

Initiating Global Service Learning Movement: Best Practices from Petra Christian University

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Background

Petra Christian University (PCU) is a private Christian university established in September 22nd, 1961. Tracing back its history when there was a significant necessity in providing higher education opportunity and service in Surabaya, especially for Christian and Chinese-Indonesian people; PCU was initiated to fulfill the needs. As a population of academic community, up to present the majority of PCU student body are Chinese-Indonesian descendants with middle level-economic family background.

Through its vision “*To be a Caring and Global University with Commitment to the Christian Values*”, PCU enhances its concern and commitment in applying the “whole person education” or “holistic education” to equip the students with at least five excellences (academic excellence, emotional excellence, moral excellence, spiritual excellence and cultural excellence). Hence, the mind, heart, spirit and cultural engagement are blended nicely within their learning process in the university to prepare their roles successfully in the global era as global citizens. PCU, then, learns that Service-Learning (S-L) program is one of the most effective and powerful concepts as well as learning method in order to achieve the holistic education objective. In the program, students as participants gain some experience not only to mingle amongst the rural communities, but also to purposely support the society’s life by sharing their expertise, involving their emotion in building relationships and communication, and earning personal reflection and commitment to continue the caring spirit toward others.

Supporting Units and Policies

The Service Learning (S-L) program in PCU is designed structurally and practically among all departments. Currently, this Program is established under the integrated cooperation of two academic entities:

- *Center of Community Service*, this center is the Project Organizer who conducts the field survey, builds relationship with the targeted communities to elaborate their needs and correlate the needs in the field with the blueprint of SL program;
- *Faculty and Department*, this entity supports the SL program by reviewing the academic curriculum and courses’ contents which are in-line with the SL concept.

In the future, it is necessary to establish one more supporting unit, called *Excellent Learning and Teaching Center*, as the “think-tank” that designs the learning and teaching methods on how to effectively implement S-L concept in pedagogical perspective.

In general, there are two types of S-L Program based on the fields of study. First, *mono-discipline* S-L program is an S-L program which particularly related to a certain course of department. In this S-L course, students learn how to serve community using the skill/competency obtained from aspecific course. Each study program or department is required to provide at least one course which applies the S-L concept. Currently, there are 45 mandatory courses provided in all departments of PCU. Table 1 shows some examples of course provided by some departments that related to the mono-discipline S-L program.

Departments	Service Learning Courses
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture for Children • Inclusive Design
Visual Communication Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging Design • Destination Branding
Hotel Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to F & B Service • Introduction to Pastry Bakery
Interior Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior Design 2 • Creative-preneurship
Electrical Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System Energy Management
Communication Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal Communication

Table 1. S-L courses provided by some departments at PCU

Second, *multi-discipline* S-L program is an S-L program organized by faculty or university. As the S-L programs provided by faculty or university, the participants of the program are the inter-discipline students who come from various departments. Multi-discipline participants are a potential demography to conduct the inter-discipline S-L program as they will apply various expertise to support the needs in the field in larger aspects (not only infrastructure or physical support, but also community soft-skills enrichment in education, basic/personal hygiene, small economic enterprises and other practical skills).

Nevertheless, students and lectures are often reluctant to participate in S-L class due to the big efforts and extra loads for running the S-L class. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage the lecturers for utilizing S-L method in their class and to appreciate those lecturers who are willing to be the coordinator of an S-L class. Similarly, an encouraging policy or regulation is necessary to motivate students to take at least one S-L class as a requirement of graduation.

Successful Stories of Mono-discipline S-L

In relation to *Packaging Design* S-L class, students of *Visual Communication Design* helped Micro-Small Enterprises in designing the packaging of their products to increase sales. Figure 1 shows students and villagers who were engaged in discussion on how to design packaging for products manufactured by the villagers in Kediri Regency.



Figure 1. Discussion between students and villagers in Kediri Regency

One of the most outstanding results was a design of honey product by the students of Packaging Design class (batch of 2009) as seen in Figure 2. Along with remarkable sales increase of the product, the design was awarded **the 1st winner Pack 2i Academy Design Award for Herbal Category** in 2009, and **Packaging Excellence Asia Star 2009** for student's category.



