*The 7th Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Service-Learning*

## Proposal for a Panel Presentation

## Extending Institutionalization of Service-Learning

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**Abstract:**

**The purpose of this presentation is to provide a case study for why and how senior leadership at Ngee Ann Polytechnic decided to make Service-Learning a signature pedagogy of the Polytechnic and to infuse at least one Service-Learning course in every diploma. Evidence will be provided that, in 3 years, the rapid institutionalization of Service-Learning meets virtually all of Furco's (2002) dimensions for institutionalization at the Quality Building level and achieves many of the dimensions at the Sustained Institutionalization level.**

*Your abstract (1,000-1,500 words) should include the following information:*
***If your abstract is not an empirical or a theoretical one, you are also required to organise the abstract with subtitles.**

## 1.       Introduction (Presenter 1)

As Service-Learning becomes more prevalent around the world, the challenge is not only

more and better Service-Learning courses but also institutionalizing Service-Learning so that it

becomes an enduring part of the fabric of a campus, the curriculum, and the academic culture.

Steps that are taken to advance the institutionalization of Service-Learning and the rate of progress are influenced by many factors, but institutional type is an important factor. Zlotkowski (1998) provided case studies of different approaches taken by different types of institutions. The purpose of this panel presentation is to provide an additional case study for the institutionalization of Service-Learning at a polytechnic institution in a non-Western setting. The panel will describe why and how senior leadership at Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) in Singapore decided to make Service-Learning a signature pedagogy of the Polytechnic and to infuse at least one Service-Learning course in every diploma so that every student will have a Service-Learning experience. Evidence will be presented on the degree to which institutionalization, in 3 years, meets Furco's (2002) dimensions of institutionalization. In addition, a bold, visionary institutional strategic plan, the Service-Learning Roadmap, will be presented that not only achieved this growth, but also will extend institutionalization. Finally, implications and recommendations will be offered to guide institutionalizing Service-Learning, thereby providing a model for other institutions globally.

## 2. Theoretical framework/literature review (Presenter 2)

Since the early 1990's, institutions of higher education have been exploring ways to redefine their public missions. Within the American context, Boyer (1996) challenged higher education to involve students in social issues, extend classrooms into communities, expand conceptions of scholarly work, engage in institutional change, and develop symbiotic relationships with communities. The expansion of this challenge beyond the American context, in turn, challenges institutions of higher education in other contexts to develop their own models

of civic engagement in ways that reflect unique mission statements, institutional traditions and structures, historical and cultural settings, and community assets.

A central component of revisioning civic engagement has been rethinking teaching in ways that contribute to the development of civic-minded graduates who have life-long habits of contributing to their communities. Service-Learning, which is acknowledged as being a high-impact pedagogy, provides a salient means for revising the curriculum to advance the civic mission of higher education, expand student learning, and enrich partnerships with communities. Meta-analyses support the value added by Service-Learning to different domains of student learning (Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009; Novak et al., 2007; Warren, 2012; Yorio & Ye, 2012). Finley (2011) found that Service-Learning (vs. the other high-impact pedagogies studied) had "the greatest impact on each of the four outcomes measured, regardless of whether the student was in the first or senior year" (p. 2).

Service-Learning is the merger of teaching and learning in ways that expands the learning objectives to include civic learning within the context of the curriculum and develops ways in which students and instructors can work in and with communities to the benefit of all. Service-Learning is defined as

> 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 personal values and civic responsibility. (adapted from Bringle & Hatcher, 1996)

There are only a few examples of extensive institutionalization of Service-Learning across a campus through a centralize campus unit outside North America (e.g., International Christian

University, 2009; Ma & Chan, 2013; McIlrath & MacLabhrainn, 2007; Xing & Ma, 2010).

Bringle and Hatcher (1996) identified sequential steps for institutionalizing Service-Learning. They delineated four central constituencies: institution, faculty, students, and communities. For each of these constituencies, they posited the following steps for advancing institutionalization of Service-Learning: planning, increasing awareness, identifying prototypes, acquiring resources, initiating activities that result in expansion, providing recognition, monitoring, conducting evaluation, conducting research, institutionalization. Evidence for achieving institutionalization of Service-Learning includes,

> it is part of the academic culture of the institution, aligns with the mission, becomes an enduring aspect of the curriculum that is supported by more than a few faculty, improves other forms of pedagogy, leads to other forms of civic scholarship, influences faculty roles and rewards, is part of the experience of most students, and has wide spread support, understanding, and involvement of students, faculty, administration, and the community (Bringle, Hatcher, Hamilton, & Young, 2001, p.93).

These elements of institutionalization are captured in Furco's (2002) framework and rubric.

In order to reach the goal of institutionalizing Service-Learning at Ngee Ann, a bold, visionary strategic plan, the Service-Learning Roadmap, was proffered. Phase One aspired to have a Service-Learning course required of all students in each academic diploma. In order to attain this goal and to develop institutionalization of Service-Learning, an Office of Service-Learning was opened in 2016, capacity building activities were initiated, and the goal will be reached in 2019. Phase One also included developing and implementing an assessment and research component that was supported by a grant from the Ministry of Education.

## 3.        Methods/analysis (Presenter 3)

Furco's (2002) *Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education* identifies the following components for institutionalizing Service-Learning: definition of Service-Learning; strategic planning; alignment with institutional mission; alignment with educational reform efforts; faculty knowledge and awareness; faculty involvement and support; faculty leadership; faculty incentives and rewards; students awareness; student opportunities; student leadership; student incentives and rewards; community partner awareness; mutual understanding; community partner voice and leadership; coordinating entity; policy-making entity; staffing; funding; administrative support; departmental support; and evaluation and assessment.  Furco's framework identifies three stages of achievement: Critical Mass Building; Quality Building; Sustained Institutionalization.

