

Notes From the Field: Learning Cultural Humility Through Critical Incidents and Central Challenges in Community-Based Participatory Research

LAURIE ROSS

*Department of International Development, Community, and Environment,
Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA*

Cultural humility is critical in the education of community development and planning graduate students because they often work with communities—geographic and/or identity based—where there is a power differential based on privileges of race, income, and education. Cultural humility requires commitment to ongoing self-reflection and self-critique, particularly identifying and examining one’s own patterns of unintentional and intentional racism (Israel, Eng, Schulz, & Parker, 2005; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). This article describes a 2-course sequence within a community development and planning graduate program that develops students’ cultural humility by integrating community-based participatory research (CBPR) and ongoing reflection. Recommendations for instruction and assessing graduate students’ development of cultural humility emerge from this analysis.

KEYWORDS *Cultural humility, experiential education, community-based participatory research, reflection, service-learning*

Students in fields such as community development, community health, or macro social work increasingly have field-based components in their curriculum. Experiential forms of teaching and learning, including service learning and community-based research, can potentially be transformative for both students and communities (Cashman & Seifer, 2008; Eyler, 2009; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Achieving such outcomes is predicated upon

Address correspondence to Laurie Ross, Clark University, IDCE, 950 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610. E-mail: lross@clarku.edu

the faculty members' and students' ability to forge trusting and respectful relationships with community partners. Yet, because experiential learning tends to connect students with geographic and/or identity-based communities that differ from them based on race, class, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and/or education levels, authentic partnerships can be difficult to achieve and maintain. An intentional process that moves students beyond appreciating diversity to developing the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are needed to engage in cross-cultural work will increase the likelihood of benefits accruing both to the students and to the community (Arches & Apontes-Pares, 2005; Simons, Blank, Russell, Williams, & Willis, 2009; Stoecker & Tryon, 2009; Wear, 2003). In this article, I propose that cultural humility, a concept that has become influential in the preparation of health workers, can inform such an intentional process in the education of community development and planning graduate students.

Cultural humility is more dynamic than cultural competence in that it requires commitment to ongoing self-reflection and self-critique, particularly identifying and examining one's own patterns of unintentional and intentional racism (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). This article explores how a two-course sequence within a community development and planning graduate program aims to develop students' cultural humility by integrating community-based participatory research (CBPR) and continuous, connected, challenging, and contextualizing reflection (Eyler, Giles, & Schmiede, 1996). Recommendations for instruction and assessing graduate students' development of cultural humility emerge from this analysis.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

CBPR

CBPR is a framework in which communities and researchers strive to form equitable partnerships to learn about and address environmental health and justice issues. Operating with a broad definition of health, there are six commonly agreed upon CBPR principles. These are that CBPR (a) promotes active collaboration and participation at every stage of research and action; (b) fosters co-learning and mutual capacity building; (c) ensures projects are community-driven; (d) disseminates results in useful terms; (e) ensures research and intervention strategies are culturally appropriate and are aimed at reducing disparities, and that the findings benefit all partners; and (f) defines community as a unit of identity (Israel et al., 2005; Minkler, 2005b; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003; O'Fallon & Dearth, 2002; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006).

CBPR, as an orientation toward research, rather than a set of research methods, teaches community development students about how their position can affect their practice:

Because CBPR projects bring together diverse participants, it is important to recognize that each pre-existing role carries a set of power positions and privileges, which exist apart and before any relationships are built. These professional roles determine to large extent the boundaries of the initial interactions and may have structural impacts over time; yet White and minority researchers and community members can also resist the roles and boundaries. (Wallerstein & Duran, 2006, p. 317)

CBPR brings to the forefront the ethical challenges that community development professionals face, such as understanding insider–outsider dynamics, participation, community consent, power, privilege, racism and ethnic discrimination, as well as multiple meanings and approaches to social change (Minkler, 2005a, 2005b). Cultural humility has become a core concept in CBPR due to its focus on addressing disparities, self-reflection, and dialogue across difference (Israel et al., 2005; Minker, 2005b). Such a focus opens the possibility of resisting traditional roles as noted in the previous quotation and developing authentic partnerships where meaningful, community-driven change is possible.

Cultural Humility

Cultural humility, a strand within cultural competence, goes beyond imparting knowledge about cultural practices. Proponents of this concept argue that it is not a lack of knowledge about culture, but rather the practitioners' beliefs and attitudes about people who are different that leads to ineffective practice and perpetuates inequity (Smith et al., 2007; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Accordingly, cultural humility has three foci: knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

In addition to understanding cultural practices, forms of knowledge relevant in cultural humility include understanding the extent of health disparities in the United States and an understanding about the relationship between social, political, and economic dynamics and resulting beliefs and behaviors of community members (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo, & Ananeh-Firempong, 2003; Smith et al., 2007; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Relevant attitudes include practitioners' subconscious and conscious bias and stereotyping, recognition of his or her privilege, and understanding about community mistrust that is borne out of historical and institutional practices (Juarez, et al., 2006; Kumas-Tan, Beagain, Loppie, MacLeod, & Frank, 2007; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998; Wear, 2003). Finally, culturally humble skills include nonauthoritarian communication, cross-cultural

communication, an asset approach to research, cultural brokering, ability to engage in participatory decision-making with community partners, and the ability to identify and analyze manifestations of the unequal distribution of power in institutional practices and policies (Betancourt, et al., 2003; Juarez et al., 2006; Kumas-Tan, et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2007; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