Figure2. Design of honey product packaging

Before starting to serve the community through S-L class, students are required to prepare not only their skills/knowledge, but also their heart (feeling), so they could serve the community eagerly. For instance, the S-L class of *“Architecture for Children”* as seen in Figure 3 prior to their project to design some facilities of a Junior High School for blind children. The Architecture students were given the experience of being blind people to improve their empathy and appreciation in order to understand the significance of their design in helping the blind children.



Figure 3. Given the experience as blind people

Another example is shown in Figure 4. In order to support the program of Surabaya city in rehabilitating ex-prostitution area – known as “Dolly”- to be a green and healthy residential area, the students of Civil Engineering Department did a project of the healthy coloring village within clean and health characteristic in urban village through S-L class “*Environment Science*”.



Figure 4. Rehabilitating ex-prostitution area in Surabaya

Successful Stories of Multi-discipline S-L

Besides the mono-discipline service learning program integrated into particular courses of each department, PCU also organized an international multi-discipline S-L Program known as *Community Outreach Program (COP)*. Accordingly, COP might be considered as an embodiment of PCU vision: “*To be a Caring and Global University with Commitment to Christian Values*”. Historically, COP is a pilot project of international multi-discipline S-L program commenced in 1996 under the partnership with Dongseo University, Busan, South Korea. During 4 weeks of COP with a tag line “*Making the world a better place*”, students from different countries, cultures and backgrounds live and work together with villagers to cultivate a fertile learning experience in serving and empowering the

community. At least, there are four essential points that students can beneficially learn from their participation in COP:

- Multi-cultural understanding and wisdom
- Inter-religious dialog and understanding
- Inter-disciplinary approach and team work
- Peace building issues

In celebrating the 20th anniversary of COP in 2016, COP has noted in total a remarkable participation of 2,684 students coming from 21 universities and 12 different countries. Amongst them are 1,594 international students and 1090 PCU's students. List of partner universities of COP is given in Table 2.

No.	University	Country	Year of Participation
1	Petra Christian University	Indonesia	1996
2	Dongseo University	Korea	1996
3	InHolland University	The Netherlands	1999
4	Hong Kong Baptist University	Hong Kong	2002
5	International Christian University	Japan	2004
6	St. Andrew University	Japan	2005
7	Chung Chi College (Chinese University of Hong Kong)	Hong Kong	2006
8	Polytechnic University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	2006
9	Soochow University	Taiwan	2007
10	Lady Doak University	India	2009
11	Guang Xi Normal University	China	2013
12	Guang Xi University in Science and Technology	China	2013
13	Lingnan University	Hong Kong	2013
14	Widya Mandira University	Indonesia	2013
15	Fu Jen Catholic University	Taiwan	2014
16	University of Newcastle	Australia	2014
17	Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Hong Kong	2015
18	Hong Kong Institute of Education	Hong Kong	2015
19	Dallas Baptist University	USA	2015
20	Coventry University	United Kingdom	2016
21	Singapore University of Social Science	Singapore	2016

Table 2. Lists of COPPartners

As the results, there are three primary outputs of COP. First, students gain *personal enrichments* in terms of hard skills and soft skills. Students have the opportunity to directly implement their knowledge and hard skills to understand the community needs and to overcome the challenges. They also have experienced personal character development by learning to understand and work together as a team with participants from diverse cultural backgrounds. Second, the relevant needs of the villagers on *physical development*, such as infrastructure support, school rehabilitation, water piping and filtering, are substantially fulfilled. Lastly, the quality of life of the community is enhanced through *community empowerment* on health care and children education.

Summary and Future Challenges

As a summary, S-L program may be started as a domestic S-L that means domestic students serve their local community. However, the cultural challenge of domestic S-L lies in the gap of life style and level of education between students and villagers. Thus, to improve cultural understanding in global perspective, domestic S-L may be extended to international S-L by inviting international students, as a team who lives and works together in serving local community. In the perspective of PCU students, COP is a good example of the growing initiative of global S-L movement in serving local communities.

As a future challenge, PCU would like to propose COP as the best practice of an international multi-discipline S-L program to be imitated and organized by international partner institutions in serving their respective communities. COP is one of the inspiring momentum which necessarily needs to be followed up with larger international partnerships to initiate the global movement. It will provide opportunity for PCU students to have international experience in collaborating and serving international community. Therefore, there are milestones to initiate the global movement as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Steps of S-L to initiate global movement