Disciplining Service-Learning and the Next Generation Engaged Campus

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The Engaged Campus: Certificates, Minors, and Majors as the New Community Engagement

Dan Butin & Scott Seider, Editors
New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012

Dominant conceptualizations of service-learning continue to privilege what I have earlier...called a “first wave” mentality that sees service-learning as the answer, irrespective of what the question is...What I want to suggest is that the service-learning field has not yet gone through its own “second wave” of questioning and critique. (pp. 144, 77)

Higher education works by very specific disciplinary rules about knowledge production, who has the academic legitimacy to produce such knowledge, and how such knowledge is produced... (p. 37)

It is...possible to view the disciplining and departmentalization of a field as accommodating to and/or modifying the notion of the role of an academic discipline. (pp. 109-110)

These excerpts are taken from Dan Butin’s earlier work, Service-Learning in Theory and Practice: The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education (2010), which develops his proposal for establishing academic programs focused on the study of service-learning and community engagement (SLCE) as an alternative to positioning SLCE only as an approach to teaching content in other fields of study. The first quote helps to explain why such programs are framed as “the new community engagement” in the subtitle of the edited volume under review here: They are, by design, spaces for SLCE to mature out of what Butin describes as its early, non-self-critical stance through disciplined inquiry and self-critique. The second quote provides some of his rationale for why such academic programs are necessary to the institutionalization of SLCE: Disciplines provide safe yet critical spaces for the sort of sustained inquiry that nurtures the development of a strong praxis and the growth of an intellectual (not only a social) movement. The third quote highlights a key question at the very heart of institutionalization efforts and discourse: Can SLCE become institutionalized in such a way that it retains its critical potential and is transformative of the academy rather than by accommodating itself to and thereby further enshrining the normative culture?

Taken together, these quotes point to a keystone on which readers’ reactions to the argument will build. That community-campus engagement is at a point of becoming—or needing to become—something new, of being conceptualized and enacted in ways that differ from how it has been, is almost commonplace (e.g., National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012; Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009). At issue is whether the future of this work unfolds through what Cuban (1988) distinguishes as first order or second order change. First order change involves incremental, accommodative adjustments within current, largely technocratic, systems, while second order change proceeds through a more radical and revolutionary paradigm shift that challenges and destabilizes underlying systems because it emerges from and nurtures alternative, more democratic epistemologies and identities (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). A central question for us is whether establishing academic departments in SLCE constitutes first order or second order change and, depending on the answer, what the implications are for the emergence of the next generation engaged campus.

Although with differing roles—established scholar, doctoral student, and center director—we three self-define as “next generation engagement (NGE) practitioner-scholars” and are part of a growing movement focused on making space for and inquiring into the identities and practices of engaged students, professionals, scholars, and community mem-
bers who bring non-traditional epistemologies, values, and practices of co-creation of knowledge and transformation to community-campus engagement (Eatman, 2012; New England Resource Center for Higher Education [NERCHE], n.d.; Saltmarsh, Zlotkowski, & Horowitz, 2010). It is through this lens that we review Butin and Seider’s edited volume, reflect on what it contributes to our and our colleagues’ thinking and practice, and pose questions for further exploration.

**Disciplining Service-Learning**

In *Service-Learning in Theory and Practice* (2010) Butin suggests that “service-learning can be sustained as a legitimate and critical undertaking in higher education only by becoming ‘disciplined’ within the framework of an academic program…” (p. 69). *The Engaged Campus: Certificates, Minors, and Majors as the New Community Engagement* functions as something of a supplement to that earlier work, compiling examples of the types of academic programs for which he is calling. Given this book’s case study-based focus on some of the practical aspects of designing and implementing certificates, minors, and majors in SLCE, it is perhaps not surprising that little space is devoted to explaining the rationale for such programs. Nevertheless, readers may find, as we did, that Butin’s short introduction to the volume offers insufficient background to provide a clear or compelling rationale. We found it necessary to turn to some of his earlier work (see Butin, n.d., Research) to gain a better understanding of why “disciplining service-learning”—in the dual sense of being more disciplined in our approach to it and by establishing a discipline to investigate and teach it—might be an important path forward in our work.

