

4. Significant results that impact the field and the community
5. Effective presentation and dissemination to both scholarly and community audiences
6. Reflective critique to identify and articulate insight to improve scholarship and community engagement
7. Demonstration and promotion of leadership and scholarly contributions coupled with agency and parity by all participants and stakeholders
8. Consistent ethical behavior coupled with cultural competence and socially responsible conduct

In Tool Kit 1.9 we invite you to reflect on the extent to which these standards of engaged scholarship are known and implemented in your setting.

Tool Kit 1.9—Honing Your Craft—Refer to Exercise 1.9 in your workbook. Reflect on the standards of engaged scholarship. To what extent are these known and implemented in your setting? To what extent do you already meet these standards? Do and can you envision these as not only a standard for assessing engaged scholarship but also possible benchmarks for scholarly identity and behavior?

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ENGAGED TEACHING AND LEARNING



Theoretical frameworks were incorporated into our graduate programs to prepare us to be scholars in our respective disciplines. As such, nearly every field of study uses theory as a structure or plan consisting of concepts, constructs, or variables and the relationships among them that explain a phenomenon and that can be used to translate research into practice through process models consisting of implementation steps (Nilsen, 2015). The introduction to this book even describes the theoretical frameworks that shaped our approach to faculty development. However, most faculty receive little to no pedagogical preparation on how to teach or on the dynamics of teaching and learning in traditional classroom settings, let alone in authentic settings through community engagement. In an unpublished white paper for the Pew Charitable Trust, Russell Edgerton, president emeritus of the American Association for Higher Education and visiting scholar at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, noted:

The dominant mode of teaching and learning in higher education [is] “teaching as telling; learning as recall.” . . . This mode of instruction fails to help students acquire two kinds of learning that are now crucial to their individual success and critically needed by our society at large. The

first is real understanding. The second is “habits of the heart” that motivate students to be caring citizens. Both of these qualities are acquired through pedagogies that elicit intense engagement. (quoted in Swaner, 2012, p. 80)

Refer to Tool Kit 2.1 to reflect on Edgerton’s statement and your formal teaching preparation, if any, during your graduate studies.

Tool Kit 2.1—Refer to Exercise 2.1 in your workbook and reflect on Russell Edgerton’s statement as well as to what extent you received any preparation on the dynamics of teaching and learning during your graduate studies. In essence, where and how did you learn how to teach in a college classroom?

Your intuition as an educator likely allows you to shape effective learning experiences, even if you aren’t currently using a theoretical framework to do so. However, we argue that your community-engaged course will be even more effective if you integrate theoretical frameworks to maximize your course’s academic potential as well as minimize the risk of exploiting community partners or inflicting hardship. This chapter is not designed or intended to “proselytize,” or encourage you to “convert” to a specific theoretical model. Instead, this chapter is designed to inform your engaged teaching and help prepare you for articulating a theoretical framework of your engaged course to your students, community partners, colleagues, and later a performance evaluation review committee.

This chapter continues by providing a theoretical foundation for transformative education that promotes engaged teaching and learning. We also provide an overview of several theoretical frameworks that can and may inform your engaged teaching and student learning. This is not an exhaustive list nor is it a detailed description, as there is an array of frameworks to choose from that have entire books devoted to them. We draw upon an entire field known as SoTL, as previously mentioned. Potter and Kustra (2011) defined *SoTL* as

the systematic study of teaching and learning, using established or validated criteria of scholarship, to understand how teaching (beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and values) can maximize learning, and/or develop a more accurate understanding of learning, resulting in products that are publicly shared for critique and use by an appropriate community. (p. 2)

This chapter concludes with an overarching heuristic theoretical framework that incorporates the salient concepts presented here to inform and guide your engaged teaching and learning as an engaged scholar.

