

The Needs of Microentrepreneurs and Preparing Future Entrepreneurs:

The Microbusiness Retail Incubator as a Mechanism for
Community Development

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Community Culture of Entrepreneurship

- Environment to help prepare future entrepreneurs
- Assistance needed from outside the firm in microentrepreneur community for success



Research Background

Entrepreneurship
Development



Microenterprise
Development

Outcomes

- Economic Multiplier Effect
- Job Creation
- Empowerment
- Hope
- Civic Participation

Microenterprise

Def: "Enterprises with 5 employees or less and require \$35,000 or less in startup capital"

Inner city, International
Context

Key Studies:

- Bosworth, 2006 (Rural)
- Korsching & Allen, 2004 (Rural)
- Servon, 1997
- Servon & Doshna, 2000

Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurship Education

Student-Run Enterprises
(SREs)
University-Hosted Incubators

Entrepreneurship Education

Potential Entrepreneur Needs:

- Community engagement
- Learn what the business world is like
- Develop skills to start a business

Outcomes

- Experiential, Applied Learning
- Community Engagement
- Empowerment

Key Studies:

- Daly, 2001
- Lendner & Dowling, 2007
- McCrea, 2010
- Mian, 1996
- Warner & Daugherty, 2004
- Wood, 2003

Human Capital: the skills, capabilities, experience, knowledge of individuals in a community (Phillips & Pittman, 2009)

Entrepreneurs
Students
Academics
Public, private donors

Key Studies:

- Becker, 1969 (Human K)
- Desplaces, Wergeles, & McGuigan, 2009
- Pena, 2002
- Unger, Rauch, Frese, & Rosenbusch, 2011
- Woods & Gibbons, 2010



Economic Gardening Through Service-Learning

“A course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students

(a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and

(b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility”

--Bringle and Hatcher (1999)

Service-Learning

Methods: Systematic literature review & personal interviews

“The common thread of SREs is that no two are alike”

- Case analysis
- Publications limited
- First 5 years of startup

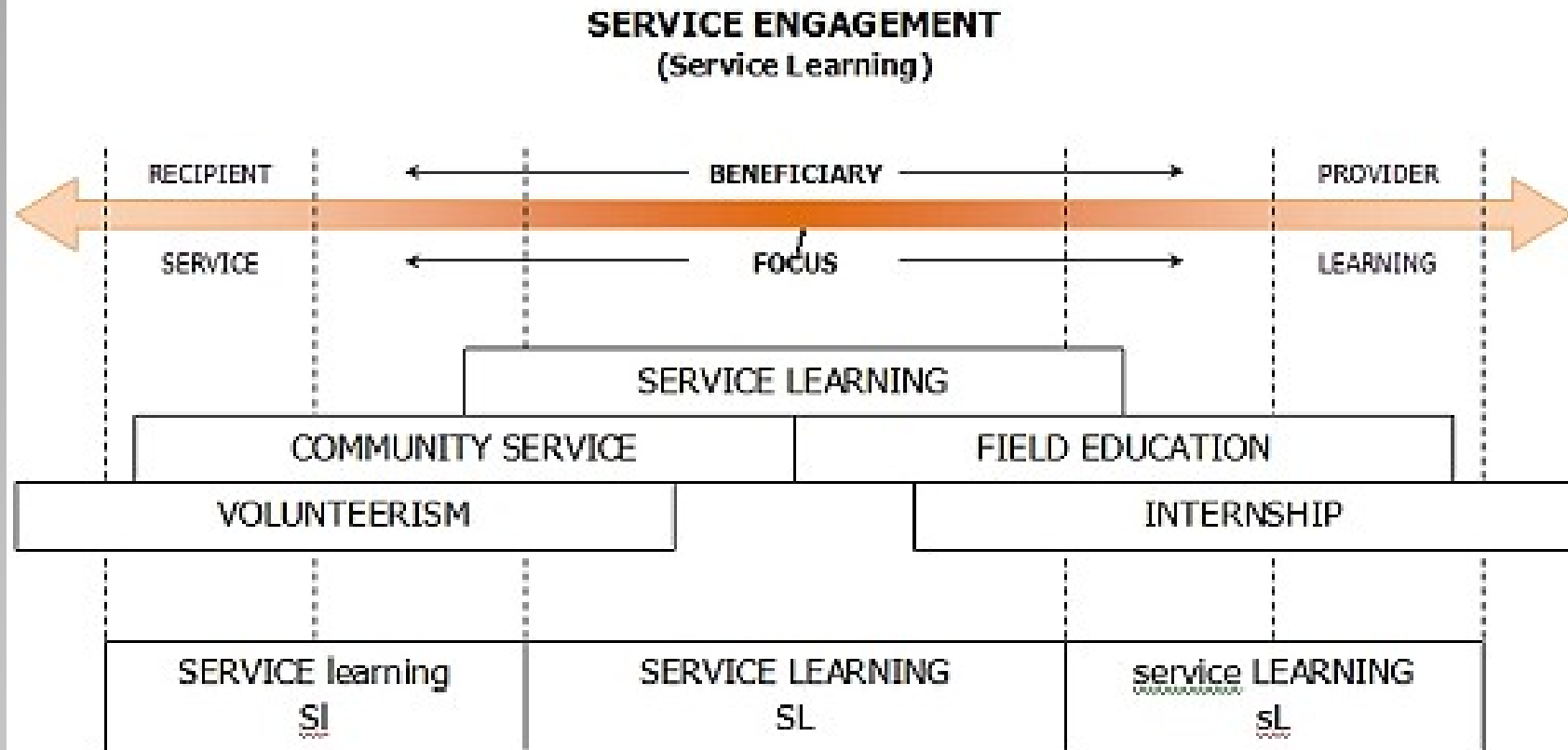
Research Purpose:

Compare SREs → Service-Learning

- Psychological ownership
- Student learning, satisfaction
- Higher quality work
- Future careers
- Service to others
- Greater community outreach
- Positive recognition to university
- Cultural awareness
- Leadership
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Pro-action
- Communications
- Critical thinking
- Community engagement

Student-Run Enterprise Outcomes from the Literature

FURCO Diagram, by Andrew Furco



Service-Learning: Balancing Learning and Service Outcomes

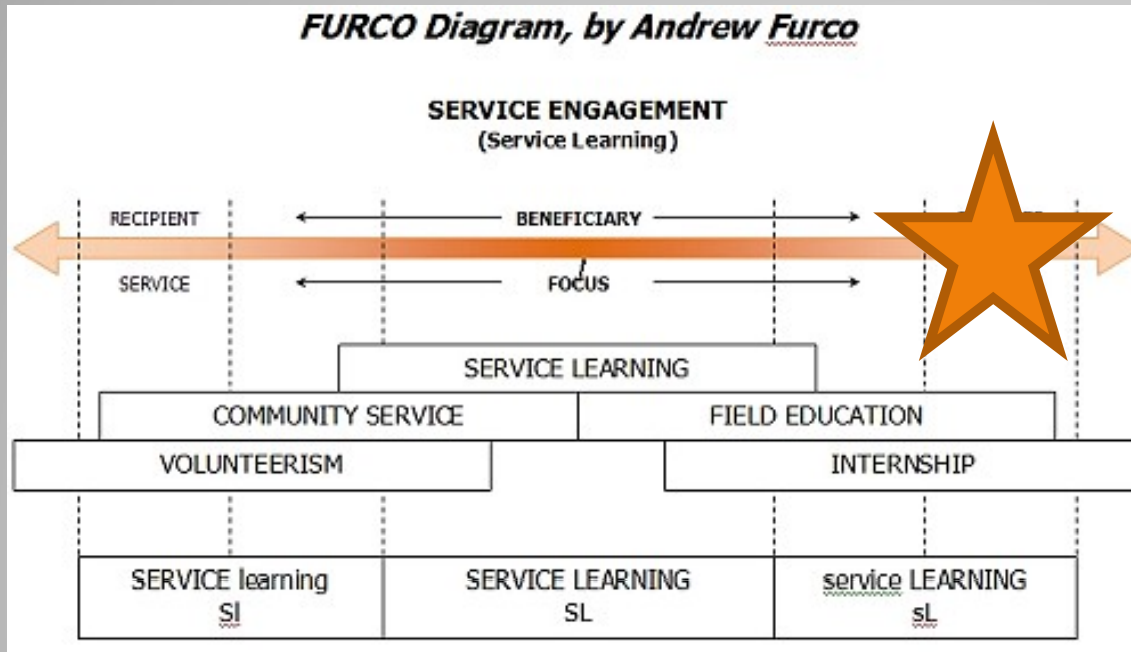
Student-Led

- Students started
- Collective agencies

Independent

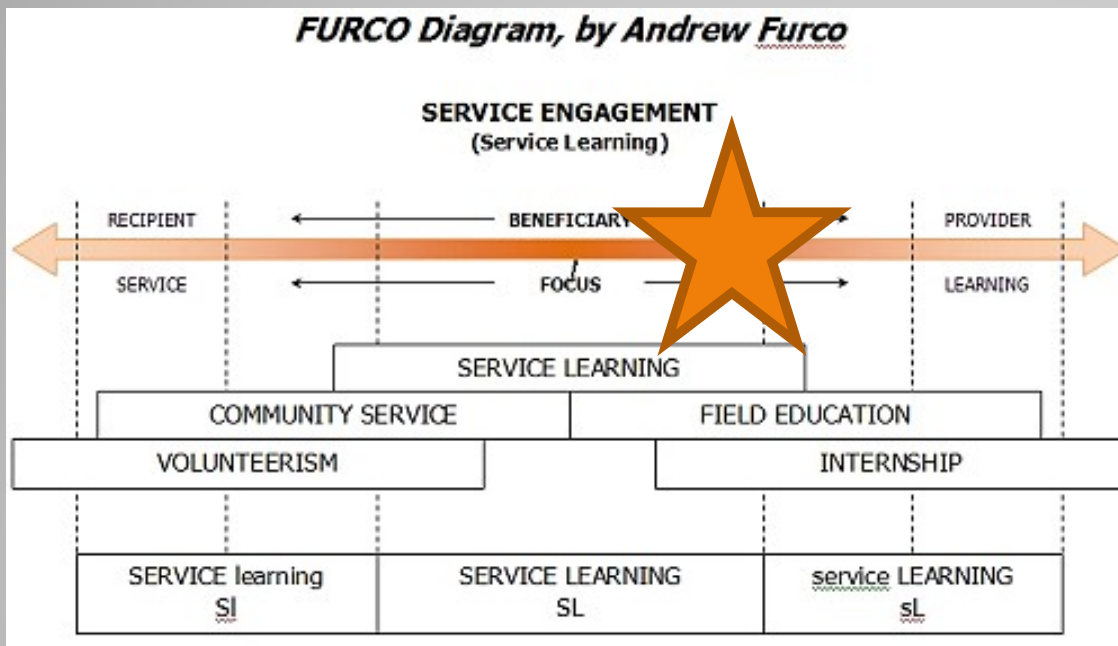
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Board of Advisors