Through self-reflection, students and practitioners are encouraged to relinquish the role of expert, work actively to address power imbalance in communication to create respectful and dynamic partnerships with the community, and ultimately become the student of the community. A focus on cultural humility helps professionals become “flexible and humble enough to let go of the false sense of security that stereotyping brings” (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998, p. 119). In fact, Kumas-Ton et al. (2007) suggested that an increase in knowledge that is derived through self-examination may actually lead to a practitioner feeling less competent to address problems, at least in the short term.

Incorporating Cultural Humility Through Reflection into a CBPR-Focused Class

Embedding Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, conceptual abstraction, and active experimentation into CBPR is a powerful way to develop cultural humility in community development professionals. Indeed, research on how to develop students’ cultural humility emphasize this cycle through informal, participatory learning activities, such as role playing, field work, structured student journaling, service learning, interactions with fellow students, and small group discussions (Juarez, et al., 2006; Shapiro, Lie, Gutierrez, & Zhuang, 2006).

Reflecting on all of these activities is critical. Bringle and Hatcher (1999) defined reflection as “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives” (p. 84). Reflection is needed to transform a students’ experience into new knowledge and understanding (Eyler, 2009; Eyler & Giles, 1999). High quality reflection activities have several characteristics, such as the fact that the community-based experience should link clearly to the course content, expectations and criteria for assessing the reflections should be structured and transparent, reflection should occur regularly throughout the semester, and the instructor should provide the student feedback on their reflection activities and provide space for students to examine and perhaps revisit their values (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999).

Capturing outcomes associated with the development of cultural humility requires the use multiple methods, including qualitative methods (i.e., review student journals, observation, analysis of video-taped encounters) and action research, along with traditional quantitative assessments (Juarez

et al. 2006; Smith et al., 2007; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). In the context of graduate studies in community development and planning, a community-based learning course guided by CBPR provides an excellent forum to integrate these elements.

METHODS

Setting

The two-course sequence that is the focus of this article is part of the core curriculum of a community development and planning master's program. This program is located at a small, liberal arts university in the Northeast. This university has a tradition of student engagement in the community. The two-course sequence consists of a classroom-based community development perspectives course and a field-based practicum course. In the first course, students learn about possibilities and limitations in the trend toward localism in community development (DeFilippis & Saegert, 2008) and about structural causes of persistent inequities in areas such as health, housing, and education. Students learn about CBPR and conduct community-based activities, including neighborhood observations and interviews with residents and organizations. Using Nominal Group Technique (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995) we discuss and prioritize the community issues they learn about until we are left with 3–5 topics. Students choose which topic they are most interested in pursuing and create a small group with the other students that choose that topic. Students build on community relationships developed through the interviews and draw on scholarly literature to cocreate work plans with local organizations that are implemented in the second semester practicum.

Students are expected to start their practicum projects over the winter break. The primary activity they undertake during this period is establishing contacts with community organizations and doing secondary research. The first several weeks of the practicum involve readings on CBPR (Israel et al., 2005) and provocative pieces on the role of community development professionals (e.g. Illich, 1968). We then alternate meeting as a whole class one week and as project-based groups for about 40 min each the next week. This ensures opportunities for the whole class to hear about each other's projects, do cross-group reflections, and for each project group to meet with me for more focused instruction and problem-solving.

Students engage in intensive, ongoing reflection in the practicum (Bradley, 1995; Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Eyler et al., 1996; Koliba, 2004). The main form of reflection is a series of three extended reflection papers that students write at regular intervals during the practicum semester. Students are instructed to use the *What/So What/Now What* reflection model (Reflection Toolkit, Northwest Service Academy, Metro Center, Portland, OR) that is based on Kolb's (1984) learning cycle. In addition to using the

What/So What/Now What framework, students assess their role and their work-group colleagues' roles in the project. Finally, students are invited to assess my role as instructor and offer suggestions on ways I can enhance their learning experience.

Participants and Data Sources

Following Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's (1998) recommendation for assessing cultural humility, I used qualitative methods to analyze the written student reflections from the 2008–2009 academic year. These papers provide an opportunity to examine the extent to which students express knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are aligned with cultural humility and the factors that promote this learning. I present an analysis of three of the five groups in the class, encompassing 12 students total, with three reflection papers for each student. I eliminated one group because it operated more in a consulting role than a partnership. I eliminated the other because their partner organization experienced a tragedy mid-way through the project, significantly changing the group's work and the focus of their reflection papers.

