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ID 1735 | PEDAGOGY BUILT ON WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

Ayse Yonder¹; Mercedes Narciso¹; Juan Camilo Osorio¹

¹Pratt Institute, School of Architecture, GCPE

ayonder@pratt.edu ; mnarciso@pratt.edu ; jcosorio@pratt.edu

1 INTRODUCTION

Preparing students for practice is the key challenge in planning education. Since the late 1990s, the issue of how to balance theory, methods, skills, and practice oriented courses in the core curriculum has been widely debated. Partly as a result of the greater emphasis in the 2006 Planning Accreditation Board guidelines on plan making skills, and partly in response to the increasing demand from students for hands on learning, most planning schools in the United States have by now incorporated practice oriented courses into their core curriculum (Edwards and Bates 2011, Vidharthi, et.al. 2012). Depending on how each program defines what planning is or ought to be, the strategies to incorporate practice oriented learning into the curriculum ranges from special seminars, internship requirements to studios (Lang 1983, Long 2012). Over two thirds (69%) of the 80 schools listed in the 2015 Planetizen Guide to Graduate Urban Planning Programs by now have a studio course requirement. Still, studio pedagogy is neither “dominant, not does it play a significant role in the earliest stages of planning education” (Long 2012, 438). Several questions remain on how to define, incorporate, and assess learning outcomes of studios in planning education (Long 2012, Vidharthi, et.al. 2012).

Since most studio projects involve working with a client, there is also the issue of how community engagement takes place within an academic setting, and how the process impacts partner communities (Frank 2008, Ferman and Hill 2004, Angotti, et.al., 2011). This concern was reflected in the 2016 ACSP Conference Call for Papers: “How are planning programs working effectively with communities in authentic, non-exploitive way s that produce real benefit?” Especially within the current political context, it is critical for

planning programs to assess how they can work collaboratively with community based organizations and their coalitions and to link to the broader social justice movements (Shiffman 2007).

This paper explores the challenges and benefits of offering a studio early on, during the first semester, that involves working with a community based client organization, using the case study of a introductory core course at Pratt Institute's Planning Program. After a brief review of some debates on studio pedagogy and service learning, we provide a short description of Pratt's practice and community oriented pedagogy. We then consider the effectiveness of the first-semester Fundamentals of Planning studio/seminar over the past seven years (14 semesters), from both the students' and community clients' perspectives. An online survey, with the participation of 163 students (out of the 208 contacted), was used to get students' assessment of the learning outcomes, and structured interviews with the community clients focused on some key issues raised in service learning literature. In conclusion, we consider the benefits, challenges and conditions necessary to effectively integrate a studio course early on into the planning curriculum.

2 PRACTICE ORIENTED LEARNING

There is considerable discussion in the academic literature about the benefits, issues and how to incorporate practice oriented learning into the curriculum. Different authors emphasize different aspects of planning practice and its implications on what practice learning should emphasize. Still, whether explicitly community service-oriented or not, studio pedagogy and internships seem to be the most popular strategy for practice oriented learning in planning programs.

The attitude towards studio pedagogy has changed over time. As the focus of planning programs shifted away from the physical planning oriented education of the earlier years towards social science and research oriented education, studio pedagogy was abandoned in most schools, to be revived once again in recent years. While for some, the term 'studio' still implies design-oriented activities, Senbel (2012) analyzes the difference between planning and design studios, and considers how the elements of each could be combined in a hybrid studio setting to teach urban design to beginning planning students. Clearly, studio pedagogy is equally applicable to social policy and policy formulation and analysis as well as physical planning, as it involves "designing and evaluating courses of action in response to problems" (Lang 1983, 123, Long 2012). "Synthesis," "learning-by-doing," and "reflection-in-action," and aiming to expose students to the complexity of "real-world problems" and to initiate "professional socialization" are some of the most common terms used in learning outcomes descriptions in studio syllabi from different programs (Nemeth and Long 2012, 479). For Higgins et.al.(2009) studio pedagogy is about experiential, problem-based, student-centered and reflective learning. Rooji and Frank (2016) and Oonk, et.al.(2016) argue that contemporary planning practice requires development of skills for co-creation and a 'transdisciplinary' approach based on collaboration among scientists, professionals, private and public sector.

