

agencies of their choice during the second and third weeks of classes. By the fourth week, service-learning students were beginning their volunteer experiences. Non-service-learning students signed up for the *New York Times* during the first week of classes and delivery began soon thereafter.

## Results

The service-learning and non-service-learning students were comparable on demographic variables (age, sex, race, class year, high school GPA, and SAT scores), prior experience with social service activities, social service activities during the semester (other than the required service-learning experience), and indicators of motivation in the two courses ("I had a strong desire to take this course" and "I felt motivated to learn while in this class"), although the service-learning group seemed more inclined to agree with the "strong desire" statement than did the non-service-learning students. I ruled out effects on learning outcomes of these extraneous variables.

### Motivation

Although not a difference between the groups, the issue of motivation is important in relation to these two classes. Over one-third of the respondents in each class (36% service-learning; 42% non-service-learning) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "I felt motivated to learn while in this class." Another third were neutral (36% service-learning; 30% non-service-learning). Less than a third (29% of service-learning and 28% of non-service-learning) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Their lack of motivation was evident in the classroom as I dealt with an unprecedented number of discipline problems, largely in the form of disruptive classroom behavior. These behaviors were not unusual for the Class of 1998 in which 40% ended up with GPAs of 2.0 or less at the end of their first semester.<sup>8</sup> Violations of the college's behavior code for students increased 41% in the 1994-1995 academic year from the previous one. Alcohol violations increased 65%, drug violations went up 14%, and acts of academic dishonesty increased by 47%. While I didn't confront these problems directly, I have no doubt they contributed to some of the problems I did encounter.

The students' lack of motivation and their behavior problems only became apparent to me as the semester unfolded and I saw them in the classroom. Interestingly, their behavior did not seem to carry over into their service experiences. A few students waited until the last minute to contact their agencies, but only two students failed to complete the

service requirement. Ninety-eight percent of the supervisors' evaluations showed students' performance met or exceeded expectations. Only one student received an unsatisfactory rating. More than 60% of the students completed more than the minimum number of service hours required for the course.

### Course Evaluation

With the exception of one item (amount of work), there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on their evaluations of the course itself (which contained agree-disagree statements such as, "this is an excellent course," "the instructor is an excellent teacher," "the instructor motivates me to do my best work," "grading was a fair assessment of my performance"). Students in the service-learning course were more likely to strongly agree or agree (24% service-learning; 8% non-service-learning) that "this course is more work than others," despite my attempts to equalize the workload.

### Social Responsibility and Personal Efficacy (pre- and post-test surveys)

Students in the service-learning and non-service-learning sections reacted to 15 statements (see Table 1) on a pre- and post-test survey to assess their development in the areas of social responsibility or personal efficacy. Social responsibility questions ask students to rate the importance of various beliefs and activities like, "working toward equal opportunity for all U.S. citizens," "developing a meaningful philosophy of life," "being very well off financially," "volunteering my time helping people in need." They also ask students to react to statements like, "adults should give some time for the good of their community or country," "if I could change one thing about society it would be to achieve greater social justice," "individuals should be ready to inhibit their own pleasures if these inconvenience others." Personal efficacy questions ask students to react to statements like, "having an impact on the world is within the reach of most individuals" and "I feel that I can make a difference in the world."

For most questions, I expected service-learning students to show greater improvements in scores than non-service-learning students. A few of the statements (like the importance of being well-off financially and I make quick judgments about homeless people) were worded in such a way that service-learning students were expected to show greater decreases in scores than non-service-learning students.<sup>9</sup> Service-learning students showed statistically significant differences in the expected