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TOWARD AN ECOFEMINIST EMBODIED PEDAGOGY: A STUDY OF DIFFERENCE IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE COMMUNITY WRITING COURSES

by

RACHEL DORTIN

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School of Wayne State University,
Detroit, Michigan
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2020

MAJOR: ENGLISH

Approved By:

________________________________________
Advisor

________________________________________
Date
DEDICATION

To my parents, for their endless support despite never understanding my desire to keep getting more degrees (or more loans); to Delani and Lujine, without whom I’d have given up long ago, and to Jeanette Winterson’s *Written on the Body* for sparking within me an interest to write about the body. And most importantly—to my students. I wouldn’t be here if it weren’t for you. Thank you for challenging me—every day—to be better.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION—ESTABLISHING A NEED FOR NEW APPROACHES SERVICE- AND COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING

Introduction

Within the parameters of Composition Studies, service-learning (SL) and community-engagement (CE) initiatives have historically attempted to bridge the gap between the university and the public sphere within which it exists (Cushman, 1996; Schutz & Gere, 1998; Deans, 2000; Weisser, 2002; Mathieu, 2005). SL and CE are both frequently used phrases that encompass a wide variety of writing and learning activities, ranging from volunteerism and internships to the integration of students into the fabric of the community (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002; Simmons & Grabill, 2007; Scott, Longo, & Wills, 2007). There are disparities between the outcomes of these two approaches, but I use SL and CE interchangeably in this project because I perceive volunteerism as a separate entity; per my definition, SL and CE are community-driven while volunteerism is university-driven. When speaking about both approaches simultaneously, I use SCEL to mean service- and community-engaged learning. Due to their perceived ability to increase student motivation and connection to the material taught in general education courses, such as first-year composition (FYC) and other writing classes, SCEL initiatives have become increasingly prevalent in the university. Within these courses, educators have traditionally been tasked with the responsibility of preparing students to read and write academically and those classes are expected to give students the skills necessary to succeed in their major courses as well as the workforce. Often, however, facilitating the acquisition of these skills has come at the expense of making a significant contribution to the communities in which students learn. Students are often isolated from engaging with the community; participation in non-academic writing is one means by which students can practice civic engagement and develop a sense of citizenship. This process allows students to learn the value of the “extracurriculum of composition” (Gere, 1994, p. 75), or rather
to learn that there is value in the kinds of composing done *outside* of the university. This work helps students to see writing as a means for productive change within their community rather than as arbitrary assignments completed for a letter grade alone. This is the ideal outcome, but often when students engage their communities through writing, there is little instruction on *how* to do so. The outcome, then, is still often the same: students view community work like any other class assignment, albeit one done in a different spatiality.

SCEL courses, particularly those that lend themselves to volunteerism, often send students into the community to seek out difference. Through this process, students view the community as the “other” in need of service from students to improve their condition. Thus, students view academic writing practices as a method to “improve” the community rather than as one means by which to construct a mutually beneficial relationship rooted in change. One common goal of university-community collaborations is to encourage a critical reflection on how institutions themselves create and reify difference between communities. However, students are rarely taught how to think critically about *why* the conditions are the way they are (Schutz & Gere, 1999). Our intention as educators is often for students to leave those community encounters having learned not only the pragmatic skills associated with the course learning outcomes, but also understanding how difference is constructed. Further, students should be encouraged to consider the role they play in both facilitating and mediating difference between themselves and their communities. Unfortunately, due to the difficulty associated with facilitating SCEL courses, meeting university learning outcomes, and ensuring that students’ writing skills improve, instructors often neglect to examine how communities are constructed. There is little time to problematize how binary driven definitions of “community” impact our student’s approach to SCEL, and thus it often falls to the wayside.
To ensure this happens, I argue for a SCEL pedagogy that attunes directly to the body. This pedagogy takes up the ways in which difference is created and recreated through embodied encounters. I theorize that community boundaries are often demarcated based on similarities and differences in our bodies and embodied experiences—a defining factor which not only needs to be problematized, but needs to be taught and practiced within the classroom to help students better engage the community. Such a pedagogy can help students navigate how their physical and mental embodiment—including factors like race, sexuality, gender, socioeconomic status, and ability—impact their own conception of both community and difference. Moreover, an embodied pedagogy that focuses on issues of difference can prime students to understand how a community member’s physical and mental embodiment might likewise impact their conceptions of university students, which can give students the tools to collaborate effectively with those from whom they differ. The goal is to help students view difference as something to learn from rather than something that divides them from the community. This project’s urgency lies in the fact that teaching students to engage in and with their communities has often fallen to the wayside in exchange for teaching students to engage with texts and writing prompts to which students assign little external meaning. When classroom activities are largely disconnected from the community, the result is often a lack of intrinsic motivation for students to find value in their community encounters (Long, 2008; Ryder, 2011). This dissertation, then, assesses the impact of a course designed around the concepts of embodiment and difference and argues that for SCEL to succeed, instructors must help students problematize the ways in which they construct community; ultimately, this project contributes to the current conversation on best practices for SCEL courses.

Statement of the Problem
There are perceived differences regarding the best method for structuring a community-based writing classroom. There exists a dichotomy between classrooms that cater to skill-building approaches exclusively driven by the university and those classrooms that accommodate SCEL programs driven by the community’s needs. As a result, students, communities, and instructors experience a disparity in pedagogical goals and outcomes for those courses, which almost always places students in the position of “sightseers rather than explorers; instead of discovering for themselves, they follow the path laid out in text and lecture, taking notes on what the tour guide/teacher points out” (Dorman & Dorman, 2006, p. 119). Students should, of course, learn the practical skills necessary to engage in the literate activities required of both the university and the workforce. However, this project argues that preparing students to engage in civic dialogue should be the main goal of community-based encounters, prioritizing exploration and immersion within the community. Such education allows students to experience the world they will enter after earning their degree and can produce a stronger sense of transferability, which is one main reason why SCEL courses can and should be infused in general education courses. Students often struggle with the transfer of skills when a course does not specifically focus on how students might use those skill sets outside of that class (Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014). Community-based writing brings the application of writing outside of the course to the forefront, which encourages critical reflection on transfer.

In addition to preparing students to use this knowledge outside of the classroom in productive ways, establishing a framework for how difference is constructed through embodiment prepares students for future encounters with difference. Courses designed with this in mind ensures that students leave with strategies to productively communicate in addition to those standardly taught in academic contexts, which can result in more critical, civic-minded community members.
Furthermore, encounters in which the students are empowered to question how communities are constructed, rather than remain complicit in accepting difference as a negative, increases students’ agency to deconstruct those artificial binaries that separate them from the community. This approach motivates students to establish a sense of responsibility, not only for their own education but for the well-being of their community and its members. In this way, learning through and with the community helps students develop those difficult academic reading and writing skills while also preparing them to participate actively in the work of citizenship. This creates classrooms that help meet the needs of the community while also satisfying programmatic and university-wide learning outcomes (Grabill, 2007). SCEL pedagogy, then, can help educators bridge the gap between the university and the community while benefitting all parties rather than prioritizing one over the other; this system of reciprocity establishes relationships between community partners and can help to prevent the altruistic, saviorism often evoked through volunteer-based courses (Cushman, 1996).

SCEL initiatives have been incorporated into general education curricula for many reasons, one of which being that they can decrease the difficulty of achieving programmatic expectations for writing. Standard writing courses often seem distant from students’ personal goals and can thus result in students viewing their work as a means to an end rather than a means to affect change. In part, this distancing happens because of the socio-spatiality of the classroom. For example, students often feel that physical classroom spaces are uninhabitable and sterile. This perception negatively impacts university teaching because students feel less comfortable in the space and are thus less energized to understand the transfer of skills between learning environments. Further, Reynolds (2007) explained that the expectations of the institution coupled with the spatiality often result in students forgetting that “writing can be studied or understood only in a cultural context”
(p. 176). Without a cultural context, the practice of writing is less meaningful and the skills less transferable. In other words, when writing feels devoid of context—in particular, a context that is relevant to the students—the skills lose value. And in the same vein, students are less likely to immerse themselves within the community. Rather, they unintentionally distance themselves and perceive that there is a stark contrast between the “us” of the university and the “them” of the community beyond the university. In this way, teaching academic writing in a classroom isolated from the “real world” fails to facilitate the goals of standard “institutional pedagogies [that] portray students as professionals in training” (Long, 2008, p. 164). As Long furthers, if educators are to successfully facilitate courses that prepare students to “go public in their professional roles,” the university needs to alter their expectations regarding “the rhetorical practices students take with them into the workplace” (p. 164). The classroom is often an ineffective space for students to practice going public in professional roles because, as Reynolds (2007) argued, they are often stripped of the cultural positionalities that influence communicative work; it is a space in which students learn skills devoid of context. The responsibility for the classroom, then, is to prepare students to engage with unfamiliar discourse communities beyond the university and work to change this “outmoded practice [by replacing] it with a more robust one” (Long, 2008, p. 166). I argue that such a shift can be facilitated by contextualizing writing instruction within the community while problematizing the ways in which we define and respond to communities; thus, SCEL is an ideal solution for producing more rhetorically aware learners and, ultimately, more critically conscious citizens.

**Overview of Study Design**

To establish a pedagogy that might achieve the aforementioned goals, the present study was conducted in two phases: first, I examined the ways in which teachers of SCEL courses
perceive the connection between the work done in the classroom and its influence on the ways students move into the community. These surveys and interviews looked directly at the ways in which the idea of the body and embodied experience are currently understood and discussed in the facilitation of SCEL courses and asked what need they saw for such a pedagogy. Based on feedback from these instructors and my own research within community writing and ecofeminist theory, I designed and taught two sections of English 3020: Writing and Community at Wayne State University (one online and one offline) in Winter 2019. These courses specifically address the ways in which the body and perceived embodiment create, reify, and facilitate encounters with difference. In teaching these classes, I wanted to explore how focusing explicitly on these concepts could better empower students to engage in the deconstruction of socio-spatial differences and encourage more meaningful engagement with the community. I designed this course based on suggestions from the instructors I spoke to in Phase One and focused on the role one’s physical body plays in the construction of difference. I intended to explicitly connect classroom pedagogy with community experience through a succinct focus on the body and how it moves through socio-spatial conditions to construct and reify difference. Further, I was interested in understanding how students currently define community based on embodiment and difference and how shifting their definition of community might produce stronger civic engagement.

Phase Two of my study was conducted with the students enrolled in these courses. I conducted an initial survey to understand how my students understood the connection between the classroom and the community before the course began. I asked them to reflect explicitly on the connection between bodies, identity, and community engagement. Throughout the semester, readings, class activities, and assignments focused on the role of the body in the construction of socio-spatial difference. At the conclusion of the course, students completed an exit survey that
asked similar questions as the initial survey to show how their definitions and beliefs changed throughout the semester. Students also had the opportunity to participate in an interview in which they explicitly talked with me about their encounters with community partners. I analyzed the data to trace the ways in which students’ perspectives of embodiment, identity, difference, and community evolved across the semester. I used an inductive coding process of student journal entries to gauge the relationship between students’ perceptions of difference and the productiveness of their work with the community across the semester. I then make recommendations for ways to redesign SCEL curricula in such a way that students enter encounters with difference cognizant of the socio-spatial factors responsible for this divide and with tools to work through related conversations. Further, I offer strategies that instructors and students might use to facilitate more meaningful engagement with the community and invite future research on working with those from whom we differ rather than separating our academic inquiry from our communities. The ultimate goal of this dissertation is to provide a framework for re-envisioning the ways in which students approach their communities and the ways in which they define community in both traditional and online learning environments.

**Literature Review**

**Frameworks for service-learning pedagogy**

SL pedagogy is not a novel concept in higher education; in fact, it began to proliferate the university just prior to the turn of the millennium with the intention to decrease the innate separation between the university and community. Although these courses were seen across the university, SL often found its home within composition courses due in large part to a commitment to pedagogical reform and the inherent cross-disciplinary nature of these courses (Bridwell-Bowles, 1997). SL was the assumed next step of the social turn in academic writing that would
provide students with a tool for becoming “more engaged participants in the world they must shape for themselves” (Anson, 1997, p. 179). Thus, SL initiatives came to the forefront at the intersection of composition theory, critical pedagogy, and rhetoric. Deans (2000) explored this nexus and identified how these discourse communities came together to frame SL courses through an analysis of the relationship between theory and practice in three different classroom case studies. Deans argues that, at its heart, SL is “a pedagogy of action and reflection, one that centers on a dialectic between community outreach and academic inquiry” (p. 2). In other words, SL courses should not be isolated at the level of the individual writer, but rather they should incorporate a diverse array of knowledge from within the university and the community alike. This integration allows for a more explicit focus on the ways in which communities produce and circulate meaning. Based on this research, Deans identified three different conceptions of SL pedagogy: writing for the community, writing about the community, and writing with the community. Each of these frameworks serves a different purpose and demonstrates a different relationship between students and community partners; proponents for each model claim that they “encourage the development of capable and socially engaged writers” (p. 52). Like any pedagogical approach, however, each emphasizes one facet of the student-community connection while potentially neglecting the value of others.

In writing for the community, students often complete assignments that are much like standard workplace writing. In such courses, the community typically directs the writing that students do based on their current needs. As a result, an inherent risk of unpredictability exists within these courses, something that must be embraced as “opportunity rather than a liability” if these courses are to succeed (Deans, 2000, p. 62). Deans found that these courses were often considered the “most effective, most pragmatic, most needed version” of service courses because
they moved “students quickly into new discourse communities where they can provide immediate and useful service to understaffed agencies in genuine needs” (p. 80). Moreover, students were often motivated to complete these writing tasks because they understood the urgency for this work and could see the immediate benefit of their work for the community; in large part, this was because students recognized that their writing served some greater purpose. Despite the perceived benefits of writing for the community, these courses often devalue intercultural inquiry regarding difference. Further, there is a risk that students will perceive their contributions as “saving” the community partner instead of recognizing their situatedness in a mutually beneficial relationship. Such a separation has the potential to further the distance between the university and community that SL seeks to eliminate.

Writing about the community courses are those in which students perform community service and are then asked to write about their experiences. Service work can vary, but opportunities might include tutoring or working in a soup kitchen. The services that students provide rarely involve writing. Rather, the writing students produce is traditionally a reflection guided by the teacher that ranges from a “focus on processing the powerful emotions prompted by community involvement to critical analysis of the root social forces that put people in need” (Deans, 2000, p. 85). Essentially, students observe the community and then write about their perceptions of this work. Due to the flexible nature of this framework, writing about the community can take on a variety of forms with varying degrees of success. Instructors often find these courses most desirable because they do not upset the traditional rhetorical work of the university. The primary focus remains critical and academic inquiry guided by the instructor rather than pragmatic work directed by community partners and this design does not encourage upsetting the perceived hierarchy of power. Further, the genres taught in writing about the community
courses do not typically vary from those in traditional writing classes. Writing about the community is the easiest SL approach to integrate into an existing writing course, but these courses rarely eliminate the isolation between students and community partners and, like writing for the community, they can further reify the perceived difference as a negative rather than as a means for collaborative knowledge-making and social change.

Whereas both writing about and writing for the community models of SL maintain a certain distance between the community partner and the students, a writing with the community model asks students and community partners to work together on research and writing projects that address local community issues. Writing with the community tends to abandon standard forms of generally accepted academic writing without shifting completely into workplace writing. Instead, the produced documents demonstrate the inquiry on behalf of both students and community partners and are done collaboratively. Often, the result of writing with the community is “a comprehensive social action effort with writing and rhetoric at its center, rather than a retooled composition course” (Deans, 2000, p. 141). This model presents as most beneficial for the community partners and demonstrates potentials for students to learn how to collaborate effectively across difference; unfortunately, it is rarely taken up in SL classes. Writing with the community requires a certain kind of partner, flexibility in the course design, and time that many instructors, unfortunately, do not have. Writing with the community also requires an openness toward mindful collaboration and the ability to connect students and community partners; the value, however, is that students come to recognize their role within the community and work toward the collaborative goal of civic engagement. Each framework has benefits and detriments for students and the community alike; Deans argued that the best SL courses would include facets
of each of the three frameworks: writing about, writing for, and writing with the community, but recognized the difficulties posed by this type of teaching.

Monberg (2009) later expanded upon Deans’ (2000) frameworks for SL to add a fourth, more holistic, option: writing as the community. In this model, Monberg argued astutely that we must place historically underrepresented students at the forefront of SCEL course design (p. 22). In essence, Monberg calls educators to reconsider how they frame encounters with difference; rather than assume that students must move across borders to encounter difference and seek out the other, Monberg urged instructors to consider having students engage in the process of “writing as the community” (p. 24). This model does not assume that there are distinct boundaries between students and the community; rather, it invites those students who are often typified as the other to “see places they thought familiar in new ways; to see places and the people who dwell in those places as deep sites for historical and public memory that, once excavated, allow them to rewrite landscapes of cultural and historical consciousness” (p. 25). The impetus for writing as the community encourages us to re-envision what “service” means; teaching students to enter their own community and engage in activism is serving the community. Rather than creating an environment where students see the community benefiting from SL as lesser than, this framework encourages a collaborative mindset of working together to achieve a common goal. Writing as the community requires students, instructors, and communities to set aside their preconceived notions about this type of work and focus on how certain understandings of community, particularly those based on the body and difference, results in the failure to acknowledge how we can serve our own communities and see all communities as valuable.

While the intent is to focus on students who are standardly underrepresented, the benefits of this approach are not only for those students. Monberg (2009) argued that writing as the
community can broaden the perspectives of more privileged students and teachers. Additionally, this model can extend the scope to those communities that instructors might consider for SCEL because “there are many communities that might qualify as ‘needy’ when it comes to, for example, understanding, noticing, disrupting, and dismantling dominant ideologies and everyday practices that maintain structural inequalities and forms of oppression” (p. 25). By reframing our understanding of “neediness,” we can empower students to take the strategies learned in a SCEL class to participate in civic engagement in their own communities now and in the future. A pedagogy such as this has a strong potential to produce empowered citizens. The idea of writing as the community helps students reexamine their own communities and, thus, recursively examine the spaces that impact the development of their cultural identities and perceptions. When allowed to rewrite these perceptions by writing as the community with which they are most familiar, students can rewrite their own relationships to difference and help their communities to rewrite the constructs which produce difference. In essence, we can begin the work of problematizing how those communities are defined based on embodied experiences to produce more thoughtful and inclusive experiences rather than those in which students perceive themselves as the “savior” to a community in “need.”