Data Analysis

Guided by the coding approach laid out in Miles and Huberman (1994), I developed a set of preliminary codes derived from literature on cultural humility, specifically indicators of knowledge, attitudes, and skills. I read each of the three papers, going group by group, developing and/or modifying codes as necessary. Text from the reflection papers was then reorganized according to the overarching domains of knowledge, attitudes, and skills and then into subthemes according to indicators of each of these domains. This task was done by hand; no qualitative software was used to cluster the codes. Names of all students and partner organizations have been changed to protect their identities.

FINDINGS: CHANGES IN STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND SKILLS

I had expected that the process of cocreating a CBPR with community partners would increase students' knowledge of social, political, and economic inequities and increase their awareness of their privilege; which in turn, I thought would lead to enhanced communication and negotiation skills with community members. Before presenting the findings on these domains of cultural humility, I introduce the three CBPR projects.

Group One: The Built Environment as a Barrier to Community in Taylor Heights

This group consisted of two female students. They worked in Taylor Heights, a densely populated lower-income neighborhood where one-third of the residents live below the poverty line and 34% of the population is African American or Latino. Both students were interested in transportation planning, and when they learned that three intersections along Taylor Street, a busy road cutting through this neighborhood, were among the top 10 crash locations in the region, they wanted to learn more about how this street affects residents' sense of community. At its peak, Taylor Street holds 25,000–35,000 cars a day and over 12,000 residents live in the abutting neighborhoods. With thousands of children needing to negotiate this street to get to school and hundreds of families relying on public transportation or walking to get to work, the students viewed this as an environmental injustice stemming from inequities in the built environment.

I put the students in touch with a colleague who works for a major hospital located on Taylor Street. I knew that the hospital was concerned about the danger the traffic posed to their patients and employees and that they had hired an outreach worker to build relationships with neighborhood residents. Even with this contact and mutual interest, the students struggled to form a partnership. As Leah, one of the students, said in her first reflection:

Admittedly, the major piece of our work plan that was missing was to make first contacts to form a strong partnership. . . . We have struggled with how to execute our ideas and how to direct our energy to producing something that would help practitioners better serve their community.

Denise expressed that the biggest barrier to their effort was “unreturned e-mails and unanswered phone calls.” By the second reflection, roughly 2 months into the semester, the students finally developed a work plan with the hospital's neighborhood outreach worker that consisted of them collecting data through street surveys and key informant interviews. They completed these tasks and presented their findings to their hospital partner at the end of the semester.

Group Two: Working with Young Women to Address Female Violence

The second group, consisting of six students—three men and three women, learned about rising incidents of violence among adolescent girls in the city during first semester key informant interviews. They also discovered that there were several initiatives aimed at middle school aged girls, but that there was little coordinated effort looking at violence among older female

adolescents. The students wanted to get the young women's voice into the conversation by partnering with high school aged girls to act as youth researchers. Amy expressed in her first reflection, "Our goal is to provide an outlet for young women to voice how they feel about female violence in their community and how they would like youth programs to address it."

This group was very efficient, using its size well to divide up the work. They identified three youth organizations that served young women and made contact with staff members. They asked the staff to identify two or three high school aged females who they thought would be interested in being youth researchers. They envisioned that the youth researchers would recruit other young women from their organizations for a focus group and that the youth researchers would facilitate the focus group. After the focus groups were completed, the Clark students planned to have the youth researchers assist in data analysis and dissemination.

Once they had a team of young women who agreed to be youth researchers, they conducted a training session with them. With the training, they created an intentional space to build a partnership with the young women. Concerned that they had done a lot planning prior to recruiting the young women, Susan explained:

We decided to go the most honest route we could and just lay out exactly what we envisioned for our project. . . . We also decided to allow their unique expertise be a strong part of the tactics we use for the focus groups. The training session became both a training session for the girls as much as it was a training session for us.

At the end of the semester, rather than do a formal presentation to the partner organizations, this group decided to have a *working meeting* where they copresented findings to the partner organizations with the youth researchers. Due to the powerful recommendations that the youth researchers made to address problems facing adolescent females, they received unanimous commitment from the agencies to transform their recommendations into reality.

Group Three: Building Organizational Capacity so Former Prisoners can Rebuild their Lives

The third group, consisting of four students—2 men and 2 women, partnered with ALLIANCE, a grassroots organization made up of former prisoners with a mission to help its members overcome the challenges of having a criminal record. Three of the four students in this group had prior involvement with ALLIANCE and all four were committed to its mission. Their project involved fundraising to support the organization's new income and job generating strategy that would help its members obtain quality employment in

spite of their criminal record. ALLIANCE also asked that the students' project help build the organization's fundraising capacity. To this end, the students organized a series of grant-writing skill shares. Jessica, in her first reflection, explained, "The goal of these skill shares was to pass on some of what we have learned about the grant-writing process and to make the concept of grants more accessible."

