

philanthropy, in which students learn philanthropy by making grants to nonprofit organizations. The study reviewed syllabi and support material for 88 experiential philanthropy courses. The analysis identified four course models offered in a variety of academic settings. These findings suggest a broader range of course options for advancing civic engagement goals that instructors might typically consider. Faculty who teach these courses pursue multiple goals, including preparing students for citizenship and for professional work in the nonprofit sector. The findings indicate that experiential philanthropy is a pedagogical strategy for both civic engagement and nonprofit management education. They deepen our understanding of how instructors use experiential philanthropy and shape how we assess its efficacy as a pedagogic strategy.

KEYWORDS

student philanthropy, experiential learning, civic engagement, nonprofit management education

In recent years, scholars have documented a strategy across its curriculum (Ahmed & growing interest in teaching philanthropy as Olberding, 2007/2008; Holland & Votruba, part of undergraduate and graduate education (2002, Olberding, 2009, 2012; Olberding et al., Researchers have described increases in 2010; Sigler, 2006). courses that address philanthropy in general (Mirabella, 2007) as well as those that involve experiential philanthropy has generated more experiential philanthropy, classes that provide attention for two reasons. First, the publications students with the chance to act as philanthropy by Northern Kentucky University researchers ist by making grants to nonprofit organizations have raised awareness of its extensive program tions (Millisor & Olberding, 2009; Olberding, of courses; and second, several prominent insti- Nekirk, & Ng, 2010). Research on experiential educational funders have underwritten courses at philanthropy has focused on case studies of colleges and universities across the United States. individual courses (Irvin, 2005; Sigler, 2006). Northern KentJ ET d8.2454s-e 10 (e) 10 (s) 106k(s) 106y-1 and Northern Kentucky University's adoption of experiential philanthropy as a pedagogical

assessment of that university's experience, but we lack systematic knowledge of key aspects of this development, such as the extensiveness of courses, their role within curricula, or whether they dominate in undergraduate or professional graduate education. In addition, researchers have not addressed either how instructors perceive the goals of these courses or the relationship of these courses to goals associated with service learning or experiential education, such as civic engagement or students' preparation for careers as professionals.

This paper provides an overview of the nature and extent of experiential philanthropy courses as a pedagogical strategy in American higher education. Increased knowledge of this phenomenon would be valuable for several reasons. First, it would clarify the goals instructors seek to accomplish through experiential philanthropy. Second, it would expand our understanding of the relationship of experiential philanthropy to two dimensions of higher education we associate it with: civic engagement and nonprofit management education. Third, increased knowledge of the goals and structure of experiential philanthropy courses would also provide a foundation for future research about how thoroughly courses achieve those goals.

EXPERIENTIAL PHILANTHROPY AND ITS

giving account sponsored by and housed at the Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund. The program continued through 2010. Faculty funded by Campus Compact received between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for their courses, with the expectation that they would identify and develop mechanisms for sustaining them (Campus Compact, n.d.).² Finally, beginning in 2010 (and continuing at the time this paper is published), three Campus Compact state chapters (Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio) received funding from the Corp funded by

to teaching. It emphasizes that students learn more through activities that directly engage them with course material.

Proponents of experiential education and active learning contrast it with more traditional approaches to teaching, particularly lecture formats. They argue that engagement with course material through experiences and other activities plays a critical role in the learning process and is more effective than traditional lecture formats. This kind of engagement with course material enables students to use direct experience to observe, reflect on, and ultimately test the abstract concepts being introduced in their course reading and lectures (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Ethridge & Branscomb, 2009, Kolb, 1984). Researchers have found that students prefer this approach to teaching and that it enhances student learning. These findings have held in a wide range of academic settings including nursing (Everly, 2013), chemical engineering (Paas, 2011), and pharmacology (Hidayat, Patel, & Veltri, 2012), among others.

Experiential philanthropy as a pedagogical strategy reflects the approaches to teaching defined by experiential education and active learning, as well as the emphasis on civic engagement inherent in service learning. Experiential philanthropy provides students with a hands-on experience, grantmaking, and provides opportunities for active engagement with core concepts about philanthropy. It also draws on key elements of service learning, notably providing students with experiences in community settings, organized to enhance student learning as well as encourage habits of civic engagement (Colby et al., 2003; Jacoby & Associates, 1996; Simons & Cleary, 2006). Experiential philanthropy differs from service learning, because the hands-on activity associated with experiential philanthropy is grantmaking, coordinated in the classroom and not through direct service to a com

programs; social work, business, business and public administration (combined), and generic graduate or professional schools have a smaller but roughly equal share of the remainder (Mirabella, 2007, p. 15S).