The Problem of Volunteerism

Deans (2000) and Monberg (2009) both argued for courses that benefit students and community partners alike. However, these methods are often time-consuming for instructors and require a fair amount of navigation and flexibility from the community partner and with course expectations. For this reason, many SCEL courses fall into the trap of rote volunteer work and unintentionally neglect to teach and promote conversations across difference. In so doing, these courses often perpetuate the belief in “saviorism,” which is the theory that students enter into a
community of those from whom they differ, typically in terms of race, class, or other socio-spatial condition, and “rescue” those individuals from their conditions. Often, this type of work instills a hierarchical belief regarding the value of certain communities. When engaging in volunteerism, students often perceive the community as a “victim” to their circumstances, environments, and so forth. This belief causes the student to feel a level of satisfaction with their work but often produces an embodied experience in which they view themselves as inherently superior to those within the community (Castro, 2014; Maurantonio, 2017). Relatedly, despite its presence across the university and in many general education courses, instructors have often struggled to present SCEL as a “method of teaching multiple skills, including those included in more traditional classes, and conventionally understood now as legitimate areas of scholarly research” (Adler-Kassner, Crooks, & Walters, 1997, p. 2). Instead, however, many courses are entrenched in the notion of volunteerism because the university dictates to what degree students engage with the community, how they write about those experiences, and for how long those partnerships remain active (Mathieu, 2005); unfortunately, this approach gives little voice to the community, both within the classroom and in their own spaces.

Bickford and Reynolds (2002) likewise addressed this concern and attributed volunteerism models of SCEL to a “philanthropic or charitable viewpoint that ignored the structural reasons to help others” (p. 230). This perspective shift results in an inherent distancing from the concept of “activism.” Students and universities find community service initiatives appealing and rewarding, primarily due to the benefit they have in exposing students to external communities; however, both students and universities often want to dissociate themselves from activism because of the dissent in which it often results. Essentially, helping those in need is glorified while seeking to change the social constructs behind those encounters is vilified. Bickford and Reynolds sought to eliminate
the artificial binary between SCEL and activism that institutionalization has reinforced—a model which often results in an “assigned encounter with difference” (p. 232) wherein students are tasked with seeking out the “other,” observing them, and writing about those experiences. When seeking out difference, students often enter these interactions with preconceived notions that are further reinforced by the missionary mentality associated with community service. Many times, these preconceptions prevent community voices from being heard. In theory, reflection on these encounters intends to make students stronger citizens. However, this approach often “make[s] their social and cultural biases further entrenched” (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002, p. 233). When students are placed at the center of the encounter and the community partner is pushed to the periphery, these attitudes result in a stronger focus on helping those who differ from a charitable perspective, and neglect for the structural mechanisms that produce said differences continues.

Thus, the Bickford and Reynolds (2002) echoed the concern Deans (2000) identified regarding the distance between the community and the students: when students are not integrated within the community, they cannot form the attachments required to fully understand how social and institutional conditions produce that divide. Relationships should be structured based on shared connection rather than difference; these connections might stem from understanding that institutional structures produce difference or from a shared goal to foster social change (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002, p. 237). By collaborating on projects that explore the social structures responsible for producing inequality, differences may come to be potential assets when building a community rather than a means for isolating the other. In other words, difference should not be presented as a reason to serve a population, but instead a means to facilitate a common connection between the community partner and the students centered on change and learning from one another. Bickford and Reynolds hoped that these collaborations would result in meaningful acts of
dissent and ultimately argued that action should not be forced upon students, but organically cultivated through their experience. Students should be provided with the tools for activist work, but ultimately must find their own impetus for engaging in acts of dissent motivated by difference; most importantly, “students must be free to choose the arenas in which they engage in social change work” (p. 246). Educators, then, are responsible for making the classroom a place where students can navigate their personal situatedness within the relationships of power that result in difference. Moreover, educators must encourage students to safely engage in dissent designed to facilitate change. Ultimately, SCEL courses that produce critically engaged citizens with a commitment to their community are those that do not simply attach a mandatory encounter with difference to a preexisting course, but rather those that motivate students to find their own ideological connection to the community by navigating the socially constructed frameworks that are responsible for the production of difference. A pedagogy that focuses on the deconstruction of pre-existing frameworks of community begins with an understanding of what difference is and provides strategies for productively challenging those notions.

Facilitating Encounters with Difference

SCEL scholars have largely agreed that the opportunity for students to encounter difference is beneficial to their academic inquiry and social development (Reynolds, 2003; Mathieu 2005; Flower, 2008). Despite advocating for the value of engaging with those from whom the students differ, research on teaching students how to encounter difference productively is largely absent from this discourse. For example, Linda Flower (2008) advocated for a shift in composition pedagogy that would teach students *to speak with others*” (p. 2, original emphasis) and use their position “to move beyond the academy and form working relationships across differences of race, class, culture, gender, age status, or discourse” (p. 3). Flower argued for a “writing with the
community” approach to SCEL that encouraged students to “talk across difference” and “stand ‘ready to pursue’ the complexities of other people’s reading of the world” (p. 187) by having students and community partners engage one another in collaborative dialogue and writing. While there is inherent value in creating a space of intercultural inquiry between students and community partners, students in this model still don’t question the origins of said difference. The goal of these encounters is to eradicate stereotypes and help students understand how difference is socially and institutionally constructed. However, most discourse surrounding difference focuses only on seeking out the Other, not working to understand the relationship between the self and the other that SCEL intends to mediate. As a result, the concept of difference is further ingrained in students and community members rather than inviting a confrontation with the ways in which difference is produced systemically. Reynolds (2003) described one approach to recognizing these socio-spatial conditions as “learning to dwell,” or understanding how these spaces are “embodied and how the process of the social construction of space occurs at the level of the body, not just at the level of the city or street or nation” (p. 143). Thus, difference is produced via bodies, and bodies—not just geographical location—produce community. To understand how this produces difference is essential to students’ ability to view SCEL as a means for productively engaging the community. In other words, without education and facilitation, encounters with difference can further divide students from their community; if students are not taught to see themselves as producing difference, they will most likely seek out someone from across the divide and mark them, and in turn their body, as the other without exploring the reasons for this demarcation.

Reynolds explained that “bodies occupy a space between self and other, they ‘catch’ and hold the imprints or layers that create one’s habitus” (p. 144). Bodies, then, store our understanding of what makes a community. We identify those who are like ourselves based on the
imprints we see on their bodies; those who do not share those markers designate the other. For example, Coogan (2006) argued that inquiries into the “racial and class boundaries that divide us […] are not enough to generate social change in the strong sense of resource distribution or legislative victories” (pp. 107-108). Instead, we must come to contextualize the ways in which those boundaries are facilitating and reifying the separation of communities from one another. Determining not only how to navigate differences amongst the bodies in shared spaces, but how to navigate the ways instructors teach students to understand how they respond to and facilitate their encounters with difference is essential to the success of SCEL. Understanding the ways in which attitudes are formed about places based on the bodies which inhabit them, and the ways in which those perceptions often result in a hardening of boundaries that prevent movement across borders, is essential for productive community engagement (Reynolds, 2003, p. 148). Thus, instructors must design SCEL courses that produce collaborative spaces for students and community partners to engage in dialogue and dissent related to the social and institutional constructs that result in the separation and formation of difference. Both parties must feel open to negotiating the ways in which bodies impact the spaces of community writing and also the approach both students and communities have to the other based on their embodied experiences; I suggest a focus on socio-spatial conditions to reconceptualize our definitions of community.

**Spaces of community writing**

While Deans (2000) did not value one form of community writing over others, he made evident that the space in which students engaged with the community directly impacted the type of writing they produced and their level of interaction and connection to the community. Thus, it would be remiss to ignore how socio-spatial conditions construct difference and, in turn, community. Reynolds (2003) explored the connection between place and identity, writing that
“understanding of place and its role in the formation of identity and the production of ideology” (p. 50) must be present for place-based learning to make any sort of lasting impact. Reynolds furthered that in order to effectively practice place-based pedagogy, “we need to understand more about how spatialities become imprinted on a body and form a habitus, a set of embodied practices that learners and writers carry around with them—like skin, hair, clothing” (p. 175). The body and extensions of the body, then, are often signifiers of the spatialities which one has encountered throughout their lives. In the same way that space constructs identity, space affects the ways in which bodies move through space and interact with one another. Place has been frequently explored in SCEL research, but little has been written about the ways in which students’ bodies impact community-based learning practices. Although Reynolds and others have discussed embodied spaces, this work must be expanded to consider how instructors teach students to move beyond the classroom space and into the community.

Consider the following example from Reynolds’ (2003) *Geographies of Writing* in which she interviewed students on their experiences in Hyde Park, an area near the University of Leeds in England:

> It’s Asian people’s territory…. It’s fine if… you, you know, keep yourself to yourself and you’ve been quite separate about it, but if you—if there’s any attempt to mix in any sense then, that, you know, I’d be nervous about it, definitely, so you tend to sort of keep to yourself and walk with your head high and hopefully no one will bother you. (p. 98)

In this scenario, the student described a spatial experience in which their body determined the way they navigated the space. This encounter encouraged the student to progress in such a way that reified the socio-spatial constructions of difference and perceive the other bodies in the space as dominant—perhaps even threatening. Per Reynolds, this often occurs when “the bodies in a place are pretty much all the same, bodies marked as different will sense borders and boundaries, even if they haven’t been erected intentionally” (p. 145). The potential to encounter different bodies and
identities is a benefit of place-based pedagogy, but instructors must teach students to understand how bodies both inform and respond to spaces. Without doing so, these experiences risk being largely prohibitive and isolating for both students and the community. The solution Reynolds offers is that students should “[learn] to dwell, […which] might encourage a willingness to encounter difference” (p. 140). Reynolds is correct that embodied spaces must be dwelled in and students must find comfort with difference, but students will need strategies for interacting with the community and pushing through those embodied encounters to find this comfort. I agree that “one way to make connection to places from which we feel alienated is to plunge in, spend time there, and figure out what creates and upholds the hardened boundaries or the geographies of exclusion” (p. 158), but also advocate that students will not benefit from spending time in these spaces without guidance. Reynolds intended to address this disconnect by inviting students to map their spaces. Students identified spaces where they felt safe, spaces where they felt a level of discomfort, and places that they classified as “no-go,” or those that a student would not frequent. She found that students often isolated themselves to specific locations within their college campus and did not immerse themselves within the community beyond the walls. This mapping draws attention to the ways in which we predetermine what our experience in a space might be based on our embodied knowledge. Understanding how we perceive space is essential to a productive encounter with difference and re-envisioning community boundaries. As Reynolds writes, “if we can get people to overcome their prejudices about places, then maybe they can be ‘moved’—persuaded—to encounter difference, to walk beyond the city walls” (p. 173). We need a strategy for doing so, however, which has yet to be offered. Simply creating and looking at an embodied map of a space does not provide students with a framework for entering those spaces. Perhaps it
will persuade them to move beyond those self-imposed borders, but it does not give them tools for engaging with difference and rewriting embodied separations once they are in those spaces.

When students physically move through a space to engage and write with, for, and about other bodies, the students’ bodies cannot be neglected from the conversation. If the bodies in our classrooms are to inform our teaching practices, they must also inform the work that takes place in the community. As teachers, we have a responsibility to teach for the body rather than deny the body. For example, Reynolds aptly acknowledged that “places only become meaningful when bodies occupy them […] If the bodies in a place are pretty much all the same, bodies marked as different will sense bordered and boundaries, even if they haven't been erected intentionally” (p. 145). If place-based learning is to succeed, instructors cannot just acknowledge this shift; community-based pedagogies must address this difference and teach our students about how their bodies both affect and are affected by the spaces in which they engage the community. Communities are constructed by the presence and absence of certain bodies and, thus, those communities give space meaning. Students’ bodies construct the community within the classroom, but that is not the community they experience when their coursework takes them beyond the classroom. Thus, our pedagogies must attend to all bodies and empower students to understand how their bodies create community.

All spatial experiences are ultimately embodied, but without drawing explicit attention to the role of the body in the construction of a space, that influence is often neglected. This disregard for the role of the body in the creation of meaning is often reified by individual internalization, because “embodied acts always take place in real-time and in specific physical spaces, and they entail the usually skillful and often internalized manipulation of an individual's body and of tools that have become second nature” (Haas & Witte, 2001, p. 416). Thus, embodied acts and their
spatial connections are often unexplored in the classroom, which can result in problematized encounters for the students, the instructor, and the community partners. The body is frequently ignored pedagogically; bell hooks (1994) attributes this neglect to the fact that “the person who is most powerful [that] has the privilege of denying their body” (p. 137). In the classroom, this is often the instructor. If the instructor neglects the body, then the students will also neglect the body when they enter the community, thus unintentionally placing themselves in positions of power. Further, the “erasure of the body connects to the erasure of class differences, and more importantly, the erasure of the role of university settings as sites for the reproduction of a privileged class of values, of elitism” (p. 140). Those with privileged bodies neglect to realize that non-normalized bodies cannot be denied; their difference is constantly tenable. This erasure is essential to maintaining the status quo which privileges only normalized bodies, oppresses the other, and allows for the continuation of the institutional barriers which activist researchers fight against. The neglect of this conversation, therefore, is one means by which divides between universities and communities are solidified.

**Privileging the body in service-learning**

As has been described, neglecting to consider the bodies of those engaging in community-based learning creates the risk of furthering the aversion to difference that SCEL aims to resist. In using community-based learning to facilitate that connection between university and community, we cannot deny the body; our responsibility—to both our communities and our students—is to work against the erasure of difference that facilitates institutional isolation. To attune pedagogy toward the body, Monberg (2009) furthered Reynolds’ (2002) claim that students should “dwell, to move through a place recursively over time,” because it “might enable a more effective lens on difference than one that merely juxtaposes what seems different with what feels familiar” (p. 28).
Unlike Reynolds, however, Monberg’s concept of dwelling encourages students to reflect on the movement, or lack thereof, that takes place within a community rather than focusing on their own border-crossing experiences. In other words, writing as the community decentralizes the student and places the community as central to SCEL initiatives. Moreover, students whose bodies are typically othered “might benefit from a re-writing pedagogy, one that explicitly foregrounds an activist stance toward the communities with which they already identify or belong” (Monberg, 2009, p. 33). Educators, then, cannot assume that students’ identities are already fixed; rather, a pedagogy must allow them to encounter their own communities and navigate the ways in which their bodies and identities can change and be changed by the spaces in which they dwell. This teaching methodology also calls attention to the ways in which bodies and identities can shape a community.

As students examine their own relationality as the community, it can further help to lessen the growing divide between university and community. When community members are pushed to the margins of these partnerships and their needs become secondary, we risk those organizations becoming less interested in accepting university partnerships. Often, students demonstrate disinterest in the needs of the community and prioritize their academic needs over those of the partner. This mentality often results in work that goes uncompleted and, in such, is detrimental toward the community (Mathieu, 2005). To address this concern, Mathieu argued that educators must be more “tactical” in their approach to facilitating SCEL. In so doing, she advocates that university needs should remain secondary to those of the community. Furthermore, all instructors and students should “view the community as a source of expertise, foreground specific community needs, involve students in work that has specific rhetorical exigencies, and acknowledge their own limitations” (p. 110). In other words, SCEL can only succeed if the community partner is viewed
as an equal rather than as a means for students to achieve a programmatic requirement. Thus, Mathieu asserts that SCEL does not succeed in isolated encounters designed to facilitate students’ reflection on perceived differences, nor is it successful if the goal is only to advance one’s own professional and educational goals. Instead, SCEL courses should “meet the immediate needs and circulate knowledge in local communities” (p. 117). To facilitate this goal, Mathieu encourages instructors to design place-based courses that “focus on neighborhood spaces, ask students to create meaningful and often lasting documents of those spaces and blur the lines between classrooms and the streets” (p. 4). Courses in which service function as an accessory to classroom learning typically do not help the community in a meaningful way, but rather offer students and teachers opportunities to fulfill institutional requirements. Likewise, these courses do not help students to navigate difference and develop meaningful connections to the spaces in which they work and learn or the bodies that inhabit said spaces. These courses reify problematic definitions of community based on embodied perceptions and restrictions rather than empower students to navigate those separations.

To better connect with the community, there needs to be better integration of course goals and public goals. Weisser (2002) described the value of academic inquiry from a public perspective and placed an urgency on the institution to “help students develop the real skills that they will need to be successful in their lives both inside and outside of the university” (p. 123). By 'skills' [Weisser means] not only how to “write effectively for their future classes and careers, but also how to make well-informed decisions about the political and social issues that affect them” (p. 127). Grabill (2007) echoed this call, arguing that not only should we teach students to engage in the work of citizenship, but that we need to reevaluate how knowledge is valued. Thus, writing programs must be incorporated into the infrastructure of civic life and students must be prepared
to make knowledge in these spaces, something the university has largely failed to do thus far. Because “we have failed to understand rhetorical work in communities as work” (p. 2, his emphasis), we have not taught our students to use those rhetorical skills to facilitate rhetoric’s main purpose, which is “to enable the transgressive acts of the least powerful” (p. 16). Grabill argued that writing programs must facilitate engagement with the public and recognize that “‘authentic’ rhetorical experiences happen only outside of the classroom” (p. 114). Thus, without teaching students the value of the skills beyond the walls of the university, they will not understand how to engage in the work of citizenship and, although students could perhaps experience success within the university, they would be ill-prepared to adapt those literate and written skills to the work involved in active citizenship. We must encourage students to learn from the community and see value in the types of writing and work citizens do in everyday life to accomplish their goals. Students must enter these relationships openly, and instructors are responsible for preparing them to do so effectively.

Unfortunately, this distance between the university and the public, and wrongful attempts for the university to dictate what those encounters look like, often means community organizations no longer wanting to collaborate with community partners. Disinterested students, increased volunteerism that creates more work for the partner, and the facilitation of projects that evolve out of the needs of the university rather than the needs of the community can further enforce that the university differs from the community. Worse, this can further enforce beliefs that the needs of those affiliated with the university are more important than those of the community (Mathieu, 2005). To resolve this tension between the university’s expectations for what students will “do” and the practical, urgent needs of the community, Mathieu argued that we teach students to respond rhetorically to their communities, and that students, teachers, and university administration alike
must learn to “how to attend to people and places, which means asking, listening, and learning” (p. 21). Our responsibility, then, becomes teaching students a set of practical skills and teaching them to use those skills to assess the needs of the community and respond in the most rhetorically strategic way. In so doing, “service learning provides a means for faculty and students to complicate this idea of the ‘classroom’ and the approaches to discourses, writing, and literacy that it constructs” (Schutz & Gere, 1998, p. 147). Furthermore, when done effectively, “service learning fits well into an English Studies that is reconsidering its own boundaries and internal relationships because it brings into classrooms discourses and activities in the world outside the academy, mediating the relationships between the discourses and needs of the academy and those of actual community contexts” (p. 147). If we are to ever meet the needs of students, university administrations, and most importantly, the community, we must recognize that the work knowledge making is not unique to those within the university.