For others, studio courses should do more than just teach practice, and investigate "new modes of practice with a focus on advocacy and community outreach, as well as meaningful collaboration among disciplines" (Long 2012, 432). Forester (2012), from a critical pragmatic perspective, argues that studio settings can provide students the opportunity to learn to "think critically about outcomes as well as processes, about institutional and process designs, about power and performance.... [and to] reconstruct possibilities where others might initially perceive or presume impossibilities". Working with a community-based client early in their educational process can help students learn to relate theory to practice, and "can be a transformative experience, forcing them to confront their own values..." (Le Gates and Robinson 1998, 314).

While there is broad consensus on the benefits of studios as a key component of practice oriented learning, there are several challenges. Some authors point out the potential tensions, as well as the benefits, that might arise from teamwork and bringing together students with different, and especially design and non-design backgrounds in studio classes (Cameron, et.al. 2001, Arefi and Edelman 2013, 72). Moreover, "real projects can be messy and unpredictable, drawing students into complex political realms. They generally require work before and after the semester, setting up relationships and completing products" (Cameron, et. al. 1998, 111). And, since studios involve "both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes and impart a complex set of skills, knowledge, and values to students," Nemeth and Long (2012) draw attention to the need for a systematic model for assessing the learning outcomes and evaluation procedures in studio courses.

While the literature on studio pedagogy focuses on how to bring practice into the classroom, service learning literature discusses issues involved in learning in and with communities. University community service is not new, but Angotti et.al.(2011) point out that planning approaches, like Advocacy Planning, that link service and learning emerged during the Civil Rights era. Federal initiatives and funding in the 1990s also led to areas assessment of the challenges and benefits of earlier university community partnerships (Dewar and Isaac 1998; Baum 2000, Le Gates & Robinson 1998, Ross, et.al. 2002, Sletto 2010). As Vidal et.al.(2002) point out, it is hard to consider service learning without understanding how the community engagement takes place within an academic context. “While quite useful and insightful, this literature is written almost entirely from the higher education perspective, leaving unanswered major questions about how community partners view and evaluate such partnerships” (Ferman and Hill 2004, 242). Similarly, others point out that service-learning courses tend to focus on the learning aspect, and the service aspect and impacts on the community are neglected, and they offer frameworks for analyzing their effectiveness (Bose and Wilson, 2014, Erickson 2014, Martin, et.al. 2014). Angottiet.al. argue that community service learning is not only about “shifting the site of learning from the classroom to the community;” it also requires equal partnership between the academic and community partners, one that is based on mutual respect , mutual learning and commitment (2011, 2-3).

3 CONTEXT MATTERS

“Each school’s core is... inevitably a reflection of the uniqueness of the department and the students and faculty who define it” (Edwards and Bates 2011, 173). Pratt Institute’s planning program is rather unique as the only planning program in the US that is located in an Art and Design School, where innovative and creative practice is valued at least as much as academic research and publication. The faculty is mainly comprised of part timers and adjuncts – artists, practitioners, activists, innovators – who often bring to the classroom new ways of thinking, experience and strong networks from the field. Moreover, the program’s approach to planning has been influenced by the legacy of the Pratt Center for Community Development (PCCD). Pratt Center is the oldest surviving university-based community planning organization in the U.S, established in 1963 to address poverty and top down government policies by supporting affected communities to participate in the planning processes .Over the past five decades, Pratt Center’s “high quality” technical assistance and policy advocacy around social and environmental justice issues, working in collaboration with community based organizations in low income neighborhoods around the city, has led to long term relations and trust – a key component of successful university partnerships (A. Vidal & et al. 2002). This was how “an activist planning model” emerged in Pratt’s City and Regional planning program (L. Wolf Powers 2008, 3), attracting adjunct faculty with similar values and experience, and students interested in participatory planning, social and environmental justice and sustainability issues. As part of the Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment (GCPE) in School of Architecture with three other graduate programs, Sustainable Environmental Systems (SES), Historic Preservation (HP) and Urban Place making Management (UPM), the Planning Program (CRP) has two goals: 1) to utilize studio and team learning to educate students about the importance of collaboration in a multidisciplinary field, and 2) to provide opportunity for focused, specialized or interdisciplinary study and degrees (2014 Planning Accreditation Report,p.33). It should be noted here that compared to the 80 planning programs listed in the Planetizen 2015 Guide to Planning Schools, Pratt is the only accredited program that requires 3 studios. Over two thirds (68%) of all of the 80 schools listed in the guide have a studio requirement, but only 11 (14%) require two studios. The practice-oriented components of Pratt’s curriculum include 3 studio requirements, a final thesis/demonstration of professional competence project (DPC), as well a range of internship/fellowship and action research opportunities which enable students to work embedded in communities to develop their action oriented research skills (Figure 1). Pratt’s three studios (Fundamentals of Planning seminar/studio and two advanced studios) and a final Demonstration of Professional Competence project or thesis make up half of the eight required courses, and a third of the program’s total 60-credit requirement. Moreover, to provide a multidisciplinary experience for students, two or more programs have started to offer their studio courses concurrently to either study the same geographic area, serve the same client, address the same urban issues, or all of the above. While the studios emphasize team work, students work individually on their final DPC project.