Transformative Education

As argued throughout this book, engaged teaching and learning can be a transformative educational experience. Harward (2012) characterized the gestalt of transformative teaching and learning as being composed of at least three dimensions. The first is epistemological, consisting of (a) a focus on “knowing that,” meaning students learn information and facts to be studied (this typically dominates the teaching paradigm); (b) “knowing how to” in which students apply their assimilated knowledge and skills; and (c) “judgment,” in which students discern a relationship between knowledge and action. We contend that the judgment component represents critical reflection that is explored in more detail in this chapter and chapter 9. Harward’s second dimension of the transformative aspects of engaged teaching and learning is psychosocial in nature. Here, learning is integrated with the holistic development of the student to have an impact on their identity, dispositions, and behaviors. The third dimension is the civic dimension that emphasizes the integration of learning about the self with the common good of others and the community as a whole.

Theoretical Foundations

If there is a cornerstone to the theoretical foundation of engaged teaching and learning, it is most likely the work of John Dewey. Benson, Harkavy, and Puckett (2007) provide an extensive and exhaustive examination of his life and work in the context of community engagement. Written during the recovery from the horrors of the World War I, Dewey’s salient points, focused on experience, democracy, and reflection, essentially frame what has become known as engaged teaching and learning. Early on, Dewey (1916) recognized and espoused the civic role education plays in advancing a democratic society in his landmark book *Democracy and Education*. His later books, *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educational Process* (1933) and *Experience and Education* (1938), introduced how experience and reflection on that experience shape learning. Likewise, he envisioned a *great community* developed and sustained through community schools. In 1899 Dewey espoused laboratory

schools to provide hands-on learning to accentuate meaning-making and problem-solving through experience and reflection in his book *The School and Society* (Dewey, 1976). This approach, although not implemented in authentic community settings, became the theoretical premise for engaged teaching and learning. In sum, Dewey advocated reflective action, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving to advance a democratic society and foster intellect in individuals, groups, communities, and society as a whole (Benson et al., 2007; Benson et al., 2017).

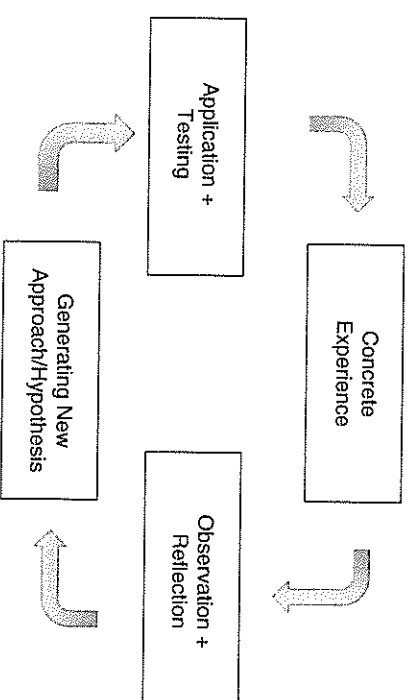
A Taxonomy of Educational Experience

In contrast to Edgerton's characterization of traditional pedagogy consisting of "teaching as telling; learning as recall" (quoted in Swaner, 2012, p. 80) as described in the opening of this chapter, Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) consists of a hierarchy of cognitive skills: (a) recall, (b) comprehension, (c) application, (d) analysis, (e) evaluation, and (f) creativity. The first two levels of the hierarchy reflect traditional didactic approaches of teaching and learning whereas the third level, application, is typically included within professional preparation programs or internships. The remaining three levels—analysis, evaluation, and creativity—are intentionally integrated within the learning experience through reflection and continued engagement in authentic settings. Similarly, Hart (2009) described a taxonomy of educational experience that shapes the consciousness of an individual in his book *From Information to Transformation*. The initial step or level is the pursuit and accumulation of information. Many students are at this concrete level, in which they equate acquiring factoids with learning. Much of the didactic approach of teaching perpetuates this format. It is essentially a transactional experience of paying tuition in exchange for a degree, which then presumably leads to a career. Hart continues by describing the second level as knowledge, in which direct experience leads to mastery of skills and concepts. Next comes intelligence, in which the learner integrates intuitive and analytic behaviors. The fourth level is understanding, followed by wisdom as the fifth level, which is characterized as blending truth with the ethics of what is right. Finally, this leads to transformation or waking up.

