

**Scott/ Ross Center for Community Service
Community Partnership and Student Development
Evaluation**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A 2004 nationwide survey of 935 college campuses found that over 30% of students in college participated in some form of community service, for an average of 4 hours per week.¹ A growing body of research suggests that student engagement in service has significant positive effects on student development, from leadership and civic engagement to academic performance to racial attitudes and perceptions.² Service participation also has long term effects. A longitudinal study on the effects of undergraduate volunteering showed that the short-term effects of volunteering on civic and social values persisted nine years after college and was significantly related to later civic engagement.³

Recognizing that volunteering is a significant developmental activity for many students during their college years, the Scott/ Ross Center for Community Service at Simmons College, in partnership with Strong Women, Strong Girls, began to consider the question: what is the role of community partners in supporting college student development?

In consulting relevant research relating to college student development and campus/community partnerships, the Scott/ Ross Center identified a significant gap. Though there were many frameworks for both college student development and campus/community partnerships, there was little to be found that incorporated student development into the structures of campus/community partnerships.

In a first step toward better understanding the role of community partners in student development, in November 2005, the Scott/ Ross Center, in partnership with Strong Women, Strong Girls, conducted an assessment of community partnerships at 45 community partner sites. These organizations were schools and community organizations where Simmons students work through Scott/ Ross Center work-study programs, service-learning classes, and student volunteering. This is the first in-depth evaluation of Scott/Ross Center partnerships, and also the first study on the role of community based organizations in supporting college student development, conducted by the Scott/Ross Center.

The assessment consisted of a survey questionnaire involving both open-ended and rating questions relating to the impact of the partnerships, student performance at community sites, and the role of community partners as educators of college students. The survey was accessible both on-line and, when requested, in hardcopy. In total, twenty of the Simmons partner sites responded to the survey. The survey was completed by the individual at each community partner site who serves as the liaison to the Scott/Ross Center at Simmons.

¹ Campus Compact (2004). 2004 Service Statistics: Highlights and Trends of Campus Compact's Annual Member Survey. Providence, RI: Campus Compact.

² Astin, A. W. & Sax, L. J. (1998). How undergraduates are affected by service participation. *Journal of College Student Development* 39 (3), 251-263.

³ Astin, A.W., Sax, L.J., & Avalos, J. (1999). Long-term effects of volunteerism during the undergraduate years. *The Review of Higher Education* 22 (2), 187-202.

Findings

Overall, the survey revealed that community partners are satisfied with the state of the partnerships. Partners reported that the benefits of the partnership outweighed the challenges and the partnerships were reported as being *mutually beneficial to the organization and the students*.

- All participants were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the knowledge and skills of Simmons students and the overall communication between students and the organization. Over 95% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the skills and knowledge of students.
- 94% of partners believed that the benefits of working with the students outweighed any burdens it may have added to their work
- Partners were positive about the performance of students working with their organizations. All partners were pleased with the overall communication between their organization and the students, and 94% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the overall quality of student work.
- Nearly 70% of partners reported “enhanced offerings of services” as a result of their partnership with Simmons College. Partners also reported that students “brought new energy to organization”, increased the number of clients served by their organization, and increased the number of services offered by the organization, among other benefits.
- 94% indicated that they believed that students gained valuable skills and knowledge from working with their organization, and that students gained a greater understanding of the community and the social issues addressed by their organization

Although several partners indicated that they were already pressed for resources and time, they also described additional ideas for supporting college student development, including:

- Student learning agreements between college and organization
- Documenting goals of both organizations
- Meeting regularly with the Simmons Coordinators/Office staff to assess the plan.
- A Student Leadership Team to develop a mission and vision for the partnership
- Providing internships/ volunteer positions oriented around what each individual student is interested in
- Allowing students to take charge of and manage programs

In general, community partners were satisfied with their organizations’ relationship to the college.

- 95% “agreed” or “strong agreed” that “Simmons is sensitive to the needs and concerns of its community partners”.
- Nearly 85% learned more about the programs and services offered by the college as a result of the partnership. Almost 70% said that they knew whom to call for assistance, and over 50% reported an increased knowledge of college resources available to community organizations.

Collaborating organizations

About the Simmons College Scott Ross Center for Community Service:

The Scott/Ross Center for Community Service facilitates and promotes community service and service learning for Simmons College faculty, staff, and students. The Center serves the Greater Boston community by developing reciprocal partnerships while enriching and expanding students' educational and co-curricular experiences.

Founded in 1899, Simmons College has a strong history of community involvement. The Scott/Ross Center for Community Service was established in 2000 through the generosity of Emily Scott Pottruck '78, Trustee of the College, in recognition of Simmons's strong commitment to community service. The Center is named in honor of Scott Pottruck and her mother, Arlene Ross Gross '47

The Scott/Ross Center is comprised of two major service programs: Simmons Community Outreach and the Office of Service Learning. These programs work closely together to provide a variety of service opportunities for students, teaching resources for faculty, and support to community partners.

About Strong Women, Strong Girls:

The mission of Strong Women, Strong Girls is to build upon the lessons learned from strong women throughout history to help girls and young women become strong women themselves. By building communities of women committed to supporting positive social change, Strong Women, Strong Girls works to create cycles of mutual empowerment for women and girls.

Strong Women, Strong Girls has created an innovative after school model that uses the study of contemporary and historic female role models, mentoring relationships with college undergraduate women, and skill building activities to help at-risk girls in grades 3-5 build positive self-esteem and skills for life-long success.

In addition to supporting the development of young girls, Strong Women, Strong Girls also emphasizes the leadership and growth of the college women who volunteer as mentors. Strong Women, Strong Girls seeks to build the skills and leadership capacity of these talented young women to engage them as mentors for girls in their communities now and as life-long advocates for women and girls.

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to increase understanding of the both the current state of Simmons community partnerships and current and potential capacities for community partners to support the development of the Simmons students who work with the community organizations. This project is a first step for the Scott/ Ross Center in better understanding the broader role of community partners in college student development.

The assessment tool was based on theoretical models of successful community partnerships and frameworks of student development and leadership⁴, as well as informal feedback from community partners and experts in higher education.

The data collected through this assessment will result in the documentation of the current state of our partnerships. Furthermore, the results will provide an understanding of how community partners view their role as educators contributing to the college students' development. Such information will help Simmons, along with Strong Women, Strong Girls, to develop strategies to maximize student learning experiences, support community partners, and ensure strong partnerships. The Scott/ Ross Center believes that this intentional approach to student development will help students in their community work and in their efforts to become more informed, engaged citizens. Additionally, this approach will help community partners feel more connect to and supported by Simmons College.

II: RESEARCH RATIONALE AND RELEVANT LITERATURE:

Making the Connection: Community Partnership and College Student Development

As an organization that forges connections between institutions of higher education, community organizations, and college students, at the start of this research process, Simmons sought out a model of campus/community partnership that incorporated supporting the development of the college students involved in community volunteering.

To our great surprise, we did not find a model that fit our needs as a center or our interest in fostering student development through community partnerships.

There *are* various models for successful campus/community partnerships, but within each model, there is barely any mention of college student development as an explicit component of the partnership. Additionally, in research relating to student development, connections with community members are not specifically emphasized. This is not to say that college students, in practice, are not turning to the community partners with whom they work for advice, mentorship, and guidance. What is surprising is that current research and best practice guides are not documenting this occurrence and are not encouraging this type of collaboration in campus/community partnerships.

⁴ Torres, J. (Ed.). (2000). Benchmarks for campus/ community partnerships. Providence, RI: Campus Compact.

This survey created by Simmons College, in partnership with Strong Women, Strong Girls, is a first step toward closing that gap and developing a greater understanding of the role of community partners in supporting college student development.

Below we have outlined some of the literature relating to community partnership models and college student development that was consulted throughout this research process. This research serves as a useful frame in considering the opportunities for better understanding the relationship between campus/community partnerships and college student development—and the opportunities that emerge when these two fields are viewed as complimentary.

Community partnerships:

Community partnerships are at the core of the work of the Scott/ Ross Center. Simmons students serve as tutors and mentors in a variety of afterschool programs in local schools and community centers, and volunteer at a wide range of community organizations through service learning courses and student volunteer groups. A goal of the Scott/ Ross Center is to both help meet the needs of the community and to support the learning and development of the college students involved.

In developing this partnership model, Simmons has sought to ground our organizational practice in relevant community partnership research. Over the last several years, as service learning and other forms of community involvement have increased at universities and colleges, researchers have begun to identify best practices and characteristics of **successful partnerships**. The Wingspread Conference, a gathering of leaders from higher education and community organizations, resulted in a series of benchmarks that describe elements of “any democratic and genuine campus/ community partnership”⁵.

“Democratic campus/ community partnerships are partnerships that strive to meet the needs of a community, as defined by the community, that are of high quality and sustained involvement that involve presidents, students, faculty, staff, and community members. In such partnerships, individuals can learn and practice civic skills. It is in this spirit that the partners work to invest the campus with a desire for community action.”⁶

The Scott/ Ross Center service-learning and community-service work study programs are seeking to form a reciprocal relationship in which “both the student and the community partner are simultaneously learners and teachers, servers and the served”⁷. Simmons is actively working to promote this understanding of college student community involvement both among the students and among the community partners with whom we

⁵ Torres, (2000) p.3

⁶ Torres, (2000) p.3.

⁷ Pollack, Seth and Helen Rucker (2000). “Building Reciprocal Partnerships Between Campus and Community,” in Harwood, Angela (ed.). Conference Proceedings, Relationships, Responsibility and Rigor: Service-Learning in the New Century. Western Region Campus Compact Consortium.

work. In all that we do, Simmons seeks to model this understanding of reciprocal partnership relationships.

Student development:

College student development refers to “the ways that a student grows, progresses, or increases his or her developmental capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education”⁸. College student development theories are used to guide student affairs practice and higher education programming.

The Scott/ Ross Center believes that in order to provide outstanding service to the community, we also need to support the growth, learning, and positive development of the college students in our programs.

The Scott/ Ross Center believes that the experience of being involved in community work should be transformative for the college students and the community partners.

Therefore, the Scott/ Ross Center seeks to link the work that we do with our college undergraduate students to student development theory and practice. By supporting the development of these college students now, Simmons seeks to develop students who are great tutors, mentors and volunteers *today* and who are *life-long* active citizens in their communities.

Student development theory helps us foster the conditions that maximize student development and learning. In order to use theory to guide practice, researchers suggest selecting “a theory or theories that you understand and that make sense to you. For instance, if a certain theory resonates for you and seems to appropriately describe a certain phenomenon, then you are more likely to internalize that theory, understand it more deeply, and apply it in your practice”⁹. *By paying close attention to college student developmental levels, we can maximize the learning experiences for students who work in the community, and, by extension, maximize the impact that students can have in their work with community members.*

⁸ Rodgers, R.F. (1990). Recent theories and research underlying student development. In D. Creamer & Associates, *College student development: Theory and practice for the 1990s* (p. 27). Alexandria, VA: American College Personnel Association.

⁹McEwen, M. K. (2003). The nature and uses of theory. In Komives, S. R., Woodard, D. B., Jr. and Associates, *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (pp. 155). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

III. METHODS

Sample

Approximately 45 organizations were contacted to participate in the study. Site contacts from twenty of these organizations completed the survey. Fifteen participants provided the name of the organization in which they worked. These organizations were:

- Big Sister Association of Greater Boston
- YMCA International
- Jamaica Plain Head Start
- Boston Connects/ Farragut School
- Special Olympics MA
- Women's Lunch Place, Citizen Schools
- Brookline School-Community Partnership (now called Steps to Success)
- Beacon Academy
- Boston Latin School
- Tenacity, One Family Inc.
- Urban Ecology Institute
- Mount Pleasant Home
- Community Servings

The majority of participants (60%) had worked with the college between 1 and 3 years. Six participants had worked with the college for more than 3 years, and two participants had worked with the college for less than one year.

The Scott/ Ross Center works with community organizations in a variety of ways. The majority of partners indicated that Simmons students worked in their organizations through service learning courses (74%). At least five organizations were community service work study sites. Work study students came to these organizations through programs such as America Counts, America Reads, Farragut Afterschool Program, Curriculum Enrichment, Farragut Library Program, Jumpstart, Steps to Success, and Strong Women, Strong Girls. Additional work study students worked with another organization, but not through an organized “program”.

Nine community partner organizations worked with Simmons in more than one way (for example, students from a service learning course and community service work study students). One organization, which maintains an intensive partnership with the college listed work with the ‘Nutrition Department Physical Therapy Interns, Work Study Staff, Education students, General Volunteers, Sports Teams’. Two organizations reported working with physical therapy interns, two indicated that students came ‘on their own’, one worked with a student volunteer group, one with psychology fieldwork students, and another organization reported working on ‘special projects with the Graduate School of Management and Department of Finance’.

Our community partners work with several other universities in the Boston area. Northeastern, Harvard, Wheelock, Boston College, Urban College of Boston, Emmanuel, Wentworth, Babson, Mt. Ida, Bunker Hill, Tufts, Lasell, Lesley, UMass Boston, Mass Art, Emerson

Participants were asked to indicate the issues that were addressed by their organizations. Most organizations focused on education, followed by health, housing, safety, environment, and public services (see Table1).

Issue	% of participants	Frequency of responses
Education	60%	11
Health	32%	6
Housing	16%	3
Public Services	10%	2
Safety	5. %	1
Environment	5%	1
Other (please specify)	68%	12

Other responses included:

- Civic & community engagement, arts
- Early child education and family support to families below poverty level - referrals of every sort
- Student Support Coordination
- Athletics
- women's issues, hunger, homelessness
- Education and youth issues are addressed through a variety of other topics such as health, sciences, architecture, business, the arts, etc.
- Childcare
- Family Homelessness
- Elder care
- Organizing/Advocacy, Work Readiness, Arts/Culture

Survey

The survey was administered online, and consisted of twenty-seven questions. Site contacts from community partner organizations were contacted via e-mail and phone; hard-copies of the survey were available for those who chose not to complete the survey online.

The survey was developed using questions from existing assessment tools, research on community partnerships and student development, and through consultation with community partners and evaluation experts.

Data Analysis

The frequency percentages for each response were calculated by dividing the number of responses in each category by the total number of *participants who answered the question*.

For the rating questions, participants picked from among a set of answers that corresponded to numbers on a Likert type scale (i.e. Strongly disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral = 3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree = 5). Again, the frequency percentages for each response were calculated by dividing the number of responses in each category by the total number of *participants who answered the question*. Second, average scores were calculated for each item using the numeric value of each response.

IV. RESULTS

B. Impact of Partnership

1. Impact of partnership on organizations’ ability to fulfill mission

Partners were asked, “*How has the partnership influenced your capacity to fulfill the mission of your organization? Please check all that apply.*”

Nearly all (95%) participants reported that the partnership had a positive impact on the organizations’ ability to fulfill the organizations’ missions. The most frequently reported influence impact was ‘enhanced offering of services’ (68.4%). Another 68.4% of the 19 respondents also felt that their partnership with the Scott/ Ross Center was beneficial in fulfilling the mission of the organization. Over half (57.9%) of the respondents reported that ‘students brought new energy to the organization’ as well.

Partners also reported that the partnership with Simmons influenced their capacity to fulfill the mission of their organization by helping them increase the ‘number of clients/ students served’ (37%), led to an increase in the ‘number of services offered’ (31.6%) and creating ‘new connections/ networks with other community groups (31.6%).

One participant (5%) reported that the partnership led to ‘new insights about the organization/ its operation’. Only one (5%) participant reported that the partnership had no influence.

Influence	% of participants	Frequency of responses
Enhanced offering of services	68%	13
Students brought new energy to the organization	58%	11
Increase in number of clients/ students served	37%	7
Increases in number of services offered	32%	6
New connections/ networks with other community groups	32%	6
Increased leverage of financial/other resources	16%	3
New insights about the organization/ its operation	5%	1
No influence	5%	1
Changes in organizational direction	0%	0
Other	21%	4

Several participants reported other ways in which the partnership with Simmons had influenced their organization’s capacity to fulfill its mission. For example:

- “Much one to one contact - talking, emotional support, play - with young children.”
- “Enough tutors in our study halls.”

2. Challenges of the partnership

Partners were asked, “*What are some of the challenges you encounter in working with Simmons students? Please check all that apply.*”

Overall, the most commonly reported challenges in working with Simmons students were ‘college students’ academic calendar and breaks’ (32%), ‘time commitment to supervise students’ (26%), and ‘project time period insufficient’ (21%). It is interesting to note that these responses all relate to time and scheduling.

Several participants indicated that there were no challenges (21%). A smaller percentage reported the following challenges: ‘demands upon staff time’ (16%), ‘mismatch between course goals and organization’ (16%), ‘the human, fiscal and physical resources required’ (10%), and ‘little contact/ interaction with faculty’ (10%).

In general, participants did not report problems with the performance of the students working with their organizations. Only 1 participant indicated that ‘students did not perform as expected’ and none of the participants reported that students were ‘not well prepared’. Also, none of the partners reported that the number of students was inappropriate for the size of the organization.

Challenge	% of participants	Frequency of responses
College students' academic calendar and breaks	32%	6
Time commitment to supervise students	26%	5
Project time period insufficient	21%	4
No challenges	21%	4
Other (please specify)	21%	4
Demands upon staff time	16%	3
Mismatch between course goals and organization	16%	3
The human, fiscal and physical resources required	10%	2
Little contact/interaction with faculty	10%	2
Students did not perform as expected	5%	1
Number of students inappropriate for size of organization	0%	0
Students not well prepared	0%	0

About 20% reported other challenges such as:

“In my experience, Simmons students (generalizing greatly) with whom I've spoken, are looking for a less intense, less committed volunteer opportunity than ours.”

“Simmons students have expressed location & transportation as being a challenge.”

C. Relationship with Simmons College

1. Awareness

Partners were asked, “As a result of this partnership, how has your awareness of the college changed? Please check all that apply.”

Most partners indicated (84%) that they ‘learned more about college programs and services’ as a result of the partnership. More than half also reported that they ‘know whom to call upon for information and assistance’ (68%) and ‘have an increased knowledge of college resources available to community organizations (53%). Slightly over a quarter of respondents (26%) indicated that they ‘have more interactions with faculty and administrators’ as a result of the partnership. One partner reported being ‘more involved with activities on campus’. None of the partners reported having taken classes or planning to take classes at the college.

Table 4 Responses to “As a result of this partnership, how has your awareness of the college changed? Please check all that apply.”		
Change in Awareness	% of participants	Frequency of responses
I learned more about college programs & services	84%	16
I know whom to call upon for information and assistance	68%	13
I have an increased knowledge of college resources available to community organizations	53%	10
I have more interactions with faculty and administrators	26%	5
Other (please specify)	10%	2
I am more involved with activities on campus	5%	1
I have taken or plan to take classes at the college	0%	0

Two participants reported ‘other’ comments related to their awareness of the college:

- “It would be good to know more about college resources available to community organizations.”

- “I am very impressed with the serious commitment that a student must make to community service, which is wonderful.”

2. Communication with the college

Partners were asked, “Do you feel that you are receiving sufficient communication from the college? (Yes/ No)”

95 % partners reported that they received enough communication from the college.

Table 5 Responses to “Do you feel that you are receiving sufficient communication from the college?(Yes/ No)”		
Response	% of participants	Frequency of responses
Yes	95%	18
No	5%	1

3. Additional communication

Partners were asked, “Would you like additional communication?”

Most participants (59 %) indicated that they were not interested in receiving additional communication from the college. Email was the preferred mode of communication for those who were interested in receiving additional communication (29%).

Table 6 Responses to “Would you like additional communication?”		
Response	% of participants	Frequency of responses
No	59%	10
Yes, by email	29%	5
Yes, by regular mail	6%	1
Yes, by phone	6%	1

4. Average communication

Participants were asked to respond to the statement “On average, my organization communicates with the college:”

- Once a week or more
- Several times a month
- About once a month
- Several times a semester
- Once a semester
- Almost never

Overall, most community partners communicated with the college at least several times a semester. 33% of partners communicated several times a semester, 17% communicated

once a week or more, and 17% communicated with the college several times a month, and another 17% communicated with the college about once a month.

Response	% of participants	Frequency of responses
Several times a semester	33%	6
Once a week or more	17%	3
Several times a month	17%	3
About once a month	17%	3
Once a semester	11%	2
Almost never	6%	1

5. Successful partnership indicators

Community partners were asked to “mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements”. (Five point scale, from Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree =5). The statements represent indicators of successful partnerships between Simmons College and the community sites.

As seen in Table 8, community partners’ responses suggested positive, successful partnerships with Simmons College. For example, 95% of community partners ‘agreed’ or ‘somewhat agreed’ that ‘Simmons is sensitive to the needs and concerns of its community partners’, and 89 % of site facilitators ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they could easily find someone at Simmons to talk with when they had concerns. A slightly smaller number of partners (66%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they could easily access Simmons facilities. Finally, only 55% ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the goals of the group were ‘written and agreed upon by all members of the partnership’.

Table 8 Reponses to “ <i>Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.</i> ”						
Statement	Averages for each statement (1-5)	Percentages of each rating				
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can easily find someone at Simmons to talk with when I have concerns	4.39	0%	0%	11%	39%	50%
Simmons is sensitive to the needs and concerns of its community partners	4.33	0%	0%	6%	56%	39%
I can easily access Simmons facilities	3.89	0%	0%	33%	44%	22%
Goals of the group are written and have been agreed upon by all members of the partnership	3.5	0%	6%	39%	44%	11%

D. College Student Development and Learning

1. Satisfaction with student performance

Partners were asked to “*rate your level of satisfaction with the work of the students at your organization*”. (Five point scale, from *Very Dissatisfied =1, Dissatisfied, Neutral, Satisfied, Very Satisfied =5*)

Community partners were overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of student work. All were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the knowledge and skills of the students and the overall communication between their organizations and the college students. Nearly 95% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the overall quality of student work and with the level of trust between their organizations and the students who worked with them. Community partners were slightly less satisfied with students’ awareness of social justice issues. Only 72% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’, while 28% were ‘neutral’.

Table 9						
Reponses to “Please rate your level of satisfaction with the work of the students at your organization.”						
Student performance	Averages for each statement (1-5)	Percentages of each rating				
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall quality of student work	4.39	0%	0%	6%	50%	44%
Overall communication with students	4.33	0%	0%	0%	67%	33%
Level of trust between students and organization	4.28	0%	0%	6%	61%	33%
Knowledge and skills of students	4.28	0%	0%	0%	72%	28%
Students’ awareness of social justice issues	4.0	0%	0%	28%	44%	28%

2. Ability to support college student learning and development

Community partners were asked, *“Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements as they relate to your ability to support the college students’ learning and development”*. (Five point scale, from *Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree =5*)

Almost all participants (94%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the benefits of working with Simmons students outweighed any burdens it might add to their work. The partners also generally believed that students gained ‘useful knowledge as a result of their work with the organization and that that students gained ‘a greater understanding of the community and the social issues’ addressed by their organizations (94% reported ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’). 78% reported seeing themselves as mentors to the college students, with 22% marking ‘neutral’.

In contrast, only 44% reported feeling ‘valued as a teacher by college students and staff’, with 44% being ‘neutral’ and 11% marking ‘disagree’.

Table 10						
Responses to “Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements as they relate to your ability to support the college students’ learning and development.”						
Statement	Averages for each statement (1-5)	Percentages of each rating				
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
In general, the benefits of working with the students outweigh any burdens it may have added to our work	4.56	0%	0%	6%	33%	61%
Students gain useful skills and knowledge as a result of their work with the organization	4.5	0%	0%	6%	38%	56%
Students gain a greater understanding of the community and the social issues addressed by my organization	4.44	0%	0%	6%	44%	50%
I see myself as a mentor to the students	4.0	0%	0%	22%	56%	22%
I feel valued as a teacher by college students, faculty and staff	3.56	0%	11%	44%	22%	22%

3. Additional ways of supporting college students

Community partners were then asked, “Please indicate whether there are any activities listed above in which you are not currently involved, but in which you would like and are able to participate”.

Most community partners (85%) reported that they would like students to gain a greater understanding of the community and the social issues addressed by their work with the organization and ‘would like students to gain useful skills and knowledge as a result of their work’ with the organization (83%). A slightly smaller percentage (69%) indicated that they ‘would like to feel valued as a teacher by the college students, faculty, and staff, while 23% marked ‘no’. 46% of community partners would like to see themselves as

mentors to the students and another 46% reported that they might like to see themselves as mentors to the students.

Table 11			
<i>Responses to “Please indicate whether there are any activities listed above in which you are not currently involved, but in which you would like and are able to participate”.</i>			
Support Activity	Percentages of each response		
	Yes	Maybe	No
I would like students to gain a greater understanding of the community and the social issues addressed by my organization	85%	8%	8%
I would like the students to gain useful skills and knowledge as a result of their work with my organization	83%	8%	8%
I would like to feel valued as a teacher by the college students, faculty, and staff	69%	8%	23%
I would like to see myself as a mentor to the students	46%	46%	8%

4. Satisfaction with current role

Community partners were asked to reflect on their current role in supporting college student development with the following question: *“Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your opportunities to have the following roles and responsibilities”.*

Community partners were satisfied with opportunities to facilitate and support student learning and development, but their responses were slightly more neutral than responses to other aspects of the partnership. For example, 55.5% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the opportunities they had to facilitate student training or reflection, and 44.4% marked ‘neutral’.

Table 12						
Reponses to “Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your opportunities to have the following roles and responsibilities.”						
Statement	Averages for each statement (1-5)	Percentages of each rating				
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Evaluating college students	3.7	0%	11%	28%	39%	22%
Facilitating student training and/or reflection	3.5	0%	0%	56%	39%	6%
Curriculum design	3.4	0%	0%	72%	17%	11%
Opportunity to participate in other program activities such as field trips, conferences, workshops	3.3	0%	6%	72%	11%	11%

5. Learning more

Site facilitators were asked, “Would you be interested in learning more about supporting college student learning and development in the following ways?”

Responses to this question suggest that partners may be interested in learning more about supporting college student learning and development in a variety of ways. For example, 31% of community partners were interested in reading articles or a guide about college student learning and development, and 56% said that they might be interested. 29% were interested in attending workshops about college student learning and development. 27% indicated that they would like to talk with staff about college student learning and development, and a 71% might be interested in other ways to learn more about college student learning and development. Table 13 depicts the varied responses to this question and suggests that further exploration of ways to educate community partners about student development is needed.

Table 13			
Responses to <i>“Would you be interested in learning more about supporting college student learning and development in the following ways?”</i>			
Activity	Yes	Maybe	No
Read articles or a guide about college student learning and development	31%	56%	12%
Attend workshops about college student learning and development	29%	53%	18%
Talk with staff about college student learning and development	27%	60%	13%
Other ways to learn more about college student learning and development not listed	0%	71%	29%

6. Working with Simmons to prepare students

Community partners were asked, *“Would you be interested in working with the college to prepare your students to work with your organization and constituents? Please indicate yes or no, and explain”*.

Most participants indicated that they were interested in working with Simmons College to help prepare students to work with their organization and the community. Responses included the following:

- “Yes, although I have time constraints which could make prep time difficult to attend.”
- “Yes. I feel that students would benefit from attending an orientation about our organization or specific programs in which they are placed, in order to gain a better understanding of what our organization does, how it benefits the community, and how they fit into that picture. We get Simmons students to work with us somewhat randomly. I feel that both our organization and the students would benefit most if there was a more structured way of getting a core group of students to work with us during their placement. Perhaps giving students a deadline for choosing their placement and having the university or faculty work with the organization to set up a start date/orientation for all those who are placed within the same organization. There should be a systematic way of tracking where the students are placed on the part of Simmons, instead of simply leaving it all up to the students themselves.”
- “Yes - we could invite interested students, for example, to our Special Olympics Coaches' Training Clinics held periodically throughout the year. These clinics not only deal w/ sport-specific coaches training, but present general training in interacting w/ our constituents - adults and children with intellectual disabilities.

- Yes - we do offer an internship program but do not have any Simmons interns. Rather, they come to us to volunteer. We are able to provide students with meaningful learning experiences.”
- “I would be very interested in collaborating to encourage more students to participate in my organization's core volunteer opportunity. It's a great opportunity for teamwork on the part of small groups of students in a service learning class.”
- “If it would be helpful to do this, I would be happy to work with Simmons.”
- “I would like a little more clarity about what Simmons expects from me as a supervisor...but I feel that I can prepare the students through our existing meetings.”
- “Yes - The more we can do with Simmons, the better!”
- “Yes, I will do whatever I can to improve the situation between the students from Simmons and the students they work with here at the Latin School.”
- “We already provide a mandatory training for all of our volunteers and work study students.”
- “Yes, if there was a specific project to work on or goal in doing so.”
- “Yes, I am interested. I do attend Service Learning Fairs and find that to be a nice way to meet and to generate interest among the students. However, there is an initial process that is important before the girls begin to work with elders for the first time. I like to have an orientation with any volunteers before beginning, but would be interested in participating in any programs that may relate to the aging population that would be living in a facility like Mount Pleasant. We are a residential care facility, and are NOT a nursing home. Sometimes there is confusion in the minds of any volunteer about that difference.”
- “Yes, specifically in regards to finding interns or students interested in service learning.”

One participant was not interested in this service:

- “No, not a sufficient number of Simmons College students involved in our organization to justify this.”

7. Indicators of community partner involvement in educating college students

Although there are currently resources for community partners who wish to work with college students, we have come across no models of “best practice” and no models for how community partners can support the development of *college students*.

The purpose of this section was to gain a better understanding of those qualities that community partners thought were most reflective of the ideal role of community partners in educating college students.

Site facilitators were first asked, *“Listed below are several possible indicators of community partner involvement in educating college students. We would greatly appreciate it if you would take a few moments to look over the indicators listed below, and rank them in order of importance, with 1 being most important and 7 being least important. Please use each number only one time”*.

There was a wide range in the rankings assigned to each indicator. The top 4 indicators in Table 14 each received three rankings of “1”. Five participants chose ‘giving students opportunities to learn more about and develop strong connections to the community’ as their second most important indicator. The second column of Table 14 indicates the number of partners who ranked the item in their top three choices. In general, the average ranking corresponded to the number of high rankings the indicator received.

Table 14		
Indicator	Average Ranking	Number of Participants who Ranked Item as 1, 2, or 3
Giving students opportunities to learn more about and develop a strong connections to the community	2.7	10
Providing student work/study and service learning positions which reinforce academic experiences	3.2	10
Providing students with the opportunity to explore career interests while developing skills applicable to future careers	4.0	6
Providing students with the opportunity to become leaders in the community	4.2	5
Community partner and college demonstrating a shared understanding and commitment to student development goals	4.5	4
Helping students connect their work to specific outcomes	4.7	5
Providing mentorship to students	5.1	2

Site facilitators were then asked to describe how their two top-ranked indicators could be reflected in the partnership, how they were *currently* reflected in the partnership, and if and how the organization would be willing to work with the Scott/ Ross Center to fulfill this aspect of partnership.

- a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.*
- b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?*
- c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?”*

It should be noted that some responses seemed to refer to elementary school students, rather than to the *college students*. This may reflect a lack of clarity in the questions that

were asked, as well as a lack of familiarity with the topic of college student development. Such responses are not included in this report. Please see Appendix A for all responses, organized by indicator.

1. Giving students opportunities to learn more about and develop strong connections to the community

For the first indicator, participants gave a variety of examples of what this indicator looks like, or could look like, “in action”. Several participants described ways in which they could help students develop stronger connections to the community through exposure and interaction with clients served by the organization. For example, one participant wrote, “Their actual volunteering takes place in the Boston Public Schools in Dorchester, Hyde Park, Roslindale, East Boston, Charlestown, Brighton, and Mattapan. It's a great opportunity for students to get out and see the public schools, as well as to meet the diverse group of students in our program, who represent the diversity of Boston.”

Other examples related to increasing student involvement with the organizations. For example, “Having our students work directly with our staff drivers delivering the meals so they can work on direct service and fully experience the issues the critically ill deal with.”

In terms of implementing the practices that would fall under this indicator, several partners suggested additional training and preparation for students. One community partner wrote that “...Training in cultural awareness/differences could be helpful.” Another suggested “...It would be very helpful to brainstorm ways that we can get more students involved, possibly coordinating that through the graduate programs.”

2. Providing student work/study and service learning positions which reinforce academic experiences

Many community partners also ranked this indicator as one of the most important. A few partners suggested explicitly linking coursework with activities in the community organization in order to fulfill this indicator. One partner wrote “Taking the subject matter they're studying and translating it to Middle-school students requires that Simmons students truly understand the material. Because volunteers with our organization teach what they know and love, Simmons students can come from every department of the college and offer an Apprenticeship in whatever topic they are covering in their course work... We can also serve as an internship or practicum site which quite closely aligns with course work.”

Partners offered a number of strategies for creating positions which reinforce academic experiences, by connecting with faculty at the college as well as by formulating and articulating learning objectives for the students. “Communicating what Simmons would like their students to learn about and work on, and by One Family clearly stating what our needs are for each individual volunteer opportunity.”

3. Providing students with the opportunity to explore career interests while developing skills applicable to future careers

Most responses for this indicator related to providing internship opportunities that allowed students to work in a “hands-on” way with the organization. For example, “Provide internships / volunteer positions oriented around what each individual student is interested in learning more about and possibly working with after graduation. This would mainly consist of community organizing, public education, legislative advocacy, event planning, administrative work and working special events.”

In order to do create such opportunities for students, partners suggested that students take an active role in designing the positions. One community partner wrote, “As it is each student's choice to volunteer with us, we outline specific tasks before an agreement is made and the experience starts. We then work with the student to make sure that he/she is happy with the way things are going, to provide guidance and answer questions, offer information about other organizations and opportunities and make the experience as positive and educational as possible.” Another noted that, “By developing expectations/guidelines that can meet the needs of both Simmons and our organization.”

E. Additional comments

Community partners were asked to provide “any additional comments or feedback”. Several participants gave positive feedback on the Scott/ Ross Center programs. Others commented on challenges in timing or coordination. Responses included:

➤ Positive feedback (5 responses)

“Only to say that Jumpstart, our partner who connects us with Simmons, Kristen Linnenbank, does an amazing job communicating with us and supporting the Simmons students - in my opinion.”

“In my experience, the Scott/Ross Center staff have been very organized, responsive and active regarding our programming with them (After-Hours U. at Lawrence). It is great to connect with an institution that devotes resources to community service learning and to developing these relationships with community organizations. I hope we can continue in this partnership. I wish we could expand our contact through America Reads and other kinds of resources.”

“Beacon Academy would simply not exist as powerfully as it does without the support, guidance, and resources of Simmons College and the Scott/Ross Center. We are deeply appreciative of the genuine interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by the Center staff and the students with whom we have had the privilege to work with this year.”

“We're just getting started with the new SHELTER group. I'm excited to see what we can create together as far as public education and awareness-raising and any other ways that the students become more knowledgeable about and involved in the movement to end family homelessness.”

“Our relationship with Simmons has been nothing short of extraordinary. We continue to meet a special segment of Boston's student population, and are so blessed with their young, energetic, and caring style. They not only accomplish some very needed work, but also share warmth and compassion for our residents.”

➤ Time/ coordination challenges (3)

“I faced some challenges coordinating and overseeing the students involved in the Digital Storytelling project. Although I met a number of the students in that class at the Service Learning Fair, it took some time to get the final list. Once I had the list, I scheduled orientation sessions at various times, but the students were apparently unavailable at those times. I then suggested meetings at Simmons, but these sessions were not well attended either. It seems as though student availability was restricted and did not coincide with Y staff/student availability which led to some frustration.”

“I find it very challenging that the only opportunity given to us as a community partner, to offer our opportunity to students is at the Service Learning Fair. There are almost too many organizations offered. Additionally, there's no opportunity presented for our organization to speak with a group of professors who lead the Service Learning classes or who want to integrate service learning. Our organization can tailor our volunteer opportunity to any subject matter, and I think that flexibility gets lost when we're only interacting through an information table. Thank you!”

“Since our Simmons students volunteer for only 10 hours, they usually finish up their time with us in two visits. I feel that this is not enough time to get to know them, and for them to get to know us. Due to their schedules, some of the students volunteer only on weekends. I do not work on weekends, so I don't get a chance to see them in action. On weekends only the kitchen is open. We serve breakfast and lunch to several hundred homeless people. These students don't get to experience the many other services we offer during the week to homeless people. We have other students, from BC, Harvard and Lesley who come in once or twice a week for 2 semesters. I think that these students have a better understanding of our mission and purpose. They also are able to make connections with staff, guests and other volunteers, which the Simmons students aren't able to make.”

V. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, community partners reported a variety of benefits that came as a result of their partnership with the Scott/ Ross Center at Simmons College. Community partners believed that the benefits of working with Simmons students outweighed any burdens it may have added to their work. Nearly all community partners believed that Simmons is sensitive the needs and concerns of the community, and that they could easily find someone at Simmons to talk to if they had concerns. Moreover, all community partners were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall communication they had with Simmons students and 95% were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of student work. **Each of these findings suggests that Simmons adds positively to the community organizations with which it works and demonstrates that the college students are providing useful and valuable services to the communities served by these organizations.**

The results have been placed into three broad categories: positive findings, areas for improvement, and suggestions for action steps (see Appendix for these three lists of findings).

Moving Forward:

The results of this assessment will be used to build upon and improve existing Scott/ Ross Center community partnerships. A committee will meet to discuss recommendations such as those described above and begin to draft an action plan. Furthermore, the Scott/ Ross Center will begin to conduct focus groups to follow up with community partners for more information on specific questions and strategies. We will also hold student focus groups to discuss the findings of the study.

APPENDIX A: Student Development Indicators

Site facilitators were first asked, *“Listed below are several possible indicators of community partner involvement in educating college students. We would greatly appreciate it if you would take a few moments to look over the indicators listed below, and rank them in order of importance, with 1 being most important and 7 being least important. Please use each number only one time”*.

- *Giving students opportunities to learn more about and develop a strong connections to the community*
- *Providing student work/study and service learning positions which reinforce academic experiences*
- *Providing students with the opportunity to explore career interests while developing skills applicable to future careers*
- *Providing students with the opportunity to become leaders in the community*
- *Community partner and college demonstrating a shared understanding and commitment to student development goals*
- *Helping students connect their work to specific outcomes*
- *Providing mentorship to students*

Site facilitators were then asked to describe how their two top-ranked indicators could be reflected in the partnership, how they were *currently* reflected in the partnership, and if and how the organization would be willing to work with the Scott/ Ross Center to fulfill this aspect of partnership.

- “a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.*
- b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?*
- c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?”*

Verbatim responses for the indicators are listed below.

1. Giving students opportunities to learn more about and develop a strong connections to the community

- a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.
 - “It is Simmons students working to facilitate basic English communication skills with residents of this community who represent a wide range of ethno-linguistic, socio-economic, educational and religious backgrounds. Sharing experiences, understanding cultural differences and developing relationships are all part of the picture.”
 - “Invite students to attend other community meetings and events to see how this program fits into the whole.”
 - “Students can assist in our Resource Center, networking with guests and helping form partnerships with local organizations and programs.”
 - “Students who participate in our core volunteer opportunity attend four hours of training during which time they learn about urban youth and about educating

middle school students. Their actual volunteering takes place in the Boston Public Schools in Dorchester, Hyde Park, Roslindale, East Boston, Charlestown, Brighton, and Mattapan. It's a great opportunity for students to get out and see the public schools, as well as to meet the diverse group of students in our program, who represent the diversity of Boston. Additionally, any interns who would be with us for more than 10 hours per week, would be working at our headquarters as well, learning what it takes, behind the scenes, to effect change in the community.”

- “The community = the partner school after school academic enrichment program and more specifically, young students within it that are struggling to succeed, academically or socially. By participating in After-Hours U. we hope Simmons students gain insights into how adults can prompt greater engagement in learning, persistence and confidence among struggling students in themselves as learners.
- “Along with all of the opportunities listed for Indicator one, students are welcome to do more with us - sit in on classes, help with homework, etc.”
- “I think that the student plays a big part in what her "assignment" will be as she takes on the service learning component here at Mount Pleasant. There is work to be done in bringing elders together both physically and emotionally, but we are always trying. I think that brainstorming and sharing this theme with a group of potential student volunteers would be terrific, in that they would bring youthful ideas or previous experiences "to the table" and we could draw on these ideas.
- “Students start to feel that the community we serve and represent is also their own community (especially because we are so close to the campus). “
- “Having our students work directly with our staff drivers delivering the meals so they can work on direct service and fully experience the issues the critically ill deal with.”

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?

- “I feel it is reflected quite well.”
- “Not at all - Simmons students come to program then go back to university”
- “Not enough”
- “We have not had enough Simmons students participating in our program for me to speak to this. However, we have demonstrated this indicator in our partnerships with other colleges.”
- “Tremendously”
- “It is something we do everyday, but not listed as an explicit part.”
- “There is a community spirit that exists here already. I think the students can see the warmth and appreciation among the residents and the friendliness of the staff. Because we are small (43 residents) we get to know each other well and consider ourselves to be somewhat of a family. I think we share that piece with the students who may connect vicariously with some stories that they hear from the residents, or appreciate what changes come as a natural part of the aging process.....some of which relate to relinquishing their one time position in the community outside, and becoming a part of the community that we try to nurture here. Our director is a resident of Jamaica Plain and has had an ongoing focus on elders and affairs that

- relate to them. He continues to work to educate and advocate for them on the local/state level and keeps a strong connection within the community. We draw from the community for other volunteers and even sponsor a little league baseball team, taking the residents who are able down to the field to cheer them on. Community mindedness is alive and well at Mount Pleasant.”
- “We do offer the opportunity for students to ride along on our delivery vans with our staff.”

- c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?
- “Yes, training in cultural awareness/differences could be helpful.”
 - “Yes, I could introduce students to many other groups, depending upon their interests.”
 - “Internships”
 - “Certainly. Similar to the first indicator, it would be very helpful to brainstorm ways that we can get more students involved, possibly coordinating that through the graduate programs.”
 - “Let's talk!!”
 - “Doing more community projects.”
 - “Yes, the problem for fulfilling this indicator is that this position requires students to be with us on the delivery van from 11am-4pm. We would be willing to explore other options for direct service and full immersion of students into the communities in which we serve.”

2. Providing student work/study and service learning positions which reinforce academic experiences

- a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.
- “It would be the same as for indicator one.”
 - “At Citizen Schools, we believe that teaching back is a demonstration of the very highest form of learning (similar to students having the opportunity to Teach Assist a course they've already taken). Taking the subject matter they're studying and translating it to Middle-school students, requires that Simmons students truly understand the material. Because volunteers with our organization teach what they know and love, Simmons students can come from every department of the college and offer an Apprenticeship in whatever topic they are covering in their course work. This is true for both the undergraduate and graduate colleges. We can also serve as an internship or practicum site which quite closely aligns with course work.”
 - “Student working at our site would be involved in an education or psychology track and would have the chance to see a strong curriculum, based on literacy and relationships, in action.
 - “• Students interested in education are tutoring our students • Students majoring in physical therapy have designed a physical education program for our students and are implementing it • Nutrition students are providing nutrition workshops • Studio 5 students are developing our first piece of collateral • A work study student is managing our morning tutors”

- “We would need to know what students are learning about in class and what the class hopes us to convey to the students.”

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?

- “Through observing our program students have had the opportunity to “see” what they are learning in the classroom. But again, I feel that they can learn more from taking a more active role within their placements.
- We have not had enough Simmons students participating in our program for me to speak to this. However, we have demonstrated this indicator in our partnerships with other colleges.
- Somewhat, depends on the student.
- In the past, it has worked out well, as we have received the syllabi for students volunteering for us through specific classes.”

c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?

- “Yes. By developing expectations/guidelines that can meet the needs of both Simmons and our organization.”
- “Absolutely. We have an excellent model for working with Service Learning students and practicum/intern students with two other institutions, so it’s very feasible for us to collaborate with Simmons in a similar manner.”
- “Present in education/psychology classes to recruit students.”
- “Yes, by communicating what Simmons would like their students to learn about and work on, and by One Family clearly stating what our needs are for each individual volunteer opportunity.”

3. Providing students with the opportunity to explore career interests while developing skills applicable to future careers

a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.

- “Having students work as a paid or unpaid intern at one of our after school programs, in which they work as program staff, along side program leaders, helping to tutor students and running specific activities or developing projects for program participants.”
- “Provide students with opportunities to learn about both organizational and hands-on skills by working in our shelter and offices.”
- “Provide internships / volunteer positions oriented around what each individual student is interested in learning more about and possibly working with after graduation. This would mainly consist of community organizing, public education, legislative advocacy, event planning, administrative work and working special events.”

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?

- “Not enough. When we do have students placed in our organization, students usually come and take on more of a passive role, where they might work with specific students during the academic hour, and during activities they take on

more of an observer role. I would like to give them more of a leadership role, where they can truly use and develop their skills.”

- “Not enough”
- “As it is each student's choice to volunteer with us, we outline specific tasks before an agreement is made and the experience starts. We then work with the student to make sure that he/she is happy with the way things are going, to provide guidance and answer questions, offer information about other organizations and opportunities and make the experience as positive and educational as possible.”

c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?

- “Yes. By developing expectations/guidelines that can meet the needs of both Simmons and our organization.”
- “Yes, by setting up internships where students come to us on a more consistent basis”
- “Yes, simply by clearly creating expectations between our organization and Simmons College and the students' expectations in working with us.”

4. Providing students with the opportunity to become leaders in the community

a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.

- “Student as Volunteer Event Director overseeing a Volunteer Event Management Team (Director would be liaison to and work closely with Special Olympics MA)”
- “Simmons students are more connected and take a greater part in actually helping design components and projects that are done within the organization, versus simply taking part in a pre-existent project.”

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?

- “Reflected well - we had an event director last year from the Simmons student body, though we need to recruit a new one this year”
- “Somewhat - it is possible, but something I need to organize myself.”

c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?

- “Yes”
- “Yes, by talking with teachers and trying to coordinate projects.”

5. Community partner and college demonstrating a shared understanding and commitment to student development goals

a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.

- “We'd have to have a meeting to discuss mutual goals. We can only guess your intentions.”
- “Having a memorandum of agreement in the beginning of the year. Having specific goals of both organizations included in that agreement. Meeting regularly with the Simmons Coordinators/Office staff to assess the plan. Having a "Farragut

Student Leadership Team" to develop a mission and vision for the partnership and plan 2-3 activities a year that were intended to bring together the two groups."

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization's partnership now?

- "We speak to students about how we work and what we expect, but do not explore their needs. I feel certain the Jumpstart site coordinator does this communication however."
- "It has been thought about and discussed."

c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?

- "Not sure it is necessary, since the Jumpstart coordinator fulfills the task."
- "Having a memorandum of agreement in the beginning of the year. (We could help to draft this. America Counts already does one) Having specific goals of both organizations included in that agreement. (Meet about the draft, make changes) Meeting regularly with the Simmons Coordinators/Office staff to assess the plan. (Maybe have a formal meeting three or four times a year) Having a "Farragut Student Leadership Team" to develop a mission and vision for the partnership and plan 2-3 activities a year that were intended to bring together the two groups. (Encouraging this group, helping them to navigate the system, talking to them about the various programs, having people from all Simmons programs involved in this)"

6. Helping students connect their work to specific outcomes

a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might "look like" at your site.

- "A partnership between Simmons students and Y students that would follow a procedure for determining what would be most useful for both, deciding what is needed in order to meet the goal and then working toward meeting the goal. This would be directly useful for the ESOL student and would provide an experience that would more directly contribute to the Simmons students' career objectives and a reference for future resume/interview"
- "Perhaps checking in with teachers about curriculum"
- "Students would identify specific goals with the kids with whom they work and aim to meet these goals throughout the year."

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization's partnership now?

- "A partnership between Simmons students and Y students that would follow a procedure for determining what would be most useful for both, deciding what is needed in order to meet the goal and then working toward meeting the goal. This would be directly useful for the ESOL student and would provide an experience that would more directly contribute to the Simmons student's career objectives and a reference for future resume/interview"
- "It has been tried, but I don't think it is currently being done."
- "barely"

c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?

- “Perhaps working with Service Learning to develop a general plan for general use but that could be given to various profs who would modify it according to the specific goals of their class. I would receive a copy of the plan and contribute as appropriate.”
- “Yes. Perhaps talking to the staff and administrators.”
- “Yes, help students identify specific goals at the beginning of their time with us.”

7. Providing mentorship to students

a. List some ideas you have for what the indicator might “look like” at your site.

- “Various departments from Simmons have come here for service learning. In the dietary department, we have an intern who is learning from our chef. Physical therapy students are here developing relational connections, but also viewing MPH from the perspective of their studies. I hope further mentoring can occur. I currently have a Simmons senior (doing field work) who upon graduation desires to follow a career path that involves elders. I am excited for her, and hope I represent a caring connection and am able to give her some guidance and help into that direction.”

b. To what extent do you feel that the indicator is reflected in your organization’s partnership now?

- “I am the one individual in our activities program and feel that a strong connection with life here at Mount Pleasant is very important. It is so easy to not think "old thoughts" when one is so busy at college. When a student walks in she realizes that the pace slows down immediately, yet further examination and experience leads to the awareness that our elders were once young, and their eyes twinkle when they hear stories that bring them back to their youth. Many of them still have active minds and the connection of young and old is tremendous. As far as mentoring goes, I think my role is important in that the opportunity to be here is very special.....there is a lot to learn from our elder population, if you just stop and listen, share, and absorb. In some ways I am a mentor, and try to be the best example in an honest way that I can. However, isn't each resident a mentor as they share who they are, and the journeys they have taken?”

c. Would your organization be able to work with us to fulfill the indicator? If so, how?

- “This needs to be discussed.”

APPENDIX B: Categorized Findings

Positive Findings

Overall, the survey revealed that community partners are satisfied with the state of the partnerships. Partners reported that the benefits of the partnership outweighed the challenges and the partnerships were reported as being *mutually beneficial to the organization and the students*.

- All participants were satisfied with the knowledge and skills of Simmons students and the overall communication between students and the organization.
- All partners reported that the number of students working with them was appropriate for the size of the organization.
- Nearly 95% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the overall quality of student work and with the level of trust between their organizations and the students who worked with them.
- Over 95% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the skills and knowledge of students.
- 94% believed that students gained ‘useful knowledge as a result of their work with the organization and that that students gained ‘a greater understanding of the community and the social issues’ addressed by their organizations.
- 94% of partners believed that the benefits of working with the students outweighed any burdens it may have added to their work
- Only 1 participant indicated that ‘students did not perform as expected’ and none of the participants reported that students were ‘not well prepared’.
- 78% reported seeing themselves as mentors to the college students
- Over 60% of community partners were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the opportunities they had to evaluate college students

Community partners were satisfied with their organizations’ *relationship to the college*.

- 95 % partners reported that they received enough communication from the college
- 95% of community partners reported that ‘Simmons is sensitive to the needs and concerns of its community partners’
- 89 % believed that they could easily find someone at Simmons to talk with when they had concerns.

Areas for Improvement

The following survey results highlight findings which may be of interest to The Scott/ Ross Center.

Time:

- Overall, the most commonly reported challenges in working with Simmons students were ‘college students’ academic calendar and breaks’ (32%), ‘time commitment to supervise students’ (26%), and ‘project time period insufficient’ (21%). It is interesting to note that these responses all relate to time and scheduling. The center can explore ways to support the community partners in light of these time constraints.

Relationship to College:

- Most partners indicated (84%) that they ‘learned more about college programs and services’ as a result of the partnership. More than half also reported that they ‘know whom to call upon for information and assistance’ (68%) and ‘have an increased knowledge of college resources available to community organizations (53%). Although this indicates that many partners are aware of the resources at the college, our goal is for these numbers to be 100%.
- Overall, most community partners communicated with the college at least several times a semester. 33% of partners communicated several times a semester, 17% communicated once a week or more, and 17% communicated with the college several times a month, and another 17% communicated with the college about once a month. Ideally, we would communicate with all community partners at least once a month.
- Only 44% reported feeling ‘valued as a teacher by college students and staff’, with 44% being ‘neutral’ and 11% marking ‘disagree’. The center can explore ways to increase the number of partners who feel valued as a teacher by students and staff at the college.

Miscellaneous:

The high number of ‘neutral’ responses indicates some confusion or ambivalence in regards to the following statements:

Table 12						
Reponses to “Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your oppourtunities to have the following roles and responsibilities.”						
Statement	Averages for each statement (1-5)	Percentages of each rating				
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Facilitating student training and/or reflection	3.5	0%	0%	56%	39%	6%
Curriculum design	3.4	0%	0%	72%	17%	11%
Opportunity to participate in other program activities such as field trips, conferences, workshops	3.3	0%	6%	72%	11%	11%

Most participants indicated that they were interested in working with Simmons College to help prepare students to work with their organization and the community. This is clearly an area we can build on. Responses included the following:

- “Yes. I feel that students would benefit from attending an orientation about our organization or specific programs in which they are placed, in order to gain a better understanding of what our organization does, how it benefits the community, and how they fit into that picture. We get Simmons students to work with us somewhat randomly. I feel that both our organization and the students would benefit most if there was a more structured way of getting a core group of students to work with us during their placement. Perhaps giving students a deadline for choosing their placement and having the university or faculty work with the organization to set up a start date/orientation for all those who are placed within the same organization. There should be a systematic way of tracking where the students are placed on the part of Simmons, instead of simply leaving it all up to the students themselves.”
- “Yes - we could invite interested students, for example, to our Special Olympics Coaches' Training Clinics held periodically throughout the year. These clinics not only deal w/ sport-specific coaches training, but present general training in interacting w/ our constituents - adults and children with intellectual disabilities.
- Yes - we do offer an internship program but do not have any Simmons interns. Rather, they come to us to volunteer. We are able to provide students with meaningful learning experiences.”

- “I would like a little more clarity about what Simmons expects from me as a supervisor...but I feel that I can prepare the students through our existing meetings.”

One participant was *not* interested in this service:

- “No, not a sufficient number of Simmons College students involved in our organization to justify this.”

Action List

The following is a list of results from The Scott/ Ross Center Community Partnership Survey. These results are of interest to the SRC staff because they relate to *specific actions* that we in the office can take to improve our partnerships with community organizations. The center will continue to enhance those areas that received positive feedback and will take concrete steps to address areas of concern.

Communication:

- Email was the preferred mode of communication for those who were interested in receiving additional communication (29%).
- 55% ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the goals of the group were written and had been agreed upon by all members of the partnership, which is interesting because the Scott/ Ross Center has few formalized, documented agreements with community partners

Training and student development:

- Community partners were slightly less satisfied with students’ awareness of social justice issues. Only 72% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’, while 28% were ‘neutral’.
- Most community partners (85%) reported that they would like students to gain a greater understanding of the community and the social issues addressed by their work with the organization and ‘would like students to gain useful skills and knowledge as a result of their work’ with the organization (83%).
- A slightly smaller percentage (69%) indicated that they ‘would like to feel valued as a teacher by the college students, faculty, and staff, while 23% marked ‘no’.
- 46% of community partners would like to see themselves as mentors to the students and another 46% reported that they might like to see themselves as mentors to the students.
- Responses suggest that partners may be interested in learning more about supporting college student learning and development in a variety of ways. For example, 31% of community partners were interested in reading articles or a guide about college student learning and development, and 56% said that they might be interested. 29% were interested in attending workshops about college student learning and development. 27% indicated that they would like to talk with staff about college student learning and development, and a 71% might be interested in other ways to learn more about college student learning and development. Results suggest that further exploration of ways to educate community partners about student development is needed.

- Most participants indicated that they were interested in working with Simmons College to help prepare students to work with their organization and the community.

Participants were also asked to identify those qualities that site facilitators thought were most reflective of the idea role of community partners in educating college students. Here, we will focus on the three indicators listed below, because they were the most popular indicators chosen by participants

These are the top three results.

Indicator	Average Ranking	Number of Participants who Ranked Item as 1, 2, or 3
Giving students opportunities to learn more about and develop a strong connections to the community	2.7	10
Providing student work/study and service learning positions which reinforce academic experiences	3.2	10
Providing students with the opportunity to explore career interests while developing skills applicable to future careers	4.0	6

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