Instead, we must push toward a model of SCEL pedagogy that allows students to develop an agency; they must see for themselves how rhetorical knowledge can be applied to meet the civic needs of the publics in which they work. In this way, students see the value of their education and the importance of using those literate strategies to affect change and create meaning, and community partners can enjoy rich relationships with universities that privilege the needs of the community, not the institution. The tension to meet administrative needs remains, but I theorize that reimagining assessment in a way that looks beyond what students are doing in the classroom will illustrate the value of a more robust, public education that prepares students for the difficult work of engaging meaningfully in democratic citizenship and public deliberation. Within the framework of an SCEL class, we cannot assess students only on their ability to engage academically, but rather in relation to the work they do for and with community partners. This
shift requires, however, that instructors “view the community as a source of expertise, foreground specific community needs, involve students in work that has specific rhetorical exigencies, and acknowledge their own limitations” (Mathieu, 2005, p. 110). Only then can the needs of students, administrators, and community partners all be satisfied with SCEL pedagogies. Most importantly, though, only then will our students be attuned to their body in such a way to examine the social and institutional constructs responsible for difference and engage in rhetorical strategizing as the community while participating in public deliberation.

**Chapter Overviews**

In the following chapter, I detail my approach to research, which is guided by ecofeminist principles. Ecofeminism (EF) focuses specifically on the role of environment in the construction of power hierarchies, which functions well for SCEL courses because they take place in different settings that influence the ways in which students learn about and interact with difference. Further, EF theory focuses on the end of oppression via an understanding of the interconnectedness of life with environment and emphasizes that hierarchies come into being “as a result of the self/other opposition” (Gaard, 1993, p. 3). I find that “the self/other opposition” is replicated through the concept of an encounter with difference inherent in most SCEL models. Because this study is conducted in two stages, I describe the process for analyzing initial surveys and interviews using an EF approach. From there, I explain how I used the results of the data to frame the course design for two sections of English 3020: Writing and Community, one offline and one online. I used the results of pre- and post-course, student reflective journals, and individual interviews with students. I likewise outline the EF methodologies used to move between the two phases of the study and draw conclusions about the best practices for attuning a pedagogy of the body. Further,
I describe the value of an ecofeminist methodology in studies of community and classroom to advocate for its more frequent practice.

Chapter Three brings my methodology into sharper focus. Specifically, I offer insights into how instructors teach students about their potential encounters with difference and how they focus on the relationship between students’ bodies and their community engagement. Because SCEL courses almost always task students with understanding the construction of difference, exploring how this goal has been promoted so far helps to orient my study within existing practices and understand what pedagogical approaches are already practiced. My project looks specifically at the physical body as a means by which one might assume another’s identity. This challenges traditional notions of identity. Phase One of the study asked instructors how they take up the body and allowed me to identify assignments, activities, and readings that bring conversations about the body into the class, perhaps using a different vocabulary or framework. I specifically analyze the results of the first part of my study and draw conclusions regarding the present conception of the relationship between physical and mental conceptions of embodiment that naturally manifest in courses without an attention to the body. As community-based learning initiatives continue to proliferate the university, and as those courses become further entrenched in online instructional settings, an urgency to teach students about the connection between the body, identity, and the construction of difference is environmentally situated and constructed through institutionally reinforced hierarchies. Empowering students in the classroom environment, either physically or online, does not always empower them in external spaces. Thus, this chapter offers strategies for giving students platforms to work through difficult notions of embodied difference to create stronger community partnerships.
Throughout both components of this study, I focus on the role experience plays in constructing and reinforcing existing notions of difference. Experience is likewise fundamental in feminist and ecofeminist research practices because they emphasize the role of the individual over the role of the collective. Thus, I take up the experience students and teachers have had facilitating and responding to difference, both within the classroom space and in the space of engagement. As a result, I address the research question: how do students value courses that attune to the body? I focus on the body because in limited encounters with difference, one’s body often produces the encounter rather than their identity. For example, one might not consider their disability part of their identity, but their wheelchair, as an extension of their body, might influence that interaction in a variety of ways. In Chapter Four, then, I focus on the results of part two of my study and focus on the data collected from the second phase of my study. I draw on pre- and post- class surveys from two sections of English 3020: Writing and Community that I taught in Winter 2019 at Wayne State University. I discuss how the course design differed in face-to-face and online environments to explore how experience and environment work together to produce productive embodied pedagogies and community collaborations. This chapter argues that students do value conversations of the body, but must be taught how to move those conversations out of the classroom and into the community. This chapter focuses directly on designing an embodied pedagogy and much of this content could be adapted to other courses, while Chapter Five focuses directly on the role of embodied pedagogy’s influence on a community engaged classroom.

Chapter Five focuses solely on the ways in which a course specifically focused on concepts of the body, embodiment, and the socio-spatial production of difference changes the ways in which students think about their encounters with difference and the conversations that take place both within the classroom and at the community partner site. This chapter relies on the data I collected
in the second phase of my study and traces the evolution of student’s consideration of the body from the initial pre-class survey to the conclusion of the course. I detail the results of pre- and post-class surveys, journal entries throughout the course, and interviews conducted after the completion of the course. I make connections between the course materials taught and student responses to draw conclusions about the efficaciousness of the course and make suggestions for redesigning the curriculum for future community writing courses.

Finally, Chapter Six makes suggestions for adapting curricula based on the course learning environment as well as the needs of students, educators, and community partners. I conclude by placing the results of both components of this study into conversation with one another and ultimately suggest future avenues for research that must be done to determine best practices for teaching about the body in the SCEL classroom. Chapter Six brings together my EF methodology and pedagogy to describe how this research contributes to the current conversation surrounding SCEL curriculum and reflects on areas for improvement in my own study and in future research.
CHAPTER 2: EXAMINING THE BODY AND DIFFERENCE IN COMMUNITY WRITING—TOWARD AN ECOFEMINIST RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD IN THE COMMUNITY-ENGAGED CLASSROOM

INTRODUCTION

As described in the previous chapter, there are a variety of frameworks that dictate the type of writing produced within a service- and community-engaged learning (SCEL) course. These include observing and writing about the community, producing writing for the community, collaboratively writing with the community, and writing as the community, wherein students immerse themselves fully in their own community. Each framework achieves certain goals. Just as the type of writing associated with each framework differs, so too does the connection students feel to the work they do in both the course and the community. To motivate students to productively work with those from whom they differ, I argued for SCEL pedagogies that instruct students on the ways in which bodies and embodiment can inform and construct communities. I then explained that students must be empowered to rethink their definitions of community through the body and to do the work of understanding why difference is created through socio-spatial conditions. Difference, which is almost always embodied, is often a means by which to isolate others based on their bodies. I advocated for courses that help students view differences between themselves and their communities as productive rather than divisive. I suggest that, for SCEL to be more successful, students must explore how they are situated within the community and how the coursework they do translates to the world beyond the classroom. Second, the course should empower students to see dialogue and difference as necessary for productive community formation. Third, the class should emphasize the value of knowledge work being done outside the university as well as within the university and invite students to deconstruct how their socio-spatial conditions influence their perceptions of this work. Students should also question how difference is produced based on those socio-spatial conditions and how certain bodies can be excluded from
important conversations. Finally, students should rethink what “need” means in a community and how the idea of “necessity” influences the way we perceive the community (Monberg, 2009).

These conversations can emerge from any of the SCEL frameworks described above; however, I find it important that students do not engage in volunteerism, or the type of work wherein they are led to seek out a group of people in “need” without questioning the surrounding conditions. Thus, the approaches I discuss in this dissertation are all rooted in student integration into the community. Drawing on the principles of ecofeminist (EF) teaching and methodology, my research focuses on how instructors can motivate and prepare students to participate in change, question the ways in which their positionality has informed their beliefs about how communities are constructed, and reexamine how they situate themselves within those communities. This approach encourages instructors to redefine “community” around shared goals rather based on shared bodies; it demonstrates the value of different perspectives in producing strong work within and for the community. Through intentional collaboration with one another and the community, I intend for students to question the socio-spatial constructs that produce the difference responsible for stratifying university and community members.

**Chapter Overview**

In this chapter, I turn toward a description of my theoretical and methodological frameworks. I do not discuss the theory that framed this course in isolation due to the inability to separate theory, practice, and method. This is especially relevant in SCEL based research because the theoretical and practical work done in these environments are inseparable. Sullivan and Porter (2004) address this problem, exploring how workplace writing studies often maintain the false divide to ultimately argue that theory, practice, and methods are not static, isolated concepts. Rather, these concepts work in tandem and should “be seen as heuristic rather than foundational
in nature and therefore as dynamic and negotiable” (p. 301), meaning they should be discussed together. The separation of theory, method, and practice creates a duality between academic and nonacademic work; theory belongs to the academic realm while practice is of the nonacademic, workplace realm. This false binary parallels that which separates the university from the community—certain works of writing belong to the university and others to the community. If we are to deconstruct either of these false binaries, Sullivan and Porter (2004) are correct that we must more strongly explore how our theory and its practice ultimately inform our methods. It is also important to discuss methodology and method simultaneously, as methodology are the theoretical bases that inform research decisions. This chapter focuses, then, on the interconnection of the theory and methodology that led to the method that I designed. In each subsequent chapter, I describe the method used to collect that data set in more depth. In the remainder of this chapter, however, I describe the reciprocal loop between theory, methodology, and method as it informs my research, beginning first with designing an EF community writing course based on the principles Victoria Davion practiced for effective EF teaching. I focus on EF at length because it is not a methodology or method widely used in rhetoric and composition studies. Thus, providing a historical, theoretical, and methodological context is relevant in advocating for EF’s use as a method within Rhetoric and Composition studies.

Because of this framework, and because my research is about bodies and perceptions of bodies, I prioritize learning from the participants rather than dominating the discourse, which is a key component of feminist and EF research (Kirsch & Ritchie, 1995). Therefore, this chapter intertwines theory, methodology, and method to demonstrate how participants in the study inform and shape my research. This fosters a relationship rooted in care and interconnection between the researcher and the researched. I first describe the overarching feminist theoretical framework that
inspired my methodology. I then move into my rationale for orienting this study within an EF methodology and describe EF’s value for community-based research and teaching. This value comes from its interest in decimating systems of oppression and viewing difference as essential in community formation. My study is rooted in the classroom; therefore, I next describe how an EF pedagogy, which focuses on the individual, their experience, and the abolition of oppression, is well suited to frame SCEL teaching initiatives. I explore how EF methodologies and pedagogies empower students and community partners to view embodied difference as a benefit rather than a detriment to collaboration. After exploring the value and application of EF, I shift toward a description of my two-part study design and describe the process in which the interviews I conducted in the initial part of the study directly influenced the design of the second part of the study: a qualitative and quantitative analysis of two community writing courses that I taught in both online and offline learning environments. Finally, I describe the method by which I coded and analyzed student journals, surveys, and interviews from those courses and discuss the major themes that emerged.

**Feminist Theoretical Framework**

I orient my study within an overarching feminist theoretical framework because of its focus on incorporating the personal—and the knowledge related to the personal—into public discourse (Kirsch & Ritchie, 1995). Within the larger goal of feminist theory, Kirsch and Ritchie proposed that “composition researchers theorize their locations by examining their experiences as reflections of ideology and culture, by reinterpreting their own experiences through the eyes of others, and by recognizing their own split selves, their multiple and often unknowable identities” (p. 8). In other words, a researcher’s positionality, beliefs, and experiences cannot be removed from their research; there is always the risk, especially if we fail to acknowledge this influence, that
researchers will misrepresent the experiences of their participants. Thus, Kirsch and Ritchie argued for an emphasis on the role of the participant in both the research design process and the representation of results. They suggested researchers invite participants to ask questions of the research and the researcher, to speak for themselves and their experiences, and often select the ways in which their experiences would be represented in the results. A feminist theoretical framework, in essence, creates a more collaborative relationship between researcher and participant rather than one in which the researcher controls the results and representation in its entirety. My research focuses on bodies, the perceptions of bodies, and embodied experiences; due to the personal nature of this research, I wanted to be certain that my students had the opportunity to represent themselves in my research to more accurately present their experiences and interpretations of the course.

Relying on a feminist theoretical framework to guide one’s research provides the advantage of more accurately representing the experiences of the participants. Despite this main benefit, research suggests that there is a lack of scholarship relying on feminist theoretical and methodological frameworks in higher education, in part because much of “academia will not recognize these feminist research endeavors as meritorious” (Falcón, 2016, p. 175). Falcón indicated that research done for and with participants is often devalued for its participatory nature and ethics of care; other, more formulaic models are often better regarded. Feminist research is not just devalued, but Zubair (2016) explains that institutional pressures often prevent related discourses that inspire feminist research from emerging within the university. Zubair’s study of institutional policies “demonstrate[d] how the underlying gendered ideologies seek to repress feminist spaces, ideas, and bodies, through overt control over awareness-raising campaigns, feminist curricula, and pedagogies” (p. 98). Through relying more holistically on a feminist
theoretical and methodological approach, we can better represent the lived experiences of traditionally marginalized groups. Research likewise urges for qualitative study designs that emphasize the voices of those who are traditionally marginalized in the classroom (Ropers-Huilman & Winters, 2011; Vaccaro, 2017). Central to these urges is a need to focus on the personal experiences of those voices who are often written out of the conversation. Thus, I was initially motivated to rely on a feminist theoretical framework due to the focus on the personal and the ability to empower participants to represent themselves and potentially work against marginalization and misrepresentation in research; to do so, I sought out a framework more directly attuned to embodiment.

The Body in Feminist Theory

My project is particularly interested in issues of the body rather than the concept of identity. This focus is intentional; in meeting someone new, one’s body often precedes their identity in encounters with those from whom they differ. Feminist research has previously made this distinction between identity and the body in a way that meshes with my conceptions of these terms (Weiss, 1998; Archer, 2004; Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010; Fluri, 2011; Hillock, 2012; Jackson & Vares, 2015; Vaccaro, 2017). For example, Weiss (1998) argued that we can cultivate an understanding of “how racial, gender, class, age, and cultural differences are corporeally registered and reproduced” by focusing on issues of the body and embodiment (p. 10). Essentially, people often base initial perceptions of others’ identities on their physical body and extensions of their body (e.g. clothing, tattoos, piercings). In such a way, the body understands, reifies, and facilitates difference. Visual markers of difference, then, can predetermine how two parties will interact and communicate. Those who feel marked as “different” can feel silenced—particularly in the educational setting. Further, because difference is socio-spatially constructed, there is often an
assumed identity informed by the body that isolates certain folks from participating in the community. These embodied markers of difference can result in silence, which “has been associated with marginalization, while voice has been equated with empowerment and healthy identity development” (Vaccaro, 2017, p. 28). In other words, those without embodied markers of difference have been traditionally empowered because their voices have been given a platform; when one’s body falls traditionally into the category of “the Other,” which can negatively impact one’s identity development.

For instance, Harris (2017) conducted a study in which she surveyed the experiences of ten multiracial women at a historically White midwestern, research university. Harris found that White students often thought that light-skinned multiracial women perceived themselves as better than “actual Black people.” As one light-skinned Black student indicated, “this stereotype was particularly prevalent in the experiences of multiracial students who have light skin, which signals their identity as ‘not actually Black’” (p. 482). In this way, her body served as a marker of identity in a way that did not allow her to establish her own identity. Rather, her body dictated how her peers understood her and ultimately restricted her from participating within her own community. She could not establish her own identity because both Black women and White women pre-determined their understanding of her identity, which resulted in undue influence. Harris’s study shows that participants were negatively stereotyped by other students and “they also internalized and perpetuated stereotypes of their own racial groups” (p. 488). The systems in place typecast individuals based on their bodies, which can silence their participation and prevent them from establishing connections within certain communities. Awareness that others assume one’s identity prior to engaging with them has the potential to change the ways in which students self-identify and present themselves.
Embodiment, while not a marker of one’s identity, is often the vessel by which we assume the identities of those from whom we differ. This is particularly true in the context of community collaboration because students enter the community with a strong awareness of difference. Students are taught to seek out difference; that notion of difference starts to craft an identity in their mind prior to leaving the classroom. This awareness happens automatically in both the classroom and the community, and thus I orient my reading of encounters with difference in understandings of the body to better understand how marginalization in the classroom continues to silence and mediate the encounters with difference that often take place at sites of SCEL. The value of a feminist theoretical framework is its intent to give voice to those who have been disempowered by the institutions in which they operate—a mission which closely aligns with my own professional and social goals for this research. In designing this study, I wanted to empower students to not only present themselves in research, but to understand and problematize the relationship between the body, identity, and community and the ways in which that relationship is socio-spatially constructed.

A Turn Toward an Ecofeminist Methodological Framework

Because of my personal and professional goals for engaged classrooms that invite students to question how the system in which they learn produces difference and reifies the separation between the university and the community, I was drawn to EF theory. EF emerged in the 1970s with its theoretical basis stemming from the concept that “a sense of self most commonly expressed by women and various other nondominant groups—a self that is interconnected with all life” (Gaard, 1993, p. 1). This belief framed the shift away from an approach that would only consider women and their experiences toward a more inclusive model which recognizes “that systems of oppression based on race, class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity stem from a set of cultural
ideologies that enable the oppression of nature” (Gardner & Riley, 2007, p. 24). In other words, EF explores how certain systems exploited non-dominant voices and bodies using the same approaches that allow for the misuse and exploitation of the environment. As a response, EF “rests on the notion that the liberation of all oppressed groups must be addressed simultaneously” (Gaard, 1993, p. 5). Of course, to end all oppression is no small feat, and thus EF focuses on effecting change in the socio-spatial and cultural infrastructures that inform the way society functions and advocating for the dismantling of traditional patriarchal domination (Birkeland, 1993, p. 15). EF essentially builds on the feminist theoretical framework described above to incorporate the unique connection between space, the individual, and experience. Due to its focus on the relationship between systems of oppression and the natural world, EF is inherently intersectional and intentional. Further, research focuses on the ways in which oppression is socio-spatially constructed and how said oppressors impact experience and identity construction.