The students conducted two skill shares, one of which was a resounding success and one that was so challenging that it temporarily destabilized the group members' confidence in their work. In spite of this challenge these students were able to raise close to \$6,000 in just 4 months through grant writing and a fundraiser. They compiled all of their grant research, grant templates, and skill share outlines into a binder and on to a CD. In this way, they contributed to the organization's capacity in both the short term, through funds raised, and long term, through the compilation of fundraising materials and the skill shares. Not only was the group productive, they were also highly reflective and aware of their privilege in relation to other ALLIANCE members. They learned a lot about communicating across difference in ways that built solidarity in the organization. Members of this group continued to be engaged in ALLIANCE after the semester ended by participating in meetings and on the Board of Directors.

Knowledge

I derived two main indicators from the literature to assess whether students were acquiring knowledge aligned with cultural humility. First, I wanted to see evidence of awareness of the existence and extent of social, political, and economic disparities in the contexts in which they were working. I knew that they had academic preparation in these areas, but was unsure if they could apply that classroom learning to the community. Second, I was looking to see whether they understood the relationship between social, political, and economic dynamics and resulting beliefs and behaviors of community members. I only focus on the Taylor Heights group in this section because their cultural humility growth seemed to be limited to the knowledge domain.

Developing a Knowledge Foundation in Taylor Heights

It took Denise and Leah about 2 months to really get going on the project, but they gained important insights as soon as they started to do their street surveys. Denise stated, "Our street surveys are going surprisingly well, or at least better than I expected. I did not think that people would be as willing to talk to us as they are." In one of our small group meetings where we processed the reflections, I sensed that she was beginning to understand some of the political factors underlying resident inaction. She expressed that

the data could be used as “a tool for Maria to use in her community meetings to reflect the opinions of the residents.” But she thought it would be more effective if the data was used to plan more radical strategies, like organizing a human chain to shut traffic down on Taylor Street. However, she realized that “it is hard for Maria to be that radical, because of her position in the community, the school, and the hospital.” This insight about large institutions playing a role in maintaining the status quo indicated to me that she was internalizing knowledge about factors that maintain inequity.

Through a key informant, Denise also learned about how larger community forces affect the beliefs of residents in ways that inhibit community organization:

He said that as a former organizer in Taylor Heights that people are afraid of organizing because of the perceived repercussions. For example, one person he talked to did not want to get involved because she said that she had a son who was selling drugs and she did not want to get in trouble for that.

This insight helped Denise see that the lack of resident involvement may not be due to apathy, but rather institutional legacies thwarting residents' engagement (i.e., criminal justice).

Leah's reflections and discussions also indicated that she developed knowledge aligned with cultural humility. For example, initially, Leah felt the lack of response and interest they got from community members was because “they [residents] have learned to cope with and accept the situation.” Yet, in her second reflection she expressed emerging awareness of hidden community dynamics, “I think that there may be an underlying organization of the area, besides the traditional institutions we identified,” yet, she indicated that she did not have the skills “to get to that layer.” By the last reflection paper, it seemed Leah was developing the knowledge needed to identify underlying factors driving disparities and awareness that political and not just technical strategies would be needed to address problems caused by traffic along Taylor Street:

I was pretty detached from the concept of community organizing during the Going Local class. However, through the practicum I am able to clearly see the need. The bi-weekly meetings with you really enabled me to take a step back and really analyze our work. I chose this transportation field for this project with no idea that it would lead to a need for community organizing.

Attitudes

I derived three indicators from the literature to assess the extent to which the students were developing new attitudes toward community work in ways

aligned with cultural humility. First, I was curious whether students' new knowledge would lead to awareness of their own biases and stereotyping of community members. Second, I was interested in whether the students would gain new insights into their own privilege as a result of working on these serious community problems. Third, I believed that the combination of new insights about their biases and privilege would lead them to understand and be sympathetic to historical and institutional sources of the community's mistrust. In other words, I wanted to know if the students had insights into how their own background could influence their interactions with community partners. In this section, I discuss the dimension of attitudes in all three groups. For Taylor Heights, I did not see the emerging knowledge previously described translating into new attitudes. Within the *violence and young women* group, there were inconsistencies in the extent to which members developed new attitudes aligned with cultural humility. ALLIANCE members deepened already striking awareness about their own privilege and awareness of how their privilege affected relationships with community members.

New attitudes in Taylor Heights? The students in the Taylor Heights group began to develop a foundation of knowledge aligned with cultural humility; however, I did not see evidence that they connected the struggles they had with the project with their own biases and privileges. For example, Leah attributed residents' lack of interest in the project to the idea that, "They have learned to cope with and accept the situation." Although this may be true, she did not consider the possibility that community members may not trust a young White woman whom they have never met asking them questions about their perceptions of community. She also did not seem to consider ways in which partnering with the large hospital could have played a role in community members' lack of interest. When Leah did reflect on her own identity as part of the challenge she faced, she commented, "Initiation definitely seems to be the biggest obstacle to overcome in forming partnerships, especially from the position of a college student." Leah solely viewed her student status as a personal liability and did not seem to consider that the community could perceive it as a position of power and privilege posing a barrier to engagement.

