needs as individuals. Several of the students had issues going on at home that were not being addressed and as a result many of the students started to downward spiral and they didn't take anything from the program. I believe if more of the troubled students were actually empowered instead of belittled and given up on they might have more of a chance to succeed in the classroom as well as life in general. The situation might be improved if more programs were funded and implemented in inner city schools.

At the conclusion of the post-service reflection, Amanda also shared her interest in "working with young individuals in the future," perhaps with programs "such as the SP" as she "would love to be a part of implementing such a wonderful program that students can benefit and grow from." All in all, the service-learning experience did the following for Amanda:

This experience opened up my eyes to the needs of others and in the future I plan on seeking out students who may be troubled. I will make a difference by listening and making sure the student(s) understand that I support them and I'm willing to help them through difficult times if need be. I have a more positive outlook when it comes to troubled students and I now understand many of them are crying out for help. I plan on being more sympathetic to their needs and I want to help in any way possible.

This quote shows Amanda's growth in seeking out opportunities *on her own* to help young people who may be struggling or asking for help.

***Theoretical application.*** After reviewing Amanda's idiographic profile relative to the theoretical framework, her service-learning experience and her proximal outcomes are largely explained by the theoretical application. Amanda was a Mexican American female student with good grades, a variety of volunteer experiences, and a liberal mindset, which are all



characteristics that increase the effects of service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). While she did not express any interest in the social issues being addressed in the SP, she did express excitement for working with young people and helping the community, as she believed the SP was doing important work. Amanda was also interested in learning from the service-learning experience, as she believed she could learn valuable skills through the course. However, Amanda did admit that she had minimal experience with diversity, as she grew up in a Mexican-American community and was unsure about her ability to connect and build relationships with students of different races. While she was initially concerned with her ability to be effective in the service-learning experience, she soon realized that she was prepared for this experience and she believed she had a significant impact on the high school students. These findings suggest that the SP was a good placement for Amanda, which has been shown to be critical in a student's service-learning experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Mabry, 1998; Morgan & Streb, 2003). While her overall experience in the SP was positive, Amanda's experience in competitive athletics led to a struggle with her previous experiences in hierarchical team structures with a high degree of conformity and a low level of autonomy; in the SP, Amanda experienced a shared leadership model (between the participants and the Program Director) with a lower degree of conformity (e.g., the high school students questioning authority) and a high level of autonomy (e.g., Amanda leading a station). Although she was unsure about her ability to be effective in this new approach at the beginning of the service-learning course and she initially struggled when the high school students pushed back, she was ultimately able to adapt to this environment and grow in tremendous ways through these experiences.

Along with these predisposing factors and Amanda's overall service-learning experience, she demonstrated a moderate level of reflection and cognitive complexity throughout the service-

learning course. While there were some weeks when Amanda engaged in deep reflection, there were other weeks when she simply answered the questions at the most basic level, suggesting that she was not as engaged in this service-learning course as some of the other participants. However, she still experienced significant proximal outcomes by the end of the service-learning course (e.g., enhanced self-understanding, improved interpersonal skills, enhanced tolerance), suggesting that her acute awareness of her fears and weaknesses at the beginning of the service-learning course, her interest in learning from the service-learning experience, and her ability to adapt throughout the SP may have allowed her to grow in more ways than expected. Overall, the theoretical framework explained Amanda's idiographic profile and the resulting proximal outcomes, with some of the factors (e.g., awareness of fears, interest in learning, adaptability) having a more significant impact than others.

**Shayna.** The eight sources of data related to Shayna's experience in the service-learning course totaled 87 typed pages. The pre-service interview with Shayna lasted 20 minutes, while she spoke for 40 minutes during the post-service interview.

**Context.** Shayna was a 22 year old Filipino who was enrolled at the university under study as a part-time student. She spoke English as a native language and grew up in a single-parent household with her mother, younger brother, and younger sister. Shayna's mother earned her high school diploma with the General Educational Development test, while her father received some college education, although he has been out of her life for quite some time. According to Shayna, her brother and sister have always "looked to me like a second mother figure because my mom's always busy with work, so I was the one helping them with school." This is not uncommon, as the adoption of some parenting and household responsibilities is often undertaken by the eldest children of single-parent households, especially when the family is not

financially stable and the eldest child is female (Capizzano, Main, & Nelson, 2004; Gennetian et al., 2002). Although Shayna wanted to go straight to university after graduating high school with a B+ average, she was asked by her mother to “stay around home” to “help with my [younger] brother and sister.” This was a difficult decision for Shayna, as she had already been accepted at two of her top choices for university, but she decided to stay home to “help out around the house.” Over the next three years, she worked full-time in sales at a local department store while attending community college part-time, paying for her own tuition and additional college expenses. With the help of a couple of grants and loans during her first two years, she was able to pay for classes at the community college, but “as far as working with my school, homework, and projects, it was really tough because of work, it always conflicted.” Although she had plans to transfer to the university under study earlier, “it took a little longer than I expected, only because it was hard for me to keep up to date with my GPA [grade point average] and my classes at my community college.” After three years, Shayna transferred to the university, where she was in her second year and planned to graduate during the semester under study. While at the university, she continued working full-time at her sales position and commuting from her home to school, which ranged from a one to two hour car ride each way (depending on the traffic). Despite these challenges, Shayna maintained a college grade point average between 2.6 and 3.0 (B- to B), along with making an estimated total gross income of \$20,000 - \$24,999 during the previous year. Shayna’s ability to work full-time, pay for college, and continue serving as a maternal figure for her younger siblings over five years highlights her organization, focus, and drive to reach her goals.

Shayna was graduating with a kinesiology major and an emphasis in neuromuscular science, with hopes to pursue a career in either physical therapy or occupational therapy. At the

time of the study, she was unsure which career path she was going to pursue, although she understood that graduate school was in her future regardless of her choice. Before applying for graduate school, she wanted to find a job as a physical therapy aid, which she believed would “get her foot in the door” and would also give her a better understanding of the occupation. Recently, she spent a semester volunteering at an occupational therapy center, where she learned from the Occupational Therapist Director about the field and her career options within the field. This experience in occupational therapy made her realize that she needed to develop a better understanding of physical therapy before she could decide on her career path, which was why she was interested in finding a job as a physical therapy aid after graduating.

When Shayna reflected on her own childhood in the pre-service interview, she described herself as a “child who grew up in an underserved community.” In fact, in the third week of the SP, she responded to a course reading in her Reflection Journal with the following story:

When an underserved school lacks the adequate education they deserve, they tend to lose the determination and strive for success especially when learning is slightly [supported]. My 8th grade science teacher is a great example for this. Though class was held everyday, our books were rarely utilized in a proper manner throughout the whole year. Our daily assignments consisted of reading and answering the questions at the end of each chapter. Because the answers were given from the back of the book, everyone merely copied them down without any reasoning to how the answers were solved. The teacher would grade them all and give full credit to anyone who simply turned in a piece of paper. With the lack of discipline, it got to the point where chaos struck the whole class everyday. Students would bring games, cards, magazines and play throughout the duration of class time. The rebels would talk back to the teacher, throw crayons across

the room, and in one predicament, a student sprayed the room with the fire extinguisher.

This behavior carried on throughout all of high school for a good amount of my middle school classmates. Some dropped out to support their new family, others thrown in jail, and a small few ended up dead from gang related violence.

This personal reflection provides a glimpse into Shayna's school environment growing up, and it also gives a better understanding of why she described her middle school as being underserved. During her middle school and high school years, Shayna was part of a career-focused program similar to the SP, which helped the young participants set career goals and pursue those goals. Although she dropped out of the program midway through high school, she believed that this type of program could have a huge influence on the lives of the participants. This was one of the reasons why she was so motivated and excited about serving as an undergraduate student leader in the SP.

As for Shayna's experience with volunteering, she helped out with some after-school activities at her younger brother's elementary school when she was in high school, but she never had experience with teenagers other than her own siblings and cousins. Shayna highlighted the fact that she had not had any formal leadership opportunities in her life, although she overlooked her informal role as a maternal figure in the lives of her siblings. The Program Director mentioned this in his interview: "She's never been in a leadership position in her entire life. Never provided leadership in any way. And that was a huge thing for her." Shayna was acutely aware of these gaps in her life experiences, expressing an interest in serving her community, giving back to the community, and taking on different leadership roles. Shayna enjoyed "knowing how much of an impact I can have in someone's life" and was interested in volunteering more in the future. She even shared how she wanted to start volunteering in third

world countries, which she mentioned in both her pre-service interview and her post-service interview. She was the only student who expressed an interest in volunteering outside of her community. Interestingly, when Shayna was asked about her political preferences in the pre-service interview, she asked to skip this question, and she also skipped this question on the demographics questionnaire.

***Service-learning experience.*** Shayna openly discussed her reasons for being interested in the service-learning course, beginning with her need to take the class for graduation. During the previous semester, she was unable to enroll in the research course that is required for graduation, so she initially was drawn to the service-learning course because it would satisfy this course requirement and allow her to graduate during the semester under study. However, after learning more about the SP, she became even more interested in the program because she just wanted to “give back.” She believed she would be able to relate to the high school students because of her own experience growing up in an underserved community, perhaps having more of an impact on the students because of her background. In this way, she could help these students become more “aware of the opportunities they have out there,” even those who do not have “parents who can guide them into understanding what education is all about and pushing them to actually succeed in life,” which was the case for her. It was clear as she spoke about her reasons for enrolling in this service-learning course that she was personally invested in this experience and focused on having a positive impact on the high school students. She also highlighted another motivation for participating in the service-learning course: her interest in learning “how to be more of a leadership figure.”

Despite these hopes going into the SP, Shayna was aware that there could be some challenges associated with the programming efforts. She was “not sure if the students are gonna

take it seriously, if they're gonna be acting up or how their attitude is towards [the SP]." She identified with this attitude, because she did not take the career-focused program she was part of seriously during her high school years, but she was hopeful that the high school students in the SP may have different attitudes than she once did. Shayna also recognized that her inexperience with adolescents outside of her family was going to be challenging for her, as she "wasn't sure how to approach [the high school students]" and how to "interact and reach out to them on that kind of [personal] level." Despite these reservations, Shayna felt as prepared for the experience as she could be from the course readings and the preparation from the Program Director. In the Reflection Journal from the first week of the service-learning course, Shayna even demonstrated a basic understanding of the SP and its theoretical background, suggesting that she had completed the required reading for the course. As the SP progressed, Shayna felt that the weekly course readings gave her even more strategies to implement and "more motivation to reach out to the kids." Although some readings explored programs which were very different from the SP, she still learned quite a bit and saw the readings as being helpful, especially given her inexperience as a leader and working with adolescents.

Shayna truly valued her role in the SP, recognizing as early as the fifth week that she needed to "step it up and show that I can maintain these requirements" and responsibilities of a mentor. In her eyes, her role in the SP was a serious endeavor where her "actions made a big difference. I helped motivate the students when they felt like giving up." Throughout the SP, she "used my knowledge and experience to reach out to [the high school students], hoping to connect with them on a student to student basis without giving the impression that I'm a teacher-like figure." In her role as one of the co-instructors of the dance station, Shayna certainly felt challenged at times because she was not "the best dancer." For example, there were dance

moves she thought were “really simple [but were] really difficult for everyone else. So it was kinda hard to think of something that everyone can relate to or actually do,” while still keeping it interesting and exciting for the high school students. However, this challenge only motivated her to try harder and learn more, so that she could become a stronger leader and have a greater impact on the high school students.

In her mentorship role, Shayna was matched with a Latina female student who was probably the most engaged and mature high school student in the SP. Shayna developed a close bond with this high school student, often writing in her Reflection Journals about their similar backgrounds and how they were learning from each other. Her mentoring style could be described as developmental (i.e., cooperative), as their mentoring relationship was largely mentor-driven with a focus on meeting the needs of the high school student mentee (Morrow & Styles, 1995). Shayna truly cared about her high school student mentee and was determined to stay in touch with her after the end of the SP, as she wanted to continue to have a role in the high school student’s life.

As for the impact of the SP on all of the high school students, Shayna felt they developed “a better sense of their future.” By the end of the semester, they understood “what kind of commitment they would need to make with their school in order to achieve successful careers.” Shayna believed the SP helped these students “understand the significance of goal settings in order to help guide themselves into the right direction.” She also felt the SP was providing the high school students with a rare opportunity to have their voices heard in a larger group and with their mentors. This was incredibly important to her, as she never felt as if she had much of a voice growing up. During her post-service interview, Shayna described how her high school student mentee changed because of the leadership opportunities she was given in the SP:



One thing that [the high school student] really worked on and that she really improved in – we all saw – is her leadership skills, because prior to the program, she was actually really shy and...she was always timid any time it came to group discussions. So having her step up to the plate and having her take on that role of a leader helped her improve that skill. And she's not as shy anymore, she tells me. [laughs] And she's a lot more confident with anything that she does.

Despite her positive outlook, Shayna voiced some concerns in her post-service interview about the impact of the SP on *all* of the high school students. For example, she discussed how some students' effort and enthusiasm would fluctuate from week to week, making it difficult to determine how much they were truly learning and whether or not they were changing. While she believed there were "certain students who really shined throughout the whole semester," she was concerned that the inconsistency of some students may have negatively impacted their experience in the SP.

When reflecting on the experience as a whole, Shayna believed she gained a tremendous amount from the "hands-on experience with the students" and she also learned from the feedback given to her by the high school students. It is interesting to note that Shayna took a true youth development approach in many of her interactions with the high school students, often asking questions before stating her own opinions. This is demonstrated in her Reflection Journal in the fifth week of the SP, when she shared how she began a conversation with her high school student mentee about respect and effort: "Before sharing my thoughts, I asked my student for feedback on her opinion about respect and effort." The previous week, Shayna described another scenario where she was aware of the students' feelings and was careful to take a thoughtful approach in her conversation: "I had the opportunity to meet several students who were kind enough to carry

on a conversation without making me feel like I was prying into their business.” This care and concern for the high school students’ feelings, along with her interest in hearing their voices, highlight Shayna’s adoption of the youth development approach and her ability to interact with the high school students in a thoughtful manner.

Throughout the entire service-learning course, Shayna was engaged in the program implementation and the course content, with the Program Director even acknowledging how she was “fully engaged” throughout the semester. This engagement included her participation in the pre- and post-session meetings, where the Program Director discussed the SP with the undergraduate student leaders. Shayna was the only undergraduate student leader in the service-learning course who actively participated in the pre- and post-session meetings, with her engagement and participation increasing as the SP progressed. This gradual change during the semester matched the field notes from the participant observations, which tracked Shayna’s transition from a quiet, reserved student who rarely spoke to a confident, vocal leader who openly shared her opinions and provided suggestions to both the Program Director and her peers.

In the post-service interview, when Shayna was asked about the supervision and guidance she received from the Program Director, she voiced her frustration with not getting “a lot of feedback. Every time we had questions...he would just tell us to look back at the first article that he sent us or look at the syllabus. But he never really told us exactly what he wanted.” While Shayna understood that the Program Director did not want to tell the undergraduate student leaders *exactly* what to do, so that they could bring their own interpretation to the program implementation, she felt like her performance in the SP and the completion of her Reflection Journals were negatively impacted due to the lack of any feedback at all.

The only constructive criticism I have was for him to give more feedback on my performance. I feel like it would have helped me improve my leadership and role as a mentor. At some points I was unsure about what he wanted in our papers and what we should have discussed within our mentoring sessions. Giving us a sense of guidance would have made the mentoring session run a lot more smoothly.

She also felt that there needed to be more discussion around the course readings and how these readings applied to the SP, so that she could be sure that she was interpreting the readings correctly and adjusting her performance in the SP accordingly. This general lack of feedback was frustrating for Shayna, who felt like she was unable to improve her skills as a leader or a mentor as much as she could have during this experience.

***Mediating variables.*** Shayna earned an overall average of 7.56 out of 10 on the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, where five questions were used to evaluate her Reflection Journals from the entire semester. This was the second highest rating among the undergraduate student leaders, suggesting that Shayna was one of the more reflective students who also demonstrated higher levels of critical thinking in her Reflection Journals. More specifically, Shayna earned an average rating of 6.85 in response to the question: “On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?” Similarly, her demonstration of critical thinking and cognitive complexity were moderate, with an average rating of 5.85 in response to the question: “On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experiences?” Although this may not seem very high, this was the highest average score for this question out of any undergraduate student leaders in the study.

In the post-service interview, Shayna was asked to rate the quality and quantity of her reflection throughout the semester, giving herself an 8 out of 10. She explained her rationale for this rating:

The reason why I don't give it a full 10 is because it would've been better to get some feedback [from the Program Director] so that I can learn from that. And I think the biggest part of the experience is learning from it and learning what I'm doing wrong and what I could've improved on. But I do give it an 8 because it does help me realize some of the things that I forgot about, like the leadership and putting all the effort and the steps that I have to do to get to my goal and having a goal so that I can realize what's more achievable and what's more easy for, like ways for me to get to that goal. So that's why I give it an 8.

When she was asked to think about the quality and quantity of her reflection when completing the Reflection Journal each week, she gave herself a 7 out of 10, indicating just how carefully and thoughtfully she completed the Reflection Journals. Overall, Shayna truly appreciated the process of reflection. In the post-service interview, she explained how the service-learning experience was "different than volunteering, because with this whole reflection part of it...I'm writing it down and actually reflecting." Through reflection, she examined the mistakes she made in the SP and the things she could improve on, and she then adjusted her behavior "in the next program session." Shayna compared this to volunteering, where she felt like "you just go on with your life. You're not really thinking" about making changes because you are not reflecting. In her words, "I like the feeling of writing about it and reflecting on what I would do with my mentoring, because it made me realize...if I talked [about] this [topic]," then the mentoring would be even more effective. In the post-service reflection, when Shayna was

directly asked whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals changed the way she acted in the SP, she explained how “the reflections slightly effected the way I acted in the program. Sitting down and writing out my observations had made me realize how much I can improve on certain areas.” Below is a response in her Reflection Journal from the fifth week that demonstrates Shayna’s reflection and cognitive complexity:

*Even though it may seem a little too soon to do so, I had got a couple students to do the small routine in front of the group. When dancing our short routine, I would mess up and forget the counts. Showing that I am struggling as a leader gave them a sense imperfections are ok because we are all about the learning process anyways. When I kept messing up the counts, I turned back to see if I had some effect on their performance. It seemed like they were all doing fine, so instead of leading and messing up, I asked one of the students to dance in front of me. She absolutely refused and said NO! In a friendly tone, I asked her again politely because she seemed to understand it where as I kept getting confused. I also asked her to help me and she was willing to. After having all of us do it as a group and having her in front while I followed, she let loose and started enjoying herself.*

Another example from the eighth week of the SP is below, with Shayna’s responses to two questions from that week’s program observations.

*Q) Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?*

*A) We discussed the concepts of responsibility, effort, leadership and goal settings. Because we practice these skills in the program, these students are getting a better sense of what it takes to master these qualities. They understand that these qualities are also essential to their school work, outside activities and life in general. When talking to [a high school student], she seemed to understand the concept of goal setting. We spoke briefly after running around the school about how competitive she was in middle school as a track athlete. "In middle school, I was 1st place in 7th grade and 3rd place in 8th grade". When I told her how great her placement was, she replied "I slowed down in 8th grade. 3rd place is not good enough". She tells me that she needed to work harder and that she does not like settling down for 3rd place. Though it seems like she pushes herself to a greater extent, she understand the hard work that needs to be put if you want to achieve the desired goal.*

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) When helping [a high school student] lead, I noticed that she would count and direct exactly as I would. I've learned that everything I do is modeled, therefore I need to make it a point to be a great role-model. Also, last week another student mentioned how she loved the songs on the play list. I asked her what kind of*

*music she would like to hear and she replied "Miley Cyrus!!". Taking into consideration her excitement when she said that, I made it a point to add a song into my play list. She lit up on Tuesday when she heard a Miley Cyrus song and said "you remembered". Something as small as actually taking their suggestion is a form of building their trust. I want to assure them that I am truly listening to them and taking any of their comments and suggestions into consideration.*

Overall, Shayna was very thoughtful in her responses in the Reflection Journals, taking time to answer each question with tremendous detail and reflect on her own life experiences as well as what was occurring in the SP. She demonstrated critical thinking skills in many of her responses, often examining others' perspectives so that she could better understand their actions and consider how she would respond if the same situation were to occur again in the future.

***Proximal outcomes.*** This service-learning course had a significant impact on Shayna's life in a variety of ways. Beginning with the social domain, Shayna became a true leader through this experience. Up until her participation in this service-learning course, she had not held any type of leadership position, and in the pre-service interview, she even expressed her discomfort and hesitation in taking a leadership role in the SP. Despite this discomfort, she matured into a thoughtful and responsive leader through her leadership roles as a co-instructor of the dance station and a mentor. In the second to last week of the SP, Shayna shared in her Reflection Journal how "this program has given me the opportunity to work on my leadership skills by helping these students explore their many options available to them. It has also helped me build my patience for students who learn at different rates." As one of the primary instructors of the dance station, Shayna learned how to "be more directive, how to demonstrate, and how to speak more thoroughly for someone to understand" when she taught dance routines. Her improvement in teaching the dance station was also recorded by the investigator in the participant observations, with a series of notations about her struggles at the beginning of the semester and her improvement as the SP progressed. In her new leadership position, Shayna also

realized that she needed to give “100%” no matter how she felt, because she was “a role model who needs to set a good example.” This change in her effort was also noted in the participant observations, with the investigator highlighting how Shayna’s personality began to shine through, with more laughter and encouragement for others. Shayna’s development throughout the service-learning course actually mirrored the stages of youth leadership development identified by van Linden and Ferman (1998): (a) *awareness* at the outset of the service-learning course, when leadership was not yet a part of Shayna’s life and she was just beginning to familiarize herself with leadership concepts and skills through the course readings and discussions; (b) *interaction* throughout the first half of the service-learning course, as Shayna began to explore how specific leadership skills affected certain outcomes in the high school students; and (c) *integration* towards the end of the service-learning course, when Shayna focused on improving her leadership skills and abilities even further while also considering how she may use these leadership skills in the future.

By the end of the service-learning course, Shayna realized that taking a leadership position could be valuable to others, as her opinions and experiences *matter* and could change the lives of others in positive ways. This was new for her, because at the beginning of the service-learning course, she “wasn’t really the type to put myself out there. I was always anti-social. I was held back and second-guessed myself, whether it was having confidence in my answers or being able to just be a leader in general.” However, Shayna was able to overcome her “shy personality” and stop “second guessing” herself with the SP, leading to higher self-confidence, higher self-efficacy in her ability to lead young people, and more self-awareness and self-understanding of her abilities as a leader and a mentor. She described these changes in her post-service reflection:

As a result from the program, my self-confidence has definitely improved. Prior to the program, I was an anti-social student who always second guessed everything I did. After the program, my ability to step up to the plate, teach and lead a group of younger teens has helped me improve my leadership skills and thus my self-confidence.

It is possible that Shayna's improvement in self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-awareness, and self-understanding are similar to Amanda's improvements in these areas, as both participants did not undergo as much identity exploration as is optimal for their stage in life. While athletics may have been the reason for this delay for Amanda, it is possible that Shayna's lack of significant identity exploration and psychosocial development could be linked with her overly scheduled life (i.e., work, school, family responsibilities) leaving her almost no time for her own personal reflection. Throughout the service-learning course, Shayna also became more open with her feelings and experiences, both with the high school students and with the Program Director and undergraduate student leaders. In his post-service interview, the Program Director was impressed by the fact that she was willing to express her feelings in front of her peers and the high school students, unlike some of the other undergraduate student leaders in the service-learning course. This showed significant growth and self-confidence in sharing her feelings and experiences with her peers.

Shifting to a focus on the academic and intellectual outcomes from her experience in the service-learning course, Shayna earned a B in this course, which is at the high range of her college grade point average (B- to B). She felt that she achieved "the learning outcomes from the syllabus, such as being able to reach out to students by means of mentoring them and guide them with their possible futures." She also believed she improved in her ability to implement the SP phases, which was one of the student learning objects and was an integral part of the course



content. Overall, she felt she improved in a variety of areas that she “can apply towards my life,” such as being a strong leader in physical therapy and occupational therapy in the future. In the post-service reflection, Shayna also shared her newfound knowledge that “everything we learn [in kinesiology] can be applied towards everyone. I’ve learned that the things we teach about kinesiology to the students can be understood even at a young age.” So her experience in the service-learning course certainly broadened her understanding of her kinesiology major and the application of this field of study in other areas of life.

In the final domain of social and community engagement, Shayna highlighted the variety of interpersonal skills she learned from her experience in the service-learning course. She learned “how to interact with high school students” by being more patient, using different strategies to motivate the students, and not “using too many intellectual terms but rather simplifying things...so that [the high school students] comprehend.” This was a significant area of improvement, as Shayna’s initial experiences as a co-instructor of the dance station were filled with technical terms and difficult dance moves that the high school students could not follow. However, by changing her language, simplifying the dance moves, and showing patience when the high school students were confused, they were able to follow her with much more success. Shayna also explained in the post-service reflection how she “learned to work with different teenagers [in the SP] who have different values of their life and education.” She felt as if this prepared her to work with a variety of individuals in the future, both personally and professionally.

As for her awareness and understanding of social justice issues, Shayna improved in this area as well:

I've learned that some of the issues that arise from the delinquent students derive from their household. One particular [high school] student went through an ordeal in which resulted in him getting arrested. Because he came from a background with unstable parents, he didn't understand what it meant to have good role models to learn from.

Issues could arise from friends or family. To change the situation, I think people should be further educated on the possible outcomes of their lives.

This quotation demonstrates Shayna's awareness that the high school students' lives are complicated and they may act in ways that reflect their family and their environment. What is most interesting about this comment is Shayna's focus on the power of education to help people overcome their backgrounds and work towards their possible futures. Shayna did not focus on the responsibilities of the communities, the schools, or the families, instead highlighting the power of education to help each individual become personally responsible for their lives.

Shayna also expressed interest in "continuing my volunteer work," as this "huge accomplishment has only enhanced my motivation for volunteering," particularly in underserved communities.

I definitely want to continue working with underserved students, because I came from that kind of background and actually living it and being that mentor, being able to reach out to them made me realize I can reach out to any student. So that definitely helped me, it's motivated me to want to do the same kind of work. Which I really am looking forward to, because I am still in that kind of environment and I see all these kids, like these potential kids that can do really well, but they just don't put a lot of effort into it. So I definitely want to continue with that. And I'm just the type that, I really want to put

myself out there and really help my community, so hopefully I can find a program similar to that in my city.

Along with searching for volunteering opportunities nearby, Shayna was also interested in exploring opportunities in third world countries, beginning with a trip to her home country of the Philippines at the end of the semester. The fact that she was able to identify specific ways she was volunteering in the future suggests that she was truly inspired through her work in the SP to give back to those who were less fortunate than herself, including an increased global awareness and interest in serving other communities, which matches previous findings in the service-learning literature (Giles & Eyer, 1994).

***Theoretical application.*** When Shayna's idiographic profile is examined through the theoretical framework, her experience in the service-learning course is largely explained by the theoretical application, along with the wide range of significant proximal outcomes. Shayna was a Filipino female student with good grades, which are all characteristics that increase the effects of service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). While Shayna did not have very much volunteer experience prior to this service-learning course, which has been shown to decrease the effects of service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998), she was acutely aware of the gaps in her life experience (e.g., her lack of any formal leadership experience) and was interested in learning as much as she could from the service-learning course. She also expressed an interest in serving her community and giving back to the community, which may be linked to the fact that she grew up in an underserved community and felt as if she could help out other students with similar backgrounds. The service-learning experience seemed to be a strong placement for Shayna, which has been shown to increase the effects of service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Mabry, 1998), as Shayna frequently highlighted the important work the SP was doing with the

high school students as well as her valuable role as a leader and mentor in the SP. She truly believed in the SP and appreciated the opportunity to learn from this experience while also having a positive impact on the high school students. Shayna gave a high level of effort in the service-learning course, highlighted by the fact that she was the only undergraduate student leader in the SP who actively participated in the pre- and post-session meetings. Additionally, she was open to feedback, although she indicated that she may have learned more through the service-learning course if she had more feedback from the Program Director about her performance in the course.

This lack of feedback did not severely limit Shayna's reflection and cognitive complexity in the Reflection Journals, as she received the second highest rating on the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale among the undergraduate student leaders. She truly engaged in and appreciated the process of reflection, taking time to answer each question with tremendous detail and reflect on her own life experiences as well as what was occurring in the SP. She also demonstrated critical thinking skills in many of her responses, which was much more than the majority of the participants in this dissertation. This deep reflection and cognitive complexity, combined with her self-awareness, interest in learning, high level of effort, and openness to change, led to a large number of significant proximal outcomes. Overall, the theoretical framework provided a strong explanation for Shayna's idiographic profile and the resulting proximal outcomes.

**Sean.** The eight sources of data specific to Sean in the study totaled 81 typed pages. During the pre-service interview, Sean spoke for 23 minutes, while the post-service interview lasted 40 minutes.

**Context.** Sean was a 25 year old male who was a full-time student at the university under study in his final semester. When he was asked in the pre-service interview to describe his political preferences, he identified as a liberal but did not explain this preference in more depth. Sean was Filipino and was born in the Philippines. When he was five years old, his parents separated, with Sean immigrating to America with his mother and siblings for two years before returning to the Philippines for three more years. He then permanently moved to America at the age of 10, where he has since lived with his mother and three older sisters. Sean's native language was Tagalog which was also the language he spoke at home, although he was also fluent in English. While growing up, Sean struggled in school because of the numerous transitions between Filipino and American schools and their different educational systems. With so much upheaval during his childhood with his family life and the numerous moves between countries, Sean remembered struggling "with math, reading...it's hard knowing two languages. To transfer here in America, it's really hard. So I struggled."

Sean described his family as low income when he was growing up, although he estimated that his mother made between \$30,000 and \$39,999 during the previous year. His mother attended high school but did not receive her diploma, with a job as a caregiver at the time of the study. Although he was no longer in Sean's life, his father received his high school diploma by taking the General Educational Development test, and he was employed by the army. Sean graduated high school just outside of the city with a C+ average, and began taking nursing classes at a local community college. He was initially interested in nursing because his sisters were all in that field, but he soon realized this was not the right path for him. He then began taking classes in kinesiology, because of his interest in physical therapy and coaching. At the time of the study, Sean was in his final semester of college after six and a half years of

coursework at the community college level and at the university under study. He was still living at home, with a 30 minute commute to and from campus each day. Sean was majoring in kinesiology with a focus on athletic coaching and physical therapy. During his time at the university under study, he maintained a grade point average between 2.1 and 2.5 (C to B-). Sean was applying to graduate school for physical therapy during the time of the study, although he was also entertaining ideas of coaching high school and even college or professional athletes in the future. However, Sean's professional goals ended up shifting due to his experience in the service-learning course, as will be explored in a later section.

Over the past few years, Sean worked at an after-school program with elementary school students near his home, coaching a number of different sports, including soccer, basketball, and flag football. This job allowed him to make an estimated total gross income between \$15,000 and \$19,999 during the previous year, and it also helped him realize how much he enjoyed coaching and working with kids. When the after-school program closed, Sean found a new job coaching flag football at a local middle school, which began at the same time as the SP. Along with these jobs coaching young people, Sean was also very involved with his church, volunteering as a Sunday School teacher for two and a half years. Overall, religion was a significant part of Sean's life, so he was happy with his ability to serve the church in this way. With all of these coaching and teaching experiences with young people, Sean realized that "kids need a role model, especially the kids around where I live. They're really poor and I wanna make a difference to the kids...so they won't become unfortunate in the future and they can have a future also." He enjoyed working with kids because "it's a great feeling helping out other kids...it's a rewarding feeling for me."

*Service-learning experience.* When Sean was in high school, he was unsure about his future with regards to higher education, but he was able to attend a summer program at the university under study that prepared high school students to go to college. Sean believed that this program enabled him to pursue higher education, which was one of the main reasons he was interested in “help[ing] out the high school students” in the SP. He was also drawn to the SP because he wanted to “pursue coaching in the future” and “build my relationship with older kids and get used to them,” because he had not yet worked with high school students. Up until the service-learning course, his only coaching experience was with elementary and middle school students, so Sean saw the service-learning course as both a challenge and an opportunity to learn how to work with older students. All in all, he was excited to help “educate these kids” and strongly believed they would benefit from the SP.

At the beginning of the semester, Sean demonstrated a basic understanding of the SP and its theoretical background in his responses in the Reflection Journal, suggesting that he had reviewed the course readings for the first week of the semester. Sean felt as if these readings, the course syllabus, and his “experience working with kids” would enable him to be successful in the SP. Once the programming began, he continued to draw lessons from the course readings, because “they actually share examples...they share information about the behavior of the kids also, and the different programs out there for the youths. So it’s really helpful.” Sean was one of the participants who seemed to rely on the course readings as a resource, indicating his interest in learning from the service-learning course as well as his concern with effectively implementing the SP and being a strong role model and mentor for the high school students.

In his eyes, the SP was an excellent program that positively impacted the high school student participants. In his Reflection Journal from the eighth week of the SP, Sean reflected on the overall impact of the SP up to that point:

The [high school student] participants are getting a better sense of their future. From my observation during the activities, the students are being empowered by taking on leadership role. In addition, because they are given the chance to become leaders in the class, they are able to become more aware of what they should do or not do such as always respecting their fellow classmates, always putting a lot of effort in the activities and remembering to set goals in the program. Furthermore, during the awareness talk and group discussion, the students are learning to give good and well thought responses about the program and about their personal improvements in the program.

During the SP, Sean was one of the instructors of the martial arts station and he also served as a mentor for two high school students: a multiracial male student identifying with both the African American and Caucasian races who was very shy and reserved throughout the duration of the SP and a Latino male student who transitioned from a quiet, reticent student into a moderately vocal, engaged high school student leader. Sean did not develop mentoring relationships with his high school student mentees that were as strong as some of the other undergraduate student leaders, and he also avoided describing his relationship with his two mentees as “close” or “caring.” This may be because he saw his mentoring role in the SP as “being a good role model for the students and making sure that I fulfill all of the program’s mission and objectives.” Instead of focusing on creating caring and deep relationships with his high school student mentees, Sean focused on the mission of the SP while also ensuring he was a good role model for his high school student mentees. Sean did not see the depth of these relationships as a limitation to his experience in the



SP, as he felt this was perfectly normal and did not identify any problems he had in developing relationships with his two high school student mentees.

In the post-service reflection, Sean shared how “meaningful” and “wonderful” this experience was for him. He truly appreciated the experience of making “a difference in the life of some kids in the program. Teaching and being able to see the improvements of each students makes me very happy.” He felt that “this experience was personally valuable” to him, leading Sean to work very hard in the SP, as the Program Director highlighted in his post-service interview. In the participant observations, the investigator also indicated Sean’s positive attitude and demeanor when interacting with the high school students, with an ever-present smile on his face and compliments ready to be given to the students. Interestingly, this enthusiasm and work ethic did not transfer into the pre- and post-session meetings with the Program Director and undergraduate student leaders, when Sean was always quiet and reserved. It is possible that Sean’s lack of participation in these meetings could be due to his discomfort with speaking in the English language, given that he was a non-native English speaker, although he did not mention this during his interviews or in his post-service reflection. In the post-service interview, when Sean was asked to reflect on his experience working with the Program Director, he shared how he “could have had more feedback [from the Program Director], and that would be very helpful.” While Sean did not focus on this as much as the other participants, it was still clear that his experience in the service-learning course was suboptimal because of the overall lack of feedback. However, he did not seem as comfortable as the other participants in speaking in great depth about his desire for more feedback and any other concerns he held regarding the Program Director.

*Mediating variables.* Throughout the service-learning course, Sean demonstrated a moderate level of reflection and cognitive complexity. When he was asked in the post-service interview to rate himself on the quality and quantity of his reflection throughout the semester, he gave himself an 8 out of 10. As for a self-rating of the quality and quantity of reflection when completing the Reflection Journal each week, Sean gave himself a 6 out of 10. These ratings are slightly higher than the findings from the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, which was used to evaluate Sean's Reflection Journals throughout the service-learning course. His overall rating was an average of 6.65 out of 10. When the five questions from the scale were examined individually, his Reflection Journals earned an average rating of 5.34 in response to the question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?" His rating dropped even further to an average of 3.91 in response to the question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experiences?" This was one of the lowest scores for this question out of any of the undergraduate student leaders, suggesting that Sean did not demonstrate high levels of cognitive complexity in his Reflection Journals. It is possible that these low levels of cognitive complexity were an indication of Sean's discomfort with the English language, as he was a non-native English speaker who did not write as easily or as well as the rest of the participants in the study. In fact, the Program Director identified this concern in his post-service interview, noting how Sean's "verb tenses were off here and there" because English was probably his "second language." So it is possible that Sean's ability to complete the Reflection Journals and demonstrate deep reflection and high levels of cognitive complexity were limited by his writing proficiency in the English language.

When Sean was asked in the post-service reflection whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals changed the way he acted in the SP, he responded: “Yes, I think the reflections each week have change the way I acted in the program because by writing the reflection, I was able to focus on what I needed to do or what to implement during the activities.” In his post-service interview, Sean expanded by sharing how the Reflection Journals allowed you to “reflect on your teaching on that week. You can reflect on what happened, what you did wrong or what you did right.” However, when he was asked whether the weekly Reflection Journals had any impact on his learning, he admitted that “the reflections that I wrote each week have only little impact on my learning.”

In the Reflection Journals, Sean answered the following optional question every single week: “What contributions has this youth work made to your life?” This is an indication of Sean’s comfort with sharing his own personal growth from the service-learning course, and it also explains why the Program Director felt that Sean was “very thoughtful in his reflections.” Below is a response taken from the seventh week of the SP, when Sean was responding to a question about the course reading:

*Chapter 6 can definitely relate to my five years experience working in the after school program in elementary school. Chapter 6 talks about the experience of university students working in the public school system. It was mentioned in this chapter that working in public school is not easy because it requires for an individual to have patient, good communication skills, dedication, understanding, compassion, trust, respect, effort, leadership and being able to give good suggestion and feedback to the students. In addition, the book mentioned that in order to be a good mentors or teacher, one should be able to get to know the students and develop relationships and trust with the kids. These are very true because base on my experience working in the after school program, I had to build good relationship with my students first wherein I learned their names, know the type of things they are interested in, find out how well were they doing in school, what were some things they were struggling at and identify whether they were the shy type of person or not. By doing all of these things, I was able to build good relationship with my students in the after school program and gained their respect and trust. In addition, knowing how to react appropriately to difficult circumstances is very important when working with kids. For example, when two of my students were fighting*

*during our basketball practice, I made sure that I did not show favoritism towards my students. Therefore, I disciplined both students the same to let the students know that I do not take on anyone sides. Furthermore, this chapter also mentioned how important to get feed back from the students. By having the kids voice heard, the students are able to share their own opinion about the program. For some, knowing how kids really feel about the program might be disappointing. However, I think that it is helpful to receive feedback from the students because instructors and mentors would be able to identify the things that the program are lacking in and the things the program needs improvement on.*

Although this response is a demonstration of the quality and quantity of reflection that Sean shared in his responses, this was not consistent throughout the semester. Some weeks, he would approach the Reflection Journal as a task to be completed while other weeks he would go into much more depth and reflect on his experiences in the SP and in his own personal life. As for any indication of his cognitive complexity, Sean rarely took others' perspectives in his writing and he rarely questioned or critically examined topics. Instead, he assumed the course readings were accurate and he did not question any of the course content. There were also weeks when he copied and pasted some of his earlier responses into that week's Reflection Journal, suggesting that he may have felt rushed in completing the journal entries or simply did not want to give the effort. Below are Sean's responses to two questions in the program observations from the eighth week of the SP:

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) I feel very happy seeing that all of the students are improving everyday in the program. Because of their improvements, I feel that I am making a difference in the lives of these young kids. Hopefully, by continuing to help them in the program, they will all be empowered and become successful in the future.*

*Q) Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.*

*A) Base from what I notice in week 6, students who are normal shy are becoming more social. For instance, during the awareness talk, one of the shy student in class give good awareness response. In addition, this same student answered the workbook question without me helping. This only shows that students are really learning in the program.*

***Proximal outcomes.*** At the conclusion of his experience in the service-learning course, Sean believed this experience was quite influential for him personally and professionally, and the Program Director agreed with this assessment, sharing how Sean “grew significantly from [the] experience.” Within the personal domain, Sean became a much stronger teacher, as he “learned new techniques on how to lead a class effectively” and he learned “how to manage or resolve different types of high school students behaviors.” This matched Sean’s interest in learning more about this age group, as he had only worked with younger students before his involvement in the SP. Additionally, up until this experience, Sean had never learned a “structured way of teaching,” which he felt would help him in his future endeavors. The Program Director agreed that Sean learned a lot about leadership through his involvement in the service-learning course. Although Sean shared how the high school students gave him the motivation to “become a better person,” he was the only participant who did not discuss any improvement in the areas of self-esteem, confidence, or self-understanding. This may be due to Sean’s focus on improving in areas that would help him professionally, but this was certainly a departure from the personal outcomes shared by the other participants.

Moving to the academic and intellectual domain, Sean earned an A- in the course, which was higher than his college grade point average (C to B-). He also learned how to “create developmentally appropriate physical activity-based lesson plans” that followed the TPSR Model and the SP, which was listed as a learning objective in the course syllabus. Additionally, he learned a tremendous amount of practical information, as he was able to take the knowledge he gained from the service-learning course, including the leadership experiences, theoretical background, and the strategies, and apply these in his everyday life. In his words, “everything that I’ve learned from the program, it’s really helping me right now.” He then shared how he

was using this information in his coaching, his social life, and his own personal management (e.g., setting goals). Sean also discussed his newfound interest in pursuing “a career as a teacher in the future.” Sean decided to make a career change because he wanted “to make a difference in our society,” which was inspired by his involvement in the service-learning course. He truly enjoyed interacting with and teaching the high school students in the SP, which motivated him to pursue a teaching career. Given that a career choice is a serious commitment that may consume a large part of one’s life, researchers have suggested that a student’s commitment to a service-based career such as teaching may be the strongest possible outcome from a service-learning course (Astin et al., 2000). In Sean’s case, he expressed his interest in continuing to work with young people in a learning environment for his career, despite the need for more education to obtain the required teaching credentials.

Finally shifting to the social and community engagement domain, Sean learned a number of interpersonal skills, especially when interacting with high school students. This was one of his goals when he began the service-learning course, and so he was pleased that he learned to “work very well with young people.” He also learned how to “encourage young people to work hard in life and in school.” As for the ability to empower young people, the Program Director felt as if Sean learned how to “empower kids and get them to teach, get them to lead and talk and run things...that’s what he did. That’s...a big deal for him.” This also was strongly related to his new career goal in teaching. Sean’s experience in the service-learning course also encouraged him to search for volunteer opportunities with this population again in the near future, although he did not explore this topic in as much depth as some of the other participants.

***Theoretical application.*** Upon examination of Sean’s idiographic profile relative to the theoretical framework, the theoretical application largely explains his experience in the service-

learning course as well as his proximal outcomes. Sean's predisposing factors were a mixture of those which have been reported to increase the effects of service-learning (e.g., Filipino, liberal) and those which may decrease the effects of service-learning (e.g., male, minimal volunteer experience) (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). However, Sean did express excitement about the service-learning course, with an interest in helping others and learning skills that could help him in his future career. He also strongly believed in the SP, highlighting the ways in which he felt the high school students were positively changing due to their participation in the SP and his interactions with them as a leader, role model, and mentor. Sean's interest, excitement, motivation, and belief in the program and in his role have all been linked to positive effects of service-learning in previous studies (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998). While Sean did express an interest in receiving more feedback from the Program Director, he did not focus on this as much as the other participants, suggesting that this was not a significant barrier for him. Sean's mentoring relationships with his two high school student mentees did not seem as strong as the other participants' mentoring relationships, which may be due to his discomfort with writing in the English language, leading to less detail in his description of his mentoring relationships.

The fact that Sean was a non-native English speaker could have also limited his writing in the Reflection Journals, leading to less reflection and cognitive complexity than would have been expressed if he were more comfortable with the English language. Despite this potential barrier, Sean demonstrated a moderate level of reflection and cognitive complexity throughout the service-learning course. Overall, it seemed as if Sean experienced fewer proximal outcomes than some of the other participants, although the outcomes which he experienced seemed to be quite powerful (e.g., his career change to teaching, enhanced interpersonal skills). So the

theoretical framework provided a strong explanation for Sean's idiographic profile and the resulting proximal outcomes, with the mediating variables of reflection and cognitive complexity seeming to limit Sean's ability to maximize his experience in the service-learning course and the number of proximal outcomes achieved. However, conclusions about his quality of reflection and cognitive complexity must be viewed with caution because his language skills may have influenced the results.

**Jill.** The eight sources of data related to Jill's experience in the service-learning experience totaled 80 typed pages. The pre-service interview with Jill lasted 24 minutes, while she spoke for 39 minutes during the post-service interview.

**Context.** Jill was a 26 year old Caucasian female who spoke English as a native language and was a full-time student in her last semester at the university under study. She grew up in Wisconsin, where she was home schooled for 10 out of her 12 years of schooling. She estimated that her average in high school was an A or A+. Both of Jill's parents attended a post-secondary technical or trade school before working in a factory as their full-time employment, although her mother was also a gardener. Jill estimated that her parents' total gross income during the previous year was between \$50,000 and \$59,999. When she was asked to describe her political preferences, Jill explained how she was "kinda neutral in a sense," as she felt that "both parties are a little twisted" with their own agendas. While she seemed knowledgeable of the political ideologies, she did not feel any connection with either party and generally eschewed the political process.

Jill was trained as a figure skater during her youth, with this training and passion for the sport continuing into her adult life. Following high school graduation, she moved to the city where the study took place to train full-time as a figure skater. From this time forward, Jill was



financially independent from her parents. During her second year in the city, Jill began taking classes at a local community college, enrolling in two classes each semester for the next few years while continuing to train for about 15 hours each week. Her commitment to figure skating led to professional sponsorship for a period of time, including a year in Europe where she toured with a professional company. Upon her return to the city, she finished her coursework at the same community college before transferring to the university under study to complete her degree. During her two and a half years at this university, she maintained a grade point average between 2.6 and 3.0 (B- to B), majoring in kinesiology with an emphasis in neuromuscular science. With an interest in pursuing physical therapy in the future, she also took prerequisite classes required for graduate school in physical therapy, although these classes did not count towards her undergraduate degree. This awareness of the required classes for graduate school was just one indication of Jill's organizational skills, which were also used to manage her busy schedule. She estimated that she generally had three jobs at any one time, with these jobs changing throughout her time in the city. These included working in sales at a department store and as a fitness instructor at a local gym, although her longest job outside of the figure skating world was as a waitress for six years. At the time of the study, Jill was a figure skating coach, with both private and group lessons each week. This type of job most likely required a high degree of sociability in order to recruit new clients and maintain old clients, which Jill seemed to do with ease. She began coaching at the age of 11 as an assistant coach and became a full-time coach when she was 16 years old, leading to a tremendous amount of coaching experience and "a lot of experiences with kids." While the skaters she worked with ranged from 2 to 85 years old, she estimated that the average age range was between 4 and 16 years old. Jill probably had the most experience with young people out of any participants in the study, although her experience

outside of coaching was much more limited. She explained how she really liked “working with kids because unlike adults, they’re very optimistic and eager.” When she was asked about her total gross income during the previous year, she estimated that she made between \$25,000 and \$29,999.

At the time of the pre-service interview, Jill shared how her professional goals included graduate school for physical therapy while also studying for her MBA, so that she had more options in the future. However, she had just returned to the city from a summer internship at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, so she was also entertaining a number of other career options as well. In her words, “I have too many interests.” In the pre-service interview, she acknowledged how difficult it would be for her to give up coaching figure skating, so she was hoping to find a career that would allow her to continue this as well. Interestingly, after her experience in the service-learning course, Jill’s career goals shifted once again, which will be presented later in this section. Overall, it was clear that Jill was still exploring her career options at the time of the study.

Jill did not have very much experience as a volunteer, with her volunteering experiences focused solely in the professional arena. She had volunteered for one year at a local hospital “in the in-patient physical therapy department,” which was “a requirement for physical therapy school.” She appreciated this volunteering experience, as she was able to learn more about the field of physical therapy and her potential career path. She also volunteered as an intern at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. However, she had not had any volunteering experiences unrelated to her future career, which matched her commitment to finding an exciting and satisfying career.

*Service-learning experience.* When Jill was asked *why* she enrolled in the service-learning course, she explained how “it sounded really fun, because I really like teaching.” She also explained that she was unable to take the senior research course required for graduation that semester, so the service-learning course allowed her to fulfill that requirement. In the pre-service interview, she also shared how she was “excited about [the SP]...I think it’s a cool thing and it kinda blends in like you’re kinda teaching a little, you’re kinda mentoring.” She was “not too worried about meeting the students or talking with them,” because she had so much experience with young people. This was actually one of her main concerns with the service-learning course, as she was not sure if she could learn very much from this experience.

I do teach so much already and I do work with kids a lot, so...I was a little hesitant...but I think it will still be a really cool experience in a high school setting, and it’s not coaching like skating, so it is different. But I’m hoping I learn a lot from it. I don’t really know how much...we’ll find out.

Jill was the only participant in the study who was unable to identify specific skills or areas in which she could improve as a result of her experience in this service-learning course, which may have impacted her experience in the service-learning course as well as the resultant outcomes. However, unlike John who was uninterested in learning from the service-learning course, Jill was open to the possibility of learning but was simply unsure of whether she would actually learn new skills and strategies.

Despite her personal reservations about her own learning from the service-learning course, she felt that the program could have a positive impact on the high school student participants, helping them “become a little more excited about options for themselves or maybe they’ll see how something they thought was a dream is actually attainable and they can do these

small steps and get towards that.” She related this to her own experience taking classes for free at a local community college, which was a strategy she was planning on sharing with the high school students to increase their awareness of these types of opportunities. All in all, before the SP began, Jill was hopeful “that by the end of the program, each student’s life has been positively impacted.”

In the Reflection Journal from the first week of the service-learning course, Jill demonstrated a basic understanding of the SP and its theoretical background, indicating she had completed the readings for the first week. In the post-service interview, when Jill was asked to reflect on her feelings at the beginning of the SP, she remembered feeling “pretty prepared for the situation.” Due to her coaching experience with young people, “working with teenagers...that age, teaching exercises to them, that wasn’t really like a scary thing or really different.” She also felt that the course readings provided by the Program Director were helpful, although the implementation of the SP was a bit complicated and hard for her to comprehend initially. Once the SP began, she felt that the course readings continued to help her, because they described “different types of programs” that gave her a “better understanding of what we were supposed to be doing.”

During the activity portion of each session, Jill was one of the co-instructors of the cardio and spin station, where she worked with another undergraduate student to design each day’s activities. In the first few weeks, “she designed very difficult workouts for the kids in her station,” as noted by the investigator in the participant observations. She was focused on pushing the high school students to work hard, even though the Program Director explained that she was doing “things that were just beyond any of our [abilities]. Doing ab work that probably professional ice skaters would work on.” This initial expectation may have reflected her lifelong

training as a competitive ice skater, experience as a professional ice skater, her role as a coach in ice skating, and her previous employment as a personal trainer. However, as the SP progressed, she began to slightly adjust the activities to better match the high school students' abilities, and she also became more encouraging and responsive to the high school students during the exercises. This included asking questions about their participation in the activities, providing more detailed explanations of the exercises, and providing easier variations for high school students who could not complete the exercises. The Program Director felt that Jill and the other co-instructor made these changes after he provided feedback on their activities.

In her post-service reflection, Jill shared how the service-learning course allowed her to learn much more than the typical class because of the “hands-on experience” where she could learn from her actions. This included her role as a mentor, as she was matched with just one high school student mentee who was an Asian female student who had recently emigrated from China. Jill developed a close relationship with this high school student, learning about her past in China and her immigration to the United States as well as supporting her high school student mentee in a number of different ways (e.g., researching more than was expected for the benefit of her high school student mentee). It was clear that Jill truly cared for her high school student mentee and was personally invested in the mentoring relationship. She found it “meaningful to be able to work with somebody and to hopefully make an impact on their life.” This was very different from her past experiences with youth, where she “was getting paid X amount of dollars per half hour” and she had the figure skaters’ parents “watching you” to make sure she earned her money as a coach. Jill felt that as a mentor in the SP, “it was nice...to sit down [with her high school student mentee] and get to know each other a little more.”

Despite her excitement surrounding the activities and the mentoring in the SP, Jill rarely spoke during the pre- and post-session meetings, which could be due to her feelings about the Program Director. In her words, “he’s got a little bit of an abrasive approach, and so he’s not really approachable to discuss things with because he kind of snaps back at you.” Along with being hesitant to ask questions or share ideas with the Program Director, Jill wanted more feedback from him. “All of us that were mentoring, we were all saying that...we wished we had gotten some feedback.” This included feedback on the Reflection Journals, because he did “not really give us suggestions, he would just say: ‘Write more.’ Or he would call us out in front of everybody...in a really uncomfortable way.” Instead of creating these difficult situations, she wished the Program Director would provide constructive criticism to each individual separately, unless this feedback was for the group as a whole. Jill also felt as if the Program Director “played favorites” with the undergraduate student leaders instead of giving compliments to all of the undergraduate student leaders in the SP. While this was not mentioned by any of the other participants in the study, this was her perception and must be examined as a potential factor in her experience in the service-learning course as well as her outcomes from this experience. Out of all of the undergraduate student leaders, Jill seemed to be the most concerned with the lack of feedback, detailed direction, and individual attention from the Program Director. This could be explained by her home schooling experience before college. While the details of this unique educational experience were not explored in-depth, it is likely that her parents were religiously motivated in their decision to home school Jill for 10 out of 12 years, as 75% of home school educators in the United States are conservative Christians with a predominate focus on the Bible and an interest in teaching specific religious values to their children (Ray, 1999; Riemer, 1995). Cai, Reeve, and Robinson (2002) found that religiously motivated home school teachers (e.g.,

parents) often held a motivating style that was significantly more controlling than conventional public school teachers. This controlling motivating style is correlated with a highly structured learning environment (Mayberry & Knowles, 1989), which may have caused Jill to yearn for more structure outlined by the Program Director in the service-learning course and less of an autonomy-supportive motivating style. In addition, having spent many years training as an ice skater, where it is customary to have individual lessons and healthy doses of feedback with one's private coach on a regular basis, this may have influenced her need for more individualized feedback.

In terms of the impact of the SP on the high school participants, Jill shared in the Reflection Journal during the ninth week how the high school students were “becoming more comfortable at speaking up and sharing their opinions when we meet at the beginning of SP and when at the end. It is exciting that even the shy students are sharing their opinions with the class.” By the end of the program, she felt the high school students were more knowledgeable about “effort, respect, goal setting, and leadership,” which were four levels of the TPSR Model, and she believed that the SP allowed the high school students “to have the confidence to explore themselves and their possible positive futures.” In her eyes, “every participant's life was positively influenced through this experience.” As for how the experience impacted her own life, Jill saw the SP as a meaningful experience where she was responsible for mentoring the high school students by “teaching physical activities and preparing for their futures.” As the semester progressed, she shared how she “really enjoyed helping the participants lead the cardio station. I enjoy helping others succeed.” In her post-service reflection, she wrote how she felt like she “implemented the program well.”

***Mediating variables.*** Jill did not demonstrate a significant amount of reflection or cognitive complexity in her Reflection Journals throughout the service-learning course. In the post-service interview, when she was asked to rate herself on the quality and quantity of her reflection throughout the semester, she gave herself a 5 out of 10. When she was asked to think about the quality and quantity of reflection when completing the Reflection Journal each week, she gave herself another 5 out of 10. This is similar to the findings from the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, which was used to evaluate Jill's Reflection Journals each week of the service-learning course. Her Reflection Journals earned an average rating of 4.88 in response to the question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?" This was one of the lowest average scores for this question for the undergraduate student leaders, suggesting that she did not reflect as much or as deeply as some of the other participants in their Reflection Journals. Jill's rating on the scale dropped even lower to an average of 3.70 in response to the question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experiences?" This was the lowest average score by any of the undergraduate student leaders for this question. As for the overall rating for Jill's Reflection Journal based on the five questions in the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, she earned an average of 6.76 out of 10.

Jill's responses in the Reflection Journals varied quite a bit throughout the semester, with very detailed responses and deep reflection some weeks and much less depth and reflection at other times. Interestingly, she answered the following optional question in *every* Reflection Journal: "What contributions has this youth work made to your life?" However, she only answered the next optional question *two* times out of 13 opportunities throughout the semester: "Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?" This



dichotomy was also noticed by the Program Director in his post-service interview, sharing how “she got pretty engaged” in the course readings and the TPSR Model, but then there were times when “she wrote so little” in the Reflection Journal. She rarely demonstrated critical thinking and did not examine others’ perspectives in her Reflection Journals, which explains why she received such a low score (3.70) for the question about cognitive complexity on the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale. These trends in her Reflection Journal are demonstrated below, first with an example from the program observations in the tenth week that demonstrates a higher degree of reflection:

*Q) Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?*

*A) The participants are getting a better sense of their future as we discuss how getting good grades now will affect the college that they can get into and their performance in college will affect their success after college. We are building the connection of now with the future. I think that is so important and it will encourage them to work harder now because they understand how it plays such an important role in their future.*

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) The SP is very impactful for me because I was home schooled for ten of my twelve years of schooling. I have some regret that I was not able to have the sound foundation in schooling that my participant is getting. College has taken me longer and has been more difficult because I did not receive as solid of a foundation that my participant is receiving. At one point, I didn’t even know if I would be able to graduate from college. It is difficult to get into college when you don’t come from the tradition background. I wish that someone would have been able to help explain how high school and college work when I was her age. I think it is healthy for me to discuss with her the things I have learned the hard way so her experience is more successful.*

*Q) Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.*

*A) My participant and her friend came up with a schedule that allows them both to teach the cardio station. I was really impressed with their ability to work together.*

Conversely, below are her responses to the same questions in the twelfth week of the program, where she does not go into as much depth.

*Q) Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?*

*A) The participants are really starting to connect what we have talked about over the last month or so to their futures. I think it is really exciting for them to be able to think about and discuss with us their different interests for their future. I am really enjoying hearing about their potential futures; there are some very bright students in our class!*

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) By talking to my participant I am able to help her while helping myself. It is a great thing for us college students to help the younger generation. I would be interested in doing this type of work in the future. I really like to see how you can positively affect someone else's life.*

*Q) Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.*

*A) I really like enjoy how everyone is opening up more. So great!*

In the post-service reflection, when Jill was asked whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals changed the way she acted in the SP, she responded: “Only slightly. The readings would remind me of different ways to approach the situation.” Similarly, when she was asked whether the weekly Reflection Journals had any impact on her learning, she responded: “A little. It was most helpful listening to [the Program Director] and working with the students.”

***Proximal outcomes.*** At the beginning of the semester, Jill shared her uncertainty of whether she would learn from this experience, but as soon as the SP began, she realized she was going to grow in a number of ways. Focusing on her growth within the personal domain, Jill mentored a high school student from China who taught Jill quite a bit about her culture as well as her transition to the United States. In Jill's Reflection Journals throughout the semester, she shared how she was learning about another culture and learning “what it is like to move here from another country.” In the ninth week, Jill commented on how she was really enjoying “learning about my [high school student mentee] because she comes from such a different background, it is educational.” She was the only participant who learned about different cultures from the service-learning course, even though some participants were also matched with high

school students from cultures different than their own. Jill's preconceptions and stereotypes associated with students in a "low performing school" were also proven incorrect through the SP, as she initially expected the students to be "super ghetto" or "really obnoxious." These preconceptions and stereotypes mirror findings in teaching education regarding the stereotypical belief that students of color may be problematic, unmotivated, or have inappropriate attitudes (Baldwin et al., 2007; Schultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996). It is possible these preconceptions and stereotypes were related to Jill's educational background in home schooling, although there have not been any significant findings suggesting lower levels of multicultural socialization among home schooled students (Kraychir, 2003). Additionally, figure skating is a sport that requires considerable expense to participate, so this sport is often associated with upper middle class families. This sporting background may have also influenced Jill's views about diversity. Regardless of the rationale for Jill's preconceptions and stereotypes, researchers have found that service-learning can help individuals examine social issues, reevaluate lifelong attitudes, and construct socially just individuals (Baldwin et al., 2007). This may have occurred for Jill, who realized that the high school students were "not as rebellious as I had originally pictured." In fact, "they were pretty well-behaved and well obviously, some of them had some struggles outside of school, but you didn't really know too much about it, like they didn't let it on a lot." Jill realized she needed to be more "understanding of different people and their backgrounds and... try to just be understanding and compassionate to people and not jump to conclusions." This attitudinal shift and her overall approach in working with the high school students were noticed by the Program Director, who felt that the service-learning course "broadened her perspective beyond working with elite kids. I really think she has a better handle on what it

would be like to work with more mainstream kids through physical activity, or underserved kids, for that matter.”

Jill also learned a lot about herself through this experience, realizing that “I value human relationships a lot and I really enjoy helping others achieve success.” In fact, Jill realized she wanted “to mentor my students more than I coach,” which was a new direction for her career. Up until this point, she had never volunteered before, but now, she began thinking about her future and “what kind of job I will be happy with.” Through her experience in the service-learning course, Jill became more aware of what she valued in her job and what she valued in her life.

Jill also improved in her leadership abilities, changing from a leader who pushed the students to perform and be successful in difficult activities to a leader who was aware of her students’ abilities and responded appropriately to their needs. This change occurred over the course of the semester. The following quotation is a response to a course reading in the eleventh week of the program:

I think that it is important that the leaders think of others more than themselves. An example would be making sure that the people you are teaching exercises are able to successfully do the skills and modifying them if you need to even though you might have really wanted to do those skills.

This quotation demonstrates Jill’s development as a leader and her enhanced awareness of the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the students she was leading.

Shifting to the academic and intellectual domain, Jill earned a B in the course, which is at the high end of her college grade point average (B- to B). She felt she learned “about the SP and TPSR,” as well as how to “create appropriate lesson plans for the [high school students].” These

were both learning objectives that the Program Director set for the undergraduate student leaders, and Jill felt as if she had reached these objectives. The Program Director also discussed how Jill became more aware of the youth development literature, which she learned about and began to implement in the SP. Up until this point, Jill had only been involved in elite sport, specifically that of ice skating, with a complete focus on performance, so her exploration and implementation of youth development in a physical activity setting was a novel experience for her.

Finally, within the social and community engagement domain, Jill demonstrated a new interest in volunteer work in the future. Up until her involvement in the service-learning course, Jill had never before volunteered in the community, with the exception of volunteering opportunities specifically related to her career. In her post-service reflection, she explained that “since I had a really good experience with this program, I am interested in helping other kids achieve their goals in other programs in the area.” She then admitted:

Before [the service-learning course] I would volunteer because I need hours for graduate school or I wanted to improve my chances to get into graduate school. Now, I want to volunteer for the right reasons which is to help the students more than myself.

This matches previous findings from Parker-Gwin and Mabry (1998) who found that self-oriented motives for volunteering decreased after high quality service-learning experiences, with students giving less importance to their own personal skill development or the quality of their resumes. At the conclusion of the service-learning course, Jill even asked the Program Director how she could get involved in similar opportunities, whether it be working in similar programs or mentoring young girls. The Program Director believed that the service-learning course “pushed her beyond working with more affluent kids and saying I want to help out more and really valuing this kind of stuff through physical activity.” All in all, while she certainly learned

a significant amount within the social and community engagement domain, it is interesting that Jill was the only student who did not list any improvement in her interpersonal skills, which may be due to her high confidence in this area.

***Theoretical application.*** When reviewing Jill's idiographic profile relative to the theoretical framework, her experience in the service-learning course and her proximal outcomes are largely explained by the theoretical application. Jill's predisposing factors were a mixture of those which have been reported to increase the effects of service-learning (e.g., female, good student) and those which may decrease the effects of service-learning (e.g., white, minimal volunteer experience) (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Overall, Jill was excited about the service-learning course, as she believed that the SP would have a positive impact on the high school students and she truly valued her role as a leader and a mentor. These findings suggest that this was a good placement for Jill, which is linked with a better service-learning experience (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998). While Jill was initially uncertain about whether she would learn anything from the service-learning course, she was still interested and open to learning from this experience, and within the first few weeks of the service-learning course, she realized that she was already learning new skills and acquiring knowledge. This openness to learn seemed to be a key for Jill in deriving benefits from the service-learning experience. Another initial concern regarding her experience in the service-learning course was the fact that she seemed unable to adapt to the high school students at the beginning of the SP, often designing activity stations that were too hard for the high school students to complete. However, as the semester progressed, she was receptive to feedback regarding the design of her activity station and began to be more responsive to the high school students' feelings and abilities.

Overall, there seemed to be three critical factors that negatively impacted her experience in the service-learning course and the number, depth, and complexity of the proximal outcomes. One of these barriers was the lack of feedback, detailed direction, and individual attention from the Program Director, which seemed to concern her more than any other participants. While this was most likely a reflection of her need for individual attention based on her home schooling and years of private ice skating lessons, previous studies have suggested that low quality feedback from course instructors may negatively impact students' learning, knowledge of skills, and commitment to service (Greene, 1996; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Subramony, 2000), so it is possible that the lack of high quality feedback from the Program Director negatively impacted Jill's experience and proximal outcomes. Additionally, the quality and quantity of Jill's reflection and degree of cognitive complexity were lower than most of the other participants. Previous studies have suggested this could limit her ability to learn from the service-learning course (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Mabry, 1998). However, Jill's responses in the Reflection Journals varied quite a bit throughout the semester, with very detailed responses and deep reflection some weeks and much less depth and reflection at other times. Given the inconsistency with reflection and cognitive complexity, along with her frustration with not receiving more feedback from the Program Director, it is not surprising that Jill experienced fewer and less significant proximal outcomes within the academic and intellectual domain and the social and community engagement domain. However, she did demonstrate a high level of proximal outcomes within the personal domain (e.g., enhanced tolerance, leadership development), suggesting that the following factors played a substantial role in the quality of her service-learning experience: her interest in learning, her excitement for the overall experience, her belief in the value of her role in the SP, and her exposure to youth from diverse backgrounds.

Overall, the theoretical framework provided a plausible explanation for Jill's idiographic profile and the resulting proximal outcomes (or lack thereof), with some of the factors (e.g., inconsistent reflection, need for feedback) having a more significant impact on certain outcomes while other factors (e.g., personal interest, belief in the work) had a more significant impact on her personal proximal outcomes.

**Anton.** The eight sources of data related to Anton in the study comprised 79 typed pages. In the pre-service interview, he spoke for 17 minutes, while the post-service interview lasted 27 minutes.

**Context.** Anton was a 24 year old Mexican American male who was a full-time student in his last semester at the university under study. Spanish was Anton's native language and the language he spoke at home with his younger brother, mother, and father, although he also spoke English fluently. His father's highest formal education was at the elementary school level, while his mother completed post-secondary technical or trade school. Anton's mother was a housekeeper at a local hospital and his father was a mattress builder at Sealy, with an estimated total gross income between \$75,000 and \$99,999 during the previous year. When Anton was asked why he went to college, he explained how his parents inspired him:

I decided to go to college because the hardship my parents had to go through, they didn't, they really didn't have any formal education due to financial situations that they went through in Mexico, so they just pushed education really hard on me when we were young. So it was always important to them. So, you know, I just kind of followed through with that. I saw how they worked hard to get to where they are now, and that was through physical labor and they didn't want that for me, and I understood that, so I'm trying to get this to where they are with education.



This quotation shows Anton's respect for his parents and their past struggles, along with his focus on working hard in school so he could reach his educational goals. Anton grew up just outside of the city where this study took place, going to public school until his high school years, at which time his parents put him in a private school. When he was in the fifth grade, Anton joined a local Police Athletic League that enabled young underserved kids from the area to ride bikes and learn how to maintain the bikes. Anton loved this opportunity, and he participated in the program through high school, although he did not attend as frequently because of his involvement in high school athletics. This program was his only experience working with young people before the service-learning course, as he helped the coach teach younger participants biking skills when they joined the program. However, Anton felt as if this was not a true coaching experience, because he simply served as a role model and leader for the younger participants whenever the coach asked him.

During high school, Anton maintained a C average, enabling him to enroll in the university under study during his first semester of college, although he continued living at home, leading to a very long commute. He realized he "couldn't handle the commute" during his first semester, so he decided to go to a local community college for the next two and a half years before transferring back to complete his degree. He was in his final semester during the time of the study, after two and a half years, during which time he maintained a grade point average between 2.6 and 3.0 (B- to B) and served as an active member and an officer of the Kinesiology Student Association. Anton was the only participant in the service-learning course who was actively involved in student organizations at the university, which he felt was important for his education and development. During the entire five and a half years of Anton's undergraduate education, he consistently worked part-time during the school year and full-time during the

summers. At the time of the study, he was working for a sushi catering company, although he had held a variety of jobs in the past. He estimated that his own total gross income during the previous year was between \$6,000 and \$9,999.

In college, he was majoring in kinesiology with an emphasis in neuromuscular science. In his words, “physical therapy is the ultimate goal,” although there were some prerequisite classes he had to take before applying for graduate school in physical therapy. After graduate school, his initial plan was to join a physical therapy clinic, but his lifelong goal was to open up his own clinic to serve the Mexican American community in which he was raised. This commitment was inspired by his parents:

My parents do work with physical labor, so I’ve seen what they’ve had to go through and then they’ve had a lot of surgeries [because of their work] as well, so I kinda want to help the Latino community just because I feel like they’re underrepresented, so I wanna be able to do something back, give something back, so eventually have my own office.

This shows how passionate and invested Anton was with his family and his community, as he was interested in devoting his career to serving this community as a physical therapist. Despite this interest in serving his community, Anton was the only participant who did not have any previous experience volunteering before the service-learning course.

When the Program Director was asked about Anton, his “biggest concern was he was shy” and did not speak up very often, which he felt may negatively impact Anton’s ability to serve in a leadership position. Although this was part of Anton’s personality, it did not get in the way of the activities he participated in with his friends, ranging from rock climbing to biking to hiking. As he explained, “I like to stay active.” When he was asked about his political

preference, Anton associated with a liberal perspective, although he admitted that he was not “really too active in politics.”

*Service-learning experience.* Anton was interested in participating in the service-learning course because he “thought it would be something cool to do. I’ve never really done anything this extensive.” While he did complete an ethnography for another college class requiring him to observe an urban skate park with underserved youth, “that was only a few days I met those kids, so...it wasn’t much.” Anton also felt that “it would be a cool thing just to give back,” so he was very excited and hopeful about his participation in the service-learning course. He believed he would learn how to work with people, specifically about “patience...[and] just knowing how to talk to people.” This interest in learning more interpersonal skills may be related to his shy personality, because he felt this experience may help him in the future, both personally and professionally. As for the impact he hoped the SP would have on the high school students, Anton wanted them to have “an open mind to go on to further education. A lot of these kids don’t see that as an option, and I’ve seen that [closed mind] through a lot of my friends.” Anton also hoped that the students would “think outside the box” and that the SP would help “them achieve leadership skills to use in the future and helping them organize a future for themselves.” It was clear that Anton was thinking about his own childhood growing up in an underserved community, where he saw his friends making bad decisions and taking different paths in life. This seemed to be a driving factor in his interest and excitement for the service-learning course.

Before the SP began, Anton shared how he felt “ready to take it on” and he demonstrated a strong understanding of the SP and its theoretical background in his Reflection Journal during the first week of the program. It was clear that Anton had completed the assigned readings at the

beginning of the program, which he found to be helpful, and was thinking about the program implementation. Once the SP began, he often “went back to review the [initial] TPSR article that was emailed, as well as the examples of how to implement the TPSR Model from the book.” Anton found some of the course readings to be irrelevant, but they “did help a bit” throughout the SP, even though for him, he learned the most by “actually going through the motions and experiencing the program.” Anton also shared how he reflected on and prepared for the sessions, sometimes even writing “notes on what I wanted to talk about as to not veer off topic and to make sure I talked about phase specific concepts.” Overall, Anton was probably the most prepared and thoughtful undergraduate student leader, taking time to complete all of the readings, prepare for the sessions, and reflect on the readings and sessions in great depth. This most certainly had an impact on his experience in the SP as well as his learning and development throughout the service-learning course.

As for his thoughts related to the SP, Anton believed it was a valuable program that could be incredibly helpful for the high school students. During the fourth week of the program, he shared these thoughts in his Reflection Journal:

We have a well-rounded program that focuses on development of the self through the responsibility model. We have a program that is going to allow us to gain these kids’ trust through exercise and group/independent reflection. We will be able to empower them, teach them, and have them teach. All are important elements to having a successful program that will change and morph these kids into assets of society

He also reflected on the growth of the high school students in his Reflection Journal at different times in the semester, sharing in the sixth week how “it is rewarding for me to see them grow” and in the fifteenth week:

It feels good to know that my leadership skills has in some way shaped the leadership of the participants and inspired them to do their best. It is also rewarding to know that my encouragement is seen in a positive way and that it helps them become better at the task they are performing and also gives them the confidence to complete that task.

By the end of the semester, Anton was convinced that many of the high school students learned about goal setting, respect, and effort through the SP and were already applying these skills in other areas of their lives. He also enjoyed watching students develop leadership skills, especially the students who were “extremely shy.” All in all, Anton felt that he “accomplished a great deed by trying to be the good role model that some of these kids need” and he has “never been so satisfied helping others than going through this program.”

Anton was one of the co-instructors of the weight lifting station, designing the majority of the workouts and seen as the “main leader” of this station by the Program Director and the high school students. The investigator highlighted in the participant observations how Anton’s leadership style improved throughout the semester, changing from a quiet, reserved leader into someone who gave better instructions and more encouragement to the high school students. While he did not break out of his shell completely nor have the best connection with the students, the Program Director felt “he did a nice job with the kids at the station.” His struggle in connecting with the students was also noted by the investigator in the participant observations, with marked improvement as the semester progressed.

As for his mentorship experience, Anton was matched with two high school students: an African American male who occasionally took leadership roles in the SP but also frequently “checked out” mentally and an African American male who did not engage in the programming

as much and struggled at different times in the semester. Anton valued his role as a mentor in the SP, seeing himself as:

A good role model for the youth. I am here to help them make connections about the different responsibilities and applying them to other areas of their life (school, home, streets). I am also here to help them map out a path for their possible futures.

However, there were several times in the post-service meetings when he asked the Program Director for advice on how to connect with his high school student mentees and encourage them to open up. In the post-service reflection, he described his struggle with getting “the kids I mentor to open up to me, many times it seemed that they were just going through the motions as if this was something they needed to do for the grade.” While it is likely that this was related to his shy and reserved nature, it was also influenced by the fact that his two high school student mentees lied to him at different times in the semester. He realized midway through the SP that both of them had lied to him about their interests and future goals, and one of the high school student mentees continued to lie to him as well as to another undergraduate student leader, who confirmed this in a post-session meeting. Because the SP and the overall experience were so meaningful for Anton, he was extremely upset about these challenging mentoring relationships. At the end of the semester, along with expressing feelings of regret and frustration, he reflected on how it may have been helpful to meet with his high school student mentees more often and/or outside of the classroom. This was one of the recommendations he gave for the SP implementation, as he felt this could have helped him to further develop his mentoring relationships.

When Anton was asked about the supervision and feedback he received from the Program Director, he shared in the post-service reflection how he learned “how to structure my

workouts that I taught by observing [the Program Director] and adding my own spin or variation.” He appreciated having the Program Director “as a model” and felt as if he learned how to be a stronger leader in this way. As for the amount of feedback he received from the Program Director, Anton admitted that it would have been helpful to receive “a little bit more from the mentoring sessions that I wrote [about]...It would have been nice to, just a comment or something about what I wrote. Or suggestions for next time.” It was clear that Anton learned from the Program Director but he could have learned more with specific feedback from the Program Director on his performance in the SP, especially regarding his mentoring sessions with which he was struggling.

***Mediating variables.*** Anton was the most reflective undergraduate student in the service-learning course, continually demonstrating a high degree of reflection and critical thinking in his Reflection Journals. He also described how he “usually did a lot of reflection when I road [home on the subway]. I had like a whole hour just to think, so I just...thoughts flowing for an hour.” The Program Director agreed, commenting on how Anton “did a nice job [with the reflections].” It is possible that Anton’s high quantity and quality of reflection and critical thinking were correlated with his hour-long ride home on the subway after each session of the SP. Jackson (2009) and Postman (1990) have both highlighted the negative influence of technology on the ability to reflect on a topic, as attention and reflection are easily distracted by technology (e.g., iPod, cellular phone, computer). Instead of tuning into the sights and sounds of technology, Anton chose to use this hour after each session as an opportunity for pure and simple reflection on his experience in the SP. This led to much deeper reflection compared with the other participants in the service-learning course, leading to greater cognitive complexity and more meaningful and long-lasting learning.

When Anton was asked to rate himself on the quality and quantity of his reflection throughout the semester, he gave himself an 8 out of 10, which matched the highest self-rating given by the other undergraduate student leaders. When he was asked to think about the quality and quantity of reflection when completing the Reflection Journal each week, he gave himself another 8 out of 10, which was the highest self-rating among the undergraduate student leaders. These high ratings match the findings from the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, which was used to evaluate Anton's Reflection Journals each week of the service-learning course. His Reflection Journals earned an average rating of 7.03 in response to the question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?" This rating was the highest for any of the undergraduate student leaders, suggesting that he was highly reflective in the Reflection Journals. His rating on the scale dropped to an average of 5.69 in response to the question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experiences?" However, this was still the second highest score for this question out of any undergraduate student leaders. As for the overall rating for Anton's Reflection Journal based on the five questions in the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale, he earned an average of 8.33 out of 10, which was the highest overall rating out of all of the undergraduate student leaders. The amount of reflection and cognitive complexity shown by Anton in his Reflection Journals is demonstrated in the following passage, which was in response to the following question in the ninth week: "Is there anything else you would like to write about the mentoring session?"

*I was bothered by [my high school mentee's] attitude on this particular day because it was a complete switch from his usual personality. I've never had any issues with [my high school mentee] and I was caught off guard. As I rode back home on [the subway] I kept reflecting on the day. I tried to connect the dots with all the events that occurred that day. I may be going out on a limb here but it is very possible that [my high school mentee] has only one parent, something that I never really thought about touching on.*



*Therefore [my high school mentee] may only have his mother and siblings to rely on. And this attitude change may be due to his fear of his mom passing away and not having a parent. As mentioned before I did not receive many hints as to what is going on. The only two things were that his mom was doing worse due to her back surgery and that a hurt goal is someone dying. That is the only possible connection that I could think of at the moment.*

Below is another passage from the weekly program observations in the twelfth week of the SP:

*Q) What contributions has this youth work made to your life?*

*A) It feels good to know that my leadership skills has in some way shaped the leadership of the participants and inspired them to do their best. It is also rewarding to know that my encouragement is seen in a positive way and that it helps them become better at the task they are performing and also gives them the confidence to complete that task.*

*Q) Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.*

*A) It is a bit upsetting that [my high school student mentee's] bad temper had led to bad decisions and consequently prevented or even discouraged him from going to school on some of the days that we've met. On a positive note, more participants are beginning to know my name simply because I give them extra attention and help them out during our group activities. I like that they notice the extra push I give them and that they see it as a positive thing and not something negative.*

As can be seen in these passages, Anton reflected on his own life while also considering others' perspectives in many of his responses in the Reflection Journal. It was clear he was very engaged with the course content, with the experience in the SP, and how it impacted him and the high school students. Similar to Sean, Anton was also non-native English speaker, although he grew up in the United States and did not show any difficulty with speaking or writing in the English language. Therefore, while completing the Reflection Journals may have been a cumbersome process for Sean, this was not an issue for Anton. When he was asked in the post-service reflection whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals changed the way he acted in the SP, he responded:

To some degree, I'd say yes. The journals kept track of what was going on in the program, therefore being able to write about and refer back to them ensured that I would

change things up if something did not work, or not repeat the same thing more than once, if it was not necessary to do so during mentoring sessions.

Anton then shared how the Reflection Journals “prepared me for the next [session].” As for whether or not the weekly Reflection Journals had any impact on his learning, Anton explained in the post-service interview: “To some degree it did, but most of my learning came from hands-on experience.”

***Proximal outcomes.*** Anton felt that he learned a tremendous amount from his experience in the service-learning course, and the Program Director agreed in his post-service interview, saying how he thinks Anton “learned a lot.” Beginning with the personal domain, Anton became a much stronger leader, feeling “more competent in my leadership skills” and learning that “enthusiasm [as a leader] helps motivated the unmotivated.” He believed that his leadership skills were strengthened by “thinking the lessons through, trying to think beforehand what I’m gonna talk about in the mentoring session. So there was just a lot more planning than I’m used to.” Anton’s leadership development was also noted by the investigator in the participant observations, where Anton’s development was chronicled from a quiet, reserved leader into someone who gave better instructions and more encouragement to the high school students. Anton’s overall self-esteem and his self-efficacy in his leadership skills also improved, as he explained in the post-service reflection:

This experience does make me feel better about myself/self-esteem. I feel proud of myself going through this experience and also being able to say that I will graduate this year. Being a leader also improved my self-confidence, I feel that I am more capable of becoming the leader I need to be to become successful in my field.

This quotation demonstrates Anton's awareness of how his leadership skills would impact his future career, thus highlighting the applicable skills learned through this experience. He also learned how to "manage my time better, both in the gym and outside the gym," which he felt would be critical in his future career. Additionally, Anton revisited the preconceptions he held when he began the service-learning course, which may have been due to his experience growing up in an underserved community. He shared these preconceptions in his post-service reflection:

Coming into this internship, I had an expectation that the kids we were dealing with were going to be much worst. By worst I mean, kids coming from extremely broken homes, being involved in gangs or drugs, or just being extremely reluctant to participate in any of the activities. This expectation was gone after the first week of working with the youth.

The kids were actually a lot easier to work with than what I expected. I learned its pretty safe not to assume the worst from these kids, as many of them showed to be nice kids.

These preconceptions and stereotypes mirror findings about the stereotypical beliefs that many students hold before working in underserved communities, with service-learning often helping individuals reexamine these stereotypes (Baldwin et al., 2007).

Within the academic and intellectual domain, Anton earned an A in the course, which was well above his college grade point average (B- to B). Anton also reached many of the course learning objectives, such as learning how to teach "exercise to kids with little to no experience" and "teach the different concepts of the TPSR Model and apply that to more than just exercise." Overall, he felt this experience "prepares me for the work force...and the skills I learned can be applied to just about any aspect in life." Anton also shared how "this experience [in the service-learning course] further reassured me that I chose the right career path," as he truly enjoyed helping others and giving back to the community. The following quotation

highlights Anton's excitement about his long-term career goal of starting a physical therapy clinic for the Latino community:

The community that we served [in the SP] was underserved, to some extent. So for me, I'm Mexican. The Latino community I think it underrepresented and there's a lot of immigrants and a lot of them don't have insurance. So for the physical therapy aspect, I've heard of people doing free clinics after they get their doctorates, become doctors, stuff like that. So something along those lines. Pay as you go, whatever you can. Just try and give back to these people that do work hard and do get injuries but are unable to get the help that they need to get back to work.

Shifting to the domain for social and community engagement, Anton learned critical interpersonal skills through his role as a leader in the SP.

I learned that it takes a lot of patience to work with the youth...I learned how to talk to the youth, wording and phrasing my sentences in a way that makes it easy for them to understand. I also learned that not all have the same attention capacity or critical thinking skills, therefore adjusting for such variables was a learning process within itself.

He also became much more interested in serving his community, sharing how "being involved in the community is more important now than I thought before...I definitely feel that I want to stay connect[ed] to my community and help out to make some sort of difference." In the past, Anton felt as if he was too busy to volunteer his time in the community, but he learned through the SP "that it is possible to volunteer despite a busy schedule." Through the service-learning course, Anton also became much more aware of and interested in social justice issues, as he shared in his post-service reflection:

From the readings, I can say that in most instances it is more complex than just being in a bad neighborhood. I mentored good kids, but I can't control what they do outside of school. I don't know specifics, but maybe their parents didn't push them hard enough to do well in school, or never bothered to ask how school was going, maybe they had friends who were bad influences. The answer may lie in the school system itself. What are school districts doing to help these kids out? From some of the things they said [in the course readings], it seemed that some teachers didn't care about the students, they simply told them what to do. One thing that could be done is to somehow implement these youth development programs as afterschool programs that are fun. Another thing is to educate those in power to allocate funds for such programs.

This passage demonstrates how Anton was thinking critically about his two high school student mentees, trying to use the course readings to understand their lives and what kind of support systems surrounded them. This passage also shows how Anton was considering possible solutions for these issues, such as increasing the number of youth development programs and educating those in power. Later in his post-service reflection, Anton shared how he learned about the public school system and the educational experiences of his two high school student mentees:

I think I've been ignorant to the high school public school system, I was lucky enough to attend private high school, and all my teachers really cared for the students. I've heard [my high school student mentee] say that he doesn't like some of his teachers because they are bossy, and just tell him what to do, and that they don't care about him. To some degree my attitude is altered because this could very well be a growing issue. In my high school, we were set up for success, everyone graduated and 99% of the students went on

to higher education, huge turnaround rate! I don't see that being the case with these high schools (underserved). It actually saddens me that these kids have to go through this with people who may not care about their future. I am hoping that somewhere down the line, [my high school student mentees] remember what I've tried to teach them and actually take my advice and attain a degree of some sort and have [a] career.

***Theoretical application.*** A review of Anton's idiographic profile relative to the theoretical framework demonstrates how the theoretical application accurately explains Anton's experience in the service-learning course as well as his proximal outcomes upon completion. Anton was a Mexican American who was a good student who was passionate about pursuing a career in physical therapy so that he could serve the Mexican American community. Although he had minimal volunteer experiences and was a male, which are predisposing factors shown to decrease the effects of service-learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999), his other predisposing factors have been shown to increase the effects (Astin & Sax, 1998; Gray et al., 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Despite his shy personality, Anton was excited about the service-learning course, believed in the importance of the SP, and valued his role in the service-learning experience, all of which positively influence a student's experience and outcomes in a service-learning course (Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Mabry, 1998). Additionally, Anton was probably the most prepared and thoughtful participant, taking time to complete all of the readings, prepare for the sessions, and reflect on the readings and sessions in great depth. In fact, Anton was the most reflective participant in the service-learning course, continually demonstrating a high degree of reflection and critical thinking in his Reflection Journals, which positively impacted his ability to learn from this experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Mabry, 1998). This may explain why he reported a number of significant proximal

outcomes upon completion of the service-learning course, as it was clear that he approached the service-learning course as a learning opportunity where he gave a high level of effort, continually reflecting on his experiences in the SP and in his own personal life and thinking critically about these experiences. Although Anton acknowledged that a greater degree of quality feedback from the Program Director would have been beneficial to his experience in the service-learning course and his learning overall, this did not prevent him from learning as much as he could from this service-learning course. Overall, the theoretical framework provided a strong explanation for Anton's idiographic profile and the resulting proximal outcomes.

## CHAPTER 5

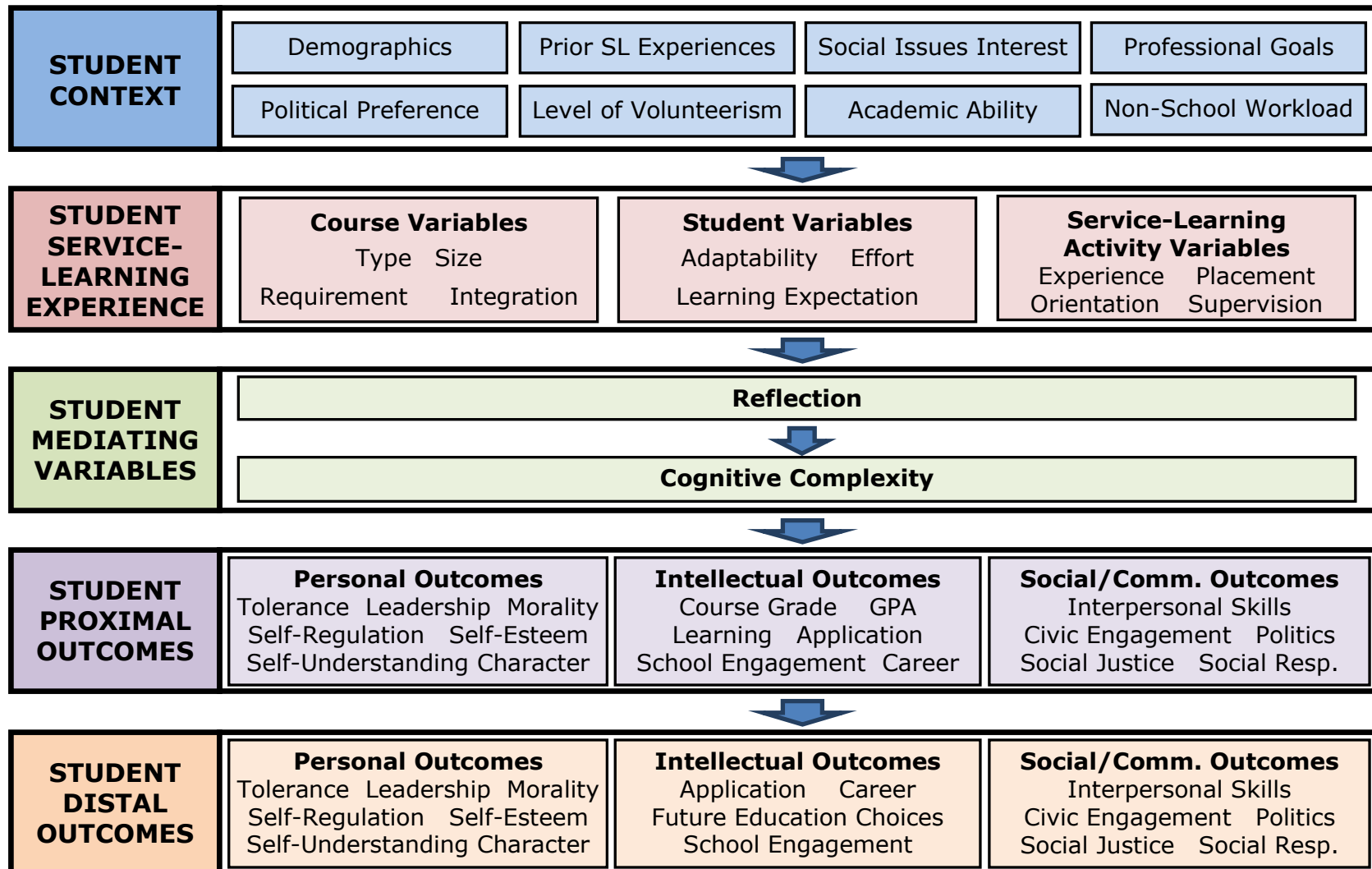
### GENERAL DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The primary purpose of this dissertation was to explore the impact of a physical activity-based service-learning course on the undergraduate student leaders enrolled in the program, with a focus on personal growth, academic and intellectual development, and social and community engagement. A secondary purpose of this study was to explore *how* these changes occurred. While the theoretical framework initially presented in Figure 4 of Chapter 2 was used as a guide for the study design, data collection, and data analysis, a revised theoretical framework was created based solely on the findings from this dissertation (see Figure 5, Chapter 4). However, given that the design and implementation of each service-learning course is quantitatively and qualitatively different (e.g., size, content, supervision) and the students enrolled in each service-learning course are also inherently unique (e.g., age, gender, academic ability), it would be inaccurate to use the revised theoretical framework in Figure 5 of Chapter 4 for the implementation and evaluation of service-learning courses in general. Therefore, a revised theoretical framework has been created (see Figure 6), incorporating the nomothetic and idiographic findings from this dissertation with previous literature in the service-learning field, enabling this theoretical framework to be used for the enhanced practice of service-learning as well as the systematic study of the service-learning field.

Before exploring the fourth level of the theoretical framework – *proximal outcomes* – which is related to the primary purpose of this dissertation, it is necessary to first evaluate the most important nomothetic and idiographic findings related to the first three levels of the theoretical framework. These levels describe *how* the proximal outcomes reported by the participants in this dissertation were reached, which was the secondary purpose of this



Figure 6. Final revised comprehensive student-focused version of the comprehensive physical activity-based service-learning theoretical framework.



dissertation. A review of the nomothetic and idiographic findings from this dissertation will be presented according to each level of the theoretical framework, along with an overview of previous literature in the service-learning field. Beginning with the findings related to *student context*, the participants comprised a diverse group of undergraduate students in relation to their basic demographics, (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status) as well as their political preferences, previous volunteering experiences, and non-school workload. The participants shared similar academic abilities and professional goals, with no previous service-learning experiences and an inability to identify specific social issues being addressed by the SP *before* the program began. While these findings certainly impacted each individual student's experience and, ultimately, their outcomes from the service-learning course, the nature of this study (e.g., small sample size, extremely diverse sample, lack of control or comparison groups) prevents any strong generalizable conclusions from being made about the impact of specific predisposing factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, race, previous volunteering experience) on the participants' proximal outcomes.

As for the *service-learning experience*, this was a credit-bearing course with a small class size and course content that was well-integrated with the service-learning experience. Most participants chose to enroll in this course and felt prepared for this experience, with the majority of the participants expressing their interest, excitement, and motivation surrounding the service-learning experience as well as their belief in the importance of their role and the overall impact of the SP on the high school students. Interestingly, all of these findings within the *service-learning experience* level of the theoretical framework support previous research suggesting that these variables have a positive impact on participants' service-learning experiences and, ultimately, the proximal outcomes (Aronson et al., 2005; Astin et al., 2000; Eyler, 2011; Eyler &

Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Hecht, 2003b; Knutson Miller et al., 2002; Morgan & Streb, 2003; Roldan et al., 2004; Weigert, 1998). It also became clear that the course goals, content, and design as well as the fact that the service-learning course was housed in a kinesiology department impacted the participants' proximal outcomes in this dissertation, matching previous findings in the service-learning literature (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004). For example, the participants did not report any enhanced political awareness or participation, which is understandable given that the course content centered on youth development, career development, kinesiology, and physical activity. Overall, the service-learning course was well-designed, with the participants taking part in a high quality service-learning experience leading to positive experiences in the service-learning course and positive outcomes upon completion. In fact, the only variable in the *service-learning experience* level of the theoretical framework that the participants perceived as negatively impacting their overall experience and their proximal outcomes was the insufficient feedback from the course instructor. All of the participants voiced an interest in receiving more feedback from the Program Director on their performance in the SP, hoping to learn from his knowledge and expertise and ultimately improve as a leader and mentor in the SP. Additionally, many of the participants felt frustrated that the questions they asked and the suggestions they made in the Reflection Journals were never answered or explored by the Program Director, which may have negatively impacted their experience and overall learning in the service-learning course. This general finding supports previous research in the service-learning field that the quality and quantity of feedback from course instructors has a significant impact on the students' service-learning experience and learning, with an adequate level of quality feedback related to students' use of new skills in the service-learning activities, greater commitment to service, increased overall learning, and enhanced awareness of their learning

(Greene, 1996; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Subramony, 2000). It is possible that the quality and quantity of feedback from the Program Director may be due to his dual roles as the course instructor of the service-learning course *and* the Program Director of the SP. Generally, service-learning course instructors are able to focus solely on the service-learning course, with their students participating in service activities in the community that are supervised by other individuals. Instead, the Program Director in the service-learning course under study had more responsibilities than are typically taken on by service-learning course instructors, leading to less of a focus on the feedback he provided to the participants. Additionally, some participants' desire for more feedback may have been related to suboptimal feelings of personal responsibility towards their own growth and development, leading to a need for a greater degree of feedback from the Program Director. This role of personal responsibility will be now explored.

One of the most significant findings from this dissertation was the *student variables* domain within the *service-learning experience* level of the theoretical framework, as this domain did not exist in the conceptual models in the service-learning field (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004) nor was this domain part of the ongoing conversation within the service-learning field. Instead, previous service-learning studies have focused on the influence of students' predisposing factors (*student context*) on their experience in the service-learning course and their outcomes upon completion, but once the service-learning course is under way, researchers have predominantly focused on the role of the course instructor, the design of the service-learning course, and the implementation of the service-learning activity (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004). While there has been a discussion about the impact of these *course variables* and *service-learning activity variables* on the students in the service-learning literature and in this dissertation, the service-learning literature has largely overlooked the role of the students *during*

the service-learning course. However, three higher order themes emerged from the data in this dissertation suggesting that the participants played an active role in shaping their experience in the service-learning course and their ultimate outcomes upon completion. This included the participants' *interest in learning*, *level of effort*, and *degree of adaptability* prior to and throughout the service-learning course, suggesting that the participants' personal responsibility may be an important factor to consider when implementing and studying service-learning courses. For example, some participants completed the Reflection Journals in a timely and comprehensive manner, while others chose to complete the Reflection Journals in an insufficient manner, sometimes even turning these assignments in late or not at all. Overall, the participants who demonstrated a greater interest in learning, a higher level of effort, and a greater degree of adaptability (e.g., Shayna, Sean, Anton) were those who also reported a more positive experience in the service-learning course and more significant outcomes upon completion.

Within the *mediating variables* level of the theoretical framework, observations of and interviews with the participants demonstrated suboptimal levels of reflection and cognitive complexity in this service-learning course, although the scores on the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale indicated this was not a significant issue. However, this is certainly an area for improvement in this service-learning course, which is not surprising given that reflection may be the most difficult component of service-learning (Ash et al., 2005; Rogers, 2001). When reflection and cognitive complexity were examined on a case by case basis in the idiographic profiles, the quality and quantity of reflection and cognitive complexity were strongly linked with the number, depth, and complexity of the proximal outcomes achieved by each participant. For example, Anton and Shayna were the most reflective participants in the study and also demonstrated moderate levels of cognitive complexity, leading to a number of significant

outcomes at the conclusion of their service-learning experience (e.g., substantial leadership development, greatly enhanced feelings of social responsibility). Conversely, the two participants (John and Jill) who consistently struggled with sufficiently completing the Reflection Journals and demonstrated lower levels of reflection and cognitive complexity were the same participants who reported fewer and less significant outcomes at the end of the semester. These findings match the growing body of literature suggesting that reflection is the key to meaningful learning in a service-learning course, and without an adequate amount of quality reflection, cognitive complexity will not improve throughout the service-learning experience and the student learning outcomes will be negatively affected (Aronson et al., 2005; Ash et al., 2005; Conrad & Hedin, 1990; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Stanton, 1990; Steinke et al., 2002; Strand, 1999; Thomas, 2007).

Now that the findings related to the first three levels of the theoretical framework – *context*, *service-learning experience*, and *mediating variables* – have been explored, with a focus on *how* these findings impacted the undergraduate student leaders' proximal outcomes (the secondary purpose of the study), there will be an examination of the undergraduate student leaders' changes related to their participation in the service-learning course (the primary purpose of the study). Overall, the six participants all reported growth and development from their experiences in the service-learning course, although the participants varied significantly in terms of the number, depth, and complexity of these proximal outcomes. The reasoning for this variance was explored in the previous sections, with the students' *context*, *service-learning experience*, and *mediating variables* having a significant impact on their proximal outcomes within the *personal*, *academic and intellectual*, and *social and community engagement* domains. In the *personal* domain, all of the participants experienced significant leadership development,

which has been well-supported in the service-learning literature (Astin & Sax, 1998; Keen & Keen, 1998). While the participants defined leadership in a number of ways (e.g., teaching ability, role model, mentor), this was one of the most well supported outcomes from this service-learning course, which may be related to the numerous opportunities for leadership in the SP (e.g., leading an activity station, serving as a mentor). Most of the participants also reported enhanced self-understanding, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, including an increased awareness of and belief in their personal values and an enhanced sense of their personal effectiveness. These results support previous findings related to personal exploration and understanding (Astin et al., 2000; Keen & Keen, 1998; Rice & Brown, 1998). Another trend that emerged in both the nomothetic and idiographic findings was an increase in tolerance, including an increased sensitivity to and awareness of diversity as well as a lack of validation of previously held stereotypes and reductions in stereotypical beliefs. One participant spoke of learning more about another culture while others focused on how their preconceived stereotypes before the service-learning course were proven incorrect (e.g., expectations of low levels of effort by the high school students, expectations of negative attitudes from the high school students). These findings support previous literature indicating improvements in tolerance and diversity from service-learning courses (Baldwin et al., 2007; Boyle-Baise & Kilbane, 2000; Driscoll et al., 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Hesser, 1995; Keen & Keen, 1998; Simons & Cleary, 2006). One area that was not included in the initial theoretical framework in Figure 4 of Chapter 4 was that of self-regulation. Several participants in this dissertation, however, reported improvements in self-regulation components (e.g., goal setting skills, time management). It is probable that this outcome was related to the goals, content, and design of this service-learning course, as the TPSR Model and the importance of goal setting and effort

were a central focus of the SP (Hellison, 2011). Two proximal outcomes within the *personal* domain that were included in the initial theoretical framework but were not demonstrated by the undergraduate student leaders in this study were moral development and character development. While these proximal outcomes were not reported by the participants in this dissertation, there is support for these outcomes in the service-learning literature (Dalton & Petrie, 1997; Gorman, 1994; Hink & Brandell, 1999), so these proximal outcomes are still included in the final comprehensive theoretical framework in Figure 6.

Shifting to the proximal outcomes within the *academic and intellectual* domain, five of the participants' course grades either improved or were at the high range of their grade point averages at the university under study. The participants felt as if they reached most of the curricular goals (listed in the course syllabus as the projected student learning outcomes, see Table 2, Chapter 2) and the students also reported learning about the course content, including a range of theoretical and pedagogical concepts and how to implement these strategies. These findings match the literature in service-learning highlighting the achievement of curricular goals and learning as outcomes related to service-learning experiences (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Strage, 2000). The participants then shared how the majority of the knowledge acquired through the service-learning course could be *applied* in their future personal and professional lives, such as using the TPSR Model when coaching or incorporating their newfound youth development knowledge when mentoring young people. These findings match a host of previous studies reporting how meaningful learning in service-learning courses can eventually be applied to other settings (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Miller, 1994; Strage, 2000). One proximal outcome that was not expected in the initial theoretical framework but was added to the revised version in Figure 6 was that of an increased awareness



and knowledge of a potential career path. Interestingly, an enhanced knowledge of one's career path was included as a distal outcome in the initial theoretical framework (Figure 4, Chapter 2), but the findings from this dissertation indicated that the service-learning course under study impacted the participants' career exploration much earlier than originally expected (by the end of the service-learning course). It is likely that the SP's focus on career exploration for the high school students may have caused the participants to examine their future careers in more depth than the "traditional" service-learning course. Additionally, with all of the participants graduating within five months of the conclusion of the service-learning course, it is likely that the participants' upcoming entry into the professional arena was on their minds, leading to more of a focus on their potential career options. This outcome supported previous findings that service-learning can help students begin the construction of their adult occupational identity (Batchelder & Root, 1994), although the findings in this dissertation suggest that this construction of an adult occupational identity may occur earlier than initially reported. Finally, there was no evidence of enhanced engagement with and commitment to their university or the participants' education in general, although this may be due to the fact that there were no class sessions held on the university campus (outside of the initial preparatory session at the beginning of the semester) and there was not much focus on the participants' engagement at the university. However, previous literature has supported the influence of service-learning on students' school engagement and future education choices (Sax & Astin, 1997), so these proximal outcomes are still included in the final theoretical framework in Figure 6.

Within the final domain of *social and community engagement*, the only area missing from the data that was included in the initial theoretical framework (Figure 4, Chapter 2) was that of political participation (Eyler et al., 1997; Simons & Cleary, 2006), although this could be

expected due to the content and goals of the service-learning course under study (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004). While this proximal outcome was not present in the findings from this dissertation, there is still support for increased political awareness and participation as a result of service-learning experiences (Eyler et al., 1997; Simons & Cleary, 2006), so this proximal outcome is still included in the final comprehensive theoretical framework in Figure 6. As for the proximal outcomes found within the *social and community engagement* domain in this dissertation, most of the participants demonstrated substantially improved interpersonal skills. This ranged from the ability to interact and build relationships with a wide variety of individuals (e.g., different races, high school students, people with different backgrounds) to improved pro-social reasoning skills and enhanced social self-confidence (e.g., belief in one's ability to successfully interact with others). These findings provide additional support for previous service-learning studies documenting students' improvement in communication skills (Meaney et al., 2008), pro-social reasoning and decision-making skills (Batchelder & Root, 1994), and increased social self-confidence (Astin & Sax, 1998; Osborne et al., 1998). Some of the participants in this dissertation also became more knowledgeable of social justice issues, including a deeper understanding of the issues present in underserved communities and an increased awareness of the need for outreach programs for young people in these communities. These findings match previous research suggesting that service-learning courses can increase students' awareness and understanding of the problems facing their communities and the nation (Astin & Sax, 1998; Batchelder & Root, 1994) and increase students' interest in and commitment to exploring social justice issues and acting on potential solutions (Fenzel, 2008; Roschelle et al., 2000). The final area of improvement in the *social and community engagement* domain was that of social responsibility and enhanced feelings of civic engagement as related to the participants'

intended participation and contribution in the community through future service. This ranged from an interest in serving their community in the future (e.g., volunteering in similar programs) to an interest in working with young people in the future (e.g., mentoring young girls). For example, Jill spoke of her interest in finding a similar program where she could mentor young girls while Shayna shared her excitement about volunteering in the future, both in her community and abroad. Overall, the majority of the participants experienced enhanced feelings of civic engagement as related to their intended participation and contribution in the community through future service, although the other aspects of civic engagement (e.g., voting, staying politically informed) were not evident in the participants' proximal outcomes. Similar findings have been reported by previous studies in the service-learning field, including an increased awareness and involvement in their community (Driscoll et al., 1996) and an increased commitment to service (Giles & Eyler, 1994; Hesser, 1995; Keen & Keen, 1998; Markus et al., 1993).

At the global level, the theoretical framework proposed in Figure 4 of Chapter 2 served as a good fit for the undergraduate student leaders in the service-learning course, with the data largely consistent with the design and flow of the theoretical framework. As for the specific components, there were some new insights added to the theoretical framework (e.g., *student variables* in the *service-learning experience*, self-regulation components in the *proximal outcomes*) and the anticipated absence of some proximal outcomes (e.g., community contact in the *service-learning experience*, political participation in the *proximal outcomes*), but these changes did not impact the foundation of the originally proposed theoretical framework. These changes were incorporated into the revised theoretical framework presented in Figure 5 of Chapter 4, which was specific to the findings from this dissertation. However, a more

comprehensive theoretical framework was created (see Figure 6), incorporating the nomothetic and idiographic findings from this dissertation with previous literature in the service-learning field. Because the distal outcomes were not studied in this dissertation, the comprehensive theoretical framework in Figure 6 is simply a reflection of the initially proposed distal outcomes in the theoretical framework in Figure 4 of Chapter 2, with the only change being the new proximal outcome of self-regulation added to the list of potential distal outcomes. Accordingly, researchers, practitioners, administrators, and funders are encouraged to use the comprehensive theoretical framework in Figure 6 as a guide for the study, practice, and funding of service-learning.

### **Practical Implications**

Based on the nomothetic and idiographic findings from this dissertation combined with previous findings collected within the fields of service-learning, experiential learning, kinesiology, and coach education, there are a number of practical implications that will now be examined. Beginning with the design and implementation of service-learning courses, this dissertation has provided both new insights and a deeper understanding of previous findings within each level of the theoretical framework, allowing the comprehensive theoretical framework in Figure 6 to guide the practice of service-learning. These practical implications will now be discussed.

Before exploring the areas for improvement within the service-learning course studied in this dissertation, the overwhelmingly positive findings related to the design and implementation of the service-learning course must be acknowledged. Based on the comprehensive theoretical framework in Figure 6, the Program Director positively integrated almost all of the *service-learning variables* under his control, with a well-integrated service-learning course that

adequately prepared the participants for a high quality service-learning experience. The participants truly valued the SP and believed their roles in the SP were important and meaningful. All of these variables suggest a high quality service-learning course (Aronson et al., 2005; Astin et al., 2000; Eyler, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Hecht, 2003b; Knutson Miller et al., 2002; Morgan & Streb, 2003; Roldan et al., 2004; Weigert, 1998), which explains why all of the participants experienced positive proximal outcomes, with most of the participants sharing how this service-learning course changed the direction of their lives. Therefore, the Program Director is encouraged to maintain the integrity of the program design and implementation in the future, given the evidentiary support from this dissertation. While the results of this dissertation demonstrate that this course was very effective, there were still some areas within the service-learning course which could be enhanced, potentially leading to even more significant outcomes in future iterations of the service-learning course. These opportunities for improvement will now be examined.

The predisposing factors within the *student context* have a significant impact on the implementation of the service-learning course as well as each individual student's experience in the service-learning course and the resultant outcomes (Aronson et al., 2005; Eyler, 2002b). For example, Amanda did not have much experience with diversity, which probably impacted her performance in the service-learning course as well as her own personal experience and her outcomes at the end of the semester. However, these predisposing factors cannot be adjusted by the course instructor prior to the service-learning experience, as students enter the service-learning course with distinct experiences, characteristics, and belief systems. So course instructors are strongly encouraged to conduct *pre-service evaluations* (e.g., pre-service interviews, written personal narratives, guided group discussions) to better understand their

students' backgrounds. These evaluations may also provide an opportunity for students to engage in *preflection*: a personal exploration of their assumptions about the community, the issues being studied, and the course content (Eyler, 2002c). Without an awareness of these assumptions and their potential interaction with the students' experiences in the service-learning course, previous service-learning studies have shown that students' ability to learn from these experiences will be negatively impacted, as old assumptions and constructs may prevent new information from being processed (Barron et al., 1998; Eyler, 2002c). In the service-learning course under study, John held onto his old assumptions and tried to fit the new experiences into his familiar conceptual framework, which negatively impacted his service-learning experience and limited his ability to learn from the service-learning course. At the beginning of this service-learning course, the Program Director did conduct pre-service evaluations with the participants by asking them to submit an essay where they answered the following questions: (a) Why do you want to do this? (b) What do you want to do for a career? (c) What is your grade point average? and (d) What is your experience with youth? After submitting this essay, the participants met individually with the Program Director to discuss their responses and their potential involvement in the SP. While this type of pre-service evaluation allowed the Program Director to get to know the participants prior to the service-learning course, there were several limitations with this methodology, beginning with the questions asked by the Program Director. These questions did not explore the participants' distinct experiences, characteristics, belief systems, and assumptions in as much depth as is recommended for optimal pre-service evaluation and *preflection*. This limited the students' awareness of their old assumptions and constructs, which therefore limited the students' ability to learn from the service-learning experience (as demonstrated by John). The Program Director also had a limited understanding of the students' predisposing factors

(*student context*), which is not uncommon in service-learning courses. This limits the course instructor's ability to (a) differentially prepare the students for their individual experiences in the service-learning course (e.g., suggesting guided readings for each student based on predisposing factors); (b) support the students throughout the service-learning course based on their individual needs (e.g., with frequent check-ins with each student, through small group meetings where students of similar backgrounds and/or with similar belief systems discuss their experiences); and (c) guide the students through targeted questions leading to deep personal reflection related to their backgrounds and belief systems.

This need for individualized attention from the Program Director at the beginning of the service-learning course and throughout the entire service-learning experience highlights one of the most significant findings from this dissertation: the need for more guidance and feedback from the Program Director. The Reflection Journal was the most significant reflective activity in this service-learning course, providing an opportunity for the participants to reflect on the course readings, describe their experiences, and share their thoughts and feelings. However, the Program Director did not provide optimal guidance and feedback on the Reflection Journals, which resulted in some participants merely logging events rather than engaging in deeper reflection and further development of cognitive complexity. This supports previous findings in the service-learning field on the powerful role of guidance and feedback from the course instructor on the students' experience and learning (Greene, 1996; Greene & Diehm, 1995; Subramony, 2000). In the future, it is recommended that the Program Director consistently provide quality guidance and feedback to the participants regarding their Reflection Journals, including suggestions of how to improve their reflective practice, questions directed at specific topics that should be explored in more depth, and overall support and encouragement for

engaging in the reflective activity. This guidance and support from the Program Director will likely lead to deeper reflection and cognitive complexity by the participants in the Reflection Journals, along with a greater awareness of their journey through the service-learning experience and the lessons they are learning along the way.

Along with providing more guidance and feedback on the Reflection Journals, there was also the need for a greater variety of reflective activities throughout the duration of the service-learning course under study. The only reflective activities *outside* of the Reflection Journals in this service-learning course were the pre- and post-session meetings, when the participants prepared for and debriefed each session. However, there was minimal personal reflection in these meetings, with more of a focus on overall program implementation and the high school students' experiences and personal development. This may reflect the fact that the Program Director was implementing the service program *in addition* to serving as the course instructor for the service-learning course, leading to a greater focus on the overall programmatic issues and less time for reflective activities that would lead to deeper personal reflection. Ideally, a greater variety of reflective activities would allow the participants to continually engage in the cyclical process of experience and reflection (Dewey, 1938; Eyler, 2002c; Kolb, 1984), although this may simply not be possible in the service-learning course under study, due to the time constraints the course instructor must handle. Because previous literature has suggested that faculty-led class discussions may be the most powerful reflective activity (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998), the Program Director is encouraged to incorporate opportunities for these focused discussions in the course design, if at all possible. The participants would be able to engage in reflective dialogue with their peers about the service-learning experience, while the Program Director could ask questions and introduce topics that challenge the participants to



engage in deeper reflection and demonstrate a higher level of critical thinking and meta-cognitive skills (Aronson et al., 2005; Ash et al., 2005; Astin et al., 2000; Thomas, 2007). This may also provide an ideal setting for the participants to discuss the course readings in relation to the service-learning course, which was highlighted as a missed learning opportunity by half of the participants in this dissertation. Additionally, these verbal reflective activities enable students who may feel uncomfortable with written reflective activities to engage in a deeper level of reflection that may not occur otherwise, perhaps due to a learning disability or being a non-native English speaker. It is possible that the reliance on the Reflection Journals in the service-learning course under study was a disservice to Sean, a non-native English speaker who may have had a higher level of language proficiency compared with his writing skills in English. Overall, there was a need in the service-learning course under study for more opportunities for reflection and cognitive complexity, especially those guided by the Program Director.

Given the powerful findings from this dissertation that the participants' *interest in learning, effort, and degree of adaptability (student variables)* had a significant impact on the participants' experience in the service-learning course and their outcomes upon completion, incorporating more reflective activities guided by the Program Director into the service-learning course could have challenged the students to give more effort and open themselves up to the possibility of change in their affect, behavior, and cognition. Without this type of individualized guidance and feedback on their actions in the service-learning course and their reflection and cognitive complexity throughout the service-learning experience, participants may not realize how their *personal variables (interest in learning, effort, and degree of adaptability)* are impacting their experience and learning outcomes. For example, John was a student who was not very interested in learning from the service-learning course and showed a low degree of

adaptability throughout the service-learning experience. With an adequate amount of quality guidance and feedback from the Program Director through a variety of reflective activities, it is possible that John could have opened up to the possibility of learning more from this service-learning course and changing his affect, behavior, and/or cognition as a result of the service-learning experience. However, this cannot be guaranteed, as some students may simply not be interested in learning, giving more effort, or adapting to the circumstances, regardless of the reflective activities and feedback provided by the Program Director.

The dissertation findings on the need for quality reflection can also add to the ongoing conversation on the best practices for specific areas within kinesiology, such as coach education. Specifically, the results from this dissertation suggest that the quantity and quality of reflection has a significant impact on the participants' service-learning experience and their learning outcomes upon completion (e.g., increased self-understanding, improved interpersonal skills). This matches the findings in the coach education literature suggesting that the quantity and quality of reflection by coaches has a significant impact on their coaching experience, learning outcomes, and overall development as a coach (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004, 2009; Lyle, 2010; Schempp & McCullick, 2010; Stephenson & Jowett, 2009; Trudel & Gilbert, 2006). In fact, Gilbert and Trudel (2009) suggested that meaningful learning only takes place when coaches reflect on their experiences on the field, with this reflection taking the form of journaling, the creation of coaching portfolios, engaging in group discussion, and taking part in video analysis. This matches the findings from this study and previous findings that there need to be a variety of reflective activities in order for the students to have more positive service-learning experiences and the most significant outcomes (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). However, the coach education literature has not explored the need for guidance and feedback from knowledgeable coaching

experts as part of these reflective activities. The findings from this dissertation suggest that this is an area for improvement in coach education, as the inclusion of high quality guidance and feedback in the reflective activities could lead to even deeper levels of reflection and cognitive complexity by the coaches, ultimately leading to more positive coaching experiences and greater learning and development. Therefore, when coach educators are developing coach education programs such as the IMPACT Coach Leadership training program in Detroit (Lauer, 2006), it is strongly recommended that reflection combined with quality guidance and feedback from coaching experts be included as part of the design of the coach education program as well as an ongoing part of coach training and evaluation following the program.

Given that there was a significant mentoring component in the SP, with the undergraduate student leaders matched with one or two high school student mentees, the current program could be improved if mentor training was implemented for the undergraduate student leaders prior to the service-learning experience. Effective mentor training helps future mentors understand their motivations for mentoring, identify their goals for the mentoring relationship, modify any unrealistic expectations for mentoring, understand the appropriate roles for mentors and mentees, and prepare for any ethical issues that may arise during the mentoring relationship (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005; Keller, 2005; Madia & Lutz, 2004; Spencer, 2006; Stukas & Tanti, 2005). While mentor training is a critical component of any effective mentoring program (Miller, 2007), it is particularly important for the SP and similar programs serving underserved youth with a high percentage of immigrant youth, incarcerated family members, and experiences in both the juvenile justice system and the foster care system (Madia & Lutz, 2004; Spencer, 2006). For these populations, it is of particular importance that the future mentors understand how to (a) build trusting relationships (Adalist-Estrin, 2006), (b) maintain cultural sensitivity

(Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001), and (c) handle unforeseen challenges (MENTOR, 2009). It is possible that this type of training could have helped Anton in his mentoring sessions with his two high school student mentees, with whom he struggled in building trust and developing strong relationships. Additionally, this type of training could have prepared the participants at the beginning of the service-learning course for working with this population, as many of them expressed feelings of uncertainty and anxiety in the pre-service interview when they were asked about working with the high school students. So it is strongly recommended for service-learning courses with a mentoring component to include a mentor training session prior to the beginning of the service-learning experience, with this session lasting a minimum of two hours in order to explore the topics in enough depth to properly prepare future mentors for these experiences (Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000). Additionally, the mentors should be supported throughout the semester in developing and managing these mentoring relationships, with this support including group discussions, feedback from the course instructor, and recommendations for additional reading material (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Herrera et al., 2000; Rhodes, Reddy, & Grossman, 2005; Rhodes & DuBois, 2006). This matches the overall findings from this dissertation that there needed to be more guidance and feedback from the Program Director as well as greater opportunities for group discussions amongst the participants. At the end of the service-learning course, it is also critical that the mentors receive training and support for handling the closure of their mentoring relationship, as this can be a difficult and sometimes traumatic experience for the mentees (Miller, 2007; Jucovy, 2001; Skinner & Fleming, 1999). Another practical implication from this dissertation is the possibility that mentoring groups with one mentor and two mentees may be less effective than the traditional mentoring dyadic model. In Shayna's words, "I think it would've been better if

everyone had just one student.” This was suggested by several undergraduate student leaders, as some of the participants were matched with two high school students in the SP while others were only matched with one high school student. The study participants felt as if this impacted their experience in the SP, as those participants who were matched with one high school student were able to develop stronger relationships that may have led to more visible outcomes in the high school students, resulting in a better experience for those undergraduate student leaders. There has been minimal discussion in the mentoring literature regarding a comparison between the traditional dyadic mentoring model and the impact of having one mentor paired with two mentees, with the only literature outside of the dyadic model focusing on peer group mentoring (Moss, Teshima, & Leszcz, 2008; Pololi & Knight, 2005). However, this may be a practical consideration for course instructors who are designing service-learning experiences with mentoring components, and this may also be a consideration for mentoring programs as well, although the majority of these programs focus on the traditional mentoring dyadic model.

At the global level, this dissertation served as one of the few service-learning studies within the field of kinesiology. While there has been a growing body of literature on the *potential* for service-learning to have a significant impact on undergraduate students in kinesiology, especially those going into human service professions (Bishop & Driver, 2007; Nendel, 2011; Prentice & Garcia, 2000; Strage, 2004; Watson et al., 2002), there was a critical gap in the literature on the impact of kinesiology-based service-learning courses. This dissertation was designed to provide more information on the impact of this service-learning course on the kinesiology undergraduate students enrolled in this course. Overall, the findings indicated a strong impact on student learning through this course, with students reporting significant growth and development in the areas of personal, academic and intellectual, and

social and community engagement. Specific to kinesiology, the undergraduate student leaders reported a greater understanding of kinesiology principles (e.g., seeing kinesiology theories in practice), increased awareness of the applicability of their kinesiology major (e.g., use of kinesiology to teach high school students about physical activity, personal responsibility, and future career options), relevant practical experience with clients (e.g., designing and leading a physical activity station), and increased awareness of new careers and fields of study within kinesiology (e.g., interest in becoming a teacher). Additionally, previous research findings have indicated the importance of incorporating service-learning in students' major area of study, because the students' degree of interest in the course content appears to have the strongest correlation with a positive service-learning experience (Astin et al., 2000; Strage et al., 2002). These findings strongly support the institutionalization of service-learning within kinesiology because all six participants were influenced by the service-learning experience and reported gains on a variety of proximal outcomes. Therefore, administrators are encouraged to incorporate service-learning into the broader curriculum (e.g., year-long service-learning experiences, several service-learning courses), as Vogelgesang and colleagues (2002) have suggested that many significant outcomes may not fully develop unless there has been at least one full year of exposure to service-learning. With a broader service-learning curriculum, undergraduate students could be exposed to a variety of service-learning experiences, with the timing of each service-learning course in an undergraduate student's college career based on the degree of autonomy, level of responsibility, content knowledge, and time commitment required for each service-learning course and the larger curricular goals. Therefore, given the high degree of autonomy and responsibility given to the undergraduate student leaders in the service-learning course under study, it was optimal for the course to be taken by undergraduate students in their

final year of college. Overall, the timing of each service-learning course should be considered by administrators to ensure that each service-learning course is taken by undergraduate students who are adequately prepared and capable of completing the course and participating in the service program, leading to more positive experiences during the service-learning course and more significant proximal and distal outcomes. It is also recommended that administrators support faculty members in the development and maintenance of service-learning courses, as the adoption of a new pedagogical practice and the development of a new course can be a frustrating, challenging, and demanding experience (Astin et al., 2000). Overall, it is hoped that the findings from this dissertation, in addition to the previous literature within the field of service-learning, can serve as a strong foundation for administrators to form policy regarding the inclusion or expansion of service-learning in kinesiology programs and departments, and potentially at the university-level as well.

### **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

Although the investigator believes this study's findings are robust, methodological limitations exist with any study of educational phenomena, as educational research contains variables which tend to be ambiguous, unstable, and methodologically uncontrollable (McMillan & Schumacher, 1984). Therefore, these limitations must be acknowledged and suggestions for future research directions provided. Beginning with the participant pool in this dissertation, it is possible that the undergraduate student leaders self-selected into this service-learning course, increasing the likelihood they were qualitatively different from those students who chose to stay in the required research methods course (Ash et al., 2005). For example, Sax and Astin (1997) found that students who self-selected into a service-learning course were likely to spend more time studying and completing homework each week compared with those students who chose

not to participate in a service-learning course. While the impact of this potential self-selection bias on the results from this study cannot be determined, it is recommended that future studies employ random sampling to eliminate any potential for self-selection bias (Ash et al., 2005; Furco, 2003). There was also the potential for a social desirability bias in this dissertation, particularly with the interview responses and Reflection Journals, although the participants were informed at the beginning of the semester and before the start of each interview that the information would be kept confidential (Jacobson et al., 2011). Additionally, as recommended by Jacobson and colleagues (2011), the post-service reflection was completed at the end of the semester and was not viewed by the Program Director nor was it graded; this was an attempt to limit the potential for social desirability bias. Another area for improvement for future studies is the sample size, as the findings from this study were based on a small sample size that may not have been representative of the total population at the university under study (Astin et al., 2000; Furco, 2003). There was also the absence of a control or comparison group, making it difficult to firmly attribute the undergraduate student leaders' proximal outcomes to the service-learning course (Furco, 2003). The lack of a comparison group also made it difficult to determine the impact of specific features of the service-learning experience (e.g., lack of feedback, quality and quantity of reflection) on the participant outcomes. Moving forward, it would be interesting for researchers to evaluate similarly designed service-learning courses with the exception of a singular variable being tested (e.g., context variables, service-learning experience variables, mediating variables), as this would lead to a greater understanding of each variable in the theoretical framework presented in Figure 6. All in all, while these limitations related to the sample could not have been addressed in the present study, because the investigator had little



control over the organization of the service-learning course, these are recommendations for future studies in service-learning.

Another potential limitation related to the sample in the present study was the fact that two of the eight participants chose not to complete the final two pieces of data: the post-service reflection and the post-service interview. During the analysis phase of the study, it was determined that these two pieces of data were the most informative, descriptive, and reflective data for the six other participants who successfully completed the study. Given the richness and depth of these final two pieces of data, the two participants who did not complete the study were not included as part of the final sample, which leads to the possibility of self-selection bias. However, to help examine if this was the case, the data that were collected from these two participants were analyzed (including the Reflection Journals and the participant observation notes), with the partial findings suggesting that these two participants were similar to the final participant pool in terms of their demographics and other predisposing factors as well as their service-learning experiences and proximal outcomes. In particular, one participant seemed to have a positive experience in the service-learning course, with indications of rather significant proximal outcomes, while the second participant seemed to enjoy the service-learning course but only experienced a moderate level of proximal outcomes. Therefore, while the loss of two of the participants was a potential limitation, the partial results suggested that these participants were comparable to the final participant pool, with similar experiences in the service-learning course and analogous proximal outcomes.

As for specific details related to the study design, it is possible that the questions about political preference in the demographics questionnaire and the pre-service interview may have caused the participants to only think about their political party identification. This is a concern,

given that civic engagement has decreased significantly with each generation of Americans (Beaumont, Colby, Erlich, & Torney-Purta, 2009). It may have been more appropriate to ask for the participants' political ideology, their views on egalitarianism, and their positions on affirmative action, immigration, crime, and welfare (Sidanius, Levin, Van Laar, & Sears, 2008). Future studies are encouraged to explore these topics, as they may lead to a deeper understanding of the participants' ideological views, especially when compared with the current study, which only ascertained the political parties of three participants without much additional information. Another suggestion for future service-learning studies is the inclusion of a measure for emotional intelligence of the undergraduate students in the service-learning course. This is based on Kolb's (1984) discussion of the learning cycle within experiential education, as he believed the proximal and distal outcomes achieved through experiential education (including service-learning) may be related to the student's level of emotional intelligence. This has not been explored in much depth in the service-learning literature, although there is potential for emotional intelligence to be a critical predisposing factor in the *student context* within the theoretical framework in Figure 6. Another area for further study is the economic, social, and cultural capital of the students in the service-learning course (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 1990; Lareau, 1987, 1989), as in the present study, this likely impacted the students' experience in the service-learning course and their proximal outcomes upon completion. In particular, the majority of the participants in this study were "non-traditional" students who came from low income, immigrant, and/or single-parent families, so it is possible that the findings in this study are related to the participants' amount of economic, social, and cultural capital. In future studies, researchers should examine the difference between students with a large amount of economic, social, and cultural capital (e.g., Caucasian students in the upper middle class) with those students with lower amounts of this

capital (e.g., immigrant students in the working class) to determine the impact on the students' experience in the service-learning course and their proximal and distal outcomes. An additional area for future service-learning studies to explore is the impact of the *student variables* within the *service-learning experience* level of the theoretical framework, as this domain did not exist in the conceptual models in the service-learning field (Aronson et al., 2005; Roldan et al., 2004) nor was this domain part of the ongoing conversation within the service-learning field. However, the findings from this dissertation suggest that the students' *interest in learning*, *level of effort*, and *degree of adaptability* may have a significant impact on their experience in the service-learning course and their ultimate outcomes upon completion. Therefore, further examination of the role of these *student variables* is warranted.

Another limitation of this dissertation was the quality and quantity of reflection that occurred in the Reflection Journals, with some participants reflecting more often and more deeply than other participants. As examined in the previous section, it would be beneficial for service-learning courses to incorporate a variety of reflective activities into the course design and implementation, enabling future studies to examine the impact of all reflective activities as well as each individual reflective activity on the undergraduate students' experiences in the service-learning course and their proximal and distal outcomes. While there has been some research related to the impact of different methods of reflection on student outcomes (Astin et al., 2000; Denson et al., 2005; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998), there are still questions about the relationship between specific mixtures of reflective activities and observed outcomes (Roldan et al., 2004; Steinke et al., 2002). Additionally, this research has not been conducted on kinesiology-based service-learning courses. It would also be interesting for future studies to examine *why* some students reflect more than others and how to help students engage in a deeper

level of reflection. Previous literature has shown that students differ in their natural ability to reflect (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999), although there is not much information on why this occurs. Additionally, there is the need for exploring whether the methodology of reflection is culturally biased and how this can be addressed in service-learning courses. These questions all certainly warrant future investigation, as they may lead to a deeper understanding of reflection and how reflective activities can be designed for *each* student. There is also the need for a more valid and reliable assessment tool for measuring reflection and cognitive complexity, as the Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale that was used in this study was not validated. Given that the findings in the present study and the general field of service-learning highlight the important role of reflection and cognitive complexity in the service-learning experience (Aronson et al., 2005; Ash et al., 2005; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Steinke et al., 2002; Thomas, 2007), it is necessary to develop valid and reliable assessment techniques for accurate measurement of these variables.

One of the most significant limitations of this study was the short time frame of the service-learning course, as this may limit the outcomes that can occur from the service-learning experience (Argosy Foundation, 2007). In fact, Vogelgesang and colleagues (2002) have suggested that many significant outcomes may not fully develop unless there has been at least one full year of exposure to service-learning. While this may seem difficult to accomplish in the university setting with classes that generally last for just one semester, it is possible when service-learning is part of a broader curriculum, enabling the undergraduate students to take part in service-learning experiences over a longer period of time. Researchers are also encouraged to design longitudinal studies investigating the long-term impacts of service-learning, as there are distal outcomes that may not manifest themselves until long after the service-learning experience

is complete (Billig & Furco, 2002; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Furco, 2003).

Ideally, these longitudinal studies would also follow control groups of students who were not engaged in service-learning activities but would provide a means of comparison with the students participating in the service-learning activities. This was yet another limitation of the present study, which focused on the proximal outcomes of the undergraduate student leaders and overlooked the distal outcomes that may have developed after the service-learning course concluded (Furco, 2003).

Another set of limitations is centered on the idiosyncratic and contextualized nature of the physical activity-based service-learning course under study, which led to findings which cannot be generalized beyond the program studied (Furco, 2003). Therefore, future service-learning studies should include multisite and cross-programmatic analyses, with a variety of disciplines, site placements, instructors, and universities involved in the data collection. These large-scale studies would lead to more generalized findings that could contribute to the ongoing discussion surrounding the nature of higher education, specifically related to engaged scholarship and involvement with the surrounding communities and America's democratic mission (Campus Compact, 2011; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). These large-scale studies should also examine the impact of service-learning on the faculty members overseeing the courses, the institutions housing the courses, the community partners being served, and the community at large. As Cruz and Giles acknowledged in 2000, most studies have focused on the effects of service-learning on students, with less knowledge on service-learning's effect on faculty and even less on its impact on departments, schools, colleges, and universities. Surprisingly, almost nothing is known about the impact of service-learning on the community partners being served and the larger community (Cruz & Giles, 2000). This contradicts the very definition of service learning, where students

provide a *meaningful service* that meets a *need* or *goal* that is *defined* by the community (Weigert, 1998). It seems illogical that there is a wealth of research on service-learning that has largely overlooked this part of the service-learning definition, instead choosing to focus on the student outcomes and, much less frequently, on the faculty and institutional outcomes. The present study followed this trend, only examining the student outcomes presented in Figure 5 while overlooking the four other areas presented in Figure 3: faculty, institution, community partner, and community.

Finally, future studies should utilize the service-learning theoretical framework presented in Figure 6, which was based on the conceptual models of Aronson and colleagues (2005) and Roldan and colleagues (2004) and then modified to include the findings from this dissertation. The most consistent criticism of past service-learning studies was the lack of a strong theoretical and conceptual foundation (Billig, 2003; Bringle, 2003), which was adequately addressed in the design of this dissertation. Future studies are encouraged to use this theoretical framework as a guide to studying service-learning in a more systematic and rigorous fashion. Researchers could also utilize the theoretical framework to assess the individual impact of students' predisposing factors and the relative contributions of each part of the service-learning experience (service-learning course variables, service-learning experience variables, student variables, and mediating variables) on the proximal and distal outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

There are many indications that higher education is in the midst of two critical paradigm shifts: (a) from a focus on *teaching* to that of *learning* (Astin et al., 2000; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Guskin, 1997); and (b) from *passive* involvement in America's most pressing civic, social, economic, and moral issues through mere critical discourse to *active* involvement with the

surrounding communities and America's democratic mission through engaged scholarship in the classroom, in research, and in the community (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010; Sandmann, 2008). Although there are many forms of engaged scholarship beginning to take hold in colleges and universities throughout the United States, service-learning is one form of engaged scholarship that focuses on student learning while also fulfilling the need for institutional citizenship, campus-community initiatives, and civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). This dissertation demonstrates the positive impact of a physical activity-based service-learning course on the undergraduate student leaders enrolled in the program, suggesting that the focus on *learning* through experiential education was successful. This dissertation also provides additional support for the growing movement in higher education for engaged scholarship through service-learning.

APPENDIX A  
Consent Form Documents



An Examination of the Impact of a Physical Activity-Based  
Service-Learning Course on Undergraduate Student Leaders

**Student Consent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Daniel Gould and Meredith Whitley from Michigan State University. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. The purpose of this project is to explore the impact of a physical activity-based service-learning course on the undergraduate students' enrolled in the course, with a focus on changes in the areas of personal growth, academic and intellectual growth, social engagement, and community engagement. The total number of participants in this project is expected to be 10 individuals. Information gathered from these interviews and reflection journals will be used to help educate those involved in teaching undergraduate students like yourself, so that courses such as the one you are enrolled in will be even more positive and meaningful. Additionally, you will receive one \$15 iTunes gift card in appreciation for your volunteer participation in this study.

As part of the study, you will complete two 45-minute interviews detailing your experience in service-learning and volunteering experiences in the past, your involvement in this service-learning course this semester, and general questions about your everyday life and plans for the future. The interviews will be audio taped and transcribed. Additionally, the Reflection Journal that you complete each week for the course will be part of the data collection for this study. If you do not wish to have the interviews audio taped and transcribed or the Reflection Journal used, then you would not meet the criteria for participating in this study. Your responses in the interviews and your writing in the Reflection Journal will remain confidential; no one except the primary investigators and the Institutional Review Board will have access to these responses and writing. A possible risk associated with this study is breach of confidentiality, but the resulting data from these interviews and the Reflection Journal will be locked in filing cabinets at Michigan State University. Computer files containing project data will be password-secure. Data will be kept for 3 years following closure of the IRB or the last publication, and then destroyed by the primary researcher. Any results coming from the project will not have names associated with them. Your confidentiality will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. However, please know that you may withdraw from participation at any time without penalty, and that you may refuse to participate in certain procedures or answer certain questions without penalty. Furthermore, you may refuse to respond to specific questions in the interview that you feel uncomfortable answering, and you can still be part of the study. If you have any concerns or questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the researcher (Dr. Daniel Gould, IM Sports Circle, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1049, (517) 432-0175, [drsgould@msu.edu](mailto:drsgould@msu.edu)).

If you have any questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research

Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail [irb@msu.edu](mailto:irb@msu.edu) or regular mail at 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Thank you for your time and cooperation,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Daniel Gould, Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Meredith Whitley, Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Your signature below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

An Examination of the Impact of a Physical Activity-Based  
Service-Learning Course on Undergraduate Student Leaders

**Program Director Consent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Daniel Gould and Meredith Whitley from Michigan State University. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. The purpose of this project is to explore the impact of a physical activity-based service-learning course on the undergraduate students' enrolled in the course, with a focus on changes in the areas of personal growth, academic and intellectual growth, social engagement, and community engagement. The total number of participants in this project is expected to be 10 individuals. While you will not directly benefit from participating in this study, information gathered from this interview will be used to help educate those involved in teaching undergraduate students, so that courses such as the one you are teaching will be even more positive and meaningful.

As part of the study, you will complete one 60-minute interview detailing your involvement as the instructor of the service-learning course under study. The interview will be audio taped and transcribed. If you do not wish to have the interview audio taped and transcribed, then you cannot participate in this study. Your responses in the interview will remain confidential; no one except the primary investigators and the Institutional Review Board will have access to these responses. A possible risk associated with this study is breach of confidentiality, but the resulting data from this interview will be locked in filing cabinets at Michigan State University. Computer files containing project data will be password-secure. Data will be kept for 3 years following closure of the IRB or the last publication, and then destroyed by the primary researcher. Any results coming from the project will not have names associated with them. Your confidentiality will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. However, please know that you may withdraw from participation at any time without penalty, and that you may refuse to participate in certain procedures or answer certain questions without penalty. Furthermore, you may refuse to respond to specific questions in the interview that you feel uncomfortable answering, and you can still be part of the study. If you have any concerns or questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the researcher (Dr. Daniel Gould, IM Sports Circle, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1049, (517) 432-0175, [drgould@msu.edu](mailto:drgould@msu.edu)).

If you have any questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail [irb@msu.edu](mailto:irb@msu.edu) or regular mail at 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Thank you for your time and cooperation,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Daniel Gould, Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Meredith Whitley, Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Your signature below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX B  
Assessment Instruments

## Demographics Questionnaire

The information in this form is being collected as part of study on the service-learning course. Through this study, the hope is to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers. Your responses will be very helpful.

1. Your sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. What is your birth date (month/day/year)? \_\_\_\_\_
3. The year you graduated from high school: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you enrolled as a: ☐ Full-time student ☐ Part-time student
5. What was your average grade in high school?  
(Mark one)  

☐ A or A +

☐ B

☐ C

☐ A –

☐ B –

☐ C –

☐ B +

☐ C +

☐ D
6. What were your scores on the SAT and/or ACT?  

SAT Verbal.....

SAT Math.....

SAT Written.....

ACT Composite.....
7. Is English your native language? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Are you: (Mark all that apply)

White/Caucasian..... ☐

African American/Black..... ☐

American Indian..... ☐

Asian American/Asian..... ☐

Mexican American/Mexican/Chicano.... ☐

Puerto Rican..... ☐

Other Latino..... ☐

Other..... ☐

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

9. The language you speak at home is: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What is your best estimate of your parents' total gross income last year? Consider income from all sources before taxes. (Mark one)

☐ Less than \$6,000

☐ \$40,000 – 49,999

☐ \$6,000 – 9,999

☐ \$50,000 – 59,999

☐ \$10,000 – 14,999

☐ \$60,000 – 74,999

☐ \$15,000 – 19,999

☐ \$75,000 – 99,999

☐ \$20,000 – 24,999

☐ \$100,000 – 149,999

☐ \$25,000 – 29,999

☐ \$150,000 – 199,999

☐ \$30,000 – 39,000

☐ \$200,000 or more

11. The profession of your mother/guardian is: \_\_\_\_\_

12. The profession of your father/guardian is: \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parents?  
(Mark one in each column)

	Father		Mother		Guardian
Middle school.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
Some high school.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
High school graduate or GED.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
Post-secondary technical or trade school.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
Some college.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
College degree.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
Some graduate school.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate degree.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>	.....	<input type="radio"/>

14. What is your best estimate of **your** total gross income last year? Consider income from all sources before taxes. (Mark one)

<input type="radio"/> Less than \$6,000	<input type="radio"/> \$40,000 – 49,999
<input type="radio"/> \$6,000 – 9,999	<input type="radio"/> \$50,000 – 59,999
<input type="radio"/> \$10,000 – 14,999	<input type="radio"/> \$60,000 – 74,999
<input type="radio"/> \$15,000 – 19,999	<input type="radio"/> \$75,000 – 99,999
<input type="radio"/> \$20,000 – 24,999	<input type="radio"/> \$100,000 – 149,999
<input type="radio"/> \$25,000 – 29,999	<input type="radio"/> \$150,000 – 199,999
<input type="radio"/> \$30,000 – 39,999	<input type="radio"/> \$200,000 or more



15. How would you characterize your political views? (Mark one)

Far left..... ☐

Liberal..... ☐

Middle-of-the-road..... ☐

Conservative..... ☐

Far right..... ☐

16. What is your current GPA in college?  
(Mark one)

☐ 3.6 – 4.0      ☐ 2.1 – 2.5

☐ 3.1 – 3.5      ☐ 1.6 – 2.0

☐ 2.6 – 3.0      ☐ 1.5 and below

17. What is your concentration within your Kinesiology major (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, teacher education, etc.)?

---

18. What occupation are you most interested in pursuing upon graduation?

---

## **Pre-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Student**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. Describe your college experience up until now.
  - i. What were your reasons for attending college?
  - ii. What are your professional goals? What are your aspirations for future employment and/or advanced degrees?
  - iii. How much time do you spend on homework and/or studying each week?
- b. Please describe your non-school workload, both in athletics and other time-committing extracurricular activities?
- c. How would you describe your political preference?
- d. Tell me about your experience with service and/or volunteering in the past.
  - i. How long?
  - ii. Why?
  - iii. What did you learn from it?
  - iv. How did you get involved in it? Of your own volition or through something/someone else?
- e. Are you currently volunteering?
- f. Have you worked with youth in the past? If so, please describe.

### **2. Community**

- a. What are your experiences with this community?
  - i. What are your expectations of this community?
- b. What are your experiences with schools like this?
  - i. What are your expectations of a school like this?
- c. What social issues do you believe are being addressed by this course?
  - i. Are you interested in these issues?
  - ii. Do you believe these issues are important?

### **3. Course**

- a. Are you familiar with the course content? If so, please describe.
- b. Could you tell me why you decided to take this course?
- c. What do you hope to get out of this experience??
- d. What challenges do you think may arise during this experience?
- e. What do you hope the students get out of this?
- f. Do you feel like you are ready for this?
- g. Do you think this experience will have an impact on you personally? As a student? In your professional world?
  - i. Do you think you will learn anything?

#### **4. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Physical Activity-Based Service-Learning Course: Semester Reading Schedule**

### **Week 1**

- Chapter 3 (Hellison et al., 2000): Introduction of physical activity-based youth development programming and the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model, with a particular focus on youth development in underserved communities.
- Published article written by the Program Director: Overview of the theoretical background of the Service Program (SP), including a description of the TPSR model and the theory of possible selves.
- Article written by the Program Director: Detailed description of the SP, including the four phases and the daily implementation.

### **Week 2**

- Chapter 9 (Hellison et al., 2000): Explanation of physical activity-based youth development programs with a mentoring component, including the definition of a good mentor, why mentoring can be effective, and how to implement a mentoring program.

### **Week 3**

- Chapter 1 (Hellison et al., 2000): Introduction to the realities of underserved youth and the circumstances affecting these youth.

### **Week 4**

- Chapter 2 (Hellison et al., 2000): Overview of the design and focus of physical activity-based programs serving underserved youth.

### **Week 5**

- Pages 31-34 (Hellison et al., 2000): Introduction to specific guidelines for physical activity-based youth development programs, including the key criteria for state-of-the-art youth development programs.

### **Week 6**

- Chapter 5 (Hellison et al., 2000): Overview of outdoor and adventure youth development programs, including how the TPSR model fits into these programs.

### **Week 7**

- Chapter 6 (Hellison et al., 2000): Explanation of in-school physical activity-based youth development programs, including the context of schools and how these programs can be evaluated.

### **Week 8**

- Chapter 7 (Hellison et al., 2000): Overview of extended day physical activity-based clubs focusing on youth development, with most of the clubs utilizing the TPSR model.

### **Week 9**

- Chapter 8 (Hellison et al., 2000): Introduction of alternative school physical education focusing on youth development.

**Week 10**

- Chapter 10 (Hellison et al., 2000): Explanation of cross-age teaching programs, including teaching and leadership options, essential components, potential impact and outcomes, and challenges related to these programs.

**Week 11**

- Chapter 11 (Hellison et al., 2000): Overview of leadership, including different types of leadership, how to be a good leader, and how leadership fits into the TPSR model.

**Week 12**

- Chapter 12 (Hellison et al., 2000): Introduction of how to evaluate physical activity-based youth development programs.

## **Reflection Journal: Weekly Prompts for the Half-Page Reflections**

### **Week 1: The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model**

- What components, strategies, and/or life skills do you believe can effectively be implemented in the program?
- Provide your understanding of the Service Program (SP). In your answer describe your understanding of how the theory of possible selves works, including the balance of hoped-for-selves and feared-selves.
- Provide your understanding of the progression of the four SP phases.

### **Week 2: Mentoring Programs: How Can These Programs Help?**

- Analyze and evaluate the various aspects of the mentoring program described in the chapter.

### **Week 3: Paint the Picture of At-Risk/Underserved Youth**

- Does the message fit your personal philosophy/understanding of these kids?

### **Week 4: The Way It Could Be**

- Does your personal philosophy of these kids align (or not) with this chapter?

### **Week 5: What Is Youth Development?**

- Which of the following key criteria for state-of-the-art youth development programs have you experienced in your field site program?

### **Week 6: Adventure Education and Outdoor Pursuits**

- Evaluate the programs in chapter 5 (e.g., strengths, weaknesses, to what extent they can contribute to kids' lives).

### **Week 7: In-School Physical Activity Programs: How Can These Programs Help?**

- Provide your thoughts on this chapter.

### **Week 8: Extended Day Physical Activity-Based Clubs: How Can These Programs Help?**

- Compare the clubs described in the chapter to your field site program.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of extended day programs.

### **Week 9: Alternative School physical Activity-Based Programs: How Can These Programs Help?**

- Evaluate the 5 programs described in the chapter.

### **Week 10: Cross-Age Teaching Programs: How Can These Programs Help?**

- Analyze and evaluate the various aspects of the cross-age teaching program described in the chapter.

### **Week 11: Leadership**

- What qualities (e.g., skills, values) contribute the most to becoming an effective youth development leader?

**Week 12: Physical Activity-Based Program Evaluation: How Do We Find Out If a Program “Works”?**

- Describe how your field site program conducts evaluation.
- Apply the chapter’s ideas and concepts to your field site program (i.e., how could your program benefit from using some of these ideas?).

### **Reflection Journal: Semester-Long Prompts for the Weekly Program Observations**

1. How did the participants respond to the instructors and the program? Include their behaviors and attitudes.
2. How did the participants handle their responsibilities?
3. Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?
4. What contributions has this youth work made to your life? (Only answer this question if something new came up since the previous reflection)
5. Provide any additional comments, kid quotes, and suggestions.



## **Reflection Journal: Phase-Specific Prompts for Mentoring Session Observations**

### **Phase One Questions:**

- How did you describe kinesiology and why you chose this major?
- How did you connect Levels 1 and 2 to your kinesiology experience?
- What did you say about the career(s) you are pursuing?
- What did you say about what helps and hurts your future?
- What did you share about yourself outside of career aspirations?
- What details did you learn about the participants?
- Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?

### **Phase Two Questions:**

- How did you connect Levels 3 and 4 to your kinesiology experiences?
- How did you create discussions about careers in kinesiology?
- In what ways did you connect goal-setting and leadership with the physical activities to being successful in kinesiology?
- What did you chart for the kinesiology “procedural knowledge”?
- What details did you learn about the participants?
- Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?

### **Phase Three Questions:**

- How did you connect Levels 1 – 4 in kinesiology to the participants’ careers of choice?
- How did you connect kinesiology “procedural knowledge” to the participants’ careers “procedural knowledge”?
- What did you chart for the participants’ career(s) of choice “procedural knowledge”?
- How did you introduce the idea of having both “hopes” and “fears”?
- What details did you learn about the participants?
- Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?

### **Phase Four Questions:**

- How did you connect Level 5 “outside the gym” to the participants’ careers of choice?
- How did you describe having a healthy balance of both “hopes” and “fears”?
- How did you advance in the steps and what did you chart for the participants’ careers of choice “procedural knowledge”?
- What details did you learn about the participants?
- Is there anything else you would like to write about from the mentoring session?

## Participant Observations

When completing the participant observations at the conclusion of each session of the Service Program (SP), the primary investigator (who was embedded in the SP) focused on the undergraduate student leaders' actions, statements, questions, and attitudes. This included an account and interpretation of what the investigator observed during each session with respect to the undergraduate student leaders' interactions with the high school students (focusing solely on the undergraduate student leaders in the observations) and the undergraduate student leaders' participation in the planning meetings with the Program Director *before* each session begins as well as the debriefing meetings with the Program Director *after* each session ends. Below is an example of the participant observations for one session of the SP.

### Week 11, Session 1

#### Overall Comments

- Although there was a bit of low energy at the beginning of the session, this was a relatively good session. Since no one went to the dance station when everyone split into stations, we decided not to have that station for the day, with just 3 stations. This was mostly because three high school students were missing, making the groups very small.
- During the self-direction time though, a lot of high school students and undergraduate students went to the dance station to learn the moonwalk from the sophomore high school student.

#### John

- Pre-session meeting
  - o He was stretching and largely “checked out” mentally during the pre-session meeting.
  - o The only time he talked during the pre-session meeting was when the course instructor asked Sean who would be leading the martial arts station, and Sean said that John would be, while Sean would rotate. The course instructor then forcefully reminded John that he should allow the high school students to lead and he needs to be mostly quiet during the stations, to which John forcefully replied that he understood that, and that the only reason he mostly taught last time (when there was supposed to be a high school student leader) was because they were teaching a new technique. The course instructor said he understood that, but did not want that to happen again – and John just shook his head and it was clear that he didn't agree with the course instructor and felt like his voice was not being heard. Throughout this entire exchange, he had a frustrated look on his face.
- Session
  - o During the warm-ups, the course instructor asked him to take one of the high school students out of the gym and to the physical education teacher and a counselor, since the high school student was not having a good day and had been struggling over the past few weeks. John did this without question, as he had been struggling in working with this high school student and seemed concerned that this high school student was not interested in participating that day.

- During the activity stations, I only heard John ask one or two questions to the high school leader, Sarah, at the martial arts station. Overall, he mostly stayed quiet.
- His two high school student mentees were absent today, so he helped another undergraduate student with her two high school student mentees.
- Post-session meeting
  - He did not say much and did not seem to listen to anyone when they talked (including the course instructor and the other undergraduate students).

#### Amanda

- Pre-session meeting
  - She did not say anything during the pre-session meeting and it was difficult to tell whether she was actively listening.
- Session
  - She helped a high school student lead the aerobics station, although she did not provide as much encouragement and support to the high school students and to this high school student leader as she could have done.
  - She did not look excited to be with the high school students.
  - She was in deep conversation with her two high school student mentees during the mentoring time.
- Post-session meeting
  - She was quiet during this meeting, not looking very interested or engaged in the discussion.

#### Shayna

- Pre-session meeting
  - During the pre-session meeting, when the course instructor asked if she and another undergraduate student had a leader for the dance station, they laughed and said that the sophomore high school student was leading, even though he did not know it yet.
  - She seemed to be engaged in the pre-service meeting, nodding her head as the course instructor talked.
- Session
  - Since there was not a dance station today, she rotated around the other three stations, but then she helped a sophomore high school student teach the moonwalk.
  - She was very encouraging and positive when working with the high school students, with an interested and engaged look on her face when she spoke with them.
  - In the circle at the end of the session, she complimented the sophomore high school student on his ability to teach the other high school students the moonwalk.
  - During the mentoring time, she seemed to be interacting very well with her high school student mentee, with the two of them in deep conversation throughout the entire mentoring time.
- Post-session meeting

- She did not say anything during this meeting, but she seemed to be listening and interested in what the course instructor and the undergraduate students were saying.

#### Sean

- Pre-session meeting
  - During the pre-session meeting, the course instructor asked him whether he was leading the martial arts station, but he explained that John was leading that station and that he would be rotating.
- Session
  - He provided a lot of support to the high school students while he rotated to different activity stations, remaining positive and encouraging the high school students to keep trying and giving good effort.
  - He was always smiling at every station.
  - During the mentoring time, he was working with his high school student mentees on their career charts, adding a few different things onto the charts.
- Post-session meeting
  - While he did not speak during this meeting, he seemed to be engaged, nodding his head and looking at whoever was speaking.

#### Jill

- Pre-session meeting
  - She showed up about seven minutes late, and then immediately started getting the aerobics station ready with Amanda.
  - She was very quiet during the pre-session meeting and did not seem to be very engaged.
- Session
  - During the activity stations, she helped to lead the aerobics station with a high school student, but she was not as vocal as she usually is during the station.
  - During the circle at the end of the session, she commented on how well the high school student leader did in the aerobics station, explaining how this high school student came up with a variety of activities and gave good instructions.
- Post-session meeting
  - During the post-session meeting, she was nodding her head and actively listening while the course instructor talked about what was expected in their reflections/observations and where the program was headed over the next few weeks.

#### Anton

- Pre-session meeting
  - He was very quiet during the pre-session meeting, not saying anything at all, although he did seem to be engaged and listening.
- Session
  - He led the weight lifting station, where he was more vocal as a leader than previous weeks and he also asked some of the high school students which muscles

they were working out and what exercises they wanted to do next. He was trying to get the high school students more engaged in the activity.

- Overall, he was more encouraging and positive than he has been in past sessions.
  - During the mentoring session, he seemed to be focused on helping his high school students complete their worksheets, pointing out areas for them to complete and asking questions.
- Post-session meeting
- He did not say anything during the post-session meeting, even though he seemed to be listening.

### **Reflection and Cognitive Complexity Scale**

- 1) On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student focus on the specified questions and use specific and concrete detail to develop the answers?
- 2) On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student express himself or herself clearly?
- 3) On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree were the entries both directly and indirectly attentive to the focus of this course?
- 4) On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate reflection?
- 5) On a scale of 0 to 10, to what degree did the student demonstrate a deep and more complex understanding, grappling with, or integration of experience?

## **Post-Service Reflection**

**Instructions:** Review your half-page reflections, program observations, and mentoring session observations from the entire semester. Take some time to reflect on personal challenges, lessons learned, your performance, and the value of this experience. Prepare a commentary of the service-learning course and your performance by writing about each of the following areas. Please answer each question.

### **1. The Experience**

- a. Describe this project in your own words.
  - i. What are the goals of this project?
  - ii. What is your role in this project?
- b. Describe your experience in this course.
  - i. How did it feel working with your classmates in this setting?
  - ii. How did it feel working with your instructor in this setting?
- c. Was this project meaningful to you?
- d. What have you learned about these students?
- e. What have you learned about this high school?
- f. What have you learned about the community?
- g. What have you learned about kinesiology?
- h. What have you learned about the course content?
- i. What have you learned about working with youth?
- j. Was there a moment of failure, success, indecision, doubt, humor, frustration, happiness, sadness? If so, please describe any/all of these moments.
- k. Do you feel that your actions had any effect?
- l. What are the needs of the kids that you think this project addressed? If so, please describe.
- m. What more needs to be done?

### **2. The Course**

- a. Does this experience complement the class readings, or does it contrast with it? How?
- b. Review the student learning outcomes that your instructor set in the course syllabus. Comment on whether the program helped you reach these outcomes.
- c. Given all of the different experiences in this course (course readings, reflection journals, practical experience), what did you learn the most from?
  - i. Why do you think this was the case?
  - ii. Did you expect this?
- d. Has learning through experience taught you more, less, or as much as classes that meet only in the classroom? In what ways?
- e. Did the reflections you wrote each week change the way you acted in the program?
- f. Did the reflections you wrote each week have any impact on your learning?

### **3. Personal Reflection**

- a. Think about the preconceptions and expectations that you had before you began this course. Discuss how your views may have changed and what you may have learned.
- b. Have you learned anything about yourself through this experience? If so, please describe.
- c. In what ways, if any, has your sense of self and your values been affected through this experience?
- d. In what ways, if any, has your self-confidence and self-esteem been affected through this experience?
- e. In what ways, if any, has your sense of community and your willingness to serve others been affected through this experience?
- f. Have your motivations for volunteering changed? If so, how?
- g. Did this experience challenge your stereotypes, prejudices, and/or biases? If so, how?
- h. Did this experience challenge your ideals, your philosophies, your concept of life, or your way of living? If so, how?
- i. Identify three things you learned while developing and implementing this program.
- j. Identify the value of the experience to you both professionally and personally. If you feel that the experience was not personally or professionally valuable, discuss how this situation might be improved for future students.
- k. What do you plan on doing in the future?
  - i. Did this experience have any effect on your future plans (e.g., major, career, decision to attend graduate school)?
  - ii. Did you learn anything that may help you with your future plans?
  - iii. Do you have any goals for volunteering in the future? If so, please describe.
- l. Identify two personal challenges you experienced while developing and implementing the program.
- m. Evaluate your performance during the planning and implementation of the program.
- n. Have you given enough, opened up enough, cared enough throughout this experience?

#### **4. The Society**

- a. From your experience, are you able to identify any issues that are creating or influencing the situation? What can be done to change the situation?
- b. Will this alter your behaviors, attitudes, and/or career? If so, how?
- c. Is the site affected by the larger political and social conditions? If so, how?

#### **5. Recommendations**

- a. What advice would you offer to a student who might be involved in this program in the future?
- b. Make three recommendations for improving the planning or implementation process of the program.



**6. Additional**

- a. Please add any additional comments or reflections on your experience that you would like to add.

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – John**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. In this interview, we will be focusing on your experience throughout the entire program as well as some of your responses from the final reflection piece. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. What is your emphasis at the university?
- b. Can you talk about your family life a bit?
  - i. Are your parents still together?

### **2. Course**

- a. Did you feel as if you learned anything in this course?
- b. Were the readings helpful for the experience? For the future?
- c. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between this course and your other courses on campus?
  - i. Where did you learn more?
  - ii. Reflect more?
  - iii. Be more prepared to use the course concepts in the “real world” more?

### **3. Experience**

- a. Do you feel like you were prepared for this experience, based on your previous life experiences, the readings, and the preparation that you got from the instructor before the SP began?
- b. In your post-service reflection, you said how working closely with the instructor wasn't as useful for you because you aren't someone with a passive personality. Can you talk a bit more about that?
- c. Do you feel as if this program is important?
  - i. Do you believe in the program and the work that you were doing at the high school?
  - ii. When asked to identify the value of the experience to you, your answer was a bit vague. Can you explain this in more detail?
- d. In your post-service reflection, you talked about doing exactly what you set out to do in the program. Can you explain this further?
- e. Did you receive enough feedback from the instructor that allowed you to learn the course concepts, understand the readings, and become more effective as a mentor in the SP?
  - i. Was the type/amount of feedback appropriate?
- f. Could you talk about the different leadership styles between the instructor and the physical education teacher at the high school, and what you think is effective?

- g. In your first interview, you spoke about believing in a military style of leadership. Was this experience different from that?
  - i. If so, please talk about the differences and your thoughts on that.
  - ii. What is more effective, in your opinion?
- h. Can you talk about the first impressions you had about the kids, and which ones were not “entirely accurate in the end”?
  - i. Why do you think was this the case?
- i. You talked about butting heads with one of your mentees, and that you think he will remember what you have told him in the future. Please explain this.
- j. You say that your motivations for volunteering have never changed. So what are these motivations, to be clear?
- k. Why do you think this experience did not challenge your ideals, philosophies, concept of life, or way of living?
- l. Do you feel like this experience will have an impact on you (professionally or personally) in the future? If so, please describe.
  - i. Did this experience have any effect on your future plans (e.g., major, career, decision to attend graduate school)?
  - ii. Did you learn anything that may help you with your future plans?
- m. In one of your program observations, you mentioned how you have learned a lot from the model and are using that in your work with kids outside of this program. Can you talk a bit more about that?
- n. One of the goals of this type of course is for the students to reflect and integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content (readings) and the experiences they are having at the SP. With this in mind, on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being not at all and 10 being careful and conscious reflection), how would you rate your quality of reflection throughout the semester?
  - i. How would you rate your written assignments that you turned in each week in terms of the quality of reflection throughout the semester?
- o. What impact do you think this had on the high school students?
- p. Did you see any changes in the undergraduate students throughout the semester?

#### **4. Community**

- a. You mentioned how the involvement of the community/parents was like a multicultural mess instead of a melting pot. Could you talk a bit more about that?

#### **5. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Amanda**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. In this interview, we will be focusing on your experience throughout the entire program as well as some of your responses from the final reflection piece. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. What is your emphasis at the university?
- b. Can you talk about your family life a bit?

### **2. Course**

- a. Were the readings helpful for the experience? For the future?
  - i. Did you learn from these readings?
- b. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between this course and your other courses on campus?
  - i. Where did you learn more?
  - ii. Reflect more?
  - iii. Be more prepared to use the course concepts in the “real world” more?

### **3. Experience**

- a. Do you feel like you were prepared for this experience, based on your previous life experiences, the readings, and the preparation that you got from the instructor before the SP began?
- b. Did you receive enough feedback from the instructor that allowed you to learn the course concepts, understand the readings, and become more effective as a mentor in the SP?
  - i. Was the type/amount of feedback appropriate?
- c. Can you talk a bit more about your experience being around a diverse group of individuals and what this meant to you?
- d. Do you feel like this experience will have an impact on you personally in the future? If so, please describe.
- e. One of the goals of this type of course is for the students to reflect and integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content (readings) and the experiences they are having at the SP. With this in mind, on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being not at all and 10 being careful and conscious reflection), how would you rate your quality of reflection throughout the semester?
  - i. How would you rate your written assignments that you turned in each week in terms of the quality of reflection throughout the semester?
- f. What impact do you think this had on the high school students?

- g. Did you see any changes in the undergraduate students throughout the semester?

**4. Community**

- a. N/A

**5. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Shayna**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. In this interview, we will be focusing on your experience throughout the entire program as well as some of your responses from the final reflection piece. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. What is your emphasis at the university?

### **2. Course**

- a. Did you feel as if you learned anything in this course?
  - i. In your post-service reflection, you briefly mentioned learning how to be a better mentor. Can you expand on this?
- b. Were the readings helpful for the experience? For the future?
- c. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between this course and your other courses on campus?
  - i. You mentioned that you learned more in this course than normal classes – can you explain why?
  - ii. Reflect more?
  - iii. Be more prepared to use the course concepts in the “real world” more?

### **3. Experience**

- a. Do you feel like you were prepared for this experience, based on your previous life experiences, the readings, and the preparation that you got from the instructor before the SP began?
- b. Do you feel as if this program is important?
  - i. Do you believe in the program and the work that you were doing at the high school?
- c. You mentioned that you may not have received enough feedback from the instructor. What would have been more helpful for you to learn the course concepts, understand the readings, and become more effective as a mentor in the SP?
  - i. Was the type/amount of feedback appropriate?
- d. You mentioned that you doubted the success of the program at times. Can you explain why you felt this way?
- e. Have you learned anything about yourself through this experience? If so, please describe.
- f. As you mentioned in your post-service reflection, can you talk more about your changes in self-confidence as a result of this program?

- g. Do you feel like this experience will have an impact on you (professionally or personally) in the future? If so, please describe.
- h. One of the goals of this type of course is for the students to reflect and integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content (readings) and the experiences they are having at the SP. With this in mind, on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being not at all and 10 being careful and conscious reflection), how would you rate your quality of reflection throughout the semester?
  - i. How would you rate your written assignments that you turned in each week in terms of the quality of reflection throughout the semester?
- i. What impact do you think this had on the high school students?
- j. Did you see any changes in the undergraduate students throughout the semester?

**4. Community**

- a. N/A

**5. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Sean**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. In this interview, we will be focusing on your experience throughout the entire program as well as some of your responses from the final reflection piece. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. What is your emphasis at the university?

### **2. Course**

- a. Did you feel as if you learned anything in this course?
- b. Were the readings helpful for the experience? For the future?
- c. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between this course and your other courses on campus?
  - i. Where did you learn more?
  - ii. Reflect more?
  - iii. Be more prepared to use the course concepts in the “real world” more?

### **3. Experience**

- a. Do you feel like you were prepared for this experience, based on your previous life experiences, the readings, and the preparation that you got from the instructor before the SP began?
- b. Do you feel as if this program is important?
  - i. Do you believe in the program and the work that you were doing at the high school?
- c. Did you receive enough feedback from the instructor that allowed you to learn the course concepts, understand the readings, and become more effective as a mentor in the SP?
  - i. Was the type/amount of feedback appropriate?
- d. You mentioned that this experience has led you to be interested in becoming a high school teacher in the future. Can you talk more about that?
  - i. Did you learn anything that may help you with your future plans?
  - ii. Do you feel like this experience will have an impact on you personally in the future? If so, please describe.
- e. One of the goals of this type of course is for the students to reflect and integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content (readings) and the experiences they are having at the SP. With this in mind, on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being not at all and 10 being careful and conscious reflection), how would you rate your quality of reflection throughout the semester?



- i. How would you rate your written assignments that you turned in each week in terms of the quality of reflection throughout the semester?
- f. What impact do you think this had on the high school students?
- g. Did you see any changes in the undergraduate students throughout the semester?

**4. Community**

- a. N/A

**5. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Jill**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. In this interview, we will be focusing on your experience throughout the entire program as well as some of your responses from the final reflection piece. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. What is your emphasis at the university?
- b. Can you talk about your family life a bit?
  - i. Are your parents still together?

### **2. Course**

- a. Were the readings helpful for the experience? For the future?
- b. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between this course and your other courses on campus?
  - i. Where did you learn more?
  - ii. Reflect more?
  - iii. Be more prepared to use the course concepts in the “real world” more?

### **3. Experience**

- a. Do you feel like you were prepared for this experience, based on your previous life experiences, the readings, and the preparation that you got from the instructor before the SP began?
- b. You said that the kids weren’t as rebellious as you had originally pictured. Can you talk more about this?
- c. For what you learned through this experience, you said that working with youth is a rewarding experience. Did you learn anything else?
- d. You said that this experience was meaningful to you. Why?
- e. You said how you enjoyed learning about your participant’s experience moving to America. Can you talk more about that?
- f. Did you receive enough feedback from the instructor that allowed you to learn the course concepts, understand the readings, and become more effective as a mentor in the SP?
  - i. Was the type/amount of feedback appropriate?
- g. You said that the experience made you think more about your future & what kind of job you will be happy with. Can you talk more about that?
- h. You said that you are interested in helping other kids achieve their goals in other programs and mentoring girls. Can you talk more about that?
- i. You said that you hope this experience helps you to be more understanding in all areas of your life. What did you mean by that?

- j. One of the goals of this type of course is for the students to reflect and integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content (readings) and the experiences they are having at the SP. With this in mind, on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being not at all and 10 being careful and conscious reflection), how would you rate your quality of reflection throughout the semester?
  - i. How would you rate your written assignments that you turned in each week in terms of the quality of reflection throughout the semester?
- k. What impact do you think this had on the high school students?
- l. Did you see any changes in the undergraduate students throughout the semester?

**4. Community**

- a. N/A

**5. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Anton**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. In this interview, we will be focusing on your experience throughout the entire program as well as some of your responses from the final reflection piece. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Background and Personal Information**

- a. What is your emphasis at the university?

### **2. Course**

- a. Were the readings helpful for the experience? For the future?
- b. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between this course and your other courses on campus?
  - i. Where did you learn more?
  - ii. Reflect more?
  - iii. Be more prepared to use the course concepts in the “real world” more?

### **3. Experience**

- a. Do you feel like you were prepared for this experience, based on your previous life experiences, the readings, and the preparation that you got from the instructor before the SP began?
- b. Do you feel as if this program is important?
  - i. Do you believe in the program and the work that you were doing at the high school?
- c. Did you receive enough feedback from the instructor that allowed you to learn the course concepts, understand the readings, and become more effective as a mentor in the SP?
  - i. Was the type/amount of feedback appropriate?
  - ii. Why do you think was this the case?
- d. You said that this experience made you more motivated to go to graduate school and become a physical therapist. Why is this the case?
- e. You mentioned your interest in being involved with the community in the future, partially because of this program. Do you have any idea what this will look like?
- f. Can you reflect a bit more on the end-of-semester experiences you had with your two high school mentees, and what meaning that holds for you at this time and in the future?
- g. One of the goals of this type of course is for the students to reflect and integrate their own personal experiences and understanding with the course content (readings) and the experiences they are having at the SP. With this in mind, on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being not at all and 10 being careful and conscious

reflection), how would you rate your quality of reflection throughout the semester?

- i. How would you rate your written assignments that you turned in each week in terms of the quality of reflection throughout the semester?
- h. What impact do you think this had on the high school students?
- i. Did you see any changes in the undergraduate students throughout the semester?

**4. Community**

- a. N/A

**5. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

## **Post-Service Interview Guide Protocol – Instructor**

**Introduction:** Through this study, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of your experience in the service-learning course, as your perspectives are valuable. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, your perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Remind participant that they have read and signed the consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

### **1. Course**

- a. What were your perceptions of the overall program?
- b. What were your feelings regarding your role in the program?

### **2. Students**

- a. How would you describe the students' performance in the program?
- b. How engaged do you think the students were with the course material? With the program?
- c. How would you gauge the students' enthusiasm for the program?
- d. What did the students learn from this experience?
  - i. Prompt with: cognitive complexity, personal growth, academic, intellectual, social, community engagement
- e. What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you think students gained/improved upon during this experience?
- f. Have you observed any "changes" in any of your students since they began this experience?
- g. What was challenging about this experience for the students?
- h. What was meaningful about this experience for the students?
- i. In comparison to past courses that you have taught, how does this one rate in terms of:
  - o Student learning
  - o Your relationship with students
  - o Students' interest level (motivation, engagement, etc.)

### **3. Conclusion**

- a. Do you have any additional comments or reflections that you would like to add?

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