

Living and Learning Together in Higher
Education: How Co-Curricular Efforts
Enhance Curricular Education and Foster
Thriving Communities

Oliver S. Crocco - 22 November 2012

Outline

- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ Methodology
- ◆ Findings
- ◆ Pictures
- ◆ Discussion and Criteria for Effective Co-Curricula
- ◆ Criticisms / Constraints
- ◆ Note: I can email you powerpoint / references / working paper

Think for a moment...

Introduction

- ◆ Authors - Oliver Crocco and Esther Wakeman
- ◆ Co-curricula = activities outside the university curriculum such as student activities, residential life, and student leadership programs, which includes service learning, mentoring opportunities, and student support services.
- ◆ Research Question: What are the identifiable effects - and potential effects - of co-curricula in higher education in Thailand (and beyond)?

Methodology

- ◆ Non-empirical exploratory
- ◆ Interdisciplinary (theory, policy, practice)

Methodology

- ◆ As Henrich, Heine, and Norenzayan (2010) in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* have noted that often “broad claims about human psychology and behavior in the world’s top journals [are] based on samples drawn entirely from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic (WEIRD) societies” (p. 2).
- ◆ This, however, does not mean extreme cultural relativism must exclude “basic aspects of cognition, motivation, and behavior” (Henrich, et al., 2010, p. 5).

Findings

◆ Primary Emergent Themes

◆ 1. Co-curricula promotes curricular education (learning)

Academic
support systems

learning styles/
multiple intelligences

Mentoring
Relationships

Make
connections

2nd language
acquisition

Service
Learning

motivation/purpose











Findings

- ◆ 2. Co-curricula fosters community (people relating in effective and cohesive ways.)

Residence Life

Global
Community

Dining Halls

Build
Relationships

Play and Wellness

Student activities

Psychosocial
Development













Findings

- ◆ Secondary Emergent Themes:
- ◆ Co-curricula and holistic human development
- ◆ Co-curricula and ethical maturity
- ◆ Co-curricula and socio-cultural adaptation
- ◆ Co-curricula and a readiness for leadership















PYU - KEISEN

Summer Joint work

25th

March 20th - 29th, 2011

At Baan Nongphakn
church,
Maesarieng, Maehong
Thailand

Discussion

- ◆ Towards an Effective Theory of Change (Weiss, 1995)
- ◆ Every educational institution is operating from a set of theories about reality/learning, etc. which include goals, strategies, and assumptions.
- ◆ What is the theory of change of your institution/organization?
Of Thailand's institutions of higher education?
- ◆ Is it based on research? Theory? What are the key assumptions?

Criteria for Effective CC

- ◆ 1. Student centered - Empowering
- ◆ 2. Developmentally sound
- ◆ 3. Contextually relevant
- ◆ 4. Relationship-oriented
- ◆ 5. Interesting and motivating

Criticisms

- ◆ Slim to no transferability of policy and practice across cultures.
- ◆ Perhaps a luxury of the wealthy
- ◆ It all depends on the quality of programming and implementation
- ◆ Involvement is often limited to people who need it the least.

Constraints

- ◆ Education reform in Thailand faces many challenges: under funded, lack of good staff preparation, lack of systemic perspective.

Further Research

- ◆ A more comprehensive knowledge base is needed to fill in the assumptions of the theory of change.
- ◆ In depth and methodologically sound* mixed methods research on the effects of co-curricula in Thailand.
- ◆ Create an ongoing dialogue.

Thank you!

- ◆ Thank you!

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