Between 1996 and 2006, philanthropy courses grew in number by 206% and represent 13% of all nonprofit management education coursework (Mirabella, 2007, p. 18S). The growth in nonprofit management education in general and philanthropy courses in particular is consistent with the emergence of experiential philanthropy in undergraduate and graduate education. Researchers have noted that higher education courses in philanthropy serve both a civic engagement and a professional preparation role (Ashcraft, 2002). Those writing about experiential philanthropy courses have emphasized both roles, though they place greater importance on civic engagement (Ahmed & Olberding, 2007/2008; Holland & Votruba, 2002; Irvin, 2005; Olberding, 2009; Olberding et al., 2010).

Researchers at Northern Kentucky University are responsible for most of the scholarship about experiential philanthropy. They have conducted empirical research and reflected deeply on the institution's integration of experiential philanthropy across its curriculum, as an element in its commitment to "building a new generation of leaders and supporters of civic action" (Holland & Votruba, 2002, p. 231). Scholars there have conducted two streams of research, one focused on how the institution's faculty and leadership have approached experiential philanthropy and the other on the outcomes of that work. In terms of approach, Northern Kentucky researchers describe their effort as student philanthropy. Its definition, as "an experiential learning approach that provides students with the opportunity to study social problems and nonprofit organizations and then make decisions about investing in them" (Olberding, 2009, p. 463), reflects a focus on civic engagement. The stated purpose of the university's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, to "advanc[e] the development of com-

petent student-citizens" (Sigler, 2006, p. 194), also emphasizes student civic engagement.

Northern Kentucky researchers have identified two distinct ways that instructors organize student philanthropy: a direct approach, in which students distribute grant money as part of their coursework, and an indirect model, in which students make funding recommendations to institutional grantmakers (Millisor & Olberding, 2009; Olberding et al., 2010). An initial survey of the experiential philanthropy landscape identified 43 institutions offering such courses. Although the survey had a limited number of respondents, it indicated that Northern Kentucky University had offered experiential philanthropy courses for the longest time (since 2000) and that most

The second study surveyed 127 Northern Kentucky alumni to assess the ~~long~~ term impact of student philanthropy courses in four areas: awareness, learning, beliefs, and intention. The study found that student philanthropy alumni scored higher than the general population on key aspects of engage-

in earlier studies (Millisor & Olberding, 2009; Olberding et al., 2010). For each course, syllabi and other relevant written material were requested. The primary institutional funders, Campus Compact (both its national and relevant state chapters) and the Learning by Giving Foundation, endorsed the study and made syllabi available for the courses they fund. In other cases, I contacted instructors of individual courses. In total, I received 86 syllabi. In lieu of a syllabus, I also received a funding application in support of one course, and descriptive information from one other. The syllabi and support documents were analyzed thematically by coding program information first into categories focused on course goals, content, and structure and then within categories using concepts taken from service-learning and nonprofit management education literature. That analysis generated the findings discussed next.

EXPERIENTIAL PHILANTHROPY COURSES

Experiential philanthropy courses vary by funding source, academic level (undergraduate or graduate), and institutional setting. Of the 88 courses analyzed for this study, 80 were undergraduate level and eight were graduate level. Funders for the courses included 13 through the Learning by Giving Foundation; 15 from the national Campus Compact organization; 51 through the Ohio, Michigan, and Kentucky Campus Compact Pay it Forward program; and 9 through individual or institutional philanthropists associated with particular colleges or universities. All but one of the courses used the direct giving approach, in which students controlled the philanthropic resources and made grants directly to eligible nonprofit organizations.

Institutions of higher education offer experiential education courses in a wide variety of departments and organizational units. The choices about where faculty offer these classes tell us a great deal about how those institutions perceive experiential philanthropy and its role in higher education. Table 1 summarizes the

settings for experiential philanthropy courses. Undergraduate pre-professional departments were the most common setting (a total of 46 courses), including business/management (17) and human services (8); 21 courses fell into a wide range of other pre-professional units, such as marketing, communications, criminal justice, public administration, and departments preparing students for health careers. The predominance of courses in pre-professional departments suggests that the institutions view experiential philanthropy coursework as part of a student's preparation for a specific type of career. The Pay it Forward program was the source of funding for 35 of the 46 pre-professional courses. Undergraduate liberal arts, notably social sciences (16) and humanities (8), were also common settings; sociology (9) was the most popular departmental home for those courses; no other social science or humanities department was the setting for more than four courses. Professional programs dominated graduate courses, including public administration/policy (4), social work, a medical school, and business and arts administration (1 each).