To address this, Kings (2017) explained that “ecofeminism has been taking into account the interconnected nature of social categories such as gender, race, class, sexuality, caste, species, religion, nationality, dis/ability, and issues such as colonialism” (p. 71). EF, at its core, works to expose how this domination, among both humans and nonhumans, emerges from the “systematic interlocking forms of oppression based on dualistic thinking” (Herles, 2018, p. 4). Other feminisms and liberation theories function by accepting some duality in one capacity or another (Gruen, 1993), but “by embracing such a way of thinking, these theories are exclusionist in the sense that each creates or maintains a category of ‘otherness’” (p. 79-80). For example, radical feminism cast men as “other” and anthropocentric feminists cast nature as the “other.” Freedom from oppression for women, then, would mean the oppression of another group. These approaches argue that “any concept that is not comparable to reason is associated with nature and is subordinated” (Sackey,
Dualistic thinking, Sackey explains, emerges from Western delegations that men are associated with reason and women with nature, thus placing women as the “other” to men. EF theory challenges duality and moves beyond this concept of othering to recognize that empathy, compassion, and inclusivity are necessary for “undoing oppression in both theory and practice” (Gruen, 1993, p. 80). Thus, EF makes its goal the destruction of hegemony-producing systems its priority, which is inherently theoretical (Sackey, 2018). This theory can, however, be moved into praxis as it informs pedagogical and methodological approaches.

Within this study, I argue that “undoing oppression,” must begin with a *critical deconstruction*—or the breaking apart of ideologies to understand how they emerge from our pre-existing worldviews to inform our interactions with others. Deconstruction, when defined in such a way, informs both my teaching and my research. EF methodologies work toward the undoing of oppression within theory and practice simultaneously; this connection makes EF research and teaching ideal for community-based learning. When students are taught to examine not only how, but *why* they differ from those within external communities, they gain an understanding of how those ideologies are formed. This leads them to question the influences said ideologies have had on the reification of difference within their respective communities. Through an EF approach, students can better consider how communities are often formed and separated from other communities on the basis of bodies. This deconstructive approach, when positioned within EF theory, empowers students to navigate the extant, socio-spatial conditions that mark one as different based on their corporeality and allows them to rebuild their definition of community collaboratively rather than to isolate others based on false dualities. EF methodologies likewise afford the opportunity to analyze how presupposed conceptions of one’s body might result in the presumption of one’s identity.
Issues of the body have been addressed by EF researchers in a variety of contexts. In one example, Field (2000) argued that “thinking through embodiment from an EF perspective also needs to be situated within a framework of a critical analysis of the social and political imaginaries that contributes to the constitution of our embodiment” (p. 56). In other words, bodies are consistently situated within and adapting toward the various landscapes in which we find ourselves. Studies of the body within EF research have largely focused on the feminine body—particularly the motherly body and mother nature—to explore the subjugation of women and nature through patriarchal institutions. Recently, however, ecofeminists have intentionally labeled themselves at intersectional, meaning there has been a broad focus on the lived-experiences of subordinate groups to “help illuminate the interconnectedness of race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, caste, religion, age” and the respective influence of these markers on “discrimination, oppression, and identity” (Kings, 2017, p. 64). This shift is important as EF embodied research now tries to account for the experiences of all bodies that do not typically dominate the environments in which they exist and interact. EF, then, is aptly positioned to empower those bodies that are normally othered and draw the experience of the non-dominant embodied experience to the forefront of the conversation. Therefore, I argue that an EF methodological approach results in a more inclusive body of research that accounts for a more diverse array of experiences and voices in the representation of data. This desire to more accurately research the body motivated me to orient my study within a general EF methodology. However, the focus on maintaining an accurate and honest representation of those diverse embodied experiences is what makes an EF approach to community-engaged classroom research most valuable.

**Ecofeminist research in the service-learning classroom**
An EF methodology provides an important framework for any classroom study, but the emphasis on experience in the representation of data is particularly pertinent in SCEL; recently, there has been a call to focus more explicitly on experience in these courses. For instance, Ludlow (2010) described the value of a service-based course that “[analyzed] the culture/nature binary as an equally important hierarchy of domination that intersects with all others” (p. 43). Deconstructing this “hierarchy of domination” is one of the primary goals that community-based learning and ecofeminism share. Ludlow’s study concluded that self-reflection—and its ability to cultivate critical consciousness amongst students—was essential to facilitating these goals (p. 45). Ludlow’s study traced the development of an assignment through six iterations of an EF course at Bowling Green State University during a ten year timeframe. During this time, she transitioned from an action-based SL assignment to an activist learning assignment (p. 42). Ludlow marks this distinction based on work by Bubriski and Semaan (2009) who indicated that SL, which typically adheres to a volunteer model, “does not significantly ameliorate social problems” (p. 93) and that activist learning focuses on “social structures rather than interpersonal relationships,” thus assuming that “social structures need transformation” (p. 93). Through the evolution of her course and assignment, Ludlow (2010) concluded that EF, as a radical approach to feminism, aligns better with activist learning that aims to transform existing institutional and social structures rather than SL, which often falls under the category of volunteerism or charity work (p. 46). Ludlow’s research focused on the transitions between the assignments she initially taught and the later, more activist based, assignments that taught students to take a risk with their learning. This type of work, then, asks students to examine how they can use their positionality to engage in social change rather than to approach a “needy” community and resolve an arbitrary problem. Ludlow’s framework provided one example of an assignment sequence in which students view difference as a
productive component of community rather than a divisive means to separate the university from its surroundings. The most prominent aspect of her pedagogy, though, was the emphasis on self-reflection. Regardless of assignment sequences, working to “undo oppression” requires students to reflect on their situatedness in the production and facilitation of oppression and difference. As instructors and researchers, we must empower students to navigate their own situatedness within the various places and power systems they will encounter during community-based experiential learning through this self-reflexivity, which is a tenet of EF research and teaching alike.

From Ecofeminist Methodology to Ecofeminist Pedagogy

EF research methodologies and EF pedagogies share the same main goal of using intersectional approaches to end oppression. To do so, both approaches require self-reflection on notions of difference and how it is socio-spatially produced. To facilitate this work in a classroom, Herles (2018) described the ideal form of EF pedagogy as “a critical praxis that brings together students and teachers to empower themselves in the scope of knowledge construction about oppression of humans and nonhumans and to develop ways to resist against dualistic thinking” (p. 4). In other words, EF pedagogy is a negotiation between students, teachers, and their respective environments that engenders a more robust knowledge production process. This process begins with inquiry regarding the construction of dualities to oppress non-normalized actors and create separation between, rather than movement through, different groups. Fostering a classroom environment that involves students in this work requires substantial preparation, patience, and flexibility. Herles (2018) described four best practices for doing so based on the EF teaching and mentorship of the late Victoria Davion; these features are accessibility, dialogue, praxis, and interconnectedness (p. 4). These four features work to move EF theory into pedagogical practice. I argue that these concepts are not only emergent in EF pedagogy, but that they are inherent within
a well-designed community-based learning course as well due to the focus on sustainable relationships between students and instructors that “translate beyond the classroom” (p. 4). Because a community writing course centers not only on collaboration *with* the community, but also on writing and learning *within* the community, this transferability makes EF pedagogy appropriate for any community-based learning initiative. Further, this framework invites students to explore the interlocking causes of oppression and to question how those forces construct difference and separate communities; this repositioning helps students refine their definitions of community based on dialogue rather than embodied experience. I used Davion’s strategies for EF teaching as a model for my curricular design. This approach allowed students to practice these conversations and enter the community prepared to redefine their community.

In the section that follows, I describe how Davion’s four components of EF pedagogy influenced my design of two upper-level, general education community-based writing courses at an urban research institution. This course fulfills not only the general education requirement but allows students the opportunity to fulfill an honors college requirement that they perform at least 20 hours of “community service.” The courses I taught did not involve a traditional service or volunteer requirement. Rather students engaged in writing for and collaborating with the community to produce actionable final products that were of value for the community partner. I worked with four community partner organizations, each of which was a small, community run organization with a grassroots framework (Appendix A). Each organization worked closely with a group of students to teach them necessary skills, to educate students about the organization’s mission and community goals, and to guide and assess the completion of their project. To make certain that this work had value, the community partners and I co-taught and co-graded the work done with the community organizations. Students reported directly to the organization and the
community partners developed timelines and parameters with students. I weaved together my understanding of EF theory and pedagogy with the needs that emerged in the class. I guided students to confront notions of the body and embodiment, difference, positionality, identity, and the socio-spatial conditions responsible for producing and perpetuating negative responses to the aforementioned concept. EF is not only a methodological framework for my data analysis, but it was valuable tool for course design and instruction, because “ecofeminist theory and practice in the higher education classroom thus carries with it a great possibility to engage students in important social issues that may in fact lead students to becoming more active in both their natural and cultural environments” (Gardner & Riley, 2007, p. 25). Thus, this framework allows students to understand their situatedness within their cultural and natural environments. It also encourages students to question how their body influences and is influenced by such spaces, which is paramount in my course design.

**Ecofeminist Course Design for a Community Writing Class**

The first tenet of EF pedagogy—accessibility—begins with the intent to make theory accessible. This comes from Davion’s commitment to refrain from “talking down” to students (Herles, 2018, p. 5). Instead, she asked students to work through challenging materials and encouraged them to allow their different backgrounds to inform how they understand and respond to theory rather than to ignore the influence of their experience. I modeled this approach in my own classroom by asking students to engage with the theory that informed my pedagogy and my research. After assigning a series of foundational readings (see Appendix C for the syllabus with a full list of readings), I opened the conversation to their interpretation of these texts and the differentiation between my approach and the traditional approach implemented in SL courses. Students problematized their definitions of community and reflected throughout the semester on
how the theory we read might make them confront these notions differently. Instead of teaching them my interpretation of these materials and how I see these readings influencing the community, each class discussion was led by a pair of students according to their positionality and experiences. Students summarized the reading, spoke on the relationships they saw developing between the course, the community, and the ideas within that particular reading. They then and led an activity that modeled the concept or helped the class work through an idea. During these discussion leads, I sat where the students sat: I was a participant and gave them full control of the room. By repositioning myself, and placing students at the front of the classroom, a new accessibility emerged that allowed for the incorporation of a variety of experiences into our discussions rather than allowing mine to frame the discourse that occurred.

Students saw that their positions and interpretations of theory were important and valuable. Reshaping the socio-spatial conditions in the classroom helped to reduce the power inherent in my position as the instructor. This format briefly redistributed power in a way that prepared students to apply a critical lens to their own shifting positionality during encounters with each other and the community. This exercise also gave students practice in facilitating potentially difficult conversations—a skill necessary for collaborating effectively with their community partners and approaching the community from a different lens. Beyond making theory more approachable to students, accessibility attunes to the needs of a diverse set of students, encouraging them to “pursue their own line of thinking in relation to the complex ideas put forth by others” (Herles, 2018, p. 6). In this way, accessibility is not just teaching to a diverse set of needs, but engaging students in dialogue regarding their acquisition of and contribution to knowledge and its production. This model must be implemented, then, through dialogue, which was the foundation for Davion’s
relationship with her students and the second foundation of EF pedagogy. Per Herles (2018), this requires self-reflection and consideration of the others with whom one is dialogically engaged.

As previously mentioned, students began with foundational readings about community, identity, and the different frameworks for SCEL courses. I assigned excerpts from Deans (2000) and Monberg (2009), both of which were discussed at length in Chapter One, to give students a working knowledge of the theoretical frameworks that inform SCEL’s relationship to writing. I engaged students in dialogue regarding these frameworks and students reflected on the influence of each approach on the relationship between students and the community. Such a reflection poised them to be critical of the work they would do in the course and their positionality within the university; this reflection creates a more accessible dialogic space in which students questioned what they knew about the relationships between our institution and our community. They problematized the ways in which they had been taught to think about Detroit, its citizens, and its relationship to the university. EF pedagogy is poised to make the classroom a more comfortable environment for working through our positionalities because of its emphasis on dialogue; likewise, the dialogue is well-poised to inform the work we do with community members. Modeling self-reflective reciprocity in conversation prepares students to enter community spaces and lead open dialogue in a way that establishes relationships because they learn to question themselves rather than just the community. One such strategy is to “[channel] anxiety and fear into resistance and calling into question cultural norms as a means to disrupt forms of dualistic thinking” (Herles, 2018, p. 6-7). In such an approach, students do not learn to fear difference or suppress their concerns but rather to pursue uncomfortable conversations and navigate how dualisms produce oppression. In essence, students learn that dialogue is a productive way to negotiate their positionality with others and move from the classroom into the community.
Dialogue directly informs Herles’s (2018) third tenet: praxis. Class materials should be strategically selected for their practical application; students should learn how to apply their coursework beyond the classroom. Not only is this beneficial for the community collaboration component of the course, but it fosters a stronger connection to the coursework. Selecting readings with practical applications allows instructors to demonstrate the connection to the community. Doing so can result in controversial or uncomfortable conversations, but maintaining a warm, open relationship with students can channel discomfort in a productive way, challenging students to resist those institutional conditions responsible for constructing that difference. The principles of EF pedagogy and research are inherently concerned with the interaction of bodies, both in and with space, and a community writing course requires that students take up that concern. To inform this practice productively, I first brought each community partner into the classroom and gave students the opportunity to see how their bodies inform their dialogue with the partner in a comfortable environment. This prepared students for encounters in spaces where they might find themselves less comfortable, such as the spaces owned by the community partners. I consider understanding how embodied encounters happen in these spaces essential to the effective SCEL courses and thus design assignments and activities to help students navigate these encounters within the community. I am particularly interested in the role of self-reflection in the praxis component of EF pedagogy, so I made certain to design assignments and activities rooted in reflection to guide students to more effectively question these positions.

In one such example, I used the chapter “Students in the Streets” from Paula Mathieu’s (2005) Tactics of Hope as a framework for a class role-play activity. This chapter describes five failed community/university collaborations. Students took on an identity (community member, instructor, student, university administrator, and so forth) based on the scenarios Mathie offers.
and read the scenario from the mindset of the assigned identity. Students then modeled conversations wherein these perspectives were brought to the table and practiced rhetorical listening strategies. Practicing these conversations prior to entering their partner projects helps students to consider how their positionality might influence that collaboration and to question its influence with their peers and with me prior to working with the partners. Students then reflected on how their bodies and their socio-spatial environments impacted their experiences and knowledge acquisition. As such, praxis can be channeled toward achieving social change beyond the classroom and the production of a more interconnected world. This reflection allowed them to think about how to better communicate with those from whom they differ to build together rather than apart.

The final tenet of EF pedagogy—interconnectedness—focuses on the relationship between humans and nonhuman environments (Herles, 2018, p. 8). Interconnectedness emerges in the EF classroom “by urging students to engage in problem solving in community issues, and through encouraging students to also bring the readings and topics they wish to pursue” (p. 8). In doing so, students take control of their learning and their interactions with the community, and hopefully use these four principles to inform their SCEL work. Students continuously reflect on how their coursework and the community work intersected and these reflections helped me to adapt readings and discussions based on their reflection; when teaching from an interconnected way, instructors must be willing to adapt to the needs of students and community situations. Ultimately, EF pedagogy gives students the power to guide their education and allows their bodies to influence the knowledge they acquire and produce. Through the application of these four best practices, students and instructors can build strong relationships within the classroom environment that students then model when they move beyond the classroom into the community.
Study Design

In addition to following an EF pedagogy, I relied on an EF methodological approach to analyze the data regarding the classroom experiences of teachers and students alike. This approach is particularly valuable as it expands upon feminist theory’s focus on the personal to focus on the relevance of experience and, as a result, emotion (Gaard, 1993). By understanding the interrelation of institutional infrastructures and personal identity perception and construction, EF analysis provides a framework for analyzing individual and collective experience rather than isolating one component of individual experience. In such, my pedagogical, methodological, and theoretical approach to this study are all focused on how socio-spatiality informs our beliefs. Ultimately, the goal of EF is not to redistribute power across difference, but to “change the fact of power-based relationships and hierarchy, and move toward an ethic based on mutual respect” (Birkeland, 1993, p. 20). Because EF research is intended to deconstruct those power-based relationships and hierarchies, which are socio-spatially created through difference, the approach aligns directly with my personal and professional research goals. In this section, I describe how I implemented this method in both phases of my study.

Phase One: Preliminary Surveys and Interviews with Instructors

After establishing a basis in EF pedagogy, but prior to designing my courses, I first needed to understand how current instructors in a variety of SCEL courses understand and discuss the body in community collaboration. I began this exploration of experience by sending a survey out on listservs for the following organizations: Writing Program Administrators, the Coalition on Community Writing, and the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Rhetoric and Composition. I selected these listservs because I had access to them as a member of the organization and they allow survey submissions. They also cover a wide variety of concentrations within Composition
and Rhetoric, which allowed me to reach a wide audience. The link was available for one month and asked participants exploratory questions to establish a baseline for how issues of the body are discussed and the degree of importance instructors assign to these topics. I was most interested in learning about experiences and the current discussions surrounding the body and embodiment, so I wrote a series of open-ended questions that asked for further description of the course, classroom conversations, assignments, and readings. Questions also addressed the work done with and for community partners and the conversations that happened based on the individual experiences of their students. I received 28 complete survey responses, eight of which indicated they would be willing to participate in a follow up interview. I had the opportunity to speak to six of the eight instructors. These interviews informed my course design and affirmed the need for a course focused on difference, embodiment, and community.

In keeping with a feminist research methodology (DeVault & Gross, 2012), I revised and individualized the interview questions based on each participant’s survey responses (see Appendix B for a series of sample questions). Rather than asking one-sided series of questions and answers, the interview sequence was a conversational exploration of how the instructors currently approach issues of difference and bodies in their SCEL courses. I approached these conversations as a means of learning; I let participants guide the conversation as much as possible and referred to the questions only when necessary. I intended to see if these conversations occurred without instructors directly recognizing that they were embodied. For example, one interviewee indicated in their survey that conversations of bodies did not come up in their course because they were not doing traditional service of underserved populations. However, in our interview, she described scenarios wherein professional dress practice was central to students’ experience. In doing so, this instructor was leading a conversation about the body without calling it such, because extensions
of the body (hair, tattoos, piercings, clothing, etc.). For this reason, conversations with instructors helped me understand current approaches to the body and difference in SCEL classrooms, which I drew from to inform my course design. Chapter Three reports on these findings and describes how I moved from this phase to phase two. In this next section, I discuss the method implemented in phase two of the study.