Butin is an advocate for community-campus engagement who challenges our field to provide stronger theoretical grounding and critically examine our promises to transform higher education. He believes community-campus engagement has been stalled by an “engagement ceiling” and that it is threatened by lack of conceptual and definitional clarity, shallow institutionalization, political and economic pressures on higher education, lack of critique, and burnout. At the heart of his concern is dissatisfaction with the conceptualization of SLCE as a social movement; he questions whether it has the legitimacy and strength to transform higher education or whether we are merely reproducing yet another ineffective, peripheral, and unsustainable reform. He suggests that we reframe SLCE as an intellectual movement instead. Not only does such “disciplining” fit within the higher education organizational structure of academic departments and units, thus providing more legitimacy within the academy, but it also offers “a legitimate and long-standing academic space from which to foster a meaningful praxis of theory and practice” (Butin, 2010, p. 69). As members of a discipline, SLCE scholars and practitioners will be freed from the constraints of having to be “everything to everyone” in order to find acceptance and will instead be able to critically examine their own and others’ work. He points to examples such as Women’s Studies and Black Studies as analogies for establishing academic homes while also advocating for change within and beyond the academy. It is important to note that Butin does not position SLCE as a discipline unto itself as an either/or alternative to its current framing as institutional reform strategy and cross-disciplinary pedagogy; rather, he suggests that we adopt a both/and strategy in our efforts to institutionalize it (Butin, 2010).

**Profiles of Disciplining SLCE**

The current edited volume continues the conversation Butin has been leading by profiling programs offered as examples of this disciplining of SLCE through certificates, minors, and majors. Overall, the volume is clearly organized, with two framing pieces (Foreword and Introduction), eight examples (Part I), and three national-perspective responses (Part II); however, there are numerous misspellings as well as missing words and phrases, and in places additional citations to support claims would have strengthened the text. Elizabeth Minnich opens the volume with a Foreword prompting readers to consider the next phase of transformative work in the academy by thinking broadly about its role in advancing the democratic purposes of higher education. In his Introduction Butin frames the volume as a “chance to seed a second wave of scholarship and activism for the long-term sustenance of civic and community engagement in higher education” (p. 1). The authors in Part I offer candid looks at the challenges associated with their own programmatic and curricular development, which is useful even though, on average, their experiences are not especially encouraging. The final three chapters reflect critically on the cases and connect them with broad questions concerning the meaning and purpose of SLCE programs; their inclusion strengthens the volume by revealing the editors’ willingness to expose tensions within the book and between it and the field more generally and to problematize as well the very notion of disciplining SLCE. The volume would perhaps be helpful to a reader charged with creating a certificate, minor, or major in SLCE as there are numerous examples of approaches taken and, especially, lessons learned; in some ways serving as cautionary tales, several of the chapters might encourage a reader in this position to proceed slowly and seriously consider the implica-
tiques of community-engaged initiatives. Giles points to the academy’s growing “involvement with the corporate and community sectors” (p. 65) to challenge the conception of institutions of higher education as spaces removed from the influence of outside forces. With the increasing number of faculty, students, and staff traversing those boundaries, it is necessary, she argues, to determine how to be a community insider to the partnerships and projects we co-construct in community-engaged research and teaching while simultaneously maintaining practices that reflect the core values of higher education (e.g., critical thinking, seeking multiple perspectives). Giles poses critical questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of faculty and institutional leaders as the potential for conflicting expectations from grassroots, business, and government community partners grows.

Arthur Keene and John Reiff profile the interdisciplinary minor (certificate in public service and civic engagement) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in Chapter 4. Their particular focus within this broader volume is negotiating the Faculty Senate approval process for a new minor, and through that process unearthing some of the political and neoliberal assumptions within the university that may resist this move toward institutionalization. For readers looking for a text that may help them anticipate and navigate the political landscape of seeking university approval for their certificate, minor, or major, Keene and Reiff provide a section on lessons learned and an appendix: a mapping tool they devised as a result of hindsight on the process. The authors describe the academic objections to their proposal and the thinking that went into determining how to negotiate these objections. They also briefly explore the unarticulated—but nevertheless present—epistemologically-grounded subtexts of the academic objections, which they believe are related to the growing influence of neoliberal ideology within higher education.

