Jacoby, Barbara, <u>Service-Learning Essentials: Questions, Answers, and Lessons Learned,</u> November 2014, Jossey-Bass

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<u>Service-Learning Essentials</u> is a great work to read cover-to-cover and use as a powerful, desk-reference resource. In it, Jacoby has synthesized 30 years of research, best practices, models, and ideas. The book would be a useful primer to anyone new to the field and serves as a source of new ideas for those practicing longer. Here are my top 13 take-aways.

1. Critical reflection
Jacoby provides a number of useful ideas about assessing critical reflection, pointing out that it's not about grading students' feelings. She includes three levels of criteria for assessing reflection: Surface, Emerging, Deep (p. 41). She also provides some useful ideas for faculty in STEM fields about how to help students reflect on importance of their discipline in addressing societal problems.

2. Types of partnerships
Starting on page 56, Jacoby offers a typology of different partnerships that is helpful in understanding how an institution might connect with community:

- 1 faculty/staff, 1 community partner
- 1 student organization, 1 community partner
- 1 campus partner, multiple community partner
- Multiple campus partners, 1 community partner
- 1 center/office, many community partners
- Place-based or issue-based coalition partnerships

3. Models of infrastructure
On page 70, you'll find a beautiful graphic illustration of the three different infrastructure models for campus institutalization: Concentrated, Fragmented, Integrated. Jacoby's ideal? Integrated.

4. Learning outcomes for which service-learning is best
Jacoby points out that service-learning is not ideal for all courses. It's best suited when your outcomes relate to these (p. 81):

- Complex problems and solutions
- Application of knowledge

- Effective communication
- Working collaboratively
- Exercise of judgment
- Ownership of learning
- Using knowledge to address social issues
- Developing critical reflection skills

5. Community as "text"

Jacoby also draws on an analogy that I've also found useful in thinking about service-learning: community as text (p. 81). Faculty assign "readings" (community experiences). These can be full texts (intensive experiences) or shorter readings (shorter experiences in multiple contexts). As with other texts, the grade not based on service, but on whether students can demonstrate, integrate and apply their learning.

6. Models for course integration

There is not one way to do service-learning. Again, Jacoby offers helpful categorization in understanding the different ways in which service can be included in credit-bearing experiences (p. 88-99):

- Service required
- Service optional
- Service for additional credit
- First-year experience
- Internship or independent study
- Field work
- Community-based research
- Capstone
- Immersion
- Course sequence
- Major, minor, certificate

7. Steps to designing a new course

She offers a step-by-step process to building a new service-learning course (p. 100-102). While I think the order could shift depending on circumstance (for instance, you might start with a community partner already in mind), this is a guide that I plan to use for faculty development.

- Identify learning outcomes, and which outcomes will be met through service-learning
- Envision the service "text"
- Select other course elements (reading, lecture, etc)
- Seek community partners
- Integrate reflection

- Plan to assess outcomes
- Address logistics

8. Ideas for successful cocurricular service-learning

Not only does Jacoby thoroughly cover curricular service-learning, she also provides key information on cocurricular engagement, including these ideas for how to achieve success with short-term or one-time events (p. 123).

- Set very clear expectations
- Offer highly structure activities
- Provide close supervision
- Facilitate multiple opportunities for check-in and reflection throughout

9. Types of cocurricular service-learning

Can you tell I love categorization? Jacoby also offers ways of thinking about types of cocurricular experiences (p. 129-139).

- Introductory, one-time, short-term
- Ongoing experiences
- Residence hall based programs
- Federally funded programs (work study, AmeriCorps)
- Cocurricular requirement
- Intensive or immersion experiences
- Experiences with alumni

10. Steps for developing cocurricular experiences

As with service-learning courses above, Jacoby also offers the key elements in the process of developing cocurricular experiences (p. 143-148). While largely similar, there are key differences, including the importance of student preparation and creating closure, both of which come more naturally in a course.

- Learning outcomes
- Consider types of service experiences
- Seek community partners
- Plan service in detail
- Determine needed student preparation
- Select activities
- Integrate reflection
- Address logistics
- Plan to measure outcomes
- Seek closure, celebrate

11. Assessment methods

Jacoby offers a number of key insights into the importance of assessment and valuable ideas about the role of evaluation, assessment, and research. I found this list of relevant assessment methods particularly useful (p. 158-161).

- Achievement testing
- Content analysis of student work
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Observations
- Document review
- Case studies

12. Cost-benefit assessment

Jacoby believes strongly in the prominence of partnerships in successful service-learning. There are too many great insights to share them all here, but a great tool she offers that I hadn't seen before is a form that allows community organizations to consider the costs and benefits of their partnership with you (p. 168-169). Imagine the change this approach could have on conversations!

13. Ideas about the future

Jacoby ends the book with a number of interests reflections on and ideas about the future. Some of my favorites:

- Ideas for making service-learning accessible to all students: personal invitations to participate, financial assistance, options for all abilities, provide alternatives, keep it relevant/flexible/convenient (p. 225-228).
- Service-learning and politics (p. 239-242).
- "Evidence above passion" as a motivator for institutionalization (p. 254).
- Co-located boundary spanners as the key to truly mutual and reciprocal relationships (p. 267-271).

Service-Learning Essentials does an excellent job of providing an overview of what we know about service-learning and provides new ideas and insights. It would be a great addition to the library of anyone teaching courses, leading institutions, or helping others provide quality service-learning experiences.