**Phase Two: Data Collection and Analysis in the Community Writing Classroom**

This research considers encounters with difference in various environments, including the site of the community partner and the face-to-face and online classrooms where students learn. I wanted to empower students to recognize the differences within those environments and articulate the ways in which their relationships to the spaces and the community influenced their learning and definition of the community. At the beginning of the course, students took a pre-class survey about their perceptions of the body and their understanding of how their body and difference would potentially dictate the interactions they had with community members. They were also asked to consider how these concepts influenced their definition of community. During the course, students wrote a series of reflective journals based on their interactions with the community partners. They documented any work that they did and addressed a series of reflective prompts related to the course content. These journals were designed to follow their changing approach to community across the semester. At the completion of the course, students completed a post-course survey, wherein they were able to indicate whether they would be interested in participating in a follow up interview to discuss their experiences and discuss the goals of the study in depth. In these conversations, students had the opportunity to determine how their experience would be represented in the research and what that might mean for future projects.
At the conclusion of the course, I reviewed student journals and, through an inductive coding process, developed a coding schema based on the course concepts to explore how students’ understanding of the body and difference as they pertained to SCEL courses developed throughout the semester. Because of the inability to separate theory, method, and practice, the coding schema was developed at the conclusion of the course rather than predetermined. When students participated in interviews, they were asked to code several of their journal entries using the schema. This motivated the final interview and allowed students to contribute to a discussion about how their perspectives would be presented in the research. I also invited them to question my coding schema and helped me to normalize the schema for all journal entries based on student perspectives. I describe my coding schema, and my interrater reliability process, at length in Chapter Four.

Site Description

Phase Two of my study took place during Winter 2019 at Wayne State University—an urban, public research university located in Detroit, MI. I studied two sections of English 3020: Writing and Community that I taught in both an online and offline learning environment. This course fulfills the Intermediate Composition (IC) requirement and is described as follows: “ENG 3020 combines advanced research writing techniques with community-based activities with local community organizations. In addition to coursework, the course requires community-based work outside of normal class time distributed across the semester. Satisfies the Honors College service-learning requirement.” The course is predominantly taken by sophomores and juniors in the honors college and students majoring in public health, though any student who has earned first-year composition credit (English 1020) may enroll.
Wayne State is unique in that it is located directly in Detroit, MI; the city and the campus are intertwined. Specifically located in Midtown, one of the country’s fastest growing neighborhoods, Wayne is known as Michigan’s most diverse institution. WSU has 26,844 enrolled students. These students are racially, economically, and ethnically diverse, as showcased in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>3,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2,536</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Resident Alien</td>
<td>1,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics of any race</td>
<td>1,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race and ethnicity unknown</td>
<td>807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: 2019 Enrollment Data for Wayne State University

It is also worth noting that WSU has a high Arab-American student population whose diversity is not reported above, as people of Arab descent are problematically classified as “White” through the United States census reporting process. According to the Arab-American Institute (2019), there are approximately 223,000 Arabs living in Michigan, with the majority in Dearborn, MI—a city in metropolitan Detroit roughly 20 minutes from Wayne State’s campus. This results in a lack of representation of the diverse lived experiences of a large portion of the student body, making students feel “alienated,” and “like [they don’t] belong” (Rabie, 2019). Thus, this sense of diversity is one that is not only relevant, but that directly informs the culture of the classroom. Unfortunately, the lack of representation makes it so there is little evidence of this problem beyond the anecdotal.
Without better reporting practices, the experiences of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) folks will continue to be underreported and underrepresented in research.

For many of my students, this inability to come to terms with their own identity directly informs the relationships that they build with the community. This is the main value of doing work that reconceptualizes and deconstructs difference, particularly as it pertains to the body. These individuals are traditionally cast as “the Other” and frequently suffer from racist and hate driven attacks. However, due to the lack of reporting and representation, these students may not feel safe speaking about their diverse experiences. A theory and method that emphasizes the personal, and the body therefore, stands to help students understand their own situatedness within this system, reminds them that their embodied experiences are valuable, and gives them the tools to speak more productively with others about their own representation. To best represent students who have been marginalized in this research, it is relevant to rely on a theory, methodology, and method that repositions difference as a means to unite rather than divide, which feminist and EF approaches both emphasize.

I return to this issue of representation in later chapters and describe how student’s feelings surrounding their own experiences being different shapes their interactions with the community. First, however, Chapter Three reports on the results of Phase One of my study, the surveys and interviews with instructors who teach SCEL courses and describes how their responses indicate a necessity for an ecofeminist embodied pedagogy (EEP). I describe the foundations that inform my approach to building an EEP and then outline my curricular design of two courses of English 3020: Writing and Community based on the results from Phase One.
CHAPTER 3: ESTABLISHING AN EMBODIED ECOFEMINIST PEDAGOGY BASED ON INSTRUCTOR PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

In Chapter One, I outlined the history of service and community-engaged learning (SCEL) initiatives, focusing directly on how theories of embodiment and difference are actively addressed. I argued that SCEL courses must account for issues of the body if they are to foster productive, natural relationships between students and their community partners. In Chapter Two, I described the ecofeminist (EF) theory, method, and methodology that influenced my study design and aided in the development of my research instruments. I also explained how EF informed my course design for two sections (one online and one offline) of English 3020: Writing and Community, a general education course that fulfills the intermediate writing requirement at an urban research university in Detroit, MI. In this chapter, then, I expand on my discussion of SCEL pedagogy to include the perspectives of current instructors teaching SL and CEL courses. Based on the surveys and interviews from Phase One of my study, I ultimately suggest that an embodied ecofeminist pedagogy (EEP) can mediate the aforementioned problems that arise in student-community collaborations. Such an approach encourages a renewed focus on the body and, therefore, the individual. This shift would require instructors to augment their instruction to focus on how the larger institutions within which we exist serve to divide communities; I discuss approaches for doing so in the subsequent two chapters and describe how these approaches informed student-community partnerships.

In this chapter, I present findings from Phase One of my study and respond to the following research questions: 1) do instructors of SCEL courses see value in implementing an EEP?; and 2) how are instructors currently accounting for issues of the body in their courses? I answer these questions by reporting on the results of surveys and interviews with instructors in a variety of
SCEL courses. This chapter analyzes the ways in which instructors are actively confronting issues of the body and difference. I also describe how instructor responses informed my EEP. I open this chapter with a description of the primary problems I identify within SCEL pedagogy that this approach can remedy. I then segue into an analysis of how instructors actively take up the notions of embodiment and difference in their courses. I describe the value instructors see in a curricular design that focuses on the body. I also discuss instructor responses to my suggestion that an EEP could be a solution to the problems with disengagement that often manifest in service-based courses. Finally, I describe how results from Phase One of my study ultimately laid the groundwork for Phase Two: teaching and studying my own community-engaged writing courses.

Problems in Service- and Community-Engaged Learning

SCEL initiatives often originate with the positive intention of bridging gaps between universities and communities, teaching students to work with those from whom they differ, and allowing students to engage in real-world learning. These courses are often designed to foster civic engagement tendencies that will, in theory, continue after students leave the university and become active community members. Despite the good intentions that often inform these collaborations, SCEL is accompanied by a variety of pitfalls. In the most common cases, SCEL leaves both students and community partners feeling dissatisfied. At its worst, however, SCEL can isolate the community from the university and produce irreparable divides. Through both primary and secondary research, I identify two major pitfalls that are most frequently responsible for the failure of SCEL courses: 1) SCEL privileges the university over the needs of the community, and 2) SCEL encourages students to seek out difference with little focus on how it originates or how difference can build community. As a result, students often perceive those from whom they differ as the “other” who they almost always believe needs “saving.” Because of these problems, students
struggle to find a means by which to collaborate with those from whom they differ as they cannot 
find a platform on which to connect with the community. I discuss these concerns at length in the 
next section to establish how an EEP can prevent these pitfalls.

**Problem 1: Service- and community-engaged learning privileges the needs of the university 
over the community**

SCEL is often described as a form of learning that helps the university build more robust 
relationships with the community; however, it initially emerged out of a desire to increase student 
engagement and retention (Morrin, 2009). SCEL classes are often implemented to improve the 
community's general perception of the university. Thus, the focus in forging these partnerships is 
wholly on building and maintaining the university’s reputation rather than doing anything for the 
community; as a result, the community’s needs are pushed to the periphery. This approach results 
in a power imbalance wherein community partners are subordinate to the university. 
Collaborations are often built around the needs of specific courses, instructors, and students rather 
than what best benefits the community. In many cases, instructors create assignments they perceive 
will benefit students without considering the needs of their partner organization and little work is 
done to build the community into the course. Community partners often report that their work with 
university students is unhelpful and the process can be a waste of time and resources. At the end 
of the semester, partners are often in the same position as they were prior to the collaboration and, 
in some cases, they have even more work to complete (Mathieu, 2009). I argue that this problem 
emerges because students see themselves as removed from the community rather than connected 
to it. An EEP presents one means by which to resolve this disconnect as it encourages students to 
see their community as a conglomerate of individuals with embodied experiences rather than the 
collective “other.” To prime students to understand the necessity for such an approach, I argue for
first exposing students to the existing conversations about SCEL initiatives. Once students understand the rationale behind the implementation of SCEL and how those partnerships can go awry, students can accept and agree that the approach must shift. They become eager to improve their own collaborations with the community partner and question why so many SCEL programs have negative outcomes. This line of questioning segues into conversations about how the conditions in which we exist construct difference and how that influences community collaborations.

**Problem 2: Service-learning encourages students to seek out difference with little instruction on using difference productively**

In addition to not prioritizing the community in these collaborations, SCEL often presents the community as impoverished, in need, and, most problematically, as different in a negative way. Mitchell, Donahue, and Young-Law (2012) note this happens primarily because SCEL is “implemented mostly by White faculty with mostly White students at predominantly White institutions to serve mostly poor individuals and mostly people of color” (p. 612). Instructors and students do not discuss the body because those with normalized bodies have the privilege of ignoring its importance—thus those from whom they differ are perceived as inherently “bad.” The university is constructed for the body of White, heteronormative, men and often we neglect to discuss how those spaces influence bodies that do not meet those qualifications. The failure to have this discussion, in conjunction with prioritizing the needs of the university, results in scenarios wherein students enter the community with the perception that the community is not only different, but lesser than. This is often because they are on the periphery of the course, and the relationship becomes one wherein the students view the community as another task to complete in the course rather than a partner from whom they can learn and grow.
Instructors are almost always well-meaning with these collaborations, but a failure to extrapolate the disparities between universities and community partners is dangerous. The inherent privilege associated with the university’s positionality can disembody the community partners and produce an environment wherein the university’s needs usurp those of the community. This often casts the university, and therefore the students, as saviors. Rather than recognizing community partners as real people with individual, embodied experiences, these students perceive the community as the collective “other” from whom they are disconnected. They begin to define their concept of self in relation to this “other” and the positionalities associated with the community members, which are often collectivized in a variety of stereotypes that do not consider causation. Students rarely wonder why they perceive the community partner as different in this way. Instead, students believe they have been placed in a position to “help” these communities; this becomes the foundation by which they relate to the community.

SCEL courses make students feel good about themselves. Students almost always enter a community space to perform menial tasks for a set number of hours without getting to know community members or establishing relationships. Students leave thinking that they have “saved the day” or “rescued” those in need and rarely reflect on the experience from a critical position. Because of the construction of these experiences, students do not consider why the conditions are the way they are or what is responsible for the production of difference (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002). SCEL courses rarely teach students to consider how the institutions of which they are a part are responsible for producing difference, nor do they consider how we might enact change to upset those conditions. Thus, when students do confront difference, they often perceive it negatively—yet another course assignment to be forgotten at the conclusion of the semester. To educate students about the striations between the university and community encourages them to question
the systemic production of difference. I argue that, without doing so, students cannot meaningfully engage with the community because they believe they cannot learn from the community. The EEP I propose emphasizes a deconstruction of how institutional positionalities isolate the community and cast it as problematically different. I claim that the body must inform students’ approach to the community because difference is almost always demarcated based on one’s body. We exist within institutions that are not spatially or socially welcoming to non-normalized bodies and confronting that helps students to move beyond “service” to connect with the community through embodied experiences. That which has often divided the university and the community becomes the bridge for stronger collaborations.

Why Ecofeminist Embodied Pedagogy?

I offer an EEP as a solution to these pitfalls. I define this EEP as a form of EF pedagogy that focuses explicitly on confronting issues of the body. Further, it explores the relationship between our bodies, our socio-spatial conditions, and the ways in which those two factors merge to create difference in both theoretical and practical settings. As described above, the body is often ignored in the classroom—especially in online learning environments—but an EEP draws attention explicitly to the body as a meaning-making vessel. This approach begins by deconstructing the origins and models of SCEL courses so that students understand why many SCEL initiatives are inherently problematic. It doesn’t simply acknowledge, though, that students and universities fail to collaborate successfully. Rather, such a process decentralizes the student and the university and helps students understand why a focus on the body is necessary to inform productive SCEL initiatives. Recognition that there is a problem opens students to the possibility that their embodied experiences can serve as a platform by which they might better connect with the community. After establishing a need for such conversation, the focus shifts toward
embodiment, experience, and how bodies influence relationships and positionalities. Finally, 
students reflect on the connection between their bodies and the differences they perceive while 
working with the community.

College students are eager to learn about difference. For many of them, their own difference 
has dramatically shaped their own experiences, be they students of color, first-year college 
students, or marked different from their peers and the community in any way. They are prepared 
to apply critical reflective skills to their community work and understand how work that 
glamorizes their role can be reductive, while work that is designed to empower and move the 
community goals forward may be more tedious. Through the application of an EEP within a 
community writing course, students recognize how their own positionality and the positionalities 
of others are continuously produced and reproduced by the institutions within which they function. 
They begin to understand how our responsibility extends beyond one isolated course in which we 
“serve” the community. Rather to use those skills to build relationships with community 
organizations and assist them as they do the difficult work of upsetting power imbalances within 
the community. This approach produces better collaborations within the community during the 
course and also prepares students to leave the university setting more critical of how bodies move 
through certain socio-spatialities. They become critical of how institutions restrict the movement 
and participation of certain folks while advancing the participation of others. This awareness helps 
them see the connection between their coursework and the world in which they exist and begin to see how the environment in which they exist and systemic oppression are interconnected—this is 
the nexus upon which EF and embodied pedagogy coexist.

Origins of Embodied Pedagogy
Embodied pedagogy, in and of itself, is not a novel concept. Many instructors have brought issues of the body into the classroom and engaged in transparent dialogue with students regarding material and embodied perspectives. Embodied approaches almost always produce more critical engagement with the course material. For instance, Nguyen and Larson (2015) explained that “embodied pedagogy in its fullest expression provides a perspective based in holistic knowledge construction and social contextualization” and is a type of “learning that joins body and mind in a physical and mental act of knowledge construction” (p. 331). In essence, they argue that teaching students to learn with the body results in more socially situated knowledge construction. This type of work is ultimately responsible for better transferability outside of the classroom as students do not perceive knowledge as tied to the classroom, but rather one that is tied to themselves; in theory it becomes a transportable pedagogy connected to one’s embodied experiences. Per Nguyen and Larson (2015), “learners are simultaneously sensorimotor bodies, reflective minds, and social beings… A curriculum can span disciplines to make concrete its visions of creating spaces where learners create personal and social meaning with and in the body” (p. 334). This work is relevant in reminding instructors of the mind-body split that often informs classroom discussions, whether intentional or unintentional, and shifting toward a pedagogy that connects said knowledge to the body, making it materialize for students.

Sullivan (2019) also drew from the concept of material-embodied pedagogy to focus on technical struggles that emerge in classroom settings, arguing that they “may renew a sense of medium as material, intensify embodied affect, and prompt instructors to consider how we can more ethically relate to our tools and to students through attention to structures of power and oppression” (p. 2). In so doing, Sullivan brings the body back into conversations about and with technologies. Like my own, this pedagogy falls under the umbrella of feminist pedagogy,
concerning itself “with the material conditions of bodies and [taking] up questions of inclusivity, power, and identity as central rather than peripheral to digital literacy education” (p. 2). Though the emphasis here is on technologic difficulties that arise in a digital media classroom, Sullivan’s impetus for a renewed focus on the body is relevant: it is widely recognized amongst embodied educators that we can no longer ignore conversations surrounding inclusivity, identity, and—most importantly—the body. We must instead set aside our discomforts to help students navigate conversations about their bodies to understand how their bodies are capable of creating meaning. Additionally, this conversation creates a point of reflection about how bodies are often assigned meaning through the institutions in which they participate.

Other scholars have recognized how institutions presume the meaning of certain bodies and thus influence their individual embodied experiences. In a study of institutional racism, Granger (2010) offered “critical somaesthetics” as a modification of critical pedagogy designed to “help us in learning to face and engage each other as coinhabiters of the human lifeworld, which means, above all, that we must continue to work to transform our highly segregated schools and communities into coinhabited sociocultural spaces” (p. 78). Not to do so is to fall victim to the ideology of the mind-body split, or to neglect the socio-spatiality of embodied experiences. Ultimately, Granger calls for the recognition of embodied experience as a means to help us combat differences. He suggests that educators must confront how racist ideologies are embodied and thus to better incorporate the body in multicultural and antiracist pedagogies. Granger encouraged a theoretical reflection on socio-spatial constructions of difference in communities and schools, while Stanger (2018) offered a more physical solution: an “embodied pedagogy of hope.” Stanger’s embodied pedagogy invited Black women to come together and dance for an audience of other Black women, effectively removing any elements of the space constructed for the “White
male gaze.” They were empowered to learn through and with their bodies in a space designed for Black women by Black women. Such a pedagogy is very literally embodied, as the women learned through the movement of their own bodies in relation to other bodies. By allowing them to do so in a private, safe space, Stanger upset the traditional embodied model of the institution. Though one perspective is theoretical and the other physical, both embodied pedagogies encourage students to confront the conditions in which bodies produce meaning at the individual and institutional levels.

