

Preparing Students to Learn Across the Disciplines: Pedagogical Interventions in Community-Service Learning

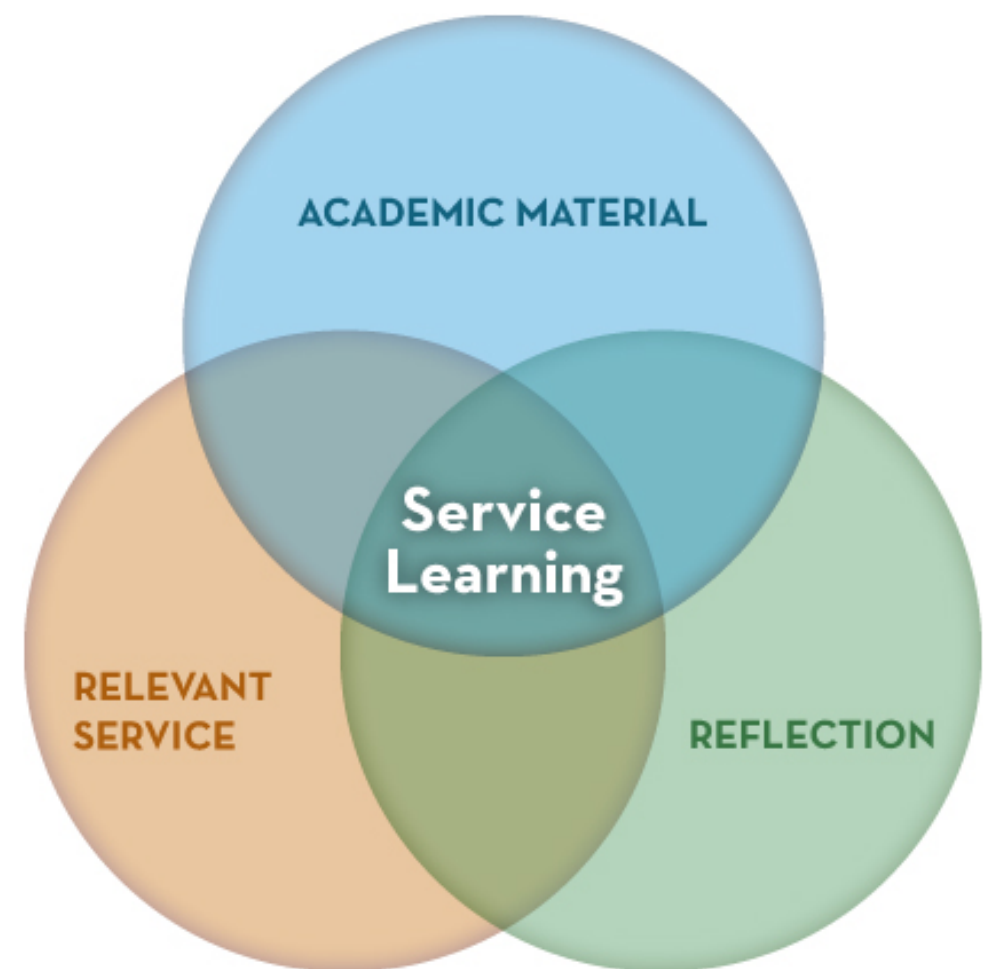


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Community Service Learning (CSL)

- ❖ High impact pedagogy
- ❖ Allows students the opportunity to participate in a service experience that:
 - ❖ is an organized activity
 - ❖ benefits communities and students
 - ❖ is integrated with course content
 - ❖ meets the actual needs of the community (reciprocity)
 - ❖ incorporates critical reflection to connect students' academic learning with their experiences.



*Adapted from the work of:
Jacoby, Bringle & Hatcher, and
Butin

2014 International Field School

- ❖ Two courses:
 - ❖ GNED3010 - Science in a Global Context focuses on biodiversity, sustainability, and conservation
 - ❖ GNED3030 - Global Communities and Societies focuses on cultural groups, global connections and social problems/social change
- ❖ Extensive CSL components
- ❖ Pre-departure in-class discussion of CSL
- ❖ Students failed to understand the essential components of CSL



Failure to understand CSL

- *Our week at OYE was about learning about social issues in Honduras and I think actually working with the OYE scholars, interviewing people involved, and exploring these issues on the ground provided a much greater understanding over learning about these issues strictly academically. It made it much more real when we were actively involved with the community.*
- *CSL has to have a portion of education where you learn about what needs to be done in a community and why it is considered an issue. After learning about the issue, CSL courses allows us to donate our new knowledge, our time, and our sweat to help make a positive change.*
- *I feel gratitude from mother earth and I feel fantastic that I helped save a few fish, turtles, sharks, and birds from consuming plastic. CSL can be defined as a selfless deed that benefits a larger community and environment.*

2016 Efforts to Increase Understanding

- ❖ Increased and varied pedagogical strategies prior to departure
 - ❖ Class discussion
 - ❖ Case Study
 - ❖ Critiques of Voluntourism
 - ❖ Reflections on course CSL projects
- ❖ Research project
 - ❖ 2014 reflections pre-departure and following each CSL activity
 - ❖ 2016 reflections pre-departure and following final CSL activity
 - ❖ Coding and analysis

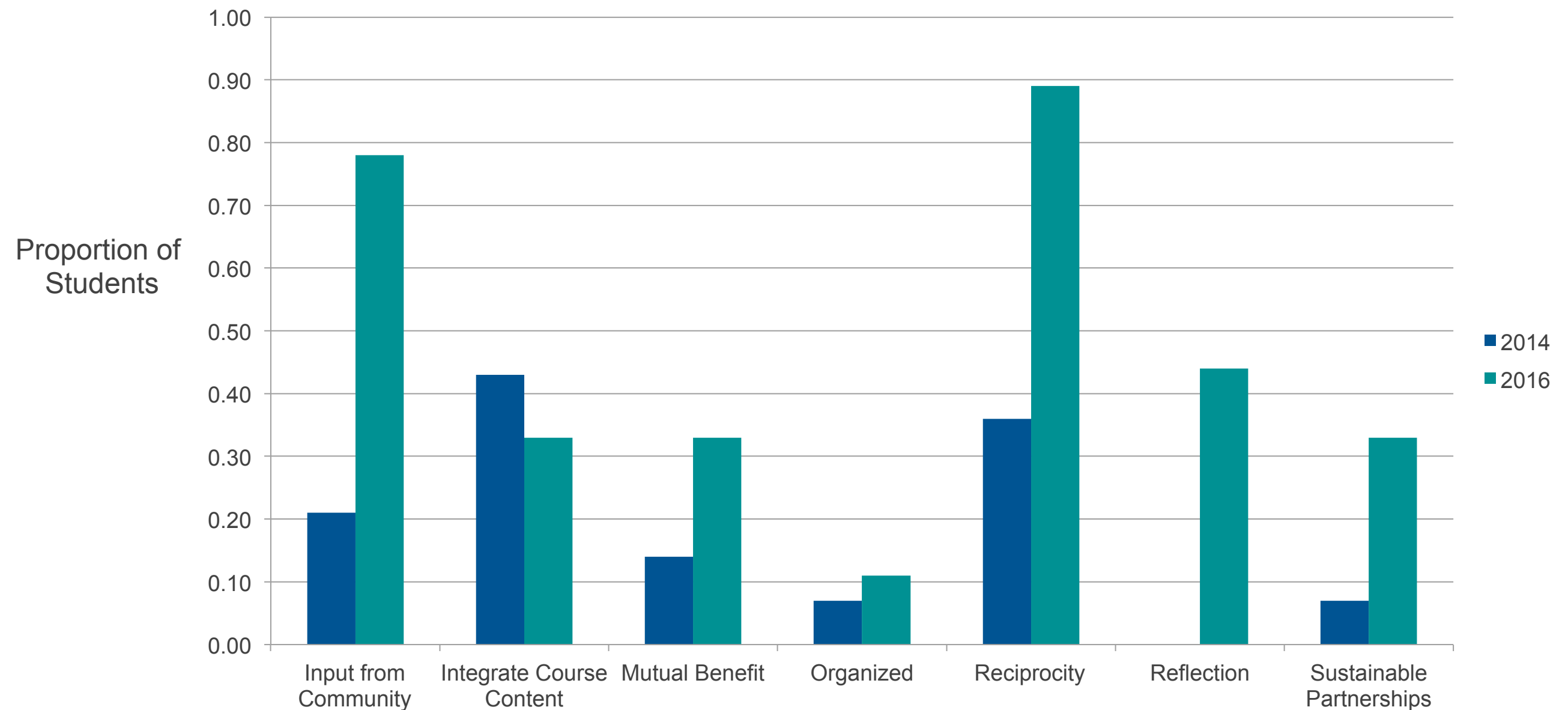


Successes in 2016

- ❖ *I think a super important aspect of CSL that I will always take with me is the idea that you should work **with not for communities** (mostly anyways) and that in helping people, it is necessary to **be aware of your status/privilege and make sure it does not create a fragmented or demoralizing relationship.***
- ❖ *I first thought CSL was helping people who were in need, and needed assistance. I thought it was going to a community and doing something for them to help better their lives. I now know that there is a lot more to CSL ... it is **learning about a community and a culture through research and understanding all of their needs.***
- ❖ *Working with the community is important because it allows for **relationships to form, that are long lasting,** and reciprocity is formed.*
- ❖ *Prior to studying CSL, I viewed CSL as doing a task for a particular community. My views of CSL were directly shaped by what I viewed in the media. For instance I always heard of people travelling to underdeveloped countries to build schools and clinics. From an **uneducated perspective I always admired those who volunteered their time to “help” underdeveloped communities.** However, after our first class of CSL, **I quickly realized that this volunteerism could actually hinder rather than help a community.***

Comparisons between 2014 and 2016

CSL Criteria Mentioned in Final Prompts



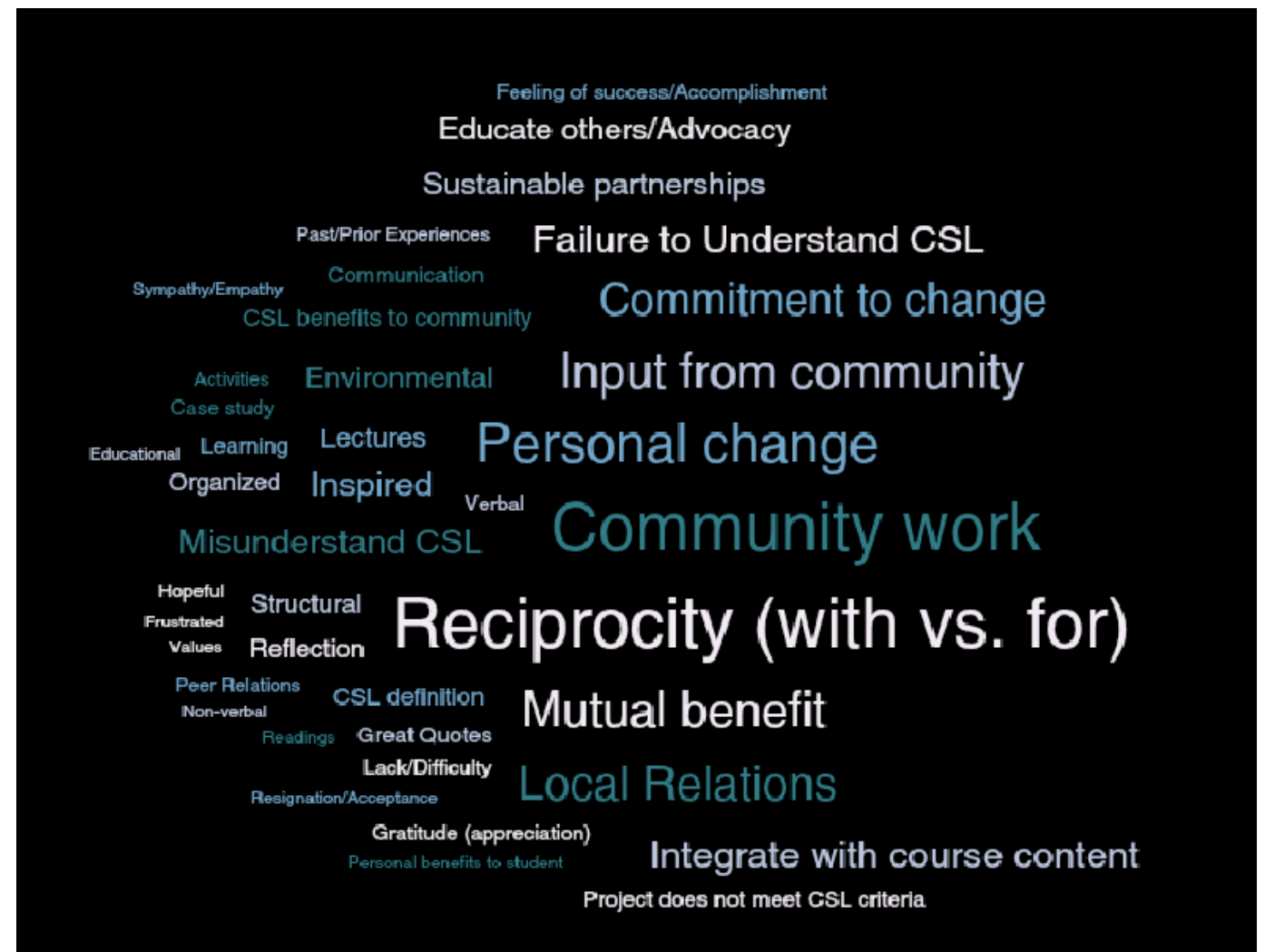
Instructor perceptions are different
than student perceptions

Students' perceptions of their learning

- ❖ *My understanding of Community Service Learning **has changed solely by immersing myself into the community** and learning the different aspects of what goes on.*
- ❖ *My personal understanding of CSL has changed greatly over the semester. I **believe through first-hand experience** allowing me to understand the specific aspects of what makes community service learning.*
- ❖ *What helped me to better understand this concept was **your story from the last field school** and the bridge. The difference of how difficult and ineffective the bridge construction was before the community members arrived in comparison to the community teaching you about the best place to build it and how; it was powerful.*
- ❖ *I found that the idea of CSL was very easy to understand especially when we **compared it to “voluntourism”** and had a class discussion about the things that set these two concepts apart.*

Implications

- ❖ Hands-on activity is not enough to understand CSL
- ❖ This study emphasized the importance of classroom instruction and not just experiential learning
- ❖ Comparisons with voluntourism (i.e. What is not CSL?) were helpful
- ❖ Increased pedagogical strategies aid in student learning, even though they may not be recognized by students





Thank You!

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This project was supported by
a TransCanada Collaborative
SoTL Inquiry Grant



Institute for Scholarship of
Teaching and Learning