A variety of attitudes emerge from working on female violence. Given that there were six members of this group, it is not surprising that I saw variation in group members' development of attitudes aligned with cultural humility. For example, in the first reflection paper, Steve conveyed a sense of distance as he spoke of himself as a researcher and the young women as subjects, "The only meeting we have had with actual subjects was our group presentation before the Youth In Action group. The meeting marked my first face-to-face interaction in the capacity of a 'researcher' with possible subjects." I attempted to unpack his language about *researcher* and *subjects* with him as we debriefed about the reflection papers; yet he persisted

with these constructs for much of the semester. In the second reflection, he expressed, “I was completely blown away and shocked by the maturity level and the analytical skills displayed by all the girls in the focus groups. The girls tackled extremely complex issues with great ease and poise.” His surprise about young women of color’s ability to have a serious conversation was an indication of his own previously unexamined biases.

Julie was the only student whose reflection consistently seemed to indicate understanding that her background could play a role—perhaps even a harmful one—in the types of interactions she could have with the young women.

I think that we could have noticed our involvement more and what it meant, but that did not always seem to be a priority among certain members of the group. . . . I said that we were the only White girls in the group and that none of us grew up in Worcester, went to an urban public school. [One of the other students] said she hadn’t even noticed that we were the only White females, that she felt completely comfortable there. I replied I felt comfortable too, yet I would never be colorblind and I don’t know how someone could not notice the dynamics in the room. . . . I think this should have been discussed previously because we went into these projects without even considering the concepts of ethnicity and race and I believe that is such a huge topic that I don’t see how we could overlook it.

In spite of this tension, working directly with the young women shifted something in the students. Amy conveyed:

Being a part of the focus group conversations and learning about the issues that many young women face with their families, friends, boyfriends, and in school was an eye-opening experience. As someone who experienced life as a teenage girl only a few years ago, on many levels I could identify with their emotions. However, the violence that many of these young women face in their everyday lives really signified that this, indeed, is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Over the course of the semester, in forging their partnership with the young women, I did see that group members’ assumptions about youth and their initial ideas about possible solutions to the problem were challenged. For example, Amy expressed:

Many focus group participants asked afterward when we would be meeting again and expressed that they enjoyed having a space to discuss these issues and have their opinions heard. . . . The focus groups, or conversations as I have come to think of them, not only give young women a chance to share their feelings and opinions with us, but each other. This

discussion allowed them to gain insight into each other's lives and see how similar their struggles and emotions really are.

In this quotation, I was happy to see Amy expressed less distance between herself and the girls by conveying a shift from seeing the project as research with focus groups to an initiative based on discussion and dialogue with potential for social change.

The ALLIANCE with ex-prisoners deepens culturally humble attitudes.

The four students working with ALLIANCE had experience working with diverse communities and with reflection. They seemed quite aware of how their positions as White, middle-class college students played a role in how they were perceived and accepted by the ALLIANCE group. There were differences, however, in how comfortable they felt with that difference and the extent to which it acted as a barrier to their effectiveness. One example of this came from their reflections after their first skills share. Rob wrote:

We needed to frame our own involvement differently. Will was much less comfortable seeing himself as an equal member of ALLIANCE than I was. We agreed that no one in the group needs to apologize for who they are and what they are bringing to the organization. We are all ALLIANCE members; we all know that. It is important to be mindful of your privilege and of difference, but that can't be the central theme when connecting with everyone else.

Will was surprised that the group members were upset with his contributions at the skill share. He had thought he had contributed positively and constructively. Yet, when they presented him with their concern that he spoke in ways that created an *us* and *them* dynamic, he realized that he did struggle with his identity as a member of ALLIANCE:

This whole situation was interesting to me because it highlighted my feelings of being an outsider. . . . I have participated and organized with ALLIANCE for years. . . . Yet I still feel like an outsider. This gets at the core of my questions and challenges about my motivations to do community development. . . . If I do not truly see myself as part of these communities, why do I continue to work there? What do I need to overcome the guilt, shame, and disgrace that I feel for being a middle-class White male? It is not easy to reconcile the fact that I am White, do not have a criminal record, and have been incredibly privileged. But, I believe strongly in the power of relationships, friendship, hard work, and consistency.

Part of the success of this group can be attributed to their effective process for project planning and their consistent examination of privilege. Linda noted:

We constantly debriefed our analysis of systems of oppression and privilege, without this analytical outlet I don't think I would have engaged with ALLIANCE so honestly and genuinely. . . . As a White ally, I think that engaging in solidarity work requires self-awareness about race and White privilege, a willingness to engage in those conversations and acknowledge difference.

Alliance group members came into the project with knowledge and attitudes aligned with cultural humility, their challenge came with how to act in the face of these dynamics.