In Chapter 5 Keith Morton describes Providence College’s Public and Community Service Studies (PSP) major and minor, established within the Feinstein Institute for Public Service (FIPS). The main focus of the chapter is the evolution of the PSP curriculum and the deliberately reflective process in which FIPS continuously engages. Morton’s honest reflections and critiques enable him to look back on changes within the major and explain how they are outgrowths of more nuanced thinking; different skills of the faculty, community partners, and students; or shifting emphasis on particular elements of the process or content of the curriculum. More so than any other chapter, there is significant inclusion of student and community partner voices as well as descriptions of how community partners are active co-educators within the curriculum. Also useful is...
Morton’s explanation of the philosophical and organizational thinking and structures that are transforming the PSP major to, arguably, something beyond a discipline. This idea of a new system—a learning organization that transcends thinking of community and campus as separate but overlapping systems—invites us to imagine what a genuinely engaged campus might be. Regardless of one’s level of interest in instituting an SLCE certificate, minor, or major, this chapter encourages deep understanding of what it means for relationships and community building to be at the heart of SLCE.

Chapter 6 offers “cautionary tales about navigating institutional change and the inescapable politics of community work” (p. 123) as Mary Beth Pudup details the rise and fall of the interdisciplinary Community Studies program at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She identifies numerous interdisciplinary blocks that emerged for the program: increasing tuition costs; standardization of the university and its degrees; growing emphases on faculty research, publications, and grants; and suspicions about the legitimacy of the curriculum and pedagogical approaches. Pudup explicitly examines the neoliberal shifts at the university and explores how those broad changes in ideology and discourse significantly contributed to the demise of the Community Studies program. Pudup also turns a critical eye toward Community Studies to identify some of the strategies and changes the program could have implemented in order to adapt to the changing institutional landscape. While this is not an encouraging representation of the potential of disciplining community engagement, the chapter’s value lies in clearly naming the neoliberal agendas in higher education and inviting readers to consider how their current or future plans for institutionalizing community engagement may serve these agendas.

Co-authored by Scott Seider (co-editor of the volume) and Sarah Novick, Chapter 7 provides a concise, accessible overview of many of the issues to be taken into account in the process of program evaluation, effectively using as an example Boston College’s PULSE Program. Focused on educating about social injustice and developing students’ critical consciousness, PULSE is a year-long program of academic courses in philosophy and theology and 10–12 hours of service per week. Walking the reader through their own efforts to robustly evaluate PULSE, the authors share what they call a “toolkit,” a simple and clear set of questions central to any evaluation or assessment activity—questions focused, for example, on the purpose of the program and the conceptualization of the outcomes it targets. They also include a summary of several approaches to outcomes assessment, such as pre- and post-surveys and participant observation. Emphasizing the importance of contextualizing to the particulars of any given course and community, the chapter will be helpful—including as a stand-alone piece—both within and well beyond the arena of SLCE certificates, minors, and majors.

In Chapter 8, the artful storyteller Tal Stanley takes readers on a descriptive journey through the region of Southwest Virginia that Emory & Henry College calls home; it is essential to his grounding in community engagement that “a deep attentiveness to this place [can] teach about educational practice and the art and craft of citizenship” (p. 161). He provides details of what the Public Policy and Community Service department and the Appalachian Center, along with local and regional partners, have come to learn as a result of a shared commitment to investing in Place, as both a theoretical concept and a literal geographic location. Stanley challenges traditional models and practices of SLCE: He emphasizes the importance of context—socio-cultural, political, economic, geographic, and historical—as fundamental to advancing epistemological transformation. At Emory & Henry, “to build in place requires that the history, stories, experiences, and social processes imbued across this landscape, beginning with the very foundations of the earth and continuing into tomorrow, shape every aspect of this pedagogy” (p. 161). Stanley’s chapter makes a valuable contribution within and well beyond this volume because it emphasizes the importance of relationships with neighbors, towns, main streets, the land, and the forgotten or dismissed locations that no longer serve the market economy and because it brings attention to the discomfort, contradictions, and risks as well as the joys of being committed to this way of educational being, all of which contribute to the transformational potential of SLCE.

Part II: Reflecting on the Future of Community Engagement

Part II is composed of three short essays that are framed by the editors as perspectives from “critical friends” on the nature and development of academic programs such as those discussed in the eight cases that comprise Part I. In Chapter 9 Peter Levine ponders how these programs—which he characterizes as focused on the local, the personal, and the particular and emphasizing citizen action and a bottom-up, grassroots orientation to social change—can possibly live up to the “monumental challenge” of improving the world. With a tone that seems to suggest reaching for a resolution of his concern that is favorable to these programs, he offers as a possibility that they may function as modern day equivalents of Jane Addams’ Hull House—a concrete, on-the-ground space for citizen inquiry and problem-solving that was essentially scaled-up as it became the model for
federal programs and policies under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. If a truly political movement(s) can emerge from these small-scale, community-based learning endeavors, then “perhaps,” he concludes, “the cases described here will one day serve as early chapters in the history of [a] democratic revival” (p. 175).