My own interpretation of embodied pedagogy is one that asks students to confront difference openly wherein we discuss our own bodies to focus on how embodied experience manifests uniquely for all parties. Adding elements of EF, I encourage reflection on how difference can serve as an impetus for productive collaboration in the dismantling of institutional oppression. After engaging theories of embodiment in the classroom, students move into the community to collaborate with their community partners. From an embodied perspective, they come to see the value in those collaborations; they recognize that the work they do with community partners has import beyond making them feel good about themselves. They no longer view these partnerships as schoolwork or as providing a service to those in “need;” rather, they recognize themselves as part of a symbiotic relationship. To achieve these goals, I argue that an effective community-based EEP consists of three phases: 1) establishing an understanding of the ways in which SCEL has previously failed and negotiating those implications; 2) establishing a theoretical framework of embodiment, exploring how experiences manifest differently based on our individual embodied encounters, and extrapolating the ways in which difference is produced both by the body and systemically; and 3) empowering students to build relationships with community partners that are oriented in awareness of the body and its role in the production of difference. Through this
approach, I argue that students better understand their bodies and the bodies of others. Additionally, they appreciate how those embodied perspectives and experiences inform their perceptions of and collaborations with the community. After establishing this framework, I used surveys and interviews instructors of SCEL courses to determine the current best practices for emphasizing the body in such a way that would better the relationships between all involved parties. In the remainder of this chapter, I report on the results of Phase One of my study and explain how I built my EEP based on their responses.

**Phase One: Survey Results**

I was interested in learning two things through the process of surveying and interviewing instructors who take up SCEL initiatives: 1) how instructors currently address issues of the body in the classroom, and 2) whether instructors see value in a focus on the body and embodiment in these courses. Ultimately, I wanted to gauge whether current and past SCEL courses were amenable to an EEP and what value they saw in its application. 28 instructors completed the full survey. I first asked questions that explored how they confronted issues of the body in the curriculum. I was also interested in learning how frequently students approached their instructors to discuss issues of the body that manifested in these courses. The responses to these questions are outlined in Table 2.
How often do or did you talk about issues of either your student’s body or the bodies of your community partners?

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>How frequently have students described embodied experiences at their sites of community engagement?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>About half the time</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 2: Survey Responses about Rates of Conversations Regarding the Body

In general, these responses indicate that students were less likely to approach conversations with their instructors than instructors were to approach these conversations directly with students, though neither was happening with much frequency. All survey respondents indicated that there was value in speaking about the body in these courses, though two did make sure to indicate that these conversations should only happen “when they make sense” given the course content and “not just because they are super popular right now.” One respondent in particular emphasized the relevance of these conversations as they pertain specifically to the aforementioned pitfalls. They write:

Yes. For my students, many of them are not majoring in Lib Arts. They don't get courses that focus on these issues. They are often conservative, Midwestern, and mostly white, who have never been around diverse peoples. Additionally, I have had numerous students of color who have told me this is the only class (these are majority senior classes) where they have talked about race and class. Plus, as we work with populations that are already othered in the community, we have to prep students to see the obstacles that people face related to their bodies and perceptions, so that students don't leave with the same old narrative of ‘I
feel sorry for them’ or pat themselves on the back for ‘helping,’ rather than being critical of systems that create oppression for othered bodies. (Anonymous Phase 1 Survey Response)

This instructor’s response indicates something that is present in much of the existing research: discussions of the body are essential should we want to produce situations in which students are critical of the systems responsible for the oppression of those marked as “different” or “other.” Instructors were overwhelmingly affirmative that there was, in fact, a necessity to cater to the body and difference. I used this to frame the interviews questions, which focused on the best practices for attuning SCEL pedagogy to the body.

**Phase One: Interview Results**

Of the 28 survey participants, eight agreed to participate in a follow up interview. I first asked each interviewee to define embodiment, the body, and identity, so that I could compare their understanding of these concepts to my own. I then asked the interviewees to speak about the value of designing a curriculum attuned directly to the body. Participants unanimously agreed that doing so was valuable and should be a focus of SCEL courses. However, when asked to offer potential practices for doing so effectively, each participant said that they did not know what instructors could do to better improve the focus on the body. This response affirmed the value of this research and encouraged me to adhere to the EF pedagogical framework I described in the previous chapter, as it has not been frequently relied on in Rhetoric and Composition Studies and would thus provide an alternate instructional model for SCEL courses. At this point, I asked participants to expand on their individual survey responses and invited suggestions specifically related to the community writing courses I was designing. The suggestions fell into three categories: assignments, readings, and general suggestions about facilitating SCEL.
Assignments

One interviewee encouraged me to incorporate a rhetorical analysis of not only the partner organization, but of the space in which the partners work. It was also suggested by three participants that I have some sort of assignment tailored specifically to ideas of the body, though they weren’t able to offer specific suggestions for what that might look like. Each participant suggested that the work done with the community partner be integral to the course as an assignment worth a large portion of their grade. When I asked for examples of how they approached grading these assignments, three participants told me that their students presented their final works to the community as a pitch proposal, two told me that the co-graded the assignments with the community partners, and one told me that they graded the assignments alone, but if it didn’t satisfy the community partner’s needs, the students could not pass the class. One instructor also suggested a “community profile,” where students performed an analysis of the community they are working within to understand the conditions that inform their lived experiences, which would improve the ways in which students connected with the community. In addition to these assignments, the participants also suggested readings that would inform their acquisitions of these skills.

Readings

interviewees suggested I ask community partners to provide readings and other materials to fuel class discussion, which I did throughout the semester. I also invited partners to lead the class discussion on the days their suggested readings were assigned. Not surprisingly, in addition to assignments and readings, all participants were eager to talk generally about the best practices for implementing SCEL work into the classroom.

**General Suggestions for SCEL Work**

Each participant emphasized the importance of preparing students for community work, not only through their readings and assignments, but through praxis and dialogue. One interviewee explained that there was value in practicing the types of conversations students have with their partners during class to think through how they might approach the partner to discuss embodied encounters or more effectively mediate differences. This suggestion directly informed my approach to teaching students rhetorical listening and role-playing conversations with community partners as described in the former chapter. Yet another interviewee suggested initiating a conversation with students about the changes they went through on their journey to become college students and joining the campus community to reflect on how that process might mirror joining the community in this course. Another suggested I teach students to “understand people in a human method. See them as people first, not clients.” Three interviewees spoke to the importance of self-disclosing my own positionalities and describing the relationship between my embodied experiences and identity as they relate to my teaching and the community; this transparency is likewise foundational in EF work. I took this advice to heart and was as honest with my students as possible about the course, my investment in its success, and my background as a student, teacher, and community member. Several participants reminded me that experiencing discomfort was productive and that I should teach students how to negotiate discomfort as a means to learn
from rather than allow it to prohibit their growth; doing so was the main goal of my course, and hearing this echoed by study participants affirmed my current approaches. In fact, one instructor described that point of using discomfort as a jumping off point for conversations is to draw attention to how discomfort is caused by their assumptions about the other. This instructor’s students were working with homeless partners and reported that the “pock marks and lack of teeth” are distracting and that “their dress and age” made them stand out, to which the instructor leads a conversation about these assumptions and how they are tied to the person’s actions in a negative way, rather than recognizing that a “hard life changes bodies.”

All but one interviewee emphasized the preconceptions students have of their partners based on their bodies and encouraged me to reframe that discomfort to ask students to question why they feel that way. One instructor who did not share this perception, Amy, was initially quite critical of my questions, responding with extended survey responses that made statements like:

I am detecting a couple of assumptions in this project that I think my answers are hitting against: 1) service learning means going to help poor or disadvantaged people on site. That is not the only type of service learning. I have not facilitated that kind of project in a writing class, only projects where students help an organization conduct some type of study or writing project. And, 2) if students do go to a site, the assumption is that students will encounter people different than them… perhaps in race or age or ability or class? This has not typically happened in my experience. We do not really have a town/gown binary or racial diversity at our small, rural university. To be helpful, I wonder if you have read the work of Ellen Cushman or Shutz and Ruggles Gere on this exact assumption. (Amy – Phase 1 Survey Response)

This was a fair assumption made by Amy, but it likewise emphasizes the stereotype that embodied difference is only relevant in certain scenarios. Because students are not likely to encounter the assumed differences in these specific situations does not mean that these students should not be taught to question how difference manifests. Homogeneity does not reduce the concerns I have with students who perform SCEL not questioning why conditions are the way that they are. Difference still exists and, if students are completely homogenous with their community partners,
it is perhaps more likely that they would negatively perceive those from whom they differ. In Amy’s interview, I questioned her assumption about my intentions, and she revealed that her assumption was that I was having students engage in traditional volunteerism—the kind of work that produces saviorism—while her students tended to engage primarily in writing for the community models. Her students did business writing for local non-profits and rarely, if ever, met with the community outside of the classroom. We spoke for a while about the different approaches to SCEL, and I explained that my students would not be performing service but would be partnering with non-profits much in the same way that her students did. There were two main differences: 1) my students would collaborate at the partner site; and 2) both my institution and the city within which it is housed are racially, economically, and ethnically diverse. Students would not experience homogeneity in any regard, and oftentimes the students would be the ones who felt othered. This sparked an important point of connection wherein Amy identified that her students had spoken about times wherein they could not meet the expectations of the partner in terms of professional dress, making them feel out of place and uncomfortable.

It’s worth noting here that issues of dress, hair, tattoos, piercings, and other extensions of the body are still embodied markers of difference that can result in othering, either on behalf of the students or the community partner and having strategies for confronting these markers of difference as points of conversation is essential to the success of student-community collaborations. The bodies of students are just as likely—if not more likely in some cases—to prevent students from working productively within the community. Not only is it important that they learn to work through the discomfort caused by their preconceptions of others, but it is important that they learn how to approach situations in which it is their body—or extensions of their body—that mark them as different. We often assume that similarities in race, class, and ability
means that difference does not exist, but that is often not the case. Thus, recognizing that both large- and small-scale embodied differences influence the ways in which we work with others can create a framework for conversations across these differences rather than speaking around them. These interviews directly informed my curricular design, which I discuss in depth in the following section.

**From Phase One to Phase Two: Curricular Design**

Armed with a series of suggestions from interviewees, I began the process of synthesizing my primary research about the relationship between the body and SCEL courses with secondary research regarding EF pedagogy. Based on these interviews, conversations with community partners, and research into embodied pedagogy, I designed two different Writing and Community courses: one for the face-to-face classroom and one for an online classroom. When designing the course for this study, I kept these four best practices—accessibility, dialogue, praxis, and interconnectedness (Herles, 2018, p. 4)—at the forefront. However, I moved EF pedagogy a step further and attuned the course directly to the body and its role in the production of difference. I was likewise interested in giving community members a direct role in the course design and execution. Thus, I began by speaking to my partner organizations and determined the variety of work they would need students to complete. Each of the four organizations I elected to work with had a very specific mission and worked with a specific subset of individuals. The Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice provides legal support to low income workers, their families, and communities fighting for economic and social rights. Advocates 4 Baba Baxter is an activist group fighting against ableism in Detroit and working to provide a model of a community that supports “the most vulnerable among us.” The Detroit Community Wealth Fund provides non-extractive loans to cooperative businesses started by traditionally marginalized groups and
provides support in building their cooperative business. Finally, Arts & Scraps provides interactive learning and creative experiences to public school students in Southeast Michigan with a focus on incorporating art into STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) education with the use of recycled materials. (see Appendix A for more information on each partner and the student projects).

For my students to understand how the differences between themselves and their respective community partners were constructed, students mapped their own positionality in relation to their communities. The first course assignment, written after just three weeks, was a position paper in which they outlined their own identity and embodied experiences in relation to the community. This assignment asked students to select several experiences, beliefs, ideologies, or encounters and deconstruct the influences they had on their definition of community. Further, they were encouraged to explore why they held these beliefs, how they informed their approach to the “other,” and how they could potentially confront this during the scope of the course (see Appendix C for full syllabus and assignment descriptions). This paper served as the foundation to which students continuously returned throughout the semester as our readings and conversations problematized the concepts of embodiment and difference.

Based on this position paper, students later completed an assignment inspired by Fluri and Trauger’s (2011) Corporeal Marker Project (CMP), which was “an experiential learning activity […] designed] to foster understanding of ways in which bodies may be interpreted in public spaces” (p. 551). Fluri and Trauger designed this project within human geography as a means for students to learn by “presenting themselves as ‘the other’ in their daily spaces of interaction on and off campus” (p. 553). Students were to mark themselves as “different” in some way and move through public spaces, hopefully encouraging consideration of how those spaces might be experienced.
much differently than what is considered their “normal.” Per Fluri and Trauger, this activity increased students’ empathy toward those who are typically oth ered and initiated an understanding of the ways in which bodies construct a corporeally assumed identity that impacts the ways in which certain people can move throughout certain spaces and, in turn, communities. There are limitations to this project, such as the inability for students to truly feel “what it is like to be really ‘othered’” and that “the experience of feeling ‘out of place’ could not be an accurate facsimile for being marginalized involuntarily” (p. 558); however, this exercise is beneficial because it encourages students to realize that “they are complicit in the construction and reinforcement of social norms, and how this is a barrier for creating solidarity across difference” (p. 559). In other words, Fluri and Trauger’s CMP exposes the ways in which socio-spatial conditions construct and reify normalcy and how those conditions isolate us within our embodied perceptions of social norms with minimal consideration for others. Because my primary goal with this course was to empower students to understand how bodies create the striations between certain communities and people and to work toward a deconstruction of those institutions, the CMP was a launch point for students to move through their current community representing a different embodied experience.

Both assignments provided valuable understanding regarding how students’ bodies inform their perception and definition of community. However, the most important aspect of my course design was the student reflective journal. As discussed earlier, Ludlow (2010) argued that self-reflection was an important tool in EF pedagogy that helps students to “[deconstruct] dualisms that justify domination” (p. 57). Self-reflection, she furthered, should take place throughout the entire project as well as at its completion because it “encourage[s] consciousness raising among the students” (p. 45). In essence, Ludlow argues experiential learning should be both inherently activist and inherently self-reflective should it intend to foster dialogue regarding the situations
and dualities which govern our worldviews. Because of the implicit focus on the environment in which the action takes place and the engagement with the community, this approach considers the interconnectedness of ourselves, our bodies, and our environment to ultimately work to eliminate systems of oppression (p. 58). This emphasis on reflection and activism was crucial to my own course design. Students maintained a reflective journal after all readings and throughout the duration of the community collaboration. Some journal entries were guided while others were completely open-ended (See Appendix D for journal prompts and guidelines). At the completion of the course, these journals were and coded to trace the development of major course concepts in relation to students’ own perceptions of the body, difference, and community. Based on these reflective journals, pre- and post-class surveys, and interviews with individual students, I demonstrated that a community writing course that attuned directly to the body produces stronger valuations of the body and embodied experiences amongst students and produces strong university-student collaborations. I report on these results in Chapters Four and Five.

**Shifting from a Traditional to an Online Community Writing Classroom**

It was not difficult to design a course that focused on the nexus of bodies, spaces, difference, and community within a traditional classroom. However, the same necessity for a classroom attuned to the body with a concern for difference, space, and bodies is essential within online SL instruction. Research has addressed identity construction in online spaces (Selfe & Selfe, 1994; DeWitt, 1997; Barrios, 2004; Williams, 2008), but a pedagogy tailored to identity’s influence on engagement with the community outside of the digital classroom is lacking. The importance of creating a SCEL pedagogy that attends to students’ bodies becomes increasingly important with the proliferation of the online writing classroom. As Griffin and Minter (2013) warned, digital classroom spaces lend themselves to a forgetting of students as people in lieu of
“[choosing] to view students as sets of data points” (p. 154). In designing digital courses, the authors maintain that instructors must craft “universally inclusive and accessible practices” (p. 157). To do so, a pedagogy must not risk unintentionally perceiving students in digital classrooms in a way that Stenberg (2002) classified as disembodied; instead it must take up the work of “challeng[ing] the notion of a purely virtual, disembodied self” (Durham, 2011, p. 58). In fact, attending to corporeality in digital spaces can direct research toward ending social inequities in those spaces and honor the ways in which meaning is created through “culturally and historically specific body experiences” (p. 57). This practice can move SCEL toward the important goal of affecting social change. The bodily experiences of students in digital spaces contribute to their ability to create meaning, and instructors must help students understand how their bodies construct and reconstruct encounters with difference, particularly as distance learning opportunities proliferate throughout the university.

In the university, fully online courses and those implementing SCEL are increasing simultaneously (Nielsen, 2016). Integrating SCEL into online learning environments has been taken up within technical communication classes (Strait & Sauer, 2004; Soria & Weiner, 2013; Bourelle, 2014). The shift into online SCEL classrooms has not been without its complications, however; specifically, Nielsen (2016) identified the three main concerns for community-engaged learning in an online class to be “locating service opportunities, serving in (potentially) isolated areas, and enrolling and engaging non-traditional and part-time students” (p. 241). Although these concerns are not unique to the online class, in digital learning communities, the instructor intervenes less and students have less faculty and staff assistance in organizing service encounters. Thus, students must assume more agency over their learning in these courses and instructors must
help them see the value in collaborating with the community partner; this EEP is well positioned
to do so.

As online SCEL classes continue to grow, so does the urgency and value to attune
community-based pedagogies toward the body. Despite the lack of a physical place, EF advocates
the development and integration of technology in a manner aware of and adaptive to the social and
material specificities of a local context” (Romberger, 2007, p. 252). Thus, by applying a subset of
EF methodology directly to the digital spaces, I tailored the course toward bodies in online spaces
within the theoretical and practical model I described above. “Users within electronic spaces are
able to claim considerably more agency if they are aware of the rhetorical construction impinging
upon or even shaping their desired methods of approaching writing tasks” (Romberger, 2007, p.
265), or in this case, engaging with the community. Instruction drawing attention to this rhetorical
construction can empower students in online SCEL courses and provide them with the tools to
identify how their digital embodied experiences may impact their engagement with the
community, either positively or negatively. No matter the environment in which the class is taught,
I argue that students must understand the way one’s body affects spaces and relationships. Online
instructors can help students feel comfortable navigating the space to create meaningful
community partnerships by attuning their curriculum to the body.

