

# Using CAR (Concept, Action, Reflection) in the disciplines to connect the local and global

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# Service Learning

- Allows students to recognise their own capacity to act as agents of social change (Butin, 2006)
- Gives students an opportunity to *exercise* their agency (Petray & Halbert *in review*)
- Nurtures “citizen-scholars” who can link individual outcomes with structural forces (Moble 2007)
  - Link between theory & practice
  - Situates students as **global** citizens who act within **local** communities
- Encourages critical reflection  
(McKinney, Howery et al 2004; Rajaram 2007; Dean 2007; Lewis 2004)

# Common goals within Service Learning

	<b>Content &amp; skills</b>	<b>Civic Values</b>	<b>Systemic change</b>	<b>Personal/identity</b>
Britt 2010 'Categories'	<i>Learner</i>	<i>Citizen</i>	<i>Activist</i>	
Kahne & Wesheimer 1996 'Domains'	<i>Intellectual</i>	<i>Moral</i>	<i>Political</i>	
Butin 2003 'Perspectives'	<i>Technical</i>	<i>Cultural</i>	<i>Political</i>	<i>Post-structural</i>

# Service Learning in the Disciplines

- Teacher candidates can serve the common good by addressing social, political, economic and cultural injustices through direct service and advocacy service-learning projects. In this process, they also gain increased respect for human differences and commonalities, learn to focus on their future students' well-being as a whole, and learn how to prepare their students to live peacefully with persons who differ from themselves. (Swick, 2000: 3)
- all good teaching must be attuned to (1) the character of learners (their interests, problems, developmental nature), (2) the highest values of the society (democratic principles of cooperation, tolerance, critical mindedness, and political awareness), and (3) the reflective representation of the subject matter (the knowledge in the various disciplines that helps the teacher present material that resonates with both learner and society) (Dewey, 1902).
- “Service Learning is the prototype: as they learn students become ambassadors of sociology to the wider world just as they bring back to the classroom their engagement with diverse publics” (Burawoy 2004: 266)

# CAR- service and engagement

## Traditional service learning framework

- Preparation – identify the issues/groups, negotiate service and establish learning goals
- Action – undertake short term or longer term experience
- Reflection – use reflective tools, link back to learning goals
- Demonstration/Celebration – share and consolidate with the learning community

## CAR – a multidisciplinary active learning framework

- Concepts (building conceptual understanding through a blended learning approach)
- Action – ‘borrowing’ from service learning to provide community based experiences, issues and case-studies
- Reflection- using reflective tools to foster critical citizenship

### CONTEXT

Learning in/with the community ----- Learning through community experiences

# Case studies:

1. CAR: embedding civic engagement and active learning for pre-service History teachers (Halbert)
2. CAR in Service-Learning: An Innovative Learning Experience beyond Knowing and Doing (Li and Miller)
3. Concept, Activism, Reflection: Service Learning through Protest (Petray)

# CAR: embedding civic engagement and active learning for pre-service History teachers

- The subject develops pre-service teachers' competence in planning, implementing and assessing historical and geographical inquiries which promote active and informed citizenship.
- These skills are consolidated in subsequent experiences:
  - Professional experience teaching in schools
  - Service Learning for Sustainable Futures

# Social Science Curriculum using CAR

## ACTION:

- Community based research — site visits, archives, museums
- Active learning activities and dialogic pedagogy

## CONCEPTS and REFLECTIONS:

- What is the nature of knowledge in the social sciences?
- Why is inquiry a powerful vehicle for learning?
- What is History? What is the purpose of historical inquiry?
- Reflect on a key historical event (personal, national, global) and how it affected you.
- What geographical skills are required for active citizens?
- What knowledge and skills do I have of planning a social inquiry?
- How can I develop curriculum connections with community?
- How can place based education develop cultural understanding?
- How engaged are you in the political system?
- What is active citizenship?
- How does your unit prepare students to be active citizens? What are the challenges and limitations of citizenship education?
- How do values inform social science inquiries? What is our role as social science teachers?



# Education – Social Science Curriculum

Students engage in community consultation to produce curriculum units that are **place based** and use community resources. Explicit focus on **experiencing and fostering active citizenship**.



# Reflections on teaching

- A layer of 'active citizenship'
- Identified community connections that can be expanded in subsequent service learning subject
- Positioned their students as service learners – developed tasks that provided for reciprocity or added to community resources.
- Illuminated tensions in teacher autonomy and curriculum implementation

# Background: CAR, service learning and experiential learning

- Research questions:
  - 1) How to structure reflection and critical thinking in social psychology;
  - 2) How reflection and critical thinking impact on students' personal and professional development and growth; and
  - 3) How reflection makes a difference in achieving the learning outcomes of Service-Learning.

# Methods

- Participants:
  - 33 third-year students who enrolled social psychology in 2013 at James Cook University.
- Materials:
  - Participants' weekly CAR entries posted on the LearnJCU discussion board.
  - A 4-item evaluation on CAR.
  - Peer-review of teaching
- Procedure:
  - Ethical approval
  - Informed consent
- Analysis:
  - Thematic analysis