Chapter 10, co-authored by Ariane Hoy and Robert Hackett of the Bonner Foundation and Mathew Johnson from Siena College, offers an alternative approach of structuring developmental pathways in civic engagement that are as much co-curricular as curricular. This chapter strongly suggests that the future of the engaged campus lies not in seeking legitimacy by building academic programs in SLCE but rather in problematizing such associated underlying assumptions of the academy as privileging the curricular, cast in dichotomy with the co-curricular; and it interprets Butin’s term “disciplining” as holding the academy accountable for community impact. The authors use Bonner programs to sketch an integrative conceptualization of students’ “developmental journey” with SLCE that they argue is—in contrast with certificates, minors, and majors—better aligned with students’ developmental processes, more apt to retain students across multiple years, more effective in reaching greater numbers of students, more conducive to sustained dialogue across difference and meaningful interactions with mentors, and more nurturing of multi-faceted partnerships and networks that incorporate a wider range of engagement activities and are capable of greater community impact. “The challenge,” the authors conclude, is not to create a discipline in which a few or some students major; rather, we believe we must take what we know about creating institutions that fully integrate the values and structures for civic and community engagement to scale, across the curriculum and institution. (p. 185)

In Chapter 11 Elizabeth Hollander traces the evolution of the civic engagement movement in higher education from the perspective of Campus Compact, which she formerly led. She suggests that the emphasis on change at the local level, characteristic of these example programs and SLCE more generally, is not surprising given, as one of several historical explanations, SLCE’s roots in co-curricular community service. Examining the eight academic programs for evidence (or not) of a theoretical base, Hollander poses pointed questions about what is and is not being taught in these programs. She is left wondering whether “it might be helpful to pursue a greater balance between local citizen- and nonprofit-based efforts and governmental systems at all levels” (p. 193) when it comes to determining the knowledge and skills these programs seek to cultivate and the theorists and literature to whom students are exposed.

Lingering Questions

As this summary of the chapters confirms, The Engaged Campus touches on and provides examples of key issues we need to pay attention to when thinking about and designing certificates, minors, and majors in SLCE—issues such as assessment, funding, and the role of place and theory. These issues are by no means unique to such academic programs (and, in fact, are less explicitly developed in that specific context here than we anticipated), but there is no doubt that they need to be better attended to in this, as in other, conversations related to SLCE.

Our review leads us to wish that the book had concluded with a reflective synthesis written by the editors, engaging with the possibilities and concerns raised by the authors in Parts I and II and thereby helping the reader better integrate and make meaning of the points of alignment and tension between Butin’s vision for certificates, minors, and majors and the programs and reflections included here. As one example, looking at Chapters 9 and 11 together, it is difficult to miss the irony of concerns regarding the overall lack of strong grounding in theory in the certificates, minors, and majors that are offered here as examples of the sort of programs Butin has been calling for, at least partly on the grounds that they can serve as spaces for enhanced attention to and development of the theoretical underpinnings of community-campus engagement. As another, Butin has suggested elsewhere (2010) that “service-learning programs that are not structured in minors or majors…have minimal means by which to shape the academic and social narratives of what constitutes service-learning and community engagement” (p. 103); read in light of Chapter 10, this statement begs the question of what—different, not necessarily less significant—means are possible for other approaches to developmental design of SLCE and how the editors might envision the relationships among this full range of approaches. Finally, Part II’s problematizing of the local focus of the examples in Part I as revealing a less political orientation than is needed in our democracy leads us to wonder whether the editors believe that such a focus is more likely when an academic program’s approach is used to institutionalize service-learning or whether it is simply a product of the selection of case studies in this volume. The collection of cases and essays seems to provide further evidence of tensions within the SLCE community regarding how we understand what we are ultimately after and how we go about it, and a final chapter by the editors could have synthesized and exam-
ined those tension points in the context of advancing “the new community engagement.”

Our reading suggests several lingering issues that we would like to see addressed as this conversation continues:

- Consideration of other types of structures, including those that span multiple departments (e.g., Writing Across the Curriculum), as potential models for institutionalizing SLCE—models that may lessen the risk that “disciplining” compartmentalizes and, therefore, marginalizes, SLCE (making it easy for us to distance ourselves from work being undertaken “over there” and to de-fund work seen as peripheral to rather than in the service of other priorities).