Though the focus of this dissertation was not to compare the outcomes between online and
offline SCEL courses, I did ask instructors what strategies they might use to adapt an EEP to the
online version of this class. I asked instructors for advice about adapting this SCEL course that
focuses on embodiment and community-making to an online class. The most common suggestion
was to “humanize” the digital space as much as possible. They encouraged me to ask students to
“log in to see each other” and to “find ways to see faces.” Inspired by this suggestion, I asked
students to complete a modified version of the in-class discussion lead where they were placed in
groups of four to pre-record video discussions throughout the semester. I made certain that they
met the community partner at their site at least once to help them see the organization as more
“human.” Beyond seeing one another, another interviewee stated that it was exceptionally
important to establish definitions for and with students and to carefully select readings that would
focus more explicitly on online communities. I did this by tailoring readings toward examples of
bodies in online spaces. For example, they read Stenberg’s (2002) article on embodied classrooms
and embodied knowledges. I also asked students to adapt the CMP discussed above to deconstruct
how bodies exist in online spaces. Another interviewee reminded me of the value of an institutional
rhetorical analysis in understanding the goals of the organization and preparing for the community
collaboration; she emphasized that having students in an online class perform this analysis would
help me to see how those students perceive the organization. Two interviewees expressed concern
regarding facilitating online SCEL. They were unable to offer suggestions and wished me well in
the process of doing so; they found too many potential risks were associated with online teaching
and SCEL. Ultimately, though there was little advice provided on translating a traditional
community writing course to an online environment, there was unanimous agreement that this
consideration is one we need to address as online writing instruction continues to proliferate the
university. Though not the focus of this dissertation, the general hesitation of respondents
demonstrates a need for continued research that considers best practices for engaging SCEL in
online learning environments. I return to this suggestion in Chapter Six.

Ultimately, through Phase One of my study, I established that instructors do see value in
attuning SCEL courses to the body but struggle to do so effectively. They recognize that many
SCEL pitfalls could be resolved through this renewed focus on the body and want these curricular
changes to be done thoughtfully and in a way that does not dismiss the socio-spatial construction of difference. All instructors unanimously agreed that questioning *why* conditions exist is most relevant to this type of curriculum as it has the best potential to result in change. Using their guidance, I designed and taught two courses geared toward using an EEP to produce stronger university-community partnerships rooted in reflections on the relationship between the body and difference. In the following two chapters, I report on the Phase Two study results and describe how students in those courses came to value the body and redefine difference through the implementation of the course based on the instructor surveys and interviews I conducted in Phase One to ultimately demonstrate improved relationships with the community partners.
CHAPTER 4: ESTABLISHING THE VALUE OF EMBODIMENT IN THE CLASSROOM: A MIXED METHODS ANALYSIS OF STUDENT SURVEYS AND JOURNALS

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented and analyzed the results from Phase One of my study. Based on a series of surveys and interviews with instructors that teach service- and community-engaged learning (SCEL) courses, I demonstrated the need for a change in SCEL curriculum to improve student relations with the community. From there, I proved that instructors are actively doing work that addresses issues of the body as they manifest within their courses, but often do not realize they are doing so. Rarely do those instructors make embodiment central to the course. Finally, I showed that instructors see value in the ecofeminist embodied pedagogy (EEP) that I proposed as a solution to many pitfalls that arise in SCEL. I then described how I used the data from the first part of my study to design syllabi for two sections, one online and one offline, of an upper-level, general education, community writing course at an urban research-intensive university in Detroit, MI. I described how an EEP would address the major pitfalls I identified within SCEL pedagogy. In this chapter, I turn toward the Phase Two of my study to argue that an EEP can and should be applied to general education courses with SCEL components. I draw on the results of pre- and post-class surveys and journal entries from students enrolled in the courses described above. This chapter engages two related questions: 1) do students value a curriculum that attunes to the body?; and 2) can an EEP improve students’ value of a curriculum attuned to the body?. I begin this chapter with a focus on the responses regarding the importance of the body and embodiment between the pre- and post-class surveys and discuss the methods that resulted in a 40% increase in the ways in which students valued the conversations of the body from the beginning to the end of the class. I then describe the coding schema I applied to students’ journals
and provide an analysis of several case studies from each section to show how students’ value of the body increased throughout the semester. Following these extended responses, I analyze these responses to ultimately show how students came to value conversations about the body and effectively showcases how students’ shifting valuation of the body aligned with the coursework from the semester, thus demonstrating the main value of an EEP. Though this chapter draws on data from a community writing course, the pedagogical framework described could be applied to courses without an SCEL component as well as SCEL courses in other disciplines. Finally, I close this chapter with a reflection on how bodies construct difference and the influence of difference on the community. This conversation informs Chapter Five’s focus on how a knowledge of the body and embodiment influences students’ relationships with their community partners.

**Results from Pre- and Post-Class Survey**

The pre-class survey asked students a variety of questions pertaining to the body, difference, and SCEL. I was interested in learning how students perceived the body/embodiment, difference, and how it might connect to their work with the community. Of the 42 students enrolled across the two sections, 31 students took the pre-class survey. In this section, I present the results of a series of Likert scale and extended response questions to explore students’ baseline perceptions of the importance of an embodied curriculum. First, students were asked if it was valuable for the curriculum to focus on issues of body, both in general and in the context of SCEL. The results at the beginning of the courses showed that students were largely ambivalent toward conversations of the body due to discomfort in facilitating those conversations; however, they were more interested in learning about the body from their instructor. Students were least interested in having these conversations with the community partner. It was not that students found these
conversations unimportant, but rather that they felt ill-prepared to discuss them without discomfort or causing someone upset.

The first question asked about when it was valuable for students to talk about issues of the body in class. As shown in Figure 1, an overwhelming majority of students felt that there was sometimes or never value in those conversations.

![Figure 1: Pre-Class Survey Response Question 1](image_url)

When asked to elaborate on their response, all 31 students articulated that if these discussions were to come up, they should be talked about respectfully and non-discriminatorily. Several students gave more specific responses, including: “since the body is the physical extension of an identity (people express identity through their body among other methods), it should be talked about in the context of identity,” “they should be talked about not just as the individual, because pointing someone out because of their differences can be problematic and lead to a very awkward class. It is important to understand differences between the people inside of your classroom, but never to the extent of making another uncomfortable,” and “without judgment or negative connotations.”
Describing their body should not be a way of better understanding them as a person, because we are not our bodies. But rather, a descriptor to help identify them.” Each student was conscious that any conversations about the body must be respectful, open-minded, and well-facilitated by the instructor should they occur. Almost all students seemed cautious in their responses about having conversations of the body with community partners, because they could become negative, awkward, or uncomfortable.

Before the class began, not only did the students not want to speak about the body within the course, most students also did not think the body should be addressed in the context of the community partnership. If one of the focuses of SCEL is for students to work with those from whom they differ, instructors must prioritize educating students on this embodied difference or students will avoid those conversations rather than embrace them, which will further the divide between the university and community. Figure 2 illustrates students’ pre-class survey responses to this question.

*Figure 2: Pre-class Survey Response Question 2*
There was a 10% increase in students who felt that it was always valuable to have conversations about the body with community partners than those who felt they should have those conversations in the classroom. However, over half of the students were still inclined to avoid these conversations, with 43% indicating that these conversations were sometimes valuable, and 13% indicating that they were never valuable. Again, students reiterated the importance of having these conversations respectfully and appropriately should they come up and encouraged attempts made to avoid said conversations. Extended responses included, “This conversation always comes up and everyone has different views on it. I find that this should never come up due to the fact that it shouldn't matter what kind of ‘body’ you have. I believe this conversation can easily backfire if not approached the proper way,” and “there are some cases where this may be appropriate, but I think for the most part people need to figure out what to do on their own. The discussion should probably be private if it is with a partner or someone you are working closely with.” Students’ past experiences and pre-existing knowledge seems to create conditions in which they perceive that conversations about the body and related issues can only be negative. Thus, most would rather ignore those conversations rather than have a potentially uncomfortable discussion. While all students were insistent that these conversations should remain appropriate and stem from a desire to understand, these extended responses still indicated that no students were fully ready to initiate conversations with those from whom they differ. While 26% of students were certain that these conversations should always happen because that they would be working with community members who were ultimately different from themselves, the majority felt it best to avoid these conversations, and all students felt ill-prepared to have them should they emerge.

Disinterest in leading conversations about markers of difference is a common trope among students. Brown et al. (2017) reviewed the extant literature on the ways in which students and
instructors talk about race in the classroom to ultimately claim that far too little research has been done about classroom conversations of race. That which does exist argues that student experience should be at the forefront of conversation. Pierce (2018) offered a framework for leading conversations amongst students about race and identity after realizing that these conversations often manifest organically in the classroom. Despite research supporting the impetus for students to guide these conversations, Buckley and Park (2019) found that students are also hesitant to talk about social class. Based on academic and social norms and pressures, students would rather avoid said conversations. When these conversations take place in the classroom, students from marginalized groups are often placed at the forefront—they must either “educate” their peers or defend themselves. For instance, in a study of college students with physical disabilities, Abes and Wallace (2018) determine that able-bodied instructors and peers often see students with physical disabilities are something to accommodate and it results in those with physical disabilities feeling as though a part of their identity, and their body, is denied.

This disregard for the body happens outside of the classroom as well. Drawing Bonilla-Silva’s (2013) framework of “color-blind racism,” Harris and Romero (2018) argue that color-blindness is used to frame social issues and policy, even by those who are otherwise progressive. They write specifically about debates between urban farmers and community activists in Austin, TX, but this issue of color-blind racism is seen in discussions of police brutality, mass shootings, and other major social issues. Color-blind racism allows White folks to distance themselves from racism because they want to accept that we live in a “post-racial” society wherein everyone has equality and racists are the outliers (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). This false narrative influences the conversations that happen in our society, making conversations about race uncomfortable. It is easier as a society to blame the individual rather than to confront that racism is pervasive in society.
This translates to other embodied markers of difference as well, resulting in a society that is not only “color-blind,” but “body-blind.” It is easier to believe that society treats all bodies as equal than to recognize that ableism, sexism, racism, ageism, transphobia, and other systems to denigrate certain embodied markers are institutionally and systemically reinforced and reproduced (Chonody, 2016; Stoll, Lilley, & Pinter, 2017; Nario-Redmond, 2019). Thus, the discomfort students exhibit in talking about issues of the body makes sense: they’ve either been societally conditioned to think these conversations are unnecessary or feel uncomfortable speaking about their own bodies because doing so has often resulted in ignoring the marker of difference rather than confronting it as a part of their identity. This discomfort is one main reason to focus on issues of the body in the classroom; doing so prepares students to productively engage difference in society rather than ignore it, as is often done, which allows for the persistence of systemic oppression.

Students are aware of the institutionalization of oppression based on the body and know that having these conversations is important. This is reflected in the final question on the pre-class survey, shown in Figure 3, which asked students how important it was for the instructor to focus on issues of the body in the classroom. The numbers shift dramatically between this question and the two previously discussed questions. More than half the class felt there was value in these conversations taking place more than half the time and over a quarter of the class felt the instructor should always talk about issues of the body. Only 6% of students responded that there was never value in instructors hosting these conversations.
Interestingly, though many students felt that they themselves should avoid these conversations, they were open to the instructor talking about the body.

When asked to expand on why instructors should or should not have these conversations, several students responded that it was conditional and should only be brought up as necessary. Several others, as described here, felt that these conversations were not relevant given the course content: “I think global issues of this topic are moderately important to discuss. On the other hand, I don't think it's applicable to talk about this in English simply because it's not important.” Most extended responses indicated that students saw value in talking about the body, with statements such as:
These conversations are extremely important because when we have hatred or prejudices against others it only makes us a weak community. Underneath what meets the eye, labels, and what one may identify with, we are all humans who have struggles and want fair treatment throughout our everyday lives. If we don't address these things and learn that there is a better more progressive way to approach them, we choose to live a life of ignorance. As long as knowledge is good-hearted and true, it is always the right move, especially within an academic setting. (Anonymous Pre-Class Survey Response)

Overall, the pre-class survey responses demonstrate that students are receptive to conversations of the body but feel discomfort at the idea of being responsible for initiation and facilitation. Inherently, students see value in learning about and discussing issues of the body within the classroom—the space in which they feel familiar and safe—however, they do not want to engage those conversations within the community or lead those conversations themselves, in large part out of a fear of upsetting someone or misjudging them based on the body. These survey results also indicated that priming students to participate in these conversations outside of the classroom must start, first, in the classroom, because they needed preparation on the best practices to engage in dialogue about the body. The pre-class survey showed that an embodied curriculum would produce more positive collaborations with those from whom the students differ and prepare them to engage in dialogue about how difference is systematically produced. I hypothesized that framing lessons around the body would increase the number of students who saw value in speaking candidly and productively about issues of the body, both in the classroom and beyond. The course thus focused explicitly on working through issues of the body in the classroom and shaping the conversation such that embodied experience was a pillar by which students defined and interacted with the community.

At the end of the course, students were asked to take a survey in which they were again asked the value of hosting conversations of the body (see Figure 4).
Over 70% of students responded that this was always valuable, and no respondents saw conversations about the body as invaluable. This is more than a 40% increase in the way that students valued the body from the pre-class survey (see Figure 1). When asked to expand on why this discussion was or was not valuable, students responded with comments such as, “These conversations are most definitely important because they truly capture many components that contribute to the main notions of this course. We could not have difference without consideration of race, gender, sexuality, etc,” “They are extremely important because these topics go unaddressed quite often, and that's when racism, etc. comes into play within the classroom. Having discussions about race, sexuality, gender, physical ability allows students to have more knowledge on these subjects and rids the mind of negative perceptions of these issues of the body,” and “because they allow us to understand a bigger picture than what we may consider normal, such as viewing things from an Arab American viewpoint which differs from someone’s experience as a
white or a black person.” Other common themes included challenging students' perceptions of the body and related issues and providing tools that were useful outside of the classroom, as issues of the body are integral to daily life.

While students expressed concern about having these conversations in the pre-class survey, the post-class responses clearly indicate that students see the recognition of the body and its relationship to difference as an essential conversation because of the influences they have on our experiences and our communities. Students were no longer worried about making sure that their conversations were “comfortable,” which was the refrain that dominated the comments in the pre-class survey. Instead, they wanted to understand the experiences of others from whom they differed. Ultimately, over the course of the semester, students went from avoiding discussions of the body to seeing value in these conversations as a means to fostering more successful community relationships. These responses proved my hypothesis that students do value the body but need coaching on how to best incorporate it into their conversations. It is not just that they are afraid to offend others, but societal conditioning has led them to believe that our perspectives are all the same—not unique to our own lived experiences. Thus, helping students question the systemization of “body-blindness” shows them that there is value in their embodied experiences and the embodied experiences of others. In the section that follows, I describe the curricular approaches taken to foster critical conversations about the body that ultimately produced this 40% increase in students’ valuation.

**Teaching Embodied Experience as a Pillar of Community**

As described in the previous chapter, I first taught students about current approaches to SCEL and we discussed the common pitfalls of these approaches. After establishing this foundation, the course shifted explicitly to issues of the body, marked with the Corporeal Marker
Project (CMP) assignment inspired by Flauri and Trauger (2011). This assignment comes from human geography and asks students to physically mark themselves different and document their experiences moving through public spaces, which motivates a critical reflection on their relationship to those encounters. I used a variation of this assignment, in conjunction with A. Abby Knoblauch’s (2012) definitions, to establish the definitions of embodiment, the body, and difference used throughout the course. Students then applied definitions of the body and embodiment to a series of readings about specific embodied experiences while reflecting on how the institutions in which we exist are responsible for creating the conditions of those experiences. We focused on written accounts about the experience of having a Black body, disabled body, queer body, Arab-American body, a trans body and a woman’s body. We focused on theoretical constructions of difference after students working through experiential readings and assignments. I wanted to first mark the importance of embodied experiences within one’s own life rather than just academic conversations taken up in the classroom. Student’s own lived experiences were essential in helping students realize the value of embodied experiences. To help students see the relationship between bodies and community, I asked students to lead discussions about these readings and to use their own experiences as a dialogic starting point for understanding the value of speaking candidly about their bodies and embodied encounters within the community.

In the phase of the course that focused on embodiment, I slightly varied the readings and responses between the offline and online sections. Students in a traditional setting who physically enter a space and see one another are more apt to understand the importance of bodies; they can literally see where certain bodies sit in the classroom, recognize how those with certain bodies may be more apt to speak, and talk more openly with one another about their experiences as they are together in real-time—they are not mediated by the asynchronous classroom. In an online
learning environment (OLE), however, students are less likely to see the body as relevant. They often fall into the trap of disembodiment because those with whom they are communicating are not bound to a physical body; in many cases, they are words on a screen to whom the reader assigns a perceived embodiment. To draw attention to this divide, I assigned readings that focused explicitly on embodiment in online spaces, including Stenberg’s (2002) “Embodied Classrooms, Embodied Knowledges: Re-Thinking the Mind/Body Split,” and Alexander et al.’s (2004) “Queerness, Sexuality, Technology, and Writing: How do Queers Write Ourselves When We Write in Cyberspace?.” These readings deal explicitly with the relationships in OLEs and digital communication platforms, so students can see the body’s relevance. The shift in readings during this section of the course was the only difference between the curricula, and tailoring readings based on the course learning environment was essential in helping students understand the role the body plays in constructing and reifying stagnant ideas of both community and difference.

Due to the complexity of embodiment theory, I anticipated that students would struggle with these ideas and that I would have to deliver supplemental instruction on the readings to have productive conversations about why embodiment creates conditions of isolation between the university and the community. However, this is not what happened. While it is true that students struggled with the complexities of the theoretical underpinnings behind these arguments, they could clearly identify and articulate why continued conversations about the body were relevant both within and outside of the course. Students eagerly engaged this dialogue within the classroom and wanted to learn how, moving forward, they might better approach those with different embodiments. In the section that follows, I review how students worked through the theoretical and experiential notions of embodiment by reflecting on data gathered in both the online and offline sections. I present the coding schema used to evaluate student journal responses. I then
expand on journals written by students in each section of the course. I do this separately for the online and offline class as the readings differed during this phase. I conclude with the post-class survey results for both courses to show that students can be taught to value and define embodiment more productively within the scope of one semester. The next chapter focuses on the ways in which this shift improved community-student partnerships.

