MOTIVATING STUDENTS WITH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING VIA REAL-WORLD PROJECTS

LUO, QING

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, QingLuo@okstate.edu

1 ABSTRACT

In design education, some professors strive to find real-world projects from the community for students to practice their design skills instead of giving students speculative projects. This paper describes how a landscape architecture faculty used actual projects with real clients for academic teaching and community service through service-learning. Such practical, hands-on experience is crucial in landscape architectural design programs, as real-world projects provide students with more effective learning outcomes. Although service learning and community engagement are part of the CELA's mission, the focuses mainly have been on the issues of urban green spaces, community heritage landscapes, sustainable community design, neighborhood transformation, cross-cultural community engagement, urban design collaborative and rural development. As a result, students' learning and motivation stemming from philanthropic values have often been overlooked. This study applied real-world learning approaches with the additional focus on students' experiential learning experience, client-professional interaction, and community service awareness. The faculty selected three service projects for three design classes to engage in this study and conducted a follow-up survey. The data and collected comments were analyzed, and the results were presented in bar charts, data tables, and preference distribution curves. This paper examines how the students were motivated when they faced a real-world project with a real client versus a speculative project. It also revealed the benefits of being able to interact with real clients during the design process of a real-world project. The survey results confirmed that real-world projects provided benefits to students' learning and facilitated better teaching outcomes in design education.

1.1 Keywords

Real-World Project, Design Education, Real Client, Service-Learning, Community Service.