- Exploration of where faculty leading and staffing these academic programs come from, how their capacity to design and implement strong programs is built, and how moving from their initial disciplinary home affects their professional success.

- Connections between these discussions about disciplining SLCE and emerging thinking and practice related to community-engaged graduate education—which is gaining momentum as graduate students increasingly seek out institutions that challenge the traditional expert model of the university and support co-creation of knowledge through transdisciplinary and community-engaged partnerships.

- Examination of the differences between SLCE certificates and minors (inherently supplemental to a primary academic focus), on the one hand, and majors on the other in terms of their ability to function as spaces for “disciplined” work on SLCE.

- Evaluation of the ways in which SLCE practitioner-scholars are (and are not) developing our own theoretical foundations both within and beyond the structures of academic homes focused on SLCE; in other words, to what extent is the field functioning (or capable of functioning) as an intellectual movement without academic programs and under what conditions (e.g., at what types of institutions, for what modes of inquiry) do such spaces add value?

Next Generation Engagement

Butin and Seider position *The Engaged Campus* as exploring and advancing “the new community engagement,” the field’s “second wave,” the “next generation” of the engaged campus. One of the functions of academic programs in SLCE is to provide space to “train a new generation of students, faculty, and administrators into deep, sustained, and impactful community engagement practices, policies, and philosophies. This…is what truly constitutes the engaged campus” (p. 3). Just as we are, the editors are thinking about the next generation of SLCE in terms of increasing depth and impact; but they seem to see this next generation as needing to be trained via a discipline, while it seems to us that this next generation is already here and is bringing with it perspectives, expectations, skills, and experiences that are pushing the academy into a new paradigm. As self-identified next generation engagement (NGE) practitioner-scholars who are members of a national learning community focused on NGE convened by the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE), Imagining America (IA), and the American Democracy Project (ADP), we ask: If our NGE colleagues were to produce a book on “the new community engagement” and the associated “engaged campus,” in what ways would it be similar to and different from, this edited volume? Or, given how NGE practitioner-scholars understand ourselves, our work, and the academic and community contexts within which we work, what does our vision of the NGE engaged campus consist of, specifically related to this discussion of institutionalizing and deepening SLCE through “disciplining” it?

That “a new citizenry is emerging within the academy” (Eatman, 2012, p. 44) is well established (e.g., Alperovitz, Dubb, & Howard 2008; Beckman, Brandenberger, & Shappell, 2009; Hale, 2008; O’Meara, 2002; O’Meara & Rice, 2005; Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The “Next Generation Engagement Project” is focused on understanding the paradigmatic shifts in perspective, practice, and identity embodied and enacted by increasingly diverse undergraduate and graduate students, early career faculty, and professionals within higher education and community organizations. Those of us who identify as NGE bring to our work an experience base, an epistemology, and a set of commitments that differentiate us from our more traditionally-minded colleagues who tend to accept and define themselves in terms of the dominant (hierarchical, technocratic, positivist, expert-oriented) paradigm of the academy and of our society more generally.

NGE practitioner-scholars shape their careers with attention to social issues and community connections and seek academic homes that nurture their counter-normative identities. Within the context of this review, can and should academic departments with majors in SLCE provide such an environment? Perhaps some of the authors who contributed chapters to the edited volume self-identify as NGE. We
would like to know the extent to which the cases assembled in *The Engaged Campus* are attracting—or have the potential to attract—NGE faculty. And, what will be the consequences of these programs for NGE practitioner-scholars whose work is grounded in a more traditional discipline (e.g., engineering, business, biology): Will the other disciplines look to such a department as a model and move in the same direction so as to better attract and retain NGE faculty, or will they further distance themselves from this work because “that happens over there”? Sturm, Eatman, Saltmarsh, and Bush (2011) suggest that what is both needed and beginning to happen as a result of “major dissatisfaction with present arrangements” is modification of the assumptions that underlie the normative structures of higher education and of the “institutional architecture that dominates campus organizational culture” (e.g., academic silos maintained via departments) (p. 9). From this perspective, disciplining SLCE seems to be a first-order change strategy (which leaves core systems and structures intact) whose promise of transformation may not align closely with the paradigmatic shifts and counternormative identities and commitments that characterize NGE practitioner-scholars.