Experiential Learning Model

David A. Kolb and Roger Fry (1984) developed a learning model that reflects basic tenets of the scientific method and can be applied to community-engaged teaching and learning (see Figure 2.1). Their

Figure 2.1 Kolb's experiential learning model.



approach consists of four components and steps that can be initiated at any one of the four points. Incorporating Dewey's ideas, concrete experience is one of the four components, followed by observing and reflecting on what was experienced. The third step consists of generating new, abstract ideas or actions based on observation and reflection on the experience. These speculations or behaviors are then applied and tested in the fourth step. This continued spiraling process allows the learner to be actively engaged in the learning process as well as provides an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes.

Critical Reflection

Critical reflection is a key component to engaged teaching and learning. Influenced by Dewey and similar to Kolb and Fry's work, Schon (1987) described reflective practice as the process professionals use to gain insight into their way of knowing through experience. Coming from a background of design and organizational development, Schon viewed learning as having three components. The first consists of governing variables, which are factors that impact learning and behaviors. Second is an action strategy that people or groups employ to manage those variables. Third are the consequences of those strategic actions and decisions. The key here is the critical reflection that is involved in each of the three variables. He operationalized critical reflection in the following ways: (a) reflection-in-action, (b) reflection-on-action, and (c) knowing-in-action. Reflection-in-action is essentially engaging in a conversation with what is happening to seek insight and understanding. Reflection-on-action represents a post

hoc summative analysis of the outcomes of what occurred. Knowing-in-action or tacit knowledge is the application of what has been derived from the reflection process in new or similar situations.

Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory

Mezirow (1991, 1999, 2000) developed a transformative learning theory composed of 10 steps within 3 phases. The first phase represents cognitive dissonance or a disorienting dilemma when individuals encounter an experience that challenges their preconceived assumptions about the world. The second phase involves critical reflection through assessing the self and the sociocultural context in which individuals find themselves and the experience. The third phase is determining a course of action based on seeking, obtaining, and considering new information that can be applied to the experience or situation, resulting in transformation or change within the individual or the behavior. Students often experience disorienting dilemmas that challenge their assumptions during engaged coursework and their experience in community settings that differ from their own life's context. Reflection is the key to processing this experience in which an instructor does not rescue the student or "solve their problem" but, instead, accompanies them through what Welch (2010b) called the shadow-side of reflection to make meaning.

Pedagogy of Engagement

Colby and colleagues (2003) identified and described eight principles of best practice that constitute a pedagogy of engagement. Their principles are not limited to engaging with the community but certainly can be applied and transferred to that setting. Instead, this form of pedagogy entails active participation in the learning process rather than passively ingesting information from an instructor. The following are principles of best practice:

1. Learning is an active, constructive process.
2. Genuine and enduring learning occurs when students are enthusiastic about their educational experience.
3. Thinking and learning are active and social processes.
4. Knowledge and skills are shaped by the contexts in which they are learned.
5. Transfer of knowledge and skill occurs when they are learned in similar settings.
6. Intentional reflection and informative feedback is essential to

7. Students have different levels and clusters of skills.
8. Genuine learning is facilitated by the ability of students to represent ideas and skills in more than one modality as well as moving to and from those various forms of knowing.

High-Impact Practices

Kuh (2008) suggested high-impact practices (HIPs) have six characteristics that can be used by instructors as pedagogical constructs to inform their teaching and students' learning. First, HIPs require students to spend more time and deepen their investment of energy in purposeful tasks on an almost daily basis. Second, students and faculty must interact on significant topics and activities over extended periods of time. Third, this type of activity typically provides opportunities for students to experience diversity in a variety of settings with an array of people who represent different backgrounds and experiences. Fourth, frequent feedback is generally provided. Fifth, students can apply and test what they are learning in the classroom in authentic settings off campus. Sixth, HIPs can provide transformative experiences as students develop and engage in meaningful interactions with faculty, other students, and other stakeholders from different contexts. Swaner (2012) argued HIPs can be considered as forms of engaged pedagogy because they promote students' developmental and holistic dimensions of thinking, feeling, and relating while integrating cognitive connections from course content with social contexts and communities.

These theoretical frameworks may be new to you. You may actually have been using them. We invite you to reflect on these theoretical foundations in Tool Kit 2.2.