# How to structure reflection and critical thinking in social psychology

- **Objectives:** To put subject materials into action in daily contexts, and apply social psychology research findings on attribution biases, bystander intervention, conflict resolution, empathy, and so on.
- **Concepts:** Attribution biases, bystander intervention, conflict resolution, empathy, and so on.
- **Action:** You are required to participate in the "Day of Compassion." To participate in this event, your challenge will be to live each minute of that day in as compassionate a way as possible. In other words, for a full 24-hour period you should do your best to help other people in need, to be considerate and respectful, and to avoid causing harm to any living being. When carrying out this assignment, leave no behaviour unexamined – from watching TV to eating lunch to decisions about giving time or money to others. That is, don't limit yourself to simply holding the door open for a stranger or petting a lonely dog; think about all the unnecessary suffering in the world, and strive for the greatest impact and deepest level of compassion without being phony or insincere. It is up to you to define what compassion is and to decide how best to realize it. If you are already quite compassionate, try being compassionate toward groups you don't often focus on, and even if your actions don't differ much from how you normally behave, be sure to carefully observe and analyse what transpires during the experience.
- **Reflection:** Reflect on your action by linking your action to the concept you choose to apply.
  - Acknowledgement: Professor Scott Plous, Wesleyan University

# How reflection and critical thinking impact on students' personal and professional development and growth

- Students constructed their personal and professional identities throughout the learning process
  - Active learner
  - Collaborator
  - Inspirer to one another
  - Cultural exchanger
  - Global citizen

# How reflection makes a difference in achieving the learning outcomes of Service-Learning

- Students actively engaged in classroom discussions
- Students were creative and critical
- Inconclusive observation: Students achieved very well in other assessments.

# Discussion

- Not only did CAR teach concepts but it improved students' ability to reflect, and their broader critical thinking skills.
- As the semester progressed and students became more familiar with reflecting and writing a CAR entry their entries became more creative and their reflections became better developed, utilising more theoretical integration.
- Critical thinking is of course an essential skill among psychology graduates. The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council even names 'critical thinking in psychology' as one of its six core graduate attributes (APAC, 2010). It is essential because the work of psychologists—whether in research or professional practice—requires critically evaluating opinions and biases, identifying and testing hypotheses to answer theoretical and applied questions, and applying knowledge to mental health problems experienced at a population or individual level (Karantzas et al., 2013).
- For these reasons, service learning models such as CAR—which teach concepts AND critical thinking, a skill needed to apply concepts in the real world—have a place within psychological teaching.



# Concept, Activism, Reflection

- Power and Protest in a Globalising World
  - Concepts:
    - Agency
    - Power relations
    - Social Change
  - Actions:
    - Activism
  - Reflections:
    - Group presentations on power relations & agency in their activism projects

# Social and Political Issues

- Refugees & Asylum seekers --- Amnesty International
- Animal welfare --- RSPCA
- Food labelling & factory farming --- Animals Australia
- Development in world heritage area --- Environs Kimberley
- Youth Crime --- Townsville Crime Alerts Discussion Group
- Healthy Schools --- [no community partner]

# Activism











# Reflections

- What did you think when you learned you had to do activism in this class?
  - “I was excited about the chance to create our own project and immediately began thinking about areas that I'm passionate about that would be relevant to the assessment task.”
  - “Uneasy about it at first, I saw protesters as people who tend to make a big scene but get little change”
  - “At first I was worried I wouldn't be able to successfully complete the task, but then I found the idea more interesting than the usual essay assignment.”

# Reflections on the project

- Students learned concepts more thoroughly by putting them into practice
- Students saw the value of active engagement with community
  - Saw themselves as part of the bigger picture
- Students achieved real outcomes through their projects
- Students pursued 'safe' forms of activism

- “This subject is good because it teaches that no matter where you are, you can use your power to pressure structures towards what you want”



# Our contributions to the field


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CAR	<i>Active learner – in a changing learning environment</i>	<i>Local and Global Citizen</i>	<i>Social Justice</i>	<i>Personal and Professional identity</i>

# http://libguides.jcu.edu.au/CAR

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### What is CAR?


**CAR - Concept, Action, Reflection:** is a curriculum framework which requires you to take an active role in the learning process. You will engage in a process of discovery and learning-by-doing.

**Concept** (core knowledge and understanding to engage in action)

**Action** (applied active learning of concepts in a community context)


**Reflection** (supported by analytical, evaluative and critical reflection frameworks)

Comments (0)



### What is blended learning?

Blended learning combines face-to-face teaching with online learning to form a cohesive learning experience. A class utilising blended learning may meet once a week, with additional online learning activities to be completed outside of class time. The subject being taught is broken down into individual units, and the most appropriate delivery methods are selected for each unit, eg. online activity, class discussion, lectorial.



Comments (0)


### What is active learning?

Active learning means getting involved in your study, rather than passively listening to your lecturers. Thus participating in active learning should enable you to develop a deeper understanding of your course content. To be an active learner you need to think about the meanings and interconnections of the information presented to you, rather than just memorising facts.

As an active learner you will:

1. Retain information for longer (which will be a big plus for you at exam time)
2. Be able to react quickly when facing the unexpected
3. Be in charge of your own progress
4. Be a more flexible and able student or employee.

Comments (0)



<http://teachingwithcar.wordpress.com/>

## **TEACHING WITH CAR**

*THE CONCEPTS, ACTIONS, REFLECTIONS MODEL AS A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK*

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### **About**

The purpose of this blog is to document our experiences redesigning three subjects for James Cook University utilising the concept of CAR as a curriculum framework. CAR stands for concepts (core knowledge and understanding to engage in action), action (applied active learning of concepts in a community context) and reflection (analytical, evaluative and critical reflective frameworks) (Brockbank & McGill, 2007; Tennyson, 1994). CAR promotes an experiential pedagogy that is discursive, flexible and reflective (Hauser, 2010). As such, the subject redesigns will place particular focus on new technologies that support and leverage learning in the classroom, so lecturers can spend more time facilitating interaction.