How can social competences be fostered in higher education by service learning? A good practice example
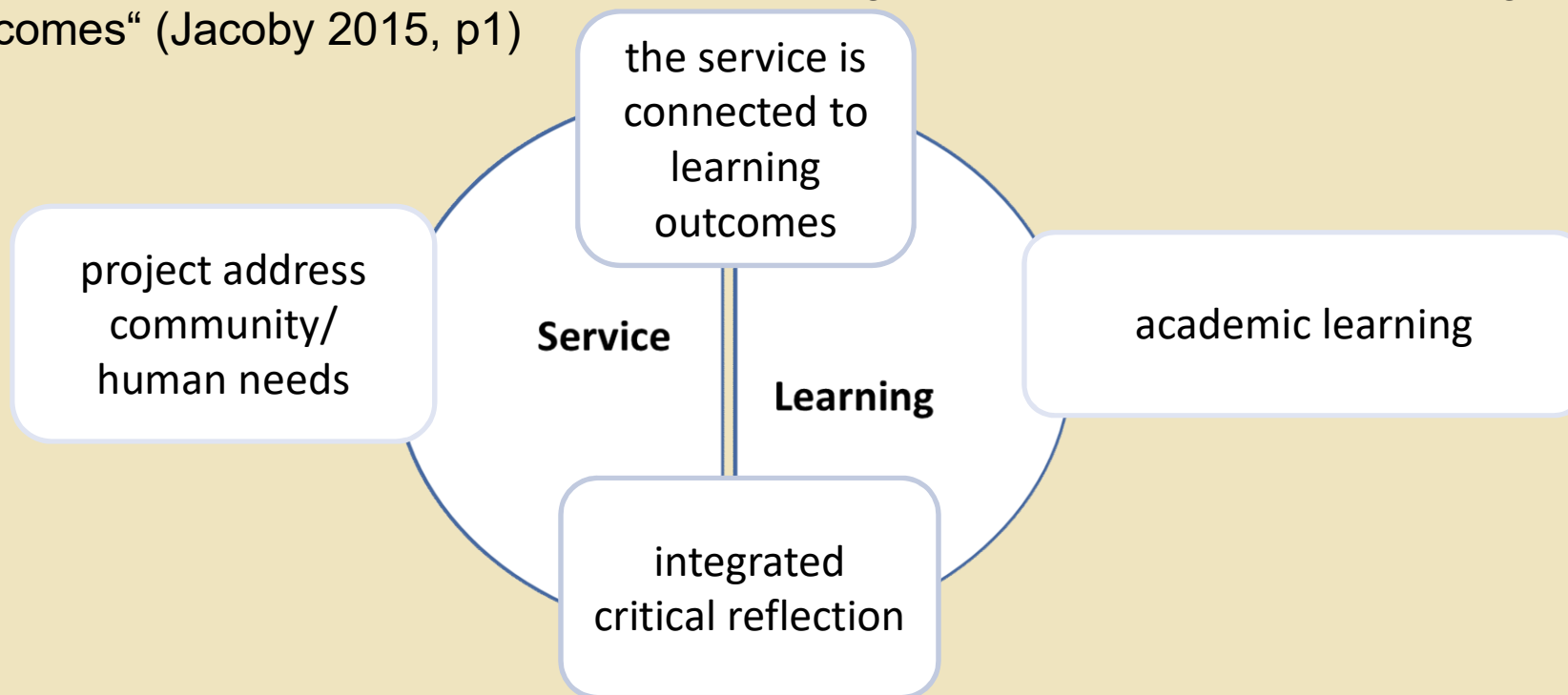
Dr. Cornelia Arend-Steinebach

1st DASCHE Conference „Meaning and role of social competence in higher education – voices from research and practice", Bremen 13.06.2019

Structure

Arend-Steinebach

Definition

Service learning can be defined „as a form of experiental education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs, together with structured opportunities for reflection designed to achieve desired learning outcomes" (Jacoby 2015, p1)

the service is connected to learning outcomes

project address community/ human needs

Service

academic learning

Learning

integrated critical reflection

Different types of Service Learning

Service Learning in higher education can be

- Discipline-based,
- interdisciplinary or
- non-disciplinary (cf. Jacoby, p.89)

„Course where

- service-learning is required
- service-learning is optional
- Students can earn an additional service-learning credit" (Jacoby, p.89f)
- students are involved as co-researchers in a communitiy-based-research project (cf. Jacoby, p.94)

Bachelor Bildungswissenschaften (Bachelor of education/ adult education/ further education, Universität Duisburg-Essen)

Course „Didactical planning, analysis, teaching, evaluation of learning situations" (cf. Arend-Steinebach 2016; Arend-Steinebach 2013)

Service Learning Projects (for e.g.):

- Anti Violence Training; Reading Skills Training; Team Spirit Training – Primary Schools
- Walker training; Memory Workout – Residents retirement home
- Team Building Training – School Integration Assistants
- Job Application Training – Refugees
- Teacher Trainings „What is Sexual Abuse?" – Primary Schools
- Making paper out of natural fibre – Youth Center
- Cooking Class – Residential home for mentally ill adults
- Communication Training – Geriatric Nurses

https://www.uni-due.de/allgemeine-didaktik/lehrprojekteservicelearning.php

Didactical Principles of Service Learning

- Experiental Learning

- Collaborative Learning

- Project Based Learning

- Problem Based Learning

- Social/ Societal/ Ecological Learning

- Democratic Learning

What are the effects of Service-Learning on students?

mixed impact:

- Mixed impact on student **academic learning** as measured by course grades;

- Students or faculty report: service learning has a positive impact on students' academic learning (cf. Eyler et al. 2001, p.3)

positive effects:

- „attitudes towards self, attitudes toward school and learning, civic engagement, social skills, and academic performance" (Celio et al. 2011, p 164)

- „service learning has a positive effect on understanding of social issues; personal insight; and cognitive development" (Yorio et al. 2012, p 9)

- „personal development, interpersonal development/ the ability to work well with others/ communication skills"(Eyler et al. 2001, p.1)

- "reducing stereotypes/ facilitating cultural & racial understanding" (ibid)

- "social responsibility/ citizenship skills" (ibid, p.2)

Understanding social issues & Civic responsibility

Understanding social issues

- „attitudes associated with cultural awareness and tolerance of diversity,

- behavioral competences, which enable students to work with individuals different from themselves

- the motivation to work toward making a difference in the life of the community

- moral awareness and ethical reasoning skills" (Yorio et al. 2012, p 11)

Civic responsibility (hard to operationalize)

- „the impact of service-learning on student cognitive moral development is mixed" (Eyler p.4)

Positive example: Two students who did a job application training for refugees in a service learning course decided to extend this over a whole year (honored by the University of Duisburg-Essen: Diversity-Engagement-Award 2019)

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Model of multidimensional interaction in Service Learning in HE

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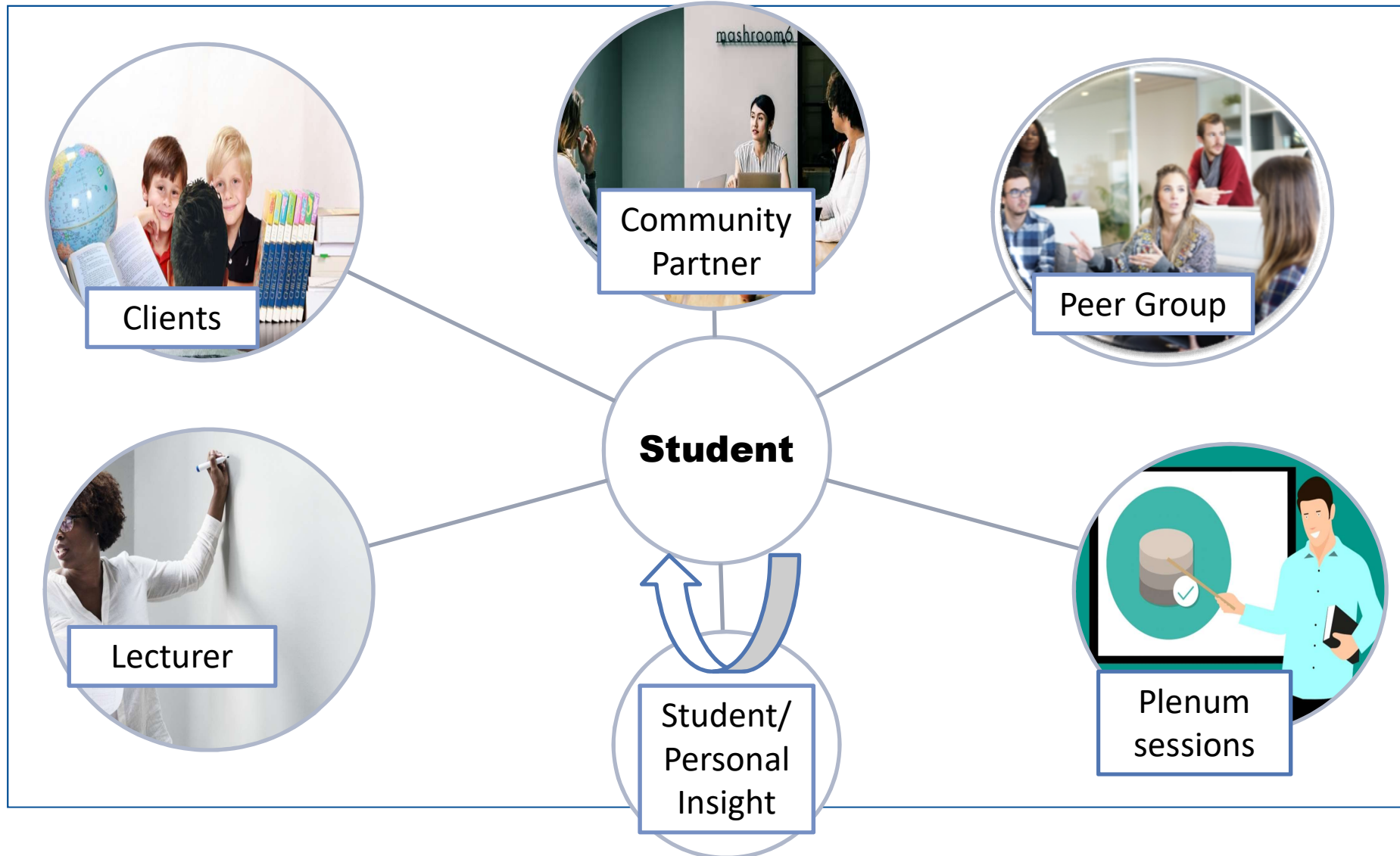
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Open-Minded

Germany

- „Hochschulnetzwerk Bildung durch Verantwortung" - German Network in Higher Education:https://www.bildung-durch-verantwortung.de/

- „Campus vor Ort" - Online Community for Service Learning and Campus-Community Partnership http://www.campus-vor-ort.de/

- „Service Learning" – Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (German Rectors Conference):://www.hrk-nexus.de/aktuelles/tagungsdokumentation/service-learning-2014/

USA

- Campus Compact (a national coalition of 1,000+ colleges and universities committed to the public purposes of higher education) https://compact.org

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