Tool Kit 2.2—Refer to Exercise 2.2 in your workbook to review and identify specific theoretical foundations presented thus far that resonate with you and/or that you have intentionally or unintentionally implemented in your teaching. Which, if any, of these concepts were new to you?

Theoretical Frameworks

Building on the theoretical foundation presented previously, the remainder of this chapter offers a cursory overview of a number of theoretical frameworks that can be used to support engaged teaching and learning.

Critical Theory

In many ways, Brazilian educator Paulo Freire might be considered the Dewey of critical theory, as his revolutionary ideas and concepts serve as a foundation in constructing critically engaged teaching and learning experiences. He viewed education as a political act and challenged mainstream pedagogy as a “banking” model in which knowledge is essentially “deposited” into the minds and consciousnesses of students and workers who were expected to be objective, impartial, and passive repositories of truth and facts intended to perpetuate oppression (Darder, 2015, 2017). As an alternative, Freire advocated for a critical consciousness to think skeptically about information and knowledge as well as its source. He described praxis as a pedagogy of reflection and action designed to empower the oppressed and bring about social change. Freire’s concept of praxis argues that dialogue designed merely to generate and disseminate knowledge is not enough as it must also include critical reflection on the social construction of reality to bring about change (Freire Institute, 2018). This process requires listening carefully to all stakeholders (especially those whose voices have traditionally been silenced or ignored), engaging in authentic dialogue, and demonstrating respect through actions. This level of listening goes beyond receiving auditory factual information to include “hearing the story” of those telling their experience, generating an awareness of the affective and emotional dynamics of the context, and maintaining awareness of the “sense of place” embedded within a community setting.

Feminist Theories

Feminist theoretical and philosophical traditions afford another framework for organizing the community-engaged learning experience. Jane Addams, a contemporary of John Dewey, created a pedagogy of feminist pragmatism that recognizes that people are motivated by a combination of emotion and rationality and that cooperative and nonviolent challenges to power and injustice can lead to social change (Deegan, 2017). Contemporary critical feminists have further articulated theories that have implications for teaching and social activism. In her book *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*, bell hooks (2003) reflects a spiritual approach of incorporating struggle, service, and shared knowledge and learning to create a “beloved community” (p. 35). Like prior feminist scholars and critical theorists, hooks views education as a political tool that can mobilize forces for

liberation and equity—in this case, for African Americans from colonization by White supremacist systems. We also want to lift up contemporary women’s studies scholars who have applied feminist theories directly to their service-learning and community-engaged courses. Seethaler (2015) argues that a feminist theoretical framework requires students to examine issues of power, privilege, and oppression in order to empower them to challenge social institutions and cultural practices that marginalize particular groups in their service-learning experiences. Further, Trigg and Balliet (2000) posit that for service (learning) to be effective it must adhere to principles of collaboration, respect, nonjudgment, and mutual transformation. Thus, we see implications for the design of course content as well as of the community engagement experience addressed in critical feminist theory.

Critical Race Theory

Though critical race theory (CRT) emerged from scholars in legal studies (Bell, 1980; Crenshaw, 1988; Matsuda, 1987; Williams, 1991) it can be applied as a framework for community-engaged learning. CRT explicitly names White privilege and White supremacy as oppressive forces that shape and confine the lives of Black Americans (and other people of color). This occurs through adhering to color-blind ideology, erasing the narratives of people of color in historical and contemporary educational texts and popular media, essentializing and stereotyping identity groups, and enacting macro- and microaggressions on people of color as the interpersonal, institutional, systemic, and cultural levels (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). In terms of addressing the pervasive oppressions asserted by CRT, scholars emphasize counterstorytelling to affirm the validity, as well as the necessity, of the voices, perspectives, and experiences of marginalized and oppressed groups to gain insight into social construction of race and ultimately dismantle it as an oppressive construct (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Tate, 1997). This approach is especially important in the context of curating engaged course content as it calls educators to seek alternative sources of information from traditional academic text to expose students to diverse and contentious perspectives on what students might have historically perceived as common sense. Further, this approach requires educators to prepare students to learn from the people they encounter and interact with in the community, and to see them as holders of valuable wisdom. Crenshaw (1991) extends CRT to illuminate the intersectional nature of “-isms” and how they magnify harmful

impacts on people who hold multiple marginalized identities. CRT calls into question traditional colonial and positivist worldviews perpetuated in academia and how those translate into concepts and practices of education and service.

Social Development Theory and Constructivism

Vygotsky (1978) proposed a theory of learning that incorporates social interaction and social learning. A key component of his model that clearly reflects the importance of community partners as cocreators is his concept of the *more knowledgeable other* (MKO), who can be any individual who holds more knowledge or experience than a learner and is perceived as and takes the role of a coach or mentor. One might assume this to be the instructor but it can be students as well as community partners as public scholars. The MKO is then integrated into what Vygotsky called the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD), whereby the learner is allowed to develop or construct skills on their own, but with the guidance of the MKO. In essence, a student or a group of students is provided a set of tools to apply in the learning setting to “construct” their own learning experience. Vygotsky contended that the shared use of tools provides a sociocultural context that promotes social interaction through shared experiences. The metaphorical use of the words and concepts of *tools* and *constructing* has contributed to a related theoretical framework of constructivism in which learning and knowledge are thought to be socially constructed.

Constructivism is an alternative to positivist and objective inquiry in which knowledge is coconstructed through a variety of coordinated activities and human interactions (Schwandt, 1994). A heuristic and spiraling framework of iteration, analysis, and critique, followed by reiteration, reanalysis, and recritique, is essentially a form of reflection that is employed by multiple stakeholders or “knowers” to collaboratively create a construction that emanates or evolves from inquiry to determine if they “work” or “fit” with a credible level of understanding (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This shared inquiry acknowledges and incorporates the values and perspectives of both the researcher and research participants. These constructions are used to interpret experience and make meaning. In the context of engaged teaching and learning, the concept of coconstructing knowledge in authentic settings *with*, as opposed to *for*, community partners reflects the democratic dimension of community engagement.

We now invite you reflect on these theoretical frameworks in Tool Kit 2.3 to identify which may resonate with you and why.

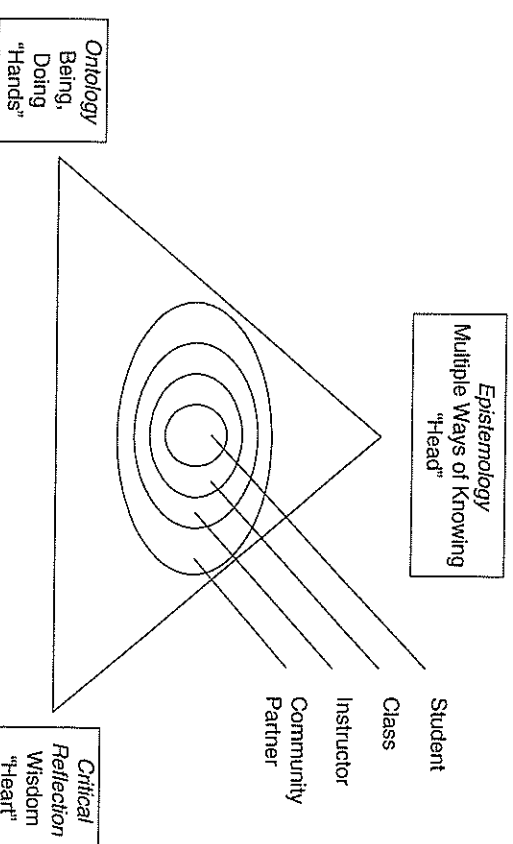
Tool Kit 2.3—Refer to Exercise 2.3 in your workbook. Reflect on and discuss the premise and constructs of these theoretical frameworks. Which ones resonate with you and why? Which, if any, of these constructs were new to you? Are any of these applicable to the engaged course you are teaching or plan to teach?