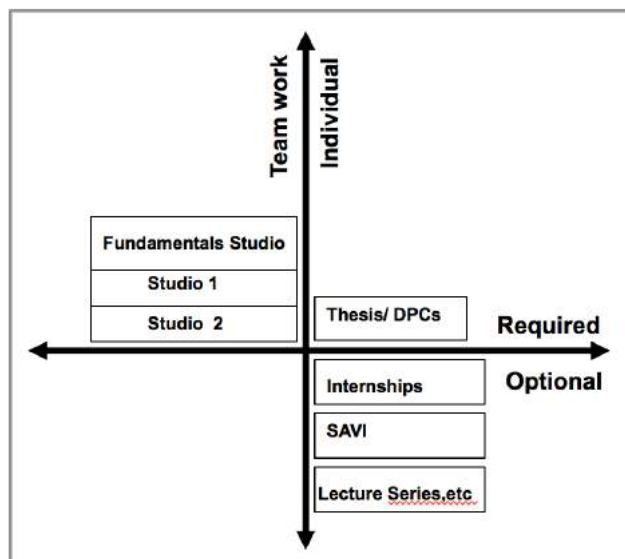


Figure 1. Components of practice-oriented learning at Pratt's Planning Program

An analysis of the 42 advanced studios offered between the spring of 2010 and 2016 reveals that most were client-based (83%), had a community development/advocacy focus (81%), and involved partnerships with community based or city wide non profit organizations (71%). Most studios stressed a multidisciplinary approach by combining faculty from the different programs and/or inviting experts from different fields (93%), and brought together students from different programs, fostering an interdisciplinary environment (71%). Some studios from different programs were linked for research then split for recommendations, some conducted research independently and then linked for recommendations, others came together in “salons” and presentations to each other for cross-learning; shared guest lectures, engaged the same client but employed different study areas or topics, or any combination of the above (GCPE Studio Guidelines Draft, August 2015). The outcome of linked studios, however, has yet to be evaluated.

4 A FIRST-SEMESTER CORE COURSE: FUNDAMENTALS OF PLANNING

It was within this context that a first semester seminar evolved into a five-credit course with a ‘mini studio’ component that involved working for a community based organization. The course is taught by one full time and two part-time faculty members. As expressed in the course syllabus, the goal of this introductory core course is twofold: “to familiarize students with relevant literature, both historical and contemporary, on the principles and practices of planning at different levels, and to relate those readings to practice by working for a real client on a current planning issue in a New York City neighborhood.” The student learning objectives include learning: 1) to critically evaluate and reflect on the readings, 2) to work collaboratively in teams, 3) to work with a community client, 4) to gather data and analyze data on existing conditions and develop planning recommendations to address the client’s concerns, and 5) to prepare and make professional presentations. The lecture/seminar component of the course requires students to prepare short weekly commentaries on the assigned readings that are reorganized each semester to provide relevant background for the studio topic. The purpose of commentaries is to make sure student stay current with the readings for meaningful class discussion, and reflect on how they relate to their own experiences and the studio area and project. Due to limited in-class time (two 3 hour-sessions per week), students are required to set additional time for teamwork, as well as site visits, community meetings, stakeholder interviews, etc. The studio topic and site is selected from among a few potential ideas proposed to the instructors by community groups they had worked with before or know through their networks, based on both the potential class size and the immediacy of the community partner’s need. Discussions with the community partner about the focus and scope of the studio project begin often months before the semester, and the deliverables and meeting schedules are confirmed before the semester starts.