Behavior and Skills

I thought that changes in behavior and skills would be an outgrowth of new knowledge and attitudes; students' insights about community dynamics and their own biases would lead to new ways of working with community members. I identified three areas in the literature that were aligned with the goals of the course and with cultural humility. The first area was regarding communication skills. I was looking for evidence of a less authoritative communication style, more skill in cross-cultural interactions, and increased ability to engage in participatory decision-making. The second area had to do with new data gathering and analysis skills. I hoped that students would approach research in a way that would build on strengths and assets in the community and simultaneously identify and analyze unequal distribution of power that erodes the possibilities of some groups, while perpetuating the privilege of other groups. Finally, I was interested in whether the students developed advocacy skills to bring their new knowledge to a larger public forum. This section focuses on the young women group and ALLIANCE because I did not see evidence of this area in the Taylor Heights group.

Culturally humble communication and research with young women. Members of this group seemed to develop some of the communication and research skills aligned with cultural humility. As they engaged in intentional work to train the young women to be youth researchers, they learned a lot about the strengths of the young women and how to cocreate a project with people from very different backgrounds using participatory decision-making. Evidence that this skill developed is that, in spite of different facilitators, locations, and participants, the three conversations with the young women led to the same place—that young women need more safe spaces to have conversations about the violence in their lives. In one of their debriefing and data analysis meetings, the youth researchers called this idea “The Sisterhood.”

At the end of the semester, rather than do a formal presentation to the partner organizations, this group decided to have a working meeting where they copresented findings to the partner organizations with the youth researchers. Due to the powerful recommendation that the youth

researchers made to create “The Sisterhood” and that it resonated with the partners’ experience about the lack of such spaces for low-income adolescent females of color, they received unanimous commitment from the organizations to support their activities. Three students committed to help create The Sisterhood with the help of several of the youth facilitators. One of the youth organizations provided space to the fledgling group and the other partners agreed to allow The Sisterhood to recruit participants at their organizations. One year after the conclusion of the course described in this article, the Sisterhood is still operational with a group of young women examining barriers that prevent their peers from accessing safe spaces and receiving the support they need to resist situations that put them at risk for violence.

Hard lessons the ALLIANCE group learned about cross-cultural communication. The four students in this group approached the second skill share with great excitement. At the first skill share, they went over grant-writing basics, but at this one they planned to go deeper and begin to cowrite a grant with ALLIANCE members. When they got to the skill share, however, and saw that none of the members who attended the first skill share were there, they shifted gears and decided to do the same workshop they had done the first time. But, quickly, they realized that this was the least of their worries because one of the participants who had not come to the first skill share began to attack the students and questioned their legitimacy. Rob reflected, “It took about 5 minutes for Ann to attack us. This continued for about 2 hours. We were rendered impotent and we did not deal with the problem effectively.”

The students were very upset and dissatisfied with how they handled Ann—a relatively inconsistent member of ALLIANCE—who was not only disruptive to them, but rude and hurtful to other members. They also expressed profound disappointment in what they perceived to be a lack of response from ALLIANCE staff about what happened. Rob expressed,

One uniquely frustrating aspect of the events was that [the director] never responded to our e-mail we sent about what happened in the skill share. It was a major disappointment for him to not give us feedback on the problem, and I sort of feel like he threw me under the bus on that one.

In our next small group session, I encouraged them to reach out to the director directly. Linda described how their conversation with him proved to be another turning point:

Instead of focusing on Ann and her problematic attitude, he turned the discussion back on us. He asked us to reflect on our reluctance to stand up to her. Immediately, the four of us had a “whoa!” moment, trying to really reflect on our obvious hesitancy to engage at that level. He

suggested that race might have played a role in this; Ann is Black and the four of us are White. We discussed the insider/outsider dichotomy which all of us struggle to balance. . . . As he pointed out, we all should have known that we have the trust and support of the other ALLIANCE members. Our genuine involvement with the organization has allowed us to build those friendships. If I, as facilitator, had confronted Ann I would have had the support of the others. . . . The conversation with him reminded me that this work isn't easy; we will make mistakes. . . . If we had always had the answers we would have failed to learn from new and uncomfortable angles, which is the only way solidarity work happens.

Although this group struggled with a particularly difficult incident, their ability to reflect on it and reach out for help laid the foundation for development of more effective cross-cultural communication and decision-making skills for the future.

DISCUSSION

The three cases bring to light similarities and substantial differences in the extent to which the students developed knowledge, attitudes, and skills associated with cultural humility. Individual, group, project, and course factors help to explain these differences and provide a guide for more effective processes to develop and evaluate cultural humility. At the individual level, it is important to take into consideration a student's educational preparation, such as his or her major; prior cross-cultural experiences, including living or studying abroad; and his or her personal expectations and goals for the project. For some students in the class, it was their first extended involvement in a community substantially different from their own. Other students, however, particularly those in the ALLIANCE group, had engaged with diverse communities, both in the United States and in developing countries.

At the group level, group size played a role. The projects had two, four, and six students in them. Each size had its pros and cons. Leah and Denise expressed how a small group made logistics, such as finding times to meet, more convenient; however, they both acknowledged that it made it also made it easier for them to become complacent when the project was not moving ahead smoothly. The group with six students appreciated the size because they were able to divide up their considerable tasks; however, a greater number of students meant having to contend with a greater diversity of opinions and working styles. This group did create house rules to manage this diversity; however at times they still found it difficult to come to consensus. Interestingly, the perspective most ignored—Julie's—was the one most aligned with cultural humility.