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Dean of Students



- Little/no financial support
- Student customers
- No academic affiliation

Purpose: Earn students money/experience



Instructor-Led

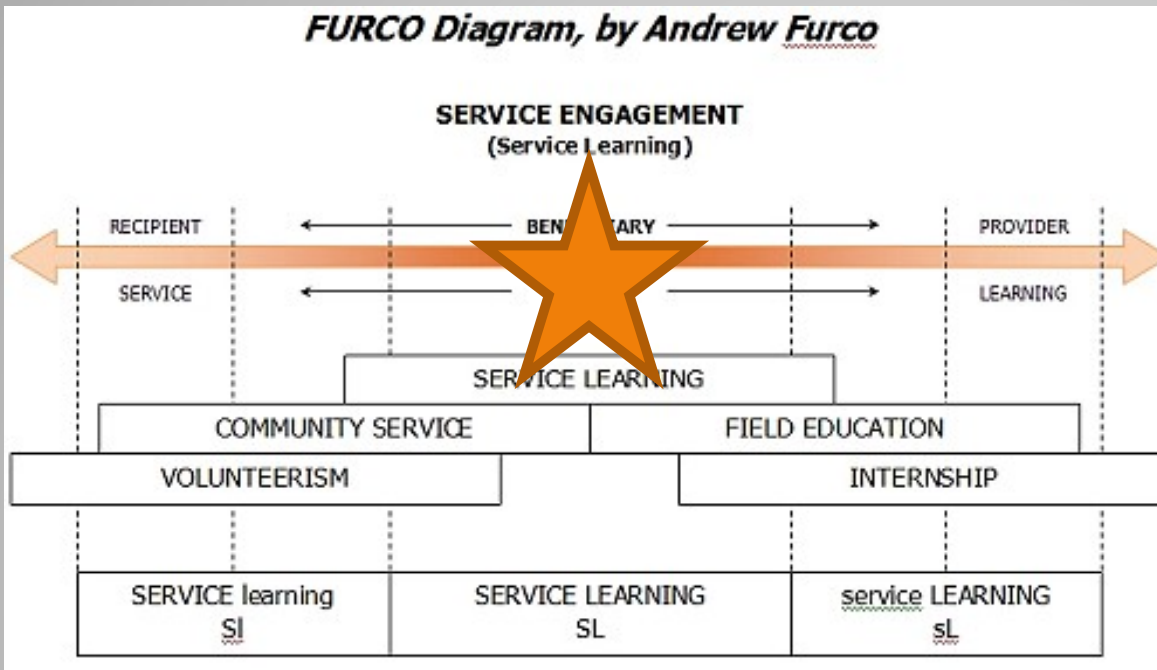
- Content analysis = Success
- Instructor runs interference
- Structures instructor-designed
 - Deliverables, learning outcomes pre-determined

Students service-deliverers

- Limited Stakes

Purpose: Apply course knowledge to real-life

FURCO Diagram, by Andrew Furco



Purpose: Reciprocal Learning

Hybrid

- Cooperative learning
- Public/private partnerships

Students consultants/
service deliverers
Autonomy

Participatory research

Instructors knowledge
resource
JIT learning

Succession planning
Continued exposure

Best Practices

- Flexibility
- Planning, planning, planning!
- Departmental buy-in
 - Dedicate staff-time
 - Grants
- Participation of other groups
- Teach delegation

Challenges

- Administrative concerns:
 - Lack of awareness
 - Resource acquisition
- Faculty concerns:
 - S-L/SREs take more time; implementation difficult
 - Role of instructor?
- Student concerns:
 - Fickle, lack initiative

SRE in the Curriculum: Best Practices

- Transdisciplinary collaboration
- Evaluation systems
- SRE Effectiveness over time
- Demographic variables + SRE participation
- SRE participation + personal/career path
- Sustainable or long-term models

Further Research

RFP; Student-written business plan; Donations

PAC established; Marketing/PR coursework

All daily operations student-run; Operational structure; More continuity in coursework

2007-2008

2009-2010

2005-2007

2008-2009

2010-2011

Manager-Dependent; Coursework piecemeal

Student-Run!
Store Manager = Graduate Student Assistantship
Assistance from staff
More responsibility in coursework

* Applied service delivery

Growing Vermont: Evolution

- Written reflection
 - Critical incident journals

- Staff feedback sessions

Area for Improvement: Initiative + Independence



Ambiguity



Student supervisor/student staff mentoring
Delegation

**Reflection: Bridging Store +
Educational Content**

Challenges

- Communication
 - Identity crisis
 - Campus awareness
 - Operational systems
- Departmental Buy-in
 - Students not concerned
 - Admin: “why do you want to run a retail store?”

Growth Opportunities

- Establish Advisory Board
- Repeated reflective experiences; coursework put to use
- Education campaign

Lessons Learned

- Students want feedback!
- “Students become so engrossed that they will willingly put up with inconvenience to complete projects successfully”
 - (Desplaces, et al., 2009)
 - Campus leaders attracted to GVT
- Flexibility is key!
 - Embrace innovation to meet student needs

Conclusions