Students meet the client at the beginning of the term, to hear directly about the community and the background of the issues they are asked to work on. To get acquainted with the neighborhood, they start

their existing conditions research with a neighborhood survey. The coordination of assignments with the one-credit skills courses (GIS, Graphics Communication, Professional Writing, and Freehand Drawing) is critical in helping students with demographic and spatial analysis and graphic skills necessary to produce professional-quality reports and presentations. Students prepare and present their existing conditions analysis report to the client around the middle of the term. During the second half of the semester, they work on developing recommendations, based on the client's feedback and priorities and their research findings, and conduct additional research as needed. They make a final presentation to the client at the end of the semester and deliver their final report. Often, they are asked to present their findings to the community members or elected officials. They also present their work at the semester end Super Studio Day, and get additional feedback from GCPE faculty and peers.

Inevitably, tensions arise among students with different backgrounds who are used to working individually in more traditional class and studio settings. To resolve such issues, instructors meet with students individually or in teams, as needed, and hold a class meeting after their mid-semester presentation to reflect on the process and brainstorm about how to resolve issues. At the beginning of the semester, they share with the students the lessons learned from previous semesters about how to divide up the work among themselves within and across teams, as well as how to relate to the client. During the latter part of the semester, as students start to work on their recommendations, collaboration gets easier. The final class session is dedicated to reflections on what they have learned and how the process can be improved.

Teamwork and good class citizenship carries significant weight in grading. Commentaries and participation in class activities account for 25% of the grade, each, and the studio project accounts for half of the grade – half on their individual contribution, and the other half, on teamwork and their team's overall performance. Given the close coaching involved during the semester, grading is based on a discussion of a number of different factors about each student's performance and progress, as well as feedback from the client and other faculty members during midterm and final presentations, as suggested in Nemeth and Long (2012).

4.1 STUDENT'S ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

An online survey was conducted with students who took the course between Spring of 2010 and 2016. The questionnaire had three open ended questions that explored how the students remembered and would describe the course; whether the concepts and skills learned were useful in later semesters or in their professional work; and how the class could have prepared them better for future academic or professional projects. It also asked if they felt the experience of working for a community-based client was useful as part of their learning process towards becoming a professional planner. (Table 1.) The question on what were the most important concepts/skills they learned in this course was adapted with some changes from the learning outcomes categories developed by Nemeth and Long (2012). The response rate was quite high (78 percent), considering over a third (35%) the 163 respondents had already graduated and six percent either on leave of absence or had transferred to another program within the GCPE or another school. It was above 95 percent for those who took the course over the past three years.

Harris and Irazabal (2011) found that the characteristics of what students described as High Service – High Learning experience involves: a) a well defined significant project with a clear schedule, b) high level of support and supervision, c) close connection between the deliverable to the agency/organization and course assignment, and d) transformed subjectivities. When the Fundamentals studio is considered in terms of these aspects, first, the deliverable to the client organization accounted for half of their grade for the course. In terms of support and supervision, as several students acknowledged in the survey, the faculty spent a lot of time working closely with the students, at times, joining them on weekend team meetings to provide support and guidance. Working on a real planning project for a real community client was very important for the students. The studio process became more structured over time with specific weekly tasks, and guidelines were provided at each phase of the project with tips on how to organize the collaborative process, as well as the deliverables. Still, some students found any unforeseen changes in the schedule and lack of a single correct answer to the issues at hand rather difficult. The steep learning curve and the workload were also challenges for some students. A student who had to work on completing the final report after the semester was over due to his absences during the semester, felt the instructors were being more responsible towards the client organization rather than the students. But as Irazabal and Harris point out, "while assignment design is important to student learning outcomes, so is the attitude of

the individual student” (2011, 118). Finally, transformed subjectivities refer to “gaining an understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by professionals” and developing confidence to view themselves as professionals, and “becoming more informed and sensitized about social responsibility and ethics in the profession” (Irazabal and Harris, 2012, 115). Most students felt the class was a good orientation to the profession and it helped them confront their own values: “The course is not only an introduction to planning but an opportunity to shape your values as an urban planner through practice and learning.” Another said facilitating a visioning workshop with “low income residents who have values far different than my own in terms of public space usage was more challenging than I would have imagined. I really had to listen and was keenly aware of my own discomfort and the difficult task of working in a community that is not my own.”