A Triadic Theoretical Framework for Engaged Teaching and Learning

To summarize, we offer a very basic triadic theoretical framework for engaged teaching and learning that incorporates many of the salient pedagogical concepts presented previously. In essence, engaged teaching and learning are composed of the following components: (a) epistemology as multiple ways of knowing with an emphasis on the intellectual development of a student as well as generating new knowledge that builds capacity for society at large, (b) ontology as a way of being or doing in the world by applying what is learned and experienced, and (c) critical reflection to contemplate and make meaning of the learning and doing (see Figure 2.2). To simplify, this framework consists of and integrates the *head, heart, and hands*.

This framework incorporates tenets of experiential learning espoused by Hutchings and Wutzdorff (1988), whereby students bridge the

Figure 2.2 Integrated triadic framework for engaged teaching and learning.



“knowing” or study of something with “doing” the subject, which is mediated through reflection. However, as discussed throughout this book and accompanying workbook, we advocate for and apply a democratized form of public scholarship that provides and allows for multiple ways of knowing and that includes the perspective of the community (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). This expanded epistemological perspective offers multiple ways of knowing and includes an array of theoretical frameworks briefly described previously that offer alternative perspectives on and approaches to teaching and learning. Similarly, we argue that the ontological component of this engaged framework not only includes but also transcends application as a form of practicing assimilated knowledge and skills to promote a way of being an engaged citizen (Colby et al., 2003). Finally, critical reflection, as espoused by Dewey (1933), Schon (1987), and Mezirow (1999, 2000), provides an opportunity for students to intentionally consider and integrate their experience into what they are learning as well as how to function and be in the world to become what Hatcher (2008) calls a *civic-minded professional*. Each of the triadic components of this framework must be implemented to be considered as engaged teaching and learning (see Tool Kit 2.4).

Tool Kit 2.4—Refer to Exercise 2.4 in your workbook to discuss the triadic theoretical framework of engaged teaching and learning.

Honing Your Craft

We began this chapter by acknowledging that theoretical frameworks of teaching and learning are often somewhat unknown to many faculty members. Theoretical models are not merely abstract philosophical tenets to “believe in.” They are, in fact, principles that guide our practice. They become, in essence, benchmarks for us to use to critically reflect on and assess what and how we’re doing as we cocreate and codisseminate new knowledge with our students and community partners.

The constructs presented in this chapter may very well challenge our traditional assumptions regarding teaching and learning, including the notion that education can be a form of political action. In one respect, the civic dimension of engaged teaching and learning reflects Aristotle’s depiction of *politikos* as affairs of the state so students learn that they, as *politikos* or “citizens,” are responsible for making decisions about the affairs of the state. In another respect, the critical theory described

briefly here reflects overt and explicit political action to bring about social justice. The political aspect of critical theory may be more applicable to certain types of courses and disciplines than others. That said and as we will see through examples in later chapters and exercises in the workbook, even traditional “hard science” courses such as environmental studies and biology can explore political issues such as environmental racism and the implications it has on both the student as preprofessional and the policies that impact marginalized neighborhoods.

We also recognize and acknowledge that both of these political perspectives represent an alternative to a traditional notion of objectivity that is embedded in academic culture. Therefore, some of these ideas may be new, even creating what Mezirow termed a *disorienting dilemma* that challenges your previous assumptions about scholarship. Keep in mind that even the most seemingly innocuous act, such as choosing a textbook for a course, reveals our personal, professional, and academic preferences and biases. The notion of reciprocal validity (Welch et al., 2005) is a hybrid approach in which traditional positivistic approaches are combined with and enhanced by the voice and perspective of participant voices, such as students or community members, in ways that cause Baer and Schwartz (1991) to ask the provocative question whether “we [scholars] are presumed more rational than ‘they’ [practitioners or laypeople]” (p. 232). This approach allows scholars and teachers to determine if the theoretical foundations articulated in the literature and taught in classrooms are accurate and/or applicable (see Tool Kit 2.5).

Tool Kit 2.5—Honing Your Craft—Refer to Exercise 2.5 in your workbook to discuss ways of honing your craft by incorporating theoretical frameworks and constructs into your course.

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A Guide for Faculty Development

MARSHALL WELCH AND
STAR PLAXTON-MOORE



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2019

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Distributed by Stylus Publishing, LLC.