Several other program settings are notable. Two institutions offer experiential philanthropy courses to undergraduates enrolled in an "honors" program, which limits participation to students preselected by the college or university. One other course, categorized for this study as a business, pre-professional course, also described itself as part of an honors program. Three institutions integrated experiential philanthropy into courses designed for new students under the popular heading "first-year experience," traditionally offered as a means of acclimating students to college life. Six institutions placed experiential philanthropy programs in departments or units dedicated to civic engagement. Northern Kentucky University, as noted earlier, integrates experiential philanthropy across its curriculum (at the undergraduate and graduate levels), reflecting its emphasis on educating students for citizenship.

Civic Engagement and
Experiential Philanthropy
Course descriptions and goal statements provide a picture of how faculty approach experiential philanthropy as a pedagogical strategy. Analysis of those documents indicates that slightly more than half (46) of the courses include civic engagement as a goal. Syllabi varied in terms of how directly they emphasized the civic engagement role. Some syllabi provided explicit assertions of how the course content would shape students' understanding of and commitment to civic engagement. For example, one syllabus listed as a goal "students will apply their understandings of the course readings to their own approaches to civic responsibilities, philanthropy, and opportunities for engagement." Another indicated a course goal was to help students "define...their own philosophies of service and their...responsibilities...as productive citizens;" a third emphasized teaching "values of active citizen-

ship." Other references were more oblique; one syllabus stated that "students will experience both the hard work involved in dl10 (e) 1iw [(couc)l10

The course settings that emphasized civic engagement the most were courses that fell under civic engagement institutional units (4 of 6), First-Year Experience Courses (3 of 3) and pre-professional, business courses (11 of 17). Civic engagement goals were less prevalent in other settings, notably in graduate degree programs (3 of 8). The emphasis on civic engagement is not surprising in institutional units organized to encourage civic engagement. The role of civic engagement in first-year experience courses suggests that some student affairs professionals view teaching students about civic engagement as a key dimension of preparing students for college life. In a similar way, the data suggest that business and management faculty use experiential philanthropy to convey that teaching students about involvement in philanthropy and civic affairs is an essential aspect of preparing students for careers in business.

Experiential Philanthropy Course Models

Course syllabi and descriptions suggest four distinct experiential philanthropy course models. The two dominant models are disciplinary specific (47) and nonprofit management education (35). Two other approaches are distinct, but less common: civic engagement (3) and first-year experience (3). Within these models, 69 courses (78%)—including all courses that fall under the nonprofit management education model—offer some skills or knowledge content about nonprofit management, including topics such as grantmaking, management, philanthropy, the nonprofit sector, and the nature and work of individual organizations. Some discipline-specific courses approach nonprofit management content in ways that apply explicitly to the discipline-specific content in those courses (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.

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As noted, the largest number of courses fell under the disciplinary-focused category (47). In these courses, the instructor organized the course to cover specific disciplinary content; philanthropy was not the primary focus of the course. Instructors used experiential philanthropy in two ways: to apply and deepen students' understanding of discipline-specific content and to reinforce ideas about civic engagement. Nearly all of the pre-professional business courses (14/17) and humanities courses (7/8), as well as most of the generic pre-professional (12/21) and social science (9/15) courses, fell into this category. Representative course names from this group include Leadership and Motivation, Special Topics in Psychology: Diversity and Health, and Legal Issues in Health Care. These titles reflected disciplinary context and content as well as that philanthropy was not the primary course focus.

Of the courses falling into the disciplinary-specific category, the syllabi in 29 (62%) included some nonproET BT 10.5 0 0 10.5 252.7245 523.1895 T,0gb 0 2gb 0 (ion,)contenn(in) -150(H) 18

their exclusive focus on civic engagement distinguishes them from the disciplinary-specific category. Two civic engagement courses included content related to managing nonprofit organizations; the third included philanthropy content. The three first-year experience courses primarily addressed acclimating students to college life. The courses introduced civic engagement as a topic but provided limited nonprofit management knowledge and skills.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

philanthropy courses may be a reasonable option for many faculty members. Second, a successful experiential philanthropy course would require clarity about specific goals of the

NOTES

- 1 In 2011, The Sunshine Lady Foundation created the Learning by Giving Foundation to continue the work in experiential philanthropy begun by the Sunshine Lady Foundation. To avoid confusion, all subsequent references will use