Our perspective as NGE practitioner-scholars raises two issues in particular as we read *The Engaged Campus*’ framing of the future of community engagement: (a) the role of community members and students in discussing and implementing institutionalization of SLCE and (b) the implications of the pervasiveness of neoliberalism in the discourse for SLCE that seeks to be authentic and transformative.

In his introduction, Butin likens the move toward certificates, minors, and majors as a strategy for institutionalizing community engagement to the development of Women’s and Black Studies. However, part of the purpose of disciplining Women’s and Black Studies was to strategically move the voices of marginalized, invisible, intentionally oppressed persons into the academy, “whose purview is supposed to be the preservation, transmission, and enrichment of *humankind’s* knowledge” (Minnich, 2005, p. 74). If we follow Butin’s analogy, then disciplining SLCE should also share a similar purpose: at the very least to challenge our assumptions of whose voices are valid within the world of knowledge production. In a volume providing case studies and practical advice to persons invested in this move toward disciplining SLCE, then, it seems reasonable to expect such a purpose to be reflected in both the very construction of the volume (e.g., the choice of authors) and the ideas, examples, and recommendations made via the chapters. It is with disappointment that we found a dearth of community members and students as authors in the volume or as identified partners in the process of disciplining SLCE. In fact, Morton’s chapter is the only one that quotes students and describes how community members have been involved as co-educators. No chapters are co-authored by community partners, and there is only one student co-author (doctoral candidate Sarah Novick, Chapter 7). Can the next wave of community engagement proceed with integrity without explicitly seeking multiple perspectives, especially as brought forward through the voices of community members and students? To advance this discussion of the future of SLCE without deep commitment to and partnership with both students and community members risks perpetuating the privileging of narrowly-constrained, academically-credentialled expertise that is normative in higher education.

While disciplining may be one strategy to institutionalize SLCE, it is perhaps also important to first focus attention on understanding neoliberalism’s threat to our practice and scholarship. Neoliberal logics—valuing efficiency, privatization, competition, and marketization more so than social welfare, public good, and collective action—are referenced in several of the chapters in this volume, but their pervasiveness in our work with communities is not fully explored. In higher education, neoliberal policies have raised tuition, inspired consumer-funding models, promoted market-driven curricular design, focused on efficiency through over-reliance on contingent and adjunct labor, and prioritized revenue-generating programs. These chapters suggest that neoliberal policies, logics, and ideologies also have a significant impact on practice, research, and strategies for institutionalization as colleges and universities face budget cuts and are pressured to attract external resources. As a result, we operate in a scarcity model whereby departments compete with each other to recruit students, and funding decisions—and therefore curricula, research, and departmental sustainability—are determined by market demands. If we were to switch our model to one of non-competitiveness and abundance (e.g., McKnight & Block, 2010), would Butin and Seider still advocate the disciplining of SLCE?

**Calling for Second Order Change**

Generally, we find ourselves in agreement with the concerns and opportunities that motivate discussion of the need to significantly deepen understanding and improve implementation of SLCE. But the examples and discussion in this volume leave us unconvinced as to the merits of certificates, minors, and majors as the proposed solution and wondering about the meaning of the transformation this approach is purported to enable.

Butin has elsewhere given voice to the concern that
SLCE “seems verged on accepting a highly problematic Faustian bargain of gaining institutional legitimacy by giving up its transformational opportunities” (2005, p. 101) and risks “buy[ing] into a paradigm not of its own making” (2010, p. 40). He was referring to un-critical compliance with pressures to quantify our work and its outcomes. But from our perspective as NGE practitioner-scholars the concern seems equally applicable to the dynamic of force fitting into the traditional framework of a disciplinary academic specialization an inherently interdisciplinary and co-constructed approach to teaching and learning, to social change, and to institutional and cultural transformation. It follows that we need to be very careful about whether and how we pursue this agenda of developing academic programs in SLCE: Can it be done in such a way as to achieve the much-needed heightened impact and deepened understanding of our work without further enshrining the dominant, technocratic paradigm out of which SLCE is in many ways leading the academy? Perhaps the most important questions this volume highlights are not, in fact, about legitimating and institutionalizing our work. If, as we believe, one of the primary matters at stake in the emergence and growth of the next generation engaged campus is transforming the underlying technocratic paradigm that impedes the flourishing of truly democratic engagement, then the more pressing questions we need to be asking concern how to actively facilitate and sustain second order change.

References


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