

THE INVOLVEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

IN SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMS: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

Determining the degree to which area colleges and universities are involved in service-learning programs and ascertaining the attitudes of higher education students, faculty, and administrators toward community involvement constitute two of the principal concerns of the Atlanta Service Learning Conference. To provide insight into these two areas of special interest, a number of college students are currently in the process of completing a survey of ten area colleges and universities. The ten institutions include: Agnes Scott College, Atlanta University, Clark College, Emory University, Georgia State College, Georgia Tech, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, Oglethorpe College, and Spelman College. As part of a broader study of student manpower resources, this survey will seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

1. To what extent does the involvement of higher education institutions vary from campus to campus? What factors account for the variations?
2. To what extent does the degree of service-learning activities vary between different schools and departments within particular institutions? What accounts for the variations?
3. What areas of community life most readily lend themselves to student involvement?
4. What are the relative roles of students, faculty, and administrative personnel in community development activities?
5. To what extent does existing curriculum encourage student involvement in the community? Do students require academic credit for participation in community activities?
6. How important are community involvement programs to students, faculty, and administrators? What do the terms "community involvement" and "service-learning" suggest to these three important clientele groups?

7. What areas of community concern presently receive the greatest attention from higher education? The least concern?
8. Do existing patterns of service-learning practices suggest that some institutions can best serve by specializing in particular programs?

It is expected that answers to the above questions will be of value to ASLC for the following reasons:

1. The research will identify both the forces facilitating and the forces inhibiting development of the service-learning concept.
2. Cataloguing existing programs of community activities can assist ASLC'S role in coordinating service-learning programs and directing students into programs most suitable to their individual preferences.
3. The research will mirror the present scope of service-learning programs and identify areas of neglect.
4. In the long run, certain priorities may be set and thereby assist ASLC in gaining the essential financial resources for funding service-learning programs in the areas demanding the greatest concentration of community efforts.