At the project level, the degree to which the projects reflected the six CBPR principles played a role in how students' cultural humility deepened (Israel et al. 2005; Minkler, 2005b; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003; O'Fallon & Dearry, 2002; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). For example, the Taylor Heights group achieved only minimal success in promoting two of the principles—active collaboration and colearning—and really did not touch on any of the other four principles. The *young women and violence* group, on the other hand, really did adhere to these principles. Their active work forging a partnership with the young women, their emphasis on building the young women's research and public communication skills, their sharing of the results in a working meeting that fostered dialogue, and the fact that the young women were instrumental in data analysis and developing recommendations all led to a culturally appropriate intervention that has been sustained for over a year. Similarly, the ALLIANCE group was able to cocreate a community-guided project, engage in colearning and mutual capacity building through strategies that enhanced the short- and long-term financial viability of the organization. The groups with deeper adherence to CBPR principles seemed to achieve deeper learning aligned with cultural humility.

Finally, aspects of the class supported students' ability to develop and/or strengthen a commitment to cultural humility. A frequently mentioned component was the one-on-one meetings with me. Starting in the second month of the semester, I met with each group for about 40 min every other week. These meetings gave students the space to work through challenges and provided me with an opportunity to ask them questions and/or directly provide my thoughts to get them to think about concepts related to cultural humility.

Having considered these factors, I now attempt to make meaning about the extent to which students developed cultural humility. Starting with the Taylor Heights group, perhaps one of the most important insights Leah and Denise gained was knowledge about how institutional affiliation can constrain the efforts of a community organizer. They both said they would bring this knowledge to their careers. Also, some of their assumptions about why people do not get involved in community improvement were challenged. By conducting a key informant interview, their assumption that people have just learned to cope with the problem was tempered by insights into what prevents people from getting involved, including fear of police. Although there was limited evidence that either student reflected deeply on their own privilege, Leah and Denise's reflection papers demonstrate growth in cultural humility, particularly in the area of new knowledge and, to some extent, challenged beliefs.

The students in the female violence group had prior knowledge about race and societal inequities; however, it appeared that for many of them this knowledge was derived from books and not experience. The primary shift in attitudes I saw in this group was that, rather than seeing themselves as the

expert, they began to understand that they were students of the community, with much to learn from the young women (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). This development was expressed in different ways, for example, one student reflected on how he saw himself less as the primary driver of community change to that of a facilitator of community process. Another expressed less distance between herself and the young women as her perception of the project shifted from research to cocreating *The Sisterhood*. All of the students commented on the communication and cultural brokering skills they developed when recruiting and working with youth representatives. Yet, only Julie consistently reflected on how their position of privilege could affect their project. Although the shift from expert to student was a very important step, members of the group still have to face their discomfort and even resistance to considering privilege as a factor in community development work.

The ALLIANCE group's reflections consistently expressed their cultural humility. It was clear that their struggle with privilege preceded their involvement in the practicum. This group had knowledge about institutional racism and had explored their personal attitudes about racial, ethnic, and other types of stereotypes and biases. However, it appeared that they had not acquired the skills to navigate the experience they encountered in the second skill share. Initially, they were rendered paralyzed by the encounter with Ann. Their intentional group process, written reflections, and group meetings with me helped the students develop the skills they needed to approach the leaders and members of ALLIANCE about the incident. The practicum class gave these students the space to become aware of, and then practice, the skills relevant to cross-cultural communication and conflict negotiation (Smith et al., 2007).

The analysis of these cases leads to three recommendations to incorporate cultural humility as an objective in community-engaged learning, such as internships, community-based research, and service learning courses. First, intentional class discussions about privilege are needed at the outset of such experiences and courses. Although the students were exposed to literature on structural causes of inequities, particularly in the first semester course, we did not delve enough into students' personal experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. Given that most students in the course were White and middle-class, this was a counterproductive omission. There are many exercises on privilege and institutional racism that have students consider their own histories and backgrounds in a way that would bring a needed personal connection to the topics. Second, to reinforce a focus on privilege throughout the semester, questions should be added to the reflection paper assignments that would have students explore how their beliefs and attitudes toward race, class, sexual identity, etc., change as they engage with their community partners and projects. Third, an assessment tool that explicitly monitors the development of cultural humility is needed to assist both teaching and learning. To this

end, the coding framework I developed could be formalized into a rubric for reflections, adding a new dimension to the work of Bringle and Hatcher (1999) and Koliba (2004) on assessing student reflections.

Although this article makes contributions to the service learning and community-based research fields, there are several limitations of the analysis. First, the relatively small number of students in total, and that they come from similar backgrounds, limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, although I had a general sense of the students' backgrounds, I did not systematically collect information about their family background, prior experience working in diverse communities, or baseline attitudes and beliefs about race, ethnicity, or culture. Such information would be important both for teaching and assessment purposes. Third, the reflection papers appeared to be most effective at capturing attitudes aligned with cultural humility, but were less effective at assessing knowledge and skill development. Reflection assignments that deliberately inquire about knowledge and skills could overcome this limitation.