A survey was constructed that presented respondents with each component of Furco's framework and asked them to indicate where they thought Ngee Ann was in terms of the development of Service-Learning on campus.  The survey was distributed to Ngee Ann administrators and instructional staff.  The response format included a slight modification of Furco's rubric; it gave respondents the opportunity to choose an intermediate response between Critical Mass and Quality Building, and between Quality Building and Sustained Institutionalization.  The survey also asked respondents for their familiarity with Service-Learning using the following choices: *No familiarity with Service-Learning; Heard of Service-Learning but don't know much about it; Some knowledge of Service-Learning; Good knowledge about Service-Learning; Provided consult and/or taught Service-Learning modules, have extensive knowledge of the theory and practice of Service-Learning.*

### 4. Results and Discussion (Presenter 3)

Responses to the survey were obtained from 106 participants; xx EXCO, yy administrators, and zz instructional staff.  Based on single-sample $t$-tests, the survey results demonstrated that, in 3 years, the rapid institutionalization of Service-Learning significantly exceeded the Quality Building level (3.0) for all five of Furco's components of institutionalization:  Philosophy and Mission of Service-Learning [mean = 3.99, $t(105) = 13.03$, $p < .01$], Faculty Support for and Involvement in Service-Learning [mean = 3.42, $t(105) = 5.23$, $p < .01$], Student Support for and Involvement in Service-Learning [mean = 3.37, $t(105) = 4.05$, $p < .01$], Community Participation and Partnerships [mean = 3.20, $t(105) – 2.18$, $p < .05$], and Institutional Support for Service-Learning [mean = 3.84, $t(105) = 9.64$, $p < .01$].

### 5. Conclusions and contributions to theory and practice (Presenters 1&4)

The evidence supports the conclusion that Stage One of the Service-Learning Roadmap to begin institutionalizing Service-Learning has been reached in 3 years, largely by taking the steps identified by Bringle and Hatcher (1996).  In addition, the mean levels of institutionalization for Furco's five components have the same rank order as the components of Bringle and Hatcher's (2000) components: institution > faculty > students > community.  This is consistent with the advice that institutional infrastructure and planning are first steps in institutionalizing Service-Learning, and that engaging in activities directed at faculty is a critical early step for developing Service-Learning and support. These results provide a basis for guiding the institutionalization on other campuses through strategic planning at the campus level and how to prioritize activities.

However, the Service-Learning Roadmap presents a vision beyond this accomplishment and extends previous frameworks (e.g., Bringle & Hatcher, Furco, Holland) for

institutionalization.  Phase Two, currently being implemented, builds upon the goals of institutionalization from Phase One and extends institutionalization (e.g., breadth, depth, quality) by developing scaffolded Service-Learning that includes sequential Service-Learning courses, interdisciplinary Service-Learning courses, domestic/international Service-Learning courses, multiple Service-Learning courses at the same community site, and Service-Learning opportunities for alumni and community members.  Phase Three, yet to be implemented, will strengthen institutionalization even further by deepening and extending community-campus partnerships through entrepreneurial civic activities that can have greater impact on communities as well as learning across constituencies.

The discussant will comment on the factors that contributed to achieving rapid institutionalization, the strengths and weaknesses of the current status, the potential for the Service-Learning Roadmap, and how this case study can guide institutionalizing Service-Learning at other institutions globally.

**Keywords**: Service-Learning, institutionalization, assessment.

**References**:

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## Biographical sketch of each presenter

Please send the biographical sketch of the presenters together with the proposal using the following format:

**Presenter 1**:

   i.   Ti, Clarence
  ii.   Principal, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore
 iii.   Short biography (word count should not exceed 70 words)

     Clarence is the Principal of Ngee Ann Polytechnic, one of Singapore's leading institutions of higher learning with 15,000 students. He has served in the Singapore Public Service for over twenty years. In his current role, he promotes entrepreneurship, innovation and Service-Learning. He graduated with a MSc and BSc (with High Honours) in Electrical Engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA and has a MBA with Distinction from INSEAD.

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**Presenter 2**:

   i.   Choo, Cheh Hoon
  ii.   Senior Director, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore
 iii.   Short biography (word count should not exceed 70 words)

     Cheh Hoon is a Senior Director/Projects at Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP). As an educator for over 30 years, she is the founding director of NP's School of Humanities & Social Sciences, and in 2016 set up the Office of Service-Learning to drive S-L as a signature pedagogy. As the founder of Dialogue in the Dark Singapore and co-founder of Women of Vision Singapore, she also champions social enterprises and community development.

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**Presenter 3**:

   i.   Tang, Joyce
  ii.   Head, Office of Service-Learning, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore
 iii.   Short biography (word count should not exceed 70 words)

      Joyce Tang is Head of the Office of Service-Learning at Ngee Ann Polytechnic, championing Service-Learning (S-L) as a signature pedagogy. A pioneer of Academic S-L in Singapore, she first introduced S-L into the academic curriculum in 2002. Joyce was formerly the Deputy Director of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences. She is passionate in the capacity development of youths through reciprocal engagement with diverse and disadvantaged communities.

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**Presenter 4**:

   v.   Bringle, Robert G.
  vi.   Senior Scholar, Center for Service and Learning, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, USA

Short biography (word count should not exceed 70 words): Robert G. Bringle, served as Executive Director of IUPUI Center for Service and Learning from 1994-2012. Dr. Bringle was awarded the Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service Learning, the IUPUI Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the Distinguished Research Award from the IARSLCE. The University of the Free State, South Africa, awarded him an honorary doctorate for his scholarly work on civic engagement and Service Learning.

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*For Panel Presentation*