Overall, the survey responses seem to confirm the course has been rather successful in meeting its primary goal of linking the background readings to practice through the hands on experience of working with a community partner. Almost all the students in each semester felt working with a community based client was useful. It was also one of the things a majority of students said stood out in their mind about the course. They learned, not only how to interact with a client, but also to respect local knowledge and realized the challenges CBOs face. One student said “it was about working for people who are more invested than my 40-hours per week; working for people who have to live with my decisions or lack of it, and working for people who may know more than I,” and a few others said the CBO provided them the legitimacy to access and work in the community.

Having a real client put an urgency and seriousness to our work that would not have existed with a hypothetical client. Knowing who would see our work led us to want to produce the best product possible so we could see it put to use and see a real response to our work. It was also much more validating at the end of the course to have a community group receive your work and be appreciative of it.

Even though numerous students described the course as “challenging,” “intense,” “hitting the ground running,” and often, as “baptism by fire,” they all said they were glad that they went through the steep learning curve during their first semester. They felt the skills they learned and the experiences of Fundamentals class prepared them for more advanced studios and even later practice: “I find myself referring back to things I learned from the Fundamentals Studio in classes I have had post-studio;” “It is almost overwhelming but it prepares you for what you will be doing in future, and helps you find the areas of planning you want to learn more about;” “I believe this studio helped me get the job I have today.”

While there was a rather equal distribution of responses to main learning outcome categories (Table 1), over sixty percent of the students marked teamwork, learning by doing, and working with a community based client (recognizing accountability or responsibility to the client, assessing planning outcomes on set of values) as the learning outcomes of the class. A significant number of students said they would have liked to have more time with the community partner and more direct interaction with people in the neighborhood. Others wanted more specific communication and analysis skills, or focus on other specific topics, and more in-class time.

TABLE 1. What were the most important skills you learned in this class? Source: Adapted from Nemeth and Long (2012)	# Yes	% of N=163 respondents
COMMUNICATION		
Graphical/visual skills	103	63%
Written skills	85	52%
Oral presentation	99	61%
Understanding the dynamics among plan's multiple stakeholders	112	69%
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE		
Working in a “real world” work environment	88	54%
Gain project management skills (workflow, time management, etc)	98	60%
Understanding quality standards expected in practice	91	56%
Understand various roles of planner	105	64%
LEARNING BY DOING		
Application of general planning concepts to specific context	120	74%
Learning how to synthesize skills, knowledge, values	97	60%

Understanding the relationship between theory and practice	89	55%
Acknowledge uncertainty/complexity in planning practice	114	70%
Recognition of planning as iterative, long-term process	109	67%
PROBLEM SOLVING		
Ability to formulate logical, defensible planning decisions	81	50%
Learn how to evaluate several possible scenarios	93	57%
Negotiate oppositional viewpoints	82	50%
Recognize importance of flexibility in decision-making process	93	57%
Seek appropriate assistance and expertise	76	47%
Being creative in designing solutions and processes	106	65%
Develop critical thinking ability	81	50%
TEAMWORK		
Role recognition in collaborative work	123	75%
Understanding basic group dynamics	125	77%
Development of leadership qualities	94	58%
Gain vital listening abilities	66	40%
Development of interpersonal cooperation skills	114	70%
SERVICE/WORKING W/A COMMUNITY BASED CLIENT		
Assess planning outcomes on set of values (justice, sustainability, etc.)	112	69%
Sublimation of personal opinion	76	47%
Creation of ethical foundation for future practice	85	52%
Recognize accountability/responsibility to client group	113	69%
Acknowledge and challenge systemic power imbalances	45	28%

4.2 ASSESSMENT OF BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY PARTNER

The eleven community based organizations (CBO) that the studio worked with from Spring 2010-2016 were interviewed about their views on the benefits and issues in working with students in general, and specifically, their experience with Pratt students (Table 2). The questions were similar to evaluation criteria suggested in community service learning literature (Bose and Wilson 2014, Frank 2008, Erickson 2014). They explored the client's views on the quality and usefulness of the deliverables; how they were used; the time frame; and ideas on improving university-community collaboration.

TOTAL(14 Projects/11 organizations)	11 clients	100%
1. Worked w/ Pratt before (Pratt Center)	7	64%
2.A. Benefits of working w/students	14 projects	100%
Resource	9	64%
Enthusiasm and ideas	9	64%
Can go deeper & do more	8	57%
2.B. Issues in working w/ students	14 projects	100%
Time consuming	8	57%
Can be too theoretical or unrealistic	5	36%
Lack of enough interaction	3	21%
Lack of understanding of local issues	10	57%
3. Positive experience w/ Pratt students	13	93%
4. Products useful	14	100%
5. Which materials most useful?	14 projects	100%
Research	14	100%
Visioning workshop (only 2)	2	100%
Recommendations	13	93%
6. Semester schedule was convenient	11 clients	100%
7. Ideas for improving collaboration	11 clients	100%
Structured collaboration	3	27%
Partnership/Extended commitments	10	91%
Structured follow-up internships	3	27%

Most CBO partners had worked with Pratt Institute before through the Pratt Center. They agreed that Students were a great resource, bringing energy, enthusiasm, and new ideas and ways of looking at things:

a) The energy and enthusiasm of the students, b) being made aware of emerging areas of expertise, c) it brought attention to neighborhood issues, d) It gave us an opportunity to see things thru the different eyes of the students and faculty, e) it gave me the opportunity to influence planning students about the real world (Director of Amsterdam Avenue BID).

MARP's director felt students "are a great resource but they are students after all, and so, more idealistic than realistic in approaching issues."

CUFFH also felt that some recommendations could be controversial or too complex to implement in the short run. GOLES director, who had the most experience working with students from different schools, said, "I've always had a positive experience.

Even if sometimes you don't get everything you want, many times you get things you didn't even ask for. So, it's a tradeoff. The same was true about the three Fundamentals studios." Director of NYCEJA, like the Director of Hester Street Collaborative (HSC), pointed out that "It is very useful to have many more eyes looking at issues, as compared to just one staff person analyzing them. In addition, this provides the opportunity to take an issue and analyze it in its broader context – which is often difficult for staff to do on a daily basis," and students "are eager to learn and get involved in co-creating a greater vision."

About half of the clients referred to time and capacity, as Ferman and Hill (2004) discuss in detail, as an issue. Since CBOs are under resourced and understaffed, it was hard for them to make additional time for the studio group, and sometimes, scheduled presentation or meeting dates had to be changed. MARP Director felt it was important to frame the relationship with students early on so that there will be less demand on client's time.

Another said "the amount of time that it takes to bring students up to speed to carry out the analysis" generally takes time away from their own work since "Every now and then, the students' lack of political context is an issue" (GOLES). The compressed schedule of the semester "doesn't allow them time to build relationships and trust with community members and stakeholders. So the client has to broker these relationships, meaning additional work for us" (HSC). While starting the work earlier on was a recommendation, most were aware of the difficulty of synchronizing the academic calendar with how things happen on the ground. As the Director of Hester Street Collaborative put it, "You must plan the curriculum in advance and on the ground things can happen more slowly or faster. An idea may not wait or process can take too long. Just 4 months doesn't allow students to see the end result." Moreover, Director of MARP pointed out that "not all CBOs as lucky as us to have access to Pratt faculty and Pratt Center. There should be a central place for groups to apply to for technical assistance on small projects."

All the clients' experiences with Pratt students were positive. Concrete Safaris director appreciated that the students were also well prepared and respected the time constraints of community based organizations: It was clear that your staff and students cared about the outcomes of the project and respected the time and contributions of non-profits... Visiting the place is essential. Your process of turning the visit into one or multiple events really built a team spirit outside of the classroom. The visits stressed the importance of the fact that work for a community-based organization cannot be done on a computer but in the community.

The Directors of NYC-EJA and HSC, perhaps because of their longer term involvement with the planning program through the ongoing Fellowship arrangements, felt Pratt students brought a more comprehensive perspective, and could grasp the issues at hand more quickly: By large, what is great about working with Pratt students is that ... the program tends to attract students that are sympathetic to environmental justice and its values. It's a richer interaction because there are similar political views. You do not have to explain too much in order for them to understand the broad principles of the work. Also, there was some diversity, so some students directly understood the issues discussed... The fact that they work with a client and enjoy that work makes the project a very pleasant experience for everyone (Director of NYC-EJA).

Pratt students were well prepared for the task and the organization. They were diverse in their backgrounds. They were serious and idealistic but had a practical approach to problems. They worked

with a true sense of enthusiastic learning about the grass roots community they were studying and seemed to grasp the community as unique from others. (Director of Two Bridges CDC).

CLIENT/Semester/Project	OUTCOMES How were the materials used?	CONTINUITY (interns, follow up studios or faculty involvement)
Amsterdam Avenue BID Manhattan CD7 - FA 2009 Commercial revitalization & community development	Posters used at BID meetings & to educate community. Student reports placed in local public library available to the public.	Follow up studio in Spring focused in on recommendations for youth & seniors.
Assemblyman's Office & BID Manhattan CD 7 - SP 2010 A community Vision for the Future	Presentations & Visioning Workshops brought together people who don't work together. Assemblyman disseminated findings in the Community Newsletter.	Fall semester students also helped w/ Visioning workshop
Myrtle Ave. Restoration Project (MARP) Brooklyn CD 2 - FA 2010 Under and Around the Brooklyn Queens Expressway	Visioning presentations & report helped w/ later workshops. Traffic recommendations were refined in MARP's final report to DOT & some were adopted & implemented.	Some students & faculty helped w/ later Visionings. Alumni worked on MARP-AFH report to DOT
NYC Environmental Justice Alliance Brooklyn CD1, CD6, CD7 - SP 2011 Planning for Resiliency -Safety & Jobs - in the three SMIA's	Research findings used in negotiations w. City around the Waterfront Plan. Innovative "Peacock" concept for addressing zoning resolution issues; research on best practices and performance standards helped with advocacy.	NYC-EJA has ongoing PSPD Fellows (interns) + faculty involvement continued
Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES) FA 2011 Gentrification, infrastructure, public health & the environment	Studio materials provided valuable research and helpful recommendations, but the long report format made it hard to look up the information needed to make a case. Needed (and got) follow up interns.	A student intern continued work on public health issues
GOLES Manhattan CD3 - SP 2011 Gentrification & Economic Justice in Lower East Side		A student continued research on financial mechanisms to assist GOLES in implementation
Churches United for Fair Housing (CUFFH) Brooklyn CD 1 - FA 2012 Development potential of CUFFH properties for resilient community development	Studio research and recommendations provided useful facts/ideas. The Professional Reference Guide used in conversations with elected officials and clergy.	Internship position announced but not filled
GOLES & LES Ready! Coalition Manhattan CD3 - FA 2013 Community Preparedness and Resilience Plan for LES	Research & recommendations contributed to LES Ready! Community Preparedness and Resilience Plan. GOLES dedicated resources for disaster preparedness. A studio idea on waterfront berm was incorporated into final Rebuild by Design plan & being implemented.	2 student interns for Spring & Summer under faculty supervision - RAMP funding
Hester Street Collaborative & Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) Manhattan CD3 - SP2013 Open Space Analysis & Recommendations	Studio findings & recommendations used in applying for capital funding from Borough President's Office in partnership w/ the Sara D Roosevelt Park Coalition in Spring 2014.	HSC has ongoing GCPE Fellows (interns)
Carroll Gardens Association (CGA) Brooklyn CD 6 & Columbia Waterfront - SP2014 Affordable Housing in Columbia Waterfront & Red Hook	Studio report presented to Council Member to acquire a proposed site for potential mixed-use light manufacturing/affordable senior housing development.	Internship position announced but not filled
Two Bridges CDC Manhattan CD3 - FA 2014 Bridging the Waterfront: Recommendations for Two Bridges	Studio recommendations incorporated into the mission statement and bylaws of the recently created CDC.	Student thesis on Resiliency Improvement Districts.
Brownsville Partnership Brooklyn CD16 - SP 2015 Brownsville: Opportunity and Strength in the Heart of Brooklyn	Storm surge info and open space ratio finding helped BP make the case for more open space w/ funders, other partners. Food retail recommendation were most useful.	
Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice (YMPJ) Bronx CD9 - FA2015 Strategies for affordable housing and economic and environmental justice	YMPJ used inventory & analysis of vacancies. Some recommendations implemented (e.g. repurposing of the lot adjacent to ABC carpet to regain access to the waterfront).	A student intern at YMPJ during & after the studio and. Ongoing PSPD fellows
Concrete Safaris Manhattan CD11 - SP 2016 Open Space Systems, Youth and in East Harlem	Recommendations and research helped in developing CS's strategic plan, write grant proposals & support both with current facts.	