CONCLUSION

To confront stark inequities in areas such as education, health, and housing and be able to work in diverse communities, community development professionals require many forms of teaching, learning, and training. Professionals need knowledge about community development's policy legacy and theoretical and conceptual debates. They need skills in areas such as theory application, conflict negotiation, community organizing, finance, geographic information systems, planning and zoning, and nonprofit management. Equally important, but perhaps less often covered in community development graduate programs, is incorporating multiple opportunities for students to confront their own beliefs and attitudes about power, racial and economic privilege, and working with diverse groups and communities. By privileging the voices of the students, this article demonstrated the ways in which CBPR supported by regular group meetings with the instructor and guided written reflections helped to develop and/or deepen the knowledge, skills, and beliefs associated with cultural humility.

REFERENCES

- Arches, J., & Apontes-Pares, L. (2005). Dilemmas for university–community partnerships and service-learning. *Humanity and Society*, 29(3/4), 209–227.
- Betancourt, J., Green, A., Carrillo, J., & Ananeh-Firempong, O. (2003). Defining cultural competence: A practical framework for addressing racial/ethnic disparities in health and health care. *Public Health Reports*, 118, 293–302.

- Bradley, J. (1995). A model for evaluating student learning in academically based service. In M. Troppe (Ed.), *Connecting cognition and action: Evaluation of student performance in service learning course* (pp. 13–26). Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States/Campus Compact.
- Bingle, R., & Hatcher, J. (1999, Summer). Reflection in service learning: Making meaning of experience. *Educational Horizons*, 179–185.
- Cashman, S., & Seifer, S. (2008). Service-learning: An integral part of undergraduate public health. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 35(3) 273–278.
- DeFilippis, J., & Saegert, S. (2008). *The community development reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Eyler, J. (2009, March). *Effective practice and experiential education*. A paper presented at the conference on Liberal Education and Effective Practice, Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise, Worcester, MA.
- Eyler, J., & Giles, D. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Eyler, J., Giles, D., & Schmiede, A. (1996). *A practitioner's guide to reflection in service learning: Student voices and reflections*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.
- Illich, I. (1968). To hell with good intentions. In B.R. Barber & R.M. Battistoni (1999) (Eds.), *Education for democracy: Citizenship, community, service* (pp. 453–458). Revised printing. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt.
- Juarez, J., Marvel, K., Brezinski, K., Glazner, C., Towbin, M., & Lawton, S. (2006). Bridging the gap: A curriculum to teach residents cultural humility. *Family Medicine*, 38(2), 97–102.
- Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Koliba, C. (2004). Assessing reflection assignments for public affairs courses: Implications of educating reflective practitioners. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 4, 295–309.
- Kumas-Tan, Z., Beagan, B., Loppie, C., MacLeod, A., & Frank, B. (2007). Measures of cultural competence: Examining hidden assumptions. *Academic Medicine*, 82(6), 548–557.
- Israel, B., Eng, E., Schulz, A., & Parker, E. (2005). *Methods in community-based participatory research for health*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Minkler, M. (2005a). Community-based research partnerships: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 82(2), ii3–ii12.
- Minkler, M. (2005b). Ethical challenges for the “outside” researcher in community-based participatory research. *Health Education and Behavior*, 31(6), 684–697.
- Minkler, M., & Wallerstein, N. (2003). *Community-based participatory research for health*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- O'Fallon, L., & Dearry, A. (2002). Community-based participatory research as a tool to advance environmental health sciences. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 110(2), 155–159.

- Shapiro, J., Lie, D., Gutierrez, D., & Zhuang, G. (2006). "That never would have occurred to me:" A qualitative study of medical students' views of a cultural competence curriculum. *BMC Medical Education*, 6, 31–38.
- Simons, L., Blank, N., Russell, B., Williams, E., & Willis, K. (2009). An exploration of the value of cultural-based service-learning for students and community partners. In B. Moely, S. Billig, & B. Holland (Eds.), *Creating our identities in service-learning and community engagement* (pp. 189–214). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.
- Smith, W., Betancourt, J., Wynia, M., Bussey-Jones, J., Stone, V., Phillips, C., et al. (2007). Recommendations for teaching about racial and ethnic disparities in health and health care. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 147, 654–665.
- Stoecker, R., & Tryon, E. (2009). *The unheard voices: Community organizations and service learning*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Tervalon, M., & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved*, 9(2), 117–125.
- Wallerstein, B., & Duran, B. (2006). Using community-based participatory research to address health disparities. *Health Promotion Practice*, 7(3), 312–323.
- Wear, D. (2003). Insurgent multiculturalism: Rethinking how and why we teach culture in medical education. *Academic Medicine*, 78(6), 549–554.
- Witkin, R., & Altschuld, J. (1995). *Planning and Conducting Needs Assessments*. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications.