

# **The Value of An Undergraduate Degree in Psychology: Enhancing Student Learning Through Service**

**Lori Simons  
Widener University**

**Charlotte Marshall  
Widener University**

**Nancy Blank  
Widener University**

**Natalie Weaver  
Widener University**

*A total of 226 undergraduate students enrolled in undergraduate psychology courses that utilize practicum/internship and service-learning as primary instructional methods took part in the study. Interns improved their understanding of the integration of diversity content in the course, awareness of gender and racial inequality, and general empathy from the beginning to the end of the practicum/internship program. Interns also had higher ratings of ethnocultural awareness and lower ratings for interpersonal engagement and civic responsibility compared to service-learners from the beginning to the end of the semester. Implications for infusing service-based pedagogies in beginning, middle, and ending psychology courses are discussed.*

*Keywords: service-learning, critical pedagogies, student learning*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Institutions of higher education (IHEs) have been scrutinized about the value of a liberal arts education during the past two decades. The increasing costs of higher education have led scholars to question the viability and sustainability of liberal arts colleges (Grawe, 2018; Varlotta, 2018). Psychology is one of the most popular majors in liberal arts colleges (Halonen & Dunn, 2018; Howell-Carter, Nieman-Gonder, Pellegrino, Catapano, & Hutzler, 2016). In fact, over 100,000 students earn a bachelor's degree in psychology each year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016), but only, 25% of them continue their education in a graduate program (Hettich, 2010). Most students enter the workforce and pursue careers outside of psychology which endorses the belief that one cannot get a job in psychology without a graduate degree and reinforces questions about whether an undergraduate degree is really a good investment (Halonen & Dunn, 2018; Landrum & McCarthy, 2018; Peterson, Wardell, Will, & Campana, 2014;

Reupert, Davis, Stewart, & Bridgman, 2018). Psychology educators have worked diligently to counter these perspectives by developing and implementing assessment strategies to measure student learning. Student learning outcomes are used to demonstrate program accountability (Landrum, 2011). Psychology Departments develop program outcomes that align with the curricula, assess student learning, and use the results to revise the curricula for improvement (APA, 2016). The focus of this paper is to describe the value of an undergraduate psychology degree using student learning outcomes.

The American Psychological Association (APA) has established guidelines for developing high quality undergraduate programs in psychology (APA, 2013; APA, 2007). Professional development and career preparedness have been emphasized in the revised guidelines for undergraduate psychology programs (APA, 2016; Landrum & McCarthy, 2018). Educators propose that career issues should be infused in beginning, middle and ending courses (Bailey, Barber, & Nelson, 2017); while, other scholars suggest that specific career exploration courses be developed and implemented in the psychology curricula (Loher, Verno, Francis, Craig, & Keller, 2010; Loher & Landrum, 2010). Halonen and Dunn (2018) recommend that career issues be embedded in psychology courses throughout the curricula, specifically addressed in professional development seminars, and explored in capstone courses as best practices for assisting students transition to the workforce.

Practicum and internship serve as capstone courses in psychology (Dunn & McCarthy, 2010). According to APA (2005), practicum courses introduce students to fieldwork in social service agencies or other appropriate settings; while, internship courses provide students with advanced training related to fieldwork and allows them to gain extensive “real world” experience. Practica and internships also refer to field-based learning that involves supervised discipline- and career-related work for academic credit (Sweitzer & King, 2009). Psychology is a discipline that can serve as a pathway for a broad range of careers (Dunn, Wilson, Freeman, & Stowell, 2010). Therefore, practica and internships can be directly or indirectly related to psychology.

Several scholars propose that practica and internships are the most optimal learning experiences for students to explore career interests related to psychology (Bailey, Barber, & Nelson, 2017; Hettitch, 2010; Loher & Landrum, 2010). Students are paired with placement sites that match their career interests, engage in professional work for extended periods of time, and connect their learning experiences to both psychology coursework and career development. Internships differ from service-learning in that field experiences are designed to promote student learning rather than reciprocal learning (Sigmon, 1996; Sweitzer & King, 2009). In contrast to this perspective, Grayson (2010) suggests that career related issues can be explored in academic service-learning (ASL) courses. ASL combines academic study with community service in which students connect the service context to the course content through critical reflection (Eyler, 2002). ASL require students to leave their comfort zones of the classroom, venture into the community, and engage in service activities with individuals who are unlike them (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Grayson, 2010). For example, in an Educational Psychology course, students tutor children in public schools located in lower-income neighborhoods. These students will have different views about school systems and possibly acquire information about working in school as a teacher or guidance counselor compared to students who learn about it in class. ASL promotes reciprocal learning in which students and recipients learn from each other (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Course goals for ASL and fieldwork differ and may contribute to different student learning outcomes. It is also conceivable that "service" can serve as a pathway for career development in beginning, middle, and ending psychology courses. The next step in this area of research is to evaluate differences in student learning outcomes (SLOs) for psychology interns and then compare SLOs for interns to those of service-learners. Our study was guided by three research questions:

- (1) Are there differences in student learning outcomes as measure in Color-blind Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS), the Multicultural Environmental Inventory (MEI), the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE), the Psychological Costs of Racism to Whites Scale (PCRW), the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), the Three Aspects of Engagement, and the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) from the beginning to the end of the semester for students enrolled in a practicum/internship program?
- (2) What are student interns' perceptions of their placements?

- (3) Are there differences in student learning outcomes from the beginning to the end of the semester for students enrolled in practicum/internship and service-learning courses?

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

A total of 226 undergraduate students enrolled in psychology courses who were part of a larger cross-sectional study from 2008 to 2015 served as participants in the current study. One-hundred and forty-four students were enrolled in practicum/internship courses and 82 students were enrolled in service-learning courses. Most students were female (81%) and White (62%) with a mean age of 20.52 years ( $SD= 2.00$ ). The remaining students self-identified as male (19%) and either African American (24%), Latino/a (5%), Asian-American (5%), Indian (5%), or Biracial or Multiracial (3%). One percent of students opted not to report their race. Student interns consisted of mostly juniors (50%) and seniors (36%). Fourteen percent were second semester juniors. Of these interns, 47% reported taking a service-learning course and 84% reported engaging in fieldwork prior to their current practicum or internship course. Student interns did not significantly differ in demographic characteristics from service-learners. Out of service-learners, 23% were sophomores, 39% were juniors, and 39% were seniors. Sixty-two percent of service-learners reported taking a service-learning course prior to and 87% of them reported taking a practicum or internship concurrently with their current course.

### **Course Content**

#### *Practicum/Internship Program*

Practicum/Internship Program (as also described in Simons, Fehr, Blank, Barnes, Connell, Fernandez, Georganas, Padro, & Peterson, 2011). The practicum/internship program is a sequential model comprised of a professional development seminar, a practicum and an internship. The goals of the psychology practicum/internship program are to foster students' personal (i.e., empathy, cultural competence), civic (i.e., civic leadership, interpersonal engagement) and professional domains (i.e., career interests). The professional development seminar is designed as a one-credit course in which students learn about the logistics of setting up a practicum. In-class time begins with an exploration of students' academic or career aspirations. Guest speakers representing different agencies also talk with students about their organizations, the requirements for a practicum, and what they need to do to obtain a position. Students learn about professional and ethical behaviors that are pertinent to the sites in which they work and demonstrate knowledge in these areas through case studies, role-playing, and mock interview and reflection assignments. Students participate in a mock interview that is video-taped and subsequently they reflect on their own performance. The mock interview reflection requires students to describe the areas of their performance that they thought they did well and those areas of their performance that they thought they could improve upon, explain why they did and did not like these particular areas, and discuss how they plan to improve upon these areas for their "actual" interviews. Students are further required to complete a goal sheet that requires them to describe what they want to learn from a practicum and explain how a practicum will assist them in achieving their career goals. Then this information is used to pair students with placement sites. Students obtain the necessary paperwork (i.e., child abuse & criminal history clearances, malpractice insurance) and are matched with a placement site by the end of the course.

After successful completion of the professional development seminar, students enroll in a practicum and then an internship. The practicum introduces students to field work in social service agencies or other appropriate settings (APA, 2005). Placements include, but are not limited to, community mental-health centers, drug and alcohol counseling centers, rehabilitation and community centers, intervention and educational programs, and other agencies in which students are able to utilize helping skills and put their knowledge of psychology into practice. Students enroll in either a three- or six-credit practicum. A three-credit practicum requires students to complete 100-hours and a six-credit practicum requires completion of 200-hours of field work. Students work under the supervision of the placement field supervisor and meet regularly with a faculty member who serves as a practicum advisor (i.e., a faculty member who has

experience in their area of interest). The practicum advisor guides students on the academic components of the course that include documentation of field hours, a daily journal in which they describe and reflect on what they learned at the placement, and a research paper. The research paper requires students to integrate psychological theory with scholarly research relevant to their placement and practical aspects of the practicum (i.e., case reflection, ethical standards). Students complete pre and post-assessment surveys, and at the end of the semester they complete placement evaluations and participate in a reflection discussion.

Students who complete a practicum and are interested in further fieldwork can take an internship. The internship requires students to take either nine or 12-credits over one or two semesters. The nine-credit internship requires students to complete 300-hours and the 12-credit internship requires them to complete 400-hours of field work. Students enrolled in an internship are required to complete an extensive research paper and the academic components of a practicum (as described above). The breadth of field experiences offered to students have been designed to help them acquire a broad range of practical knowledge and skills and to foster their personal and professional goals so they can become productive professionals and make an impact in their particular field of psychological study.

### *Service-Learning*

Multicultural Psychology is a three-credit service-learning course that fulfills a distribution requirement in the psychology and African and African American Studies curricula (as also described in Simons, Fehr, Blank, Russell, Goodman, DeSimone, Manampuram, and Georganas, 2012). The goals of this course are to increase students' multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills. In-class time begins with a discussion on student concerns about taking this class, guidelines for this course, and a lecture on multiculturalism. The next two classes consist of an orientation on service-learning activities by guest speakers representing different placement sites. Students are required to complete 15 hours of service in which they tutor or mentor children who are may differ from them in race, ethnicity, and/or socioeconomic status at public schools in the Chester Upland School District. The rest of the course is devoted to lecture, reflective and experiential activities, and discussion. Topics covered in detail include multicultural psychology, stereotypes, ageism, sexism, and other isms, classism and racism, racial identity development, oppression and privilege, prejudice reduction, and cultural competence. Experiential activities (i.e., crossing-the-line) and video-clips (i.e., *People Like Us*, *Blue Eyed*) are used to stimulate reflection and discussion.

Students are required to complete a multicultural observation paper, a movie critique of a diversity film, an intercultural interview paper, and reflections about their course and service experiences. The multicultural observation is an immersion experience. Students attend an activity associated with a culture or ethnic group that is distinctively different from them. For example, some students attend a church service other than their own, dine at a restaurant that serves ethnic food, or go to a part of the community or city to which they have never been. Then they write a short description about what they did, how it felt while they were doing it, and what they learned. Students are also required to watch a diversity film (i.e., *Crash*, *Save the Last Dance*), apply diversity theories to explain the main theme of the movie, and describe what they did or did not learn in terms of racial identity development and multicultural competence (i.e., awareness, knowledge, & skills). In addition, students are required to complete an intercultural interview paper. This assignment requires students to develop an interview on any topic related to multicultural psychology (i.e., classism, ageism, racism), interview two individuals who differ in one cultural characteristic (i.e., age, race, religion, sexuality, nationality, education, gender, or socioeconomic status), and compare and contrast their responses. Students integrate theory and research to explain the main findings from the interviews. Students are also required to complete structured reflection questions after each class and service experience so they can critically analyze their thoughts and feelings about race and class concepts within the course and service context over the semester. The course ends with a social network activity and a reflective discussion about how student concerns about taking this class have changed throughout the semester.

### **Measures and Procedure**

A Demographic Questionnaire, developed by the researchers, was used to gather information on gender, race, age, and year in school.

The Color-Blind Racial Attitude Scale (CoBRAS), developed by Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne (2000), assessed contemporary racial attitudes. The CoBRAS, a 20-item self-report measure, yields scores on three scales: 1. Unawareness of Racial Privilege (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of White racial privilege); 2. Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of racial issues associated with social policies, affirmative action, and discrimination); and 3. Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of blatant racial problems in the United States). Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .86 to .88 (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000).

The Multicultural Environmental Inventory (MEI), developed by Pope-Davis, Liu, Nevitt, and Toporek. (2000) assessed the degree to which multiculturalism is integrated in the curriculum on four subscales: 1. Curriculum and Supervision (respondents assess the degree to which multicultural issues are integrated into the course); 2. Climate and Comfort (respondents assess the degree to which their comments are valued in class); 3. Honesty in Recruitment (respondents assess the degree to which they are honest about the climate when recruiting); and 4. Multicultural Research (respondents assess how much multicultural issues are integrated in research). The internal consistency reliability estimates for the four subscales ranged from .83 to .92. The curriculum and supervision and the climate and comfort subscales that were used in this study were slightly modified to evaluate the course content and classroom climate in an undergraduate diversity course.

The Psychological Costs of Racism to Whites Scale (PCRW), developed by Spanierman and Heppner (2004), measures the costs of racism to Whites as an emotional, cognitive and behavioral consequences experienced by White individuals as a result of racism on three subscales: 1. White Empathetic Reactions Toward Racism (respondents assess their feelings about racial injustice); 2. White Guilt (respondents assess the degree to which they feel responsible for racism) and 3. White Fear of Others (respondents assess how much they trust or distrust people who culturally differ from them). Items were added together to produce three subscales. The internal consistency for each subscale ranged from .69 to .95. Cronbach's coefficient *alpha* for each scale ranged from .63 to .78. The White empathetic reactions toward racism and White guilt subscales were used in this study.

The Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy, developed by Wang, Davidson, Yakushko, Savoy, Tan, and Bleier (2003), cultural empathy on four subscales: 1. Empathetic Feeling and Expression (respondents assess their ability to take a position when they are offended by a joke or comment about a group who culturally differs from them); 2. Empathetic Perspective-Taking (respondents assess the degree to which they can put themselves in the shoes of someone who is culturally different); 3. Acceptance of Cultural Differences (respondents assess their acceptance of others who culturally differ from them); and 4. Empathetic Awareness (respondents assess their ability to recognize how society portrays people based on racial or ethnic stereotypes). Items are added together to produce a total scale and four subscales. Cronbach's coefficient *alpha* for the total scale and the four subscales ranged from .71 to .91. The four subscales were used in this study.

The Socially Responsible Leadership Scale, developed by Dugan (2006), measured characteristics associated with leadership on eight subscales: 1. Consciousness of Self (respondents assess their level of comfort in expressing oneself); 2. Congruence (respondents assess their ability to take a stand when I believe in something); 3. Commitment (respondents assess their ability to follow through on tasks); 4. Common Purpose (respondents assess their ability to work with others who share collective values); 5. Collaboration (respondents assess their belief in having better outcomes as a result of people working together); 6. Controversy with Civility (respondents assess the belief that hearing differences in opinions enriches thinking); 7. Citizenship (respondents assess the importance of playing an active role in communities); and 8. Change (respondents assess the degree to which they work well in changing environments). The internal consistency for each scale ranged from .69 to .92. The citizenship subscale was used in this study and has strong level reliability ( $\alpha=.90$ ).

The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire, developed by Spend, McKinnon, Mar, and Levine (2009), measures empathy. Sixteen items are added together to produce a total scale. The test-retest reliability score was .81 and Cronbach's coefficient alpha was .87.

The Three Aspects of Engagement, developed by Gallini and Moely (2003), assessed students' views of their engagement. This 27-item self-report questionnaire yields scores on three scales: 1. Community Engagement (respondents evaluate the extent to which their attitudes changed as a result of course participation, working with people of different backgrounds, and feeling connected to the community); 2. Academic Engagement (respondents describe their satisfaction with the academic course and university, and their connectedness to their studies and field of interest); and 3. Interpersonal Engagement (respondents evaluate the course's influence on their ability to effectively work with others, communicate with other students, and make friends). Items are added together to produce three subscale scores. Cronbach's coefficient *alpha* for each scale ranged from .85 to .98. The community and interpersonal engagement subscales were used in this study.

All students completed an informed consent form, a demographic information sheet, and a survey that measured the Color-blind Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS), the Multicultural Environmental Inventory (MEI), the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE), the Psychological Costs of Racism to Whites Scale (PCRW), the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), the Three Aspects of Engagement, and the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) as part of a larger cross-sectional study on student learning in psychology courses. Interns completed the pretest survey in the professional development seminar and then again after the practicum/internship program; while, service-learners completed the survey at the beginning and end of the Multicultural Psychology course. All students completed the survey during class and gave it directly to the researcher. An online version replaced the paper-and-pencil survey in spring 2010. Additional items measuring citizenship, ethnocultural empathy, empathetic reactions to racism, and multicultural content and course climate were included in the online survey. Surveys took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

## RESULTS

A paired t-test was conducted to measure differences in student learning outcomes (i.e., CoBRAS, MEI, PCRW, SEE, SRLS, TEQ, and Three Aspects of Engagement) for students enrolled in the practicum/internship program. Interns improved their empathy, understanding of the integration of diversity content in the course, and comprehension of gender and racial inequality, as well as they reduced their level of acceptance of others who culturally differ from them and feelings of White guilt from the beginning to the end of the semester (See Table 1).

**TABLE 1**  
**SIGNIFICANT RESULTS FROM THE PAIRED T-TEST ANALYSES FOR INTERNS**

Variable	Time 1		Time 2		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
CoBras Total	54.11	8.29	50.69	10.86	63	2.18*
MEI Course	25.14	5.70	27.28	4.81	94	-2.69**
White Guilt	16.81	4.02	13.81	4.80	59	3.56***
SEE Acceptance	10.25	2.98	8.82	3.36	51	2.97**
TEQ Empathy	31.23	7.97	33.90	8.01	55	-2.16*

Note. <sup>1</sup>Differential change by service-learners and experiential learners, reflected in an interaction of Group by Time, at \*\*\*p<.000, \*\*<.01, \*p<.05. ANOVA F ratios are Wilk's approximation for Group X Time interactions. <sup>2</sup>Differential change as a function of group. <sup>3</sup>Differential change as a function of time. CoBRAS rating scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Lower posttest scores indicate awareness and a reduction in denial or negative racial attitudes.

Almost all students felt prepared to engage in fieldwork and appraised the internship was a worthwhile experience. Most students reported that they were treated as professionals, assumed responsibility for their work, and that placement sites addressed the needs of the clients they served. Students further felt that they

had opportunities for reflection and the internship was an integral part of the psychology curriculum (See Table 2).

**TABLE 2**  
**PERCENTAGES OF FIELDWORK FOR INTERNS**

Variable	Strongly Disagree/Disagree %	Neither Disagree/Agree %	Strongly Agree/Agree %
I did a good job at my placement site	12	7	81
I had opportunities to reflect on my internship through journals and other assignments	9	0	91
I had opportunities to reflect on my internship through discussions with faculty, students and supervisors	7	5	88
My placement site was prepared for interns	1	2	97
I was prepared to engage in fieldwork	1	2	97
I accomplished something at my placement site	5	7	88
I was appreciated at my placement site	2	1	97
I feel my internship was worthwhile	1	2	97
I would recommend an internship to a friend	1	1	98
My placement site reflected real needs of the clients it served	1	2	97
I was able to develop ideas at my placement site	2	1	97
My internship was an integral part of my undergraduate studies	1	1	98
My placement site was related to my field of interest	1	3	96
I assumed responsibility at my placement site	1	2	97
My placement site encouraged me to provide feedback	1	2	97
I was treated as a professional at my placement site	1	1	98
There was enough work to keep me busy at my placement site	2	1	97

A repeated measures analyses of variance with orthogonal contrasts were conducted to measure changes in student learning outcomes (i.e., CoBRAS, MEI, PCRW, SEE, SRLS, TEQ, and Three Aspects of Engagement) between students in internship and service-learning courses from the beginning to the end of the semester. The type of course (i.e., practicum/internship, service-learning) was used as the dependent variable and pretest and posttest survey scores were used as the dependent variables. Orthogonal contrasts that were significant ( $p < .05$ ) for interaction effects indicate that interns had higher and service-learners had lower ratings of the integration of diversity content in the course from the beginning to the end of the semester. Interns increased their ethnocultural awareness and decreased their civic leadership and interpersonal engagement skills, over the course of the semester, compared to service-learners. In contrast, service-learners improved their awareness of White privilege, institutional discrimination, empathetic reactions, understanding of gender and racial inequality, and evaluations of the course as encouraging diversity discussions compared to interns. Both service-learners and interns improved their empathy and increased their White guilt from the beginning to the course end.

**TABLE 3**  
**SIGNIFICANT RESULTS FROM THE REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSES OF VARIANCE**

Measure	Time Points				Time	F ratios	
	Pretest		Posttest			Group	Group
	M	SD	M	SD			
CoBras							
White Privilege					5.07*	22.18***	0.11
Interns	22.07	3.99	21.06	5.61			
Service-Learners	18.9	5.67	17.52	5.5			
Total	20.68	5.04	19.51	5.81			
Institutional Discrimination					3.07	9.09**	0.04
Interns	20.13	3.92	19.51	3.97			
Service-Learners	18.54	3.97	17.75	3.97			
Total	19.45	4.01	18.76	4.28			
CoBras Total					6.53*	6.55*	0.86
Interns	54.3	8.21	50.59	10.95			
Service-Learners	49.41	9.57	47.67	11.44			
Total	51.98	9.17	49.21	11.22			
MEI							
Course					2.43	12.13***	5.51*
Interns	25.05	5.65	27.35	4.79			
Service-Learners	28.58	4.55	28.12	4.83			
Total	26.38	5.52	27.64	4.81			
Climate					0.39	8.66**	0.14
Interns	27.51	4.99	27.65	4.4			
Service-Learners	29.22	4.34	29.65	4.4			
Total	28.27	4.77	28.6	4.69			
PCOWR							
White Guilt					8.64**	5.91*	3.32
Interns	13.75	4.82	16.84	4.5			
Service-Learners	13.11	5.48	13.83	4.05			
Total	13.51	5.06	16.69	4.45			
White Empathetic Reactions					4.21*	11.89***	0.13
Interns	18.7	3.81	19.5	3.22			
Service-Learners	20.21	2.39	21.36	3.18			
Total	19.3	3.38	20.25	3.31			
SEE							
Awareness					14.08***	1.54	34.08***
Interns	15.77	3.13	16.31	3.16			
Service-Learners	17.89	3.64	16.31	3.16			
Total	16.54	3.47	15.98	3.19			



SRLS							
Citizenship					0.27	9.41**	10.76***
Interns	32.4	5.42	29.76	5.99			
Service-Learners	32.47	4.38	34.38	5.46			
Total	32.44	4.78	32.61	6.08			
TEQ							
Empathy					4.30*	1.02	1.28
Interns	31.35	8	33.74	7.99			
Service-Learners	33.5	7.43	34.2	6.69			
Total	32.38	7.77	33.96	7.36			
Three Aspects of Engagement							
Interpersonal					0.65	19.42***	4.68*
Interns	12.77	1.52	12.37	2.57			
Service-Learners	16	4.77	16.89	4.44			
<u>Total</u>	<u>15.05</u>	<u>4.34</u>	<u>15.56</u>	<u>4.48</u>			

Note. <sup>1</sup>Differential change by service-learners and interns, reflected in an interaction of Group by Time, at \*\*\* $p < .000$ , \*\* $< .01$ , \* $p < .05$ . ANOVA F ratios are Wilk's approximation for Group X Time interactions. <sup>2</sup>Differential change as a function of group. <sup>3</sup>Differential change as a function of time. CoBRAS rating scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Lower posttest scores indicate awareness and a reduction in denial or negative racial attitudes.

## DISCUSSION

This study explored student learning outcomes (SLOs) in undergraduate psychology courses that utilize either service-learning or fieldwork as the primary instructional strategy. Internship and service-learning courses contribute to different SLOs. Interns acquired a deeper understanding of diversity material, improved their racial attitudes, and experienced both lower levels of White guilt and higher levels of ethnocultural awareness and general empathy through participation in a practicum/internship program. Interns also differed from service-learners. Service-learners increased their awareness of White privilege and institutional discrimination, interpersonal engagement and civic responsibility compared to interns. Incorporating a large sample of students enrolled in practicum/internship and service-learning courses over the past six years assured us the reliability of our findings and allowed us to generalize our results beyond students in a single course.

The first objective of this study was to measure differences in student learning outcomes (i.e., CoBRAS, MEI, PCRW, SEE, SRLS, TEQ, and Three Aspects of Engagement) from the beginning to the end of the practicum/internship program. Interns increased in their understanding of the integration of diversity content in the course, awareness of gender and racial inequality, and empathy from the beginning to the end of the practicum/internship program, consistent with previous research on diversity education and racial empathy (Kordesh, Spanierman, & Neville, 2013; Paone, Malott, & Barr, 2015; Spanierman, Poteat, Wang, & Oh, 2008). Todd, Spanierman, and Poteat (2011) suggest that exposure to diversity courses increase racial awareness and decrease colorblind racial attitudes in undergraduate students. Greater racial awareness and reduced colorblind racial attitudes are also related to greater levels of empathy (Spanierman et al., 2008; Todd et al., 2011). Interns engaged in 100- to 400-hours of fieldwork at drug and alcohol organizations, behavioral health centers, and physical therapy clinics, worked with clients who culturally differed from them, and connected their field experiences to psychology coursework. As a psychology major, students are required to take an introductory to psychology course, two two-hundred level psychology courses in experimental (i.e., cognition, biopsychology), socio-developmental (i.e., personality, human growth and development) and applied domains (i.e., abnormal, health psychology), research methodology courses, two psychology electives, and a capstone course. Multicultural Psychology, Educational Psychology, and

practicum/internship (including the professional development seminar) courses serve as psychology electives. Interns may or may not have taken a diversity or a service-learning course to fulfill psychology electives. Students reported having a better understanding of the diversity material by the end of the course. For some students, the practicum/internship may have been their first exposure to diversity material in both the course and field. Exposure to diversity material in the practicum/internship program may have contributed to improved racial attitudes and increased empathy in students.

In addition, interns reduced their levels of acceptance of others who culturally differed from them and feelings of White guilt from the beginning to the end of the practicum/internship program, partially congruent with previous diversity research. Spanierman et al. (2008) found that diversity courses are related to increased guilt in White students. Moderate levels of White guilt are related to higher racial awareness, better racial attitudes, and higher levels of empathy. Kordesh et al. (2013) further suggests that racial awareness, levels of empathy and White guilt differ for students exposed and not exposed to diversity courses. Students who take diversity courses in their undergraduate studies, increase their racial awareness and experience high levels of both empathy and guilt. Students in the practicum/internship program were exposed to minimal diversity content compared to students enrolled in Multicultural, Educational, and Counseling Psychology courses. It is possible that the mere exposure to diversity material in the practicum/internship program not only influenced students' racial attitudes and empathy levels, but also contributed to their intolerance and White guilt. Students also may have rated responses to questions about ethnocultural awareness and cultural acceptance too high at pretest which would limit the amount of incremental change that could be measured at posttest. Therefore, ceiling effects may be associated with students' lower levels of acceptance of cultural difference and White guilt (Heppner, Kivlighan, Wampold, 1999). Specificity and sensitivity issues associated with the acceptance of cultural difference subscale may further explain students' low levels of acceptance. The acceptance of cultural difference subscale had low to moderate inter-item correlations, factor loadings and reliability estimates (Wang et al., 2003). Subsequent analyses resulted in this subscale being removed from the total scale (Mallinckrodt, Miles, Bhaskar, Chery, Choi, & Sung, 2014; Ozdikmenli-Demir & Demir, 2014).

A second objective was to measure interns' views of their placement sites. Interns positively evaluated their placement sites. Most students reported that they were treated as professionals, assumed responsibility for their work, and that placement sites addressed the needs of the clients they served. Interns also positively appraised their own work. Students felt prepared to engage in fieldwork and that the internship was a worthwhile experience. Almost all students also felt they had opportunities for reflection and that the internship was an integral part of the psychology curriculum. This finding is important considering that the practicum/internship is not required for psychology majors.

A final objective was to measure differences in student learning outcomes (i.e., CoBRAS, MEI, PCRW, SEE, SRLS, TEQ, and Three Aspects of Engagement) between students in internship and service-learning courses from the beginning to the end of the semester. Interns had higher ratings of the integration of diversity content into the course and ethnocultural awareness and lower ratings of interpersonal engagement and civic responsibility from the beginning to the end of the semester compared to service-learners, partially congruent with previous research indicating that there are positive associations between participation in diversity courses and cognitive, social and civic development (Kordesh et al., 2013; Simons et al., 2013; Simons et al., 2012; Spanierman et al., 2008; Todd et al., 2011). Compared to interns, service-learners improved their awareness of White privilege, institutional discrimination, empathetic reactions, understanding of gender and racial inequality, and evaluations of the course as encouraging diversity discussions by the end of the semester. Service-learners also had lower ratings of White guilt compared to interns. Service-learners tutored children in public elementary schools, observed the limited resources associated with public schools located in inner-city neighborhoods, and connected their observations and activities to the diversity content through reflections, discussions, and assignments. These assignments may have afforded students the opportunity to further examine their own White privilege and other systems of privilege, thus contributing to their greater understanding of gender and racial inequalities, stronger empathic reactions to racism and lower levels of White guilt, congruent with multicultural service-learning research (Simons et al., 2013 & 2012; Sperling, 2007).

Consistent with research on diversity activities and race-related affect (Todd et al., 2011), both student groups increased their awareness of White privilege, understanding of gender and racial inequality, general empathy, empathetic reactions to racism, and White guilt from the beginning to the end of the semester. Both student groups also reduced their ethnocultural awareness. White students are situated in fieldwork or service in which their own race and racial impact becomes salient (Helms, 1990). Students develop an awareness of their White privilege and this awareness requires them to formulate and reformulate their racial attitudes. Students also develop a critical awareness of racism which leads to empathetic reactions of anger, frustration, and guilt (Kordesh, 2013). White empathy and guilt may be linked to lower levels of ethnocultural awareness. Spanierman and Heppner (2004) suggest that as White students learn about White privilege, they experience shame and guilt and these emotions become overwhelming thus inhibiting them from increasing their ethnocultural awareness. Students also connected their fieldwork and service to either the psychology curricula or the diversity course through critical reflection. The use of guided reflections may have further contributed to students' reformulation of attitudes, acquisition of skills, and empathetic reactions.

A unique finding from this study was detecting changes in empathy scores over time. Empathy may be a critical component for promoting student learning through participation in a practicum/internship program and in service-learning courses. It is extremely difficult to teach students to be empathetic, yet important for psychology majors who will work with diverse clients in counseling, physical therapy and other social service settings. Exposure to fieldwork and service may be necessary components for teaching empathy. It may be advantageous for psychology departments to include service-learning in beginning, practicum in middle, and internship in ending courses to enhance student learning (Bingle, Ruiz, Brown, & Reeb, 2016). For instance, service-learning could be incorporated in introductory courses and used to enhance discussions related to diversity and careers. Service-learning should be included in middle-level courses such as Multicultural, Abnormal, and Careers in Psychology to engage students in diversity discussions and these courses should be required rather than serve as electives. The Career in Psychology course should also serve as a prerequisite for practica and internships because students feel prepared to engage in fieldwork after taking this class. Matching students with placement sites based on their interests should be a key component in this course. Practica should be offered as a middle-level course while internships should be offered as a capstone or ending course (Halonon & Dunn, 2018). Practica and internships should be an integral part of the psychology curriculum. Opportunities for critical reflection should be part of both practicum and internship courses to enhance student and career development. The infusion of "service" in undergraduate psychology courses may serve as a pathway for career development.

There are a few limitations associated with this study that prevents us from generalizing results beyond our student sample of White females. The undergraduate student population is also demographically homogenous. The use of surveys at different points in time does not prevent participant bias in written materials. Males and students from diverse background may have answered questions about White privilege and White guilt differently from White females. There is also the potential for social-desirability and testing effects to be associated with participant responses that were collected at different points in time. Participants worked in physical therapy clinics, mental health and drug and alcohol centers, and public schools, and these field experiences are unique and unlikely to be replicated in research elsewhere. There were an unequal number of students enrolled in the practicum/internship program and in service-learning courses. A large percentage of students were enrolled in courses that included fieldwork and service components concurrently which prohibits us from disentangling the effects from the course content and the field context on student learning. Finally, the use of a cross-sectional design prevents us from examining changes in student learning across the college experience. Future research may want to address these limitations by measuring student learning outcomes longitudinally. Researchers may want to assess "service" in beginning, middle and ending psychology courses to detect if service can serve as a pathway for career development. Researchers should also include an equal number of students in practicum/internship and service-learning courses to disentangle the effects from the psychology content and the field context. This would provide researchers the opportunities to generalize the impacts from service and fieldwork on student

learning which may be particularly useful for higher education institutions whose mission are predicated on career development and civic engagement.

## CONCLUSION

Internship and service-learning courses contribute to different student learning outcomes. Differences in student learning outcomes reflect the specific goals and pedagogical methods of each course. Practical, internships, and service-learning enhance student learning. Therefore, each method should be incorporated into the psychology curricula. Educators should use a developmental approach for infusing service in beginning, practicum in middle and internships in ending courses to improve student learning, promote career interests and development, and prepare students for transitioning to graduate school and the workforce.

## REFERENCES

- American Psychological Association Committee on Accreditation. (2005). *Guidelines and principles for accreditation programs in professional psychology*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/ed/gp2000.html>.
- American Psychological Association. (2007). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from [www.apa.org/ed/resources.html](http://www.apa.org/ed/resources.html)
- American Psychological Association. (2013). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major: Version 2.0*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf>.
- American Psychological Association. (2016). Guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major: Version 2.0. *American Psychologist*, 71(2), 102-111.
- Bailey, S.F., Barber, L.K., & Nelson, V.L. (2017). Undergraduate internship supervision in psychology departments: Use of experiential learning best practices. *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, 16(1), 74-83.
- Bringle, R.G., Ruiz, A.I., Brown, M.A., & Reeb, R.N. (2016a). Enhancing the psychology curriculum through service learning. *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, 15(3), 294-309.
- Dugan, J.P. (2006). Involvement and leadership: A descriptive analysis of social responsible Leadership. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(1), 335-343.
- Dunn, D.S., & McCarthy, M.A. (2010). The capstone course in psychology as liberal education opportunity (pp. 55-170). In D.S. Dunn, J.H. Wilson, J.E. Freeman, & J.R. Stowell (Eds.), *Best practices for technology-enhanced teaching and learning*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Dunn, D.S., Beins, B., McCarthy, M.A., & Hill, G.W. (2010). Undergraduate education in psychology: All's well that begins and ends well, (pp. 3-12). In D.S. Dunn, J.H. Wilson, J.E. Freeman, & J.R. Stowell (Eds.), *Best practices for technology-enhanced teaching and learning*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Eyer, J. (2002). Reflection: Linking service and learning - linking students and communities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(3), 517-534.
- Eyler, J.S., & Giles, D.E. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning?* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gallini, S.M., & Moely, B.E. (2003). Service-learning and engagement, academic challenge, and retention. *Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning*, 10(1), 5-14.
- Grayson, J.H. (2010). Capping the undergraduate experience: Making learning come alive through fieldwork (pp. 79-298). In D.S. Dunn, J.H. Wilson, J.E. Freeman, & J.R. Stowell (Eds.), *Best practices for technology-enhanced teaching and learning*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Halonen, J.S., & Dunn, D.S. (2018). Embedding career issues in advanced psychology major courses. *Teaching of Psychology*, 45(1), 41-49.
- Helms, J.E. (1990). *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

- Heppner, O., Kivlighan, D.M., & Wampold, B.E. (1999). *Research design in counseling* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Hettich, P. (2018). Helping undergraduates transition to the workplace: Four discussion starters (pp. 299-318). In D.S. Dunn, J.H. Wilson, J.E. Freeman, & J.R. Stowell (Eds), *Best practices for technology-enhanced teaching and learning*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Kordesh, K.S., Spanierman, L.B., & Neville, H.A. (2013). White university students' racial affect: Understanding the antiracist type. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 6(1), 33-50.
- Landrum, R.E., & McCarthy, M.A. (2018). Measuring the benefits of a bachelor's degree in psychology: Promises, challenges, and next steps. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 4(1), 55-63.
- Loher, B.T., & Landrum, R.E. (2010). Building a psychology orientation course: Common themes and exercises, (pp. 69-92). In D.S. Dunn, J.H. Wilson, J.E. Freeman, & J.R. Stowell (Eds), *Best practices for technology-enhanced teaching and learning*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Mallinckrodt, B., Miles, J.R., Bhaskar, T., Chery, N., Choi, G., & Sung, M.R. (2014). Developing a comprehensive scale to assess college multicultural programming. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 61(1), 133-145.
- Neville, H.A., Lilly, R.L., Duran, G., Lee, R.M., & Browne, L. (2000). Construction and initial validation of the Color-Blind Racial Attitude Scale (CoBRAS). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47, 59-70.
- Ozdikmenli-Demir, G., & Demir, S. (2014). Testing the psychometric properties of the scale of ethnocultural empathy in Turkey. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 47(1), 27-42.
- Paone, T.R., Malott, K.M., & Barr, J.J. (2015). Assessing the impact of a race-based course on counseling students: A quantitative study. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 43, 206-220. DOI: 10.1002/jmcd.12015
- Peterson, J.J., Wardwell, C., Will, K., & Campana, K.L. (2014). Pursuing a purpose: The role of career exploration courses and service-learning internships in recognizing and developing knowledge, skills, and abilities. *Teaching of Psychology*, 41(4), 354-359.
- Pope-Davis, D.B., Liu, W.M., Nevitt, J., & Toporek, R.L. (2000). The development and validation of the multicultural environmental inventory: A preliminary investigation. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 6(1), 57-64.
- Reupert, A., Davis, M., Stewart, S., & Bridgman, H. (2018). A new education pathway for postgraduate psychology students: Challenges and opportunities. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 58(2), 225-245.
- Sigmon, R.L. (1996). The problem of definitions in service-learning. In R.L. Sigmon and colleagues (Eds.), *Journey to service-learning* (pp. 9-12). Washington: DC: The Council of Independent Colleges.
- Spanierman, L.B., & Heppner, M.J. (2004). Psychological costs of racism to Whites scale (PCRW): Construction and initial validation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 51(2), 249-262.
- Spanierman, L.B., Poteat, V.P., Wang, Y.F., & Oh, E. (2008). Psychological costs of racism to White counselors: Predicting various dimensions of multicultural counseling competence. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 55(1), 75-88.
- Sperling, R. (2007). Service-learning as a method of teaching multiculturalism to White college students. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 6(4), 309-322.
- Spreng, R.N., McKinnon, M.C., Mar, R.A., & Levine, B. (2009). The Toronto empathy questionnaire: Scale development and initial validation of a factor-analytic solution to multiple empathy measures. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 91(1), 62-71.
- Sweitzer, H.F., & King, M.A. (2009). *The successful internship: Personal, professional, and civic development*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

- Todd, N.R., Spanierman, L.B., & Poteat, V. P. (2011). Longitudinal examination of the psychological costs of racism to Whites across the college experience. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 58(4), 508-521.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). Bachelor's degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by field of study: Selected years, 1970-1971 through 2013-2014. In U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (Ed.), *Digest of Education Statistics*. Retrieved from [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/diget/d15/tables/dt15\\_322.10.asp?current=yes](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/diget/d15/tables/dt15_322.10.asp?current=yes)
- Varlotta, L. (2018). Designing a model for the new liberal arts. *Association of American colleges and Universities*, 104 (4).
- Wang, Y.W., Davidson, M.M., Yakushko, O.F., Savoy, H.B., Tan, J.A., & Bleier, J.K. (2003). The scale of ethnocultural empathy: Development, validation, and reliability. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 50(2), 221-234.