Table 3. List of Studio Projects, Outcomes and Continuity

All CBO partners found both the existing conditions analysis and the final recommendations useful. The ability to get the existing conditions report at that particular time gave us a current snapshot of the community. In particular, we have used a lot the inventory and analysis of vacancies – block and lot number and ownership information. The recommendations were also great. For example, the repurposing of the lots adjacent to ABC carpet to regain access to the waterfront is something that we have actively been bringing up in various discussions with the City and now may be able to achieve. (Director of YMPJ)

An issue that almost all community partners agreed on was that there was not enough time for more interaction and to follow through with the outcomes of student research and recommendations. Director of Two Bridges suggested, "You should come back with some of the students about a year later to evaluate the results of the studio project. Students should know how the product of their work was used."

Interestingly, no one felt the semester schedule was a problem, but all wanted more continuity, a key challenge in service learning (Martin, et.al. 2014) They had different ideas about how continued collaboration with Pratt could be accomplished, ranging from structured follow-up internship positions to multi-year collaboration agreements. The Director of YMPJ had further ideas about community university collaboration: There are so many other things the university could do to help out... Universities need to be aware of how to increase local organizations capacity too. The reports are cool but are there other potential benefits that should be considered – like to train members of the community, too. What about trainings on how to do research and mapping with Google tools? Or training on what is affordable housing? What about computers or software? Can we even access to universities' academic resources for local youth who want to go there? Can young people be able to sit in on a class? These collaborations could be useful to create a pipeline to design or planning.

5 CONCLUSION

This paper considered the benefits and challenges of engaging students during their first semester in a studio project with a real client. The findings from the student and client survey indicate that the first semester course has been relatively successful in meeting its learning objectives. Not only learning the technical skills for plan preparation, but also working collaboratively in teams, dealing with uncertainties, and acquiring a strong sense of accountability to the community client, provided a foundation for their advanced interdisciplinary studios in the program, and as several students pointed out, later professional work. Almost all the students (96%) reflected that they benefitted in different ways from working with a community based organization. Working with Fundamentals students was a positive experience for the community partners, too. They were, at times, impressed with the materials produced. They could use the data provided in the existing conditions report in different ways. At times, it highlighted issues they had not considered before (especially in relation to potential disasters and impacts of climate change). The recommendations generated new ideas that went beyond the scope they expected. Presentations to the community (Community Boards, other CBOs, CBO's constituencies) and visioning workshops were useful in a number of ways. They provided useful information for the CBO, but were also important in bringing together stakeholder groups that often did not work together. The presence of an independent outside party provided a sense of neutrality, and eventually, some of the recommendations were refined and implemented in the neighborhood.

Continued engagement and support was the community partners' main concern, reflecting a key challenge in the community service-learning. Cameron, et.al. suggest that campus based community design or development centers, like the Pratt Center for Community Development, "help create a more permanent framework for community relations and service" (1998, 110). Still, there is need for coordination (as has been started through the GCPE Studio Group meetings) to conduct follow up studios, and administrative support (Martin et.al. 2014). Coordination between the internship course, fellowships, and some of the studios has led to the creation of internship positions linked to studios, enabling students to continue to work longer with the partner CBOs or in the communities.

Despite the unique advantages of the Pratt's planning program due to the legacy of the Pratt Center, engaging students early on, during their first semester, with a real client around a plan-making project is possible and important for introducing them to the challenges of professional practice and collaborative work, and helping them confront their values and consider future directions. However, it requires a seminar component to ground students in theory, a structured process to overcome potential anxieties and ensure satisfactory completion of the deliverables on time, and close collaboration with skills courses to enable a steep learning curve. A lot of faculty time and attention is needed to plan the studio process: to meet and discuss early on with the community-based client the goals, expectations, deliverables and meeting schedules, and to work closely with students, incorporating feedback and reflection sessions into the class schedule. Without community outreach and establishment of strong long-term relations and trust with community organizations, however, it is not possible to have effective dialogue and mutual learning experience in communities.

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