**Journal Coding Schema**

I developed an inductive coding schema at the conclusion of the course based on the following five concepts: the body/embodiment, difference, identity, community, and personal growth. I was explicitly interested in how an EEP influenced students’ connection with the community and I made sure to delineate between the body/embodiment and identity, hence the need to code them differently. Students are often cognizant of how they or others identify themselves, but as discussed in Chapter One, the body often precedes identity. I documented personal growth since it would provide a framework by which to document how students sense of improvement throughout the semester. The full coding schema is outlined in Table 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Sample Student Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The body and embodiment</td>
<td>Student writing that directly addresses a physical marker or extension of the body in a critical way—mentioning blackness alone wouldn’t count, but identifying how blackness impacts one’s experience would</td>
<td>&quot;The history of slavery, or the repeat of history, and how even to this day a Black woman/man (also considering there are different struggles of a man compared to a Black woman's) cannot receive the same things or treatments like the majority group. How the skin complexion is a sign of their struggles and their histories, and beyond their skin is why they feel the need to work three times as hard to get where someone else can easily get to.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Student writing about identity that is devoid of commentary about the body or physical markers—mentioning feeling unsafe because of their brown skin would code for the body, but exploring what it means to be Arab-American would code for identity</td>
<td>&quot;It is my duty to serve others in the best way possible because we are all human, and we should be able to make one other happy and make other’s burdens less of a burden. It is my duty as a Muslim, as a human, as an individual to treat others kindly.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>Student writing that identifies literal or metaphorical ways in which two or more individuals or entities are not alike from a structural or systemic perspective</td>
<td>&quot;We subconsciously isolate ourselves both physically and socially, basically we can display a tendency of being a little snobby. We gap this barrier when we approach people from outside of our community.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Student writing about what constitutes a community and/or their community partner</td>
<td>&quot;It tells us how much we may go into places thinking we know more than anyone else what we are doing and just thinking about us benefiting the community instead of opening ourselves to really understanding the community, and seeing how they can offer things that will benefit us. Or even showing us ways that they view their problems, and solutions to these problems.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Academic Growth</td>
<td>Student writing that demonstrates awareness of having learned something or established agency in some way related to the course concepts coded above. These are direct instances of metacognition.</td>
<td>I think of community differently now because there are so many unspoken ways that it effects how we move through spaces.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To establish these criteria, I performed inter-rater reliability (IRR) testing with three other coders. We went through a full set of student journal entries to ultimately compare and revise our coding schema three times. Through the IRR testing process, we established the differentiation between the body/embodiment, difference, and identity in a way that would allow me to better categorize students’ understandings of embodiment theory. For instance, when students self-identified as Black or Arab-American, that wasn’t an acknowledgement of embodiment theory, but rather an identity marker they’ve selected. When they described feeling unsafe in a certain area because of their skin color, that was a marker of the body. However, if they described why they felt unsafe being Black in a predominantly White area, that was coded as difference. Through the IRR process, I fine-tuned the coding schema that was then applied to all journal entries from the participating students in both sections of the course. In the following two sections I present the results of the offline and online classes respectively.

**Student Journal Coding Results: Offline Class**

I chose to separate my analysis of student journals from between the online and offline courses because the readings and number of journals varied between sections. In this section, I present the ways in which students in the offline class communicated about embodiment during this phase of the course. I begin by showing the results from coding student journals to demonstrate how all students began to write more critically about the body/embodiment in relation to the community. I then provide an extended analysis of several students as they moved through the course.

In this segment of the course, students in the offline class had a total of six journals to complete. Across these six journals, an average of 41.37% of the journal entries were coded for the body/embodiment and 15.42% were coded for difference. While the codes for difference were
not all that substantial, this was prior to the class’s uptake of the theoretical constructions of difference. The students who did write about it, however, wrote about it in a meaningful way. 7.97% of journal responses indicated understanding of personal growth in the related content. To be certain, this does not mean that students were not developing outside of these codes, but rather that only 7.97% of the language used clearly indicated students’ self-evaluation of growth. Nearly half of the participating students wrote about the body/embodiment during this phase of the course, which demonstrates their ability to understand these concepts and write about them appropriately. Further, because students were writing about difference before it was introduced as a course concept, it is evident that students saw connections between the body and the social production of difference based solely on their own experiences. Throughout their responses, what is most interesting are the ways in which students comment on the value of the body. I expand on this in the following section, tracing the development of two students’ journal entries during this unit.

**Case Studies: Shreya and Morgan**

In this section, I extrapolate more thoroughly the journal responses from two students in the offline class, Shreya and Morgan, to describe how they understood the body and embodiment. I selected these students as samples because they attended each class session, wrote each journal response during this phase, and completed all readings. Finally, both Shreya and Morgan’s individual journals coded similarly to class average. I chose not to focus on the outliers as this dissertation focuses on best practices for SCEL courses and should speak on behalf of the majority of students. In what follows, I explicate sections from the first and last journals of this unit for each student as well as one journal written at the unit’s halfway point. I use these examples to illustrate how students’ understanding of the body and embodiment changed throughout the semester. I
finish with a critical reflection on how students came to better value the body and its relationship to the structural production of difference that informs much of SCEL.

In the first journal, both students spoke generally about the body and embodiment’s ability to divide or unite. Shreya wrote that:

The way you connect to the ‘embodiments’ you read about can affect your emotion towards the reading. You may either feel more connected or actually be pushed away and feel disconnected. Likewise, when moving through a space/community it's important to understand the impact of embodiment around you and how you interact with the examples of embodiment you see. For many people, they may feel more connected to things because of embodiment because it seems relatable. (Offline Journal 7)

In this excerpt, Shreya comments on the ways in which embodiment is a uniting force. She identifies that we connect with that which we find familiar or relatable. She also recognizes that it can largely be divisive, serving to disconnect one from their surroundings, their community, and/or their reading. While she recognizes that embodiment has those abilities, she does not write about it in such a way that she understands its theoretical underpinnings or sees value in the notions of embodiment. In the same journal entry, Morgan writes similarly about the body. See the following excerpt:

I think that the shunning of the body in literacies mainly shows a rejection of different cultures, because in other cultures the body is not shamed as much. People need to be conscious and aware of how the body affects how we talk. I think that as a woman also I am more aware that how a person acts and orientates her body will determine how people receive what she is saying. Just because we have to be aware about how the body affects what we are saying doesn’t mean that we have to shy away from using it, it should encourage acceptance and a biology about the body and overall more acceptance. An example of this from current times when I was giving a speech last week I was quite sick and that affected my speech. My professor told me that I sounded too sad in the speech delivery, affecting the over all [sic] message of my speech. (Offline Journal 7)

In this section of her journal, Morgan focused more explicitly on the body than Shreya did, but the message is still quite similar. She describes how the physical body is shamed and denigrated, calling this a cultural issue. She shares a personal experience wherein she felt that someone’s
perception of her body influenced their perception of the material she presented. Neither of these students demonstrates that they see value in the theoretical concept of the body/embodiment, nor do they work through it theoretically. However, from their initial conception, they are both able to recognize that there is an inherent power to divide or unite attached to the body and can recognize the importance of embodied experiences. The notion of experience is what primes students to understand how the body is responsible for the construction of difference and to learn its value. Understanding the value of a focus on this body is what prepares students to take those conversations out of the classroom and into the community, wherein they would collaborate with those from whom they differed.

At the half-way point of the unit, our course had discussed experiences of women’s bodies, Black bodies, and disabled bodies. At this point, students could recognize that bodies do not exist in isolation, but rather within systems and institutions that are only designed to accommodate one normative body; this urges the students to think about the relationship between our body and our ability to create meaning. These conversations correlated to student recognition that difference is socio-spatially constructed. For example, Morgan wrote:

Bodies have historically been excluded from spaces, segregation, red-lining, and small door frames have excluded people from entering or living in specific spaces. There is improvement though, it is no longer legal for house to re-line, or for places to be segregated but that doesn’t mean that people feel completely comfortable in those spaces but when people who are in the "other" group place themselves into a space that they are uncomfortable in safely that helps the movement of this progress because it helps bring awareness to these boundaries and helps people who are categorized as other reclaim those spaces. People other have been marginalized and that is what allows the in-group to dominate spaces. When reading this article I thought of an analogy that A4BB said he was talking about when it was snowing and they haven't shoveled the ramp yet but they were shoveling the stairs first. The person who was shoveling the stairs is clearly part of the in group and doesn’t recognize the limitations that are present in that space. With people reclaiming their right to be a part in this space we can all start to think more inclusively and not exclusively. (Offline Journal 10)
Morgan writes about the ways in which spaces are often inaccessible to those with non-normalized bodies, or at the very least make certain bodies uncomfortable, and she recognizes that these choices are often intentionally exclusionary. Further, she acknowledges that, while there have been changes within the legal system, folks with those bodies will not necessarily feel comfortable or safe navigating certain spaces. Within this journal, she gets at the larger problem facing those who have traditionally been othered: it is not a series of isolated instances, but rather that society privileges those who have the dominant body in a given space. This response demonstrates how, as students engaged in dialogue regarding bodies, they start to understand the social construction of difference and the ways it informs relationships built in our society. Even minimally, students begin to understand that it is not as simple as choosing to engage with difference, but that we must confront its association to the body and work to change the conditions surrounding embodied difference.

Responding to the same content, but focusing more directly on the connection between the body and difference, Shreya writes:

This reading makes it very clear that there is a gap between ‘abled’ bodies and ‘disabled’ bodies. The way of life for disabled people is very different, even if it is just a mental disability. This adds to the controversy where physical differences between people draw out larger gaps in society and social norms. This is a problem that creates issues such as social inequalities in the workplace, places of education, and other environments. This class embodies the importance of how metaphorical differences relay into real life problems, such as the racial differences and issues we analyzed in Monday's reading. Leading into today's reading, the physical and mental differences between people lead to social problems among these different groups of people every day. Additional thoughts I had while driving this morning: The main theme I noticed in this class is that the differences between physical bodies set standards for how we socially stigmatize those people. We see this mainly in people of color, disabled people, and people of different body types. The physical aspect of ‘bodies’ translates into our mental attitude towards them and how they stand in society. (Offline Journal 10)

Shreya clearly articulates the nexus of the course and my project: the relationality between the physical body and the way that difference is socio-spatially constructed. She aptly identifies that
bodies create the standards by which we judge others and categorize folks within society. Here Shreya calls difference “metaphorical,” which is important. She identifies how difference is used as a cover for other, more dangerous ideologies, such as racism, ableism, and sexism. These notions of difference, then, are used to reify and produce problematic social norms that are built in the exclusion of certain bodies from the norm. When asked to read accounts of individual embodied experiences, students are more than capable of making connections between personal accounts and the larger scenarios within which these bodies exist. They do not read these individual accounts as isolated experiences of mistreatment. Students can and do recognize the larger meaning behind the stories we read and are eager to confront how that difference manifests to produce the isolation that separates them from their peers and from the community. As instructors, especially those facilitating contact with the community, our responsibility is to expose students to those conversations and motivate them to critically engage in not just dialogue surrounding given experiences, but their origins. These student samples demonstrate that students are most definitely prepared to do so.

In their final journal of the unit on embodiment, students reflected on what they learned about the concept. Morgan identified that “[she] learned a lot about how the body affects how a person can function within a community. I think that bodies limit and allow access to many groups but being able bodied makes it easier to be a part of a community,” that “the body is used to distinguish people and how they are allowed to be treated,” and that “the body affects how we are able to function within a society” (Offline Journal 12). Shreya wrote:
I've learned that bodies and embodiment are the physical constructs that define the way we view others in society and how we treat others based on their appearances. This may seem simple and mundane but there are much more deeper aspects to this, such as issues like social justice for disadvantaged people, racial divides, disadvantages for people who are not able bodied, and so on. Within the community, bodies function as a means for ‘grouping people together’ and ‘Difference is produced by the body by creating physical differentiations that are visible to others’. (Offline Journal 12)

In these responses, the students both shift toward an explicit focus on how bodies can either limit or enhance an individual’s ability to move through certain spaces. Difference, as a theoretical framework, was not yet introduced, yet the majority of students made the connection between these ideas throughout this unit. As both Morgan and Shreya emulate here, students can learn to value the body and become eager to seek out its role in constructing difference. These led to a shift in the valuation of the body and was likewise evident in the online course.

**Student Perspectives on Embodiment from the Online Class**

Although students were asked to discuss and respond to conceptions of the body from their own perspective and draw from their own experientiality without having been introduced to theoretical underpinnings of difference, many students in the online class also wrote about difference and the body as interrelated. Students saw almost immediately how the body produces difference and made connections about its importance. I anticipated that students would react to the described embodied experiences or share their own—and many students did. However, they also diverged into discussions that transcended the body and explored the difference which it produces. This unit of the class ran across seven journals, with the last two journals synthesizing their knowledge from the length of the course. Throughout these journals, students’ focus on the body and embodiment decreased as they naturally shifted toward the ways in which difference is produced. In Table 4, I show the percentage of student journals that coded for the body and embodiment and difference during the first three journals.
There was an inverse correlation between these numbers—as students came to better understand the body, their discussions automatically shifted toward how difference manifests through the body. This is particularly interesting in the online class because these students rely more heavily on asynchronous communication, both with me and one another. In the offline class, daily discussions naturally focused on our own unique, embodied experiences. The online class did not have this same affordance, yet they still recognized the relationship between bodies and difference.

For example, see the following excerpt from Alisha’s sixth journal written in response to Knoblauch (2012) and Flauri and Trauger (2011):

Knoblauch mentions “They all expressed feelings of comfort among their ‘own kind,’ and this provided an opportunity to return to the discussion of the struggles of lower caste women in Sangtin Writers to achieve equality, as well as the struggles of upper caste women to overcome their own internalized prejudice” (page 8). These both demonstrate how we really do not know the internal struggles of others, whether or not they feel like they are the ‘normal.’ We tend to each think what we do is normal, but when we see anything other than our ‘normal,’ it becomes different to us. However, we’re all human and we all have our internal goals and struggles that not everyone knows about. What we find normal can be ‘different’ to what another person finds normal. What they find normal may be different from what we find normal. We are different, but we’re all human, so we do not know because not every shoe will fit when we try to ‘walk in someone else's shoes.’ One important thing is to try to understand the ‘other’ and also treat them like a human being because that is what we are. (Online Journal 6)

In this selection, Alisha responds to the caste system wherein certain bodies find comfort in associating with their own kind. In the caste system, difference is presented as inherently negative and divisive. There is no communing across difference and thus members from different caste levels build relationships with others based on their bodies. While Knoblauch (2012) uses the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Journal 1</th>
<th>Journal 2</th>
<th>Journal 3</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Body and Embodiment</td>
<td>58.71%</td>
<td>40.27%</td>
<td>20.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9.78%</td>
<td>38.34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: Journal Codes for First Three Journals of Unit*
quoted example to build her definition of embodied rhetoric, this student noted that this identification causes us to demarcate those from whom we differ as “abnormal without regard for how normalcy is not static, but rather constructed situationally and individually.” Here the student recognizes the value in understanding the “other,” again through identifying with them and treating them as human. Even in this scenario, wherein individuals are not to communicate with one another, the student recognizes that human connection presents possibilities for collaboration. This seems simplistic, but the value in these revelations is that students want to understand those from whom they differ, and they see it as possible to do so through open communication and empathy. The following section expands on two case studies from the online class.

**Case Studies: Omar and Annie**

I followed the same guidelines to select case studies for this section as with the offline class: students needed to have completed all readings and journals for the unit and their journals needed to code similarly to the class average to serve as accurate representations of the course dialogue. For these case studies, I selected Omar and Annie. In what follows I analyze two journal responses from each student—the second journal from the unit and the last journal from the unit. I selected the second rather than the first as this was the first reading that specifically addressed embodiment in an OLE and thus better showcases how students approached the idea of the body in digital spaces. I use these excerpts to depict how students responded to the notions of embodiment and the body as specifically presented in online environments and ultimately argue that they demonstrate the ways in which students came to value embodiment during the course.

In the second journal for this unit, the online students responded to Stenberg (2002) and wrote about the body in online spaces. Both Omar and Annie recognize the crux of the problem:
disembodiment in online learning has a detrimental impact on non-normalized students.

Addressing this, Omar writes:

First, Stenberg depicts how the masculinist norms of intellectualism and professionalism still dominate the academic landscape. As this is the case, it is critical for us to use embodied knowledge to our advantage, as it allows us to recognize the differences between groups (in society) and individuals within these groups. Here, Stenberg does make it a point, however, to acknowledge that some scholars believe disembodiment is a form of empowerment. She points to the ‘utopia’ example of a networked classroom and online communities, in which students can actively participate without being judged based on differences. However, Stenberg retorts with the declaration that disembodiment severely marginalizes our unique individualities. In fact, it leads to a concept known as ‘enfleshment,’ which is when our bodies absorb the dominant stereotypes and assumptions of society. Therefore, Stenberg advocates for us to not view embodiment as unnecessary and excessive, and instead calls for us to embrace our identities and self-reflect upon them. The first step in this process is to view the problems minorities face with a historical lens. Additionally, it involves taking risks, which Stenberg notes is required when tackling such a difficult and multi-layered question? (Online Journal 7)

In this excerpt, Omar confronts the ways in which the body is written out of online spaces, often presenting the online classroom as a utopian learning environment. However, he notes that neglecting the body further marginalizes those who differ because it pushes them to the peripheries of dialogue. Their embodied identities and cultures are eliminated from focus, as is the knowledge which accompanies those perspectives. He recognizes here, albeit briefly, that embodiment is an important tool for confronting difference productively. It’s evident from this excerpt that he perceives difference positively—something that should be brought to the forefront of our dialogue rather than neglected. Annie makes a similar connection in her journal, writing:
This article, “Embodied Classrooms, Embodied Knowledge” written by Shari J. Stenberg, focuses a lot on race inside and outside the classroom and making sure you embody who you are as a person. Stenberg explores the idea that there is a tendency for certain people to deny embodiment in scholarly and pedagogical sites, and the related tendency to conflate disembodiment with authority and freedom. I found this article very interesting to read and later think about…. This article made me think about situations similar to Shauna and Alisha that I have been in. I think about how I saw myself back then, and how I would see myself now while also acknowledging the idea of embodiment and embodied subjects. I like the way she incorporated feminism into her argument regarding embodiment. One of my favorite lines from this article is “But to deny the bodies in our classrooms does not prevent us from reading (or misreading) each other as bodies.” By doing this, it would only result in a way you may not want it to – naturalizing assumptions, overlooking our bodies, a loss of opportunity. Stenberg wrapped up the entire article in a perfect way as well. She stated that ‘challenging the status quo of disembodied, rational intellectualism means taking the risk of inviting them back in.’ Just because somebody looks, acts, or feels a different way than you doesn’t mean you can just dismiss them. Stenberg’s main goal is for people to embody themselves and also appreciate the embodiment of others. (Online Journal 7)

In this response, Annie makes the same connections as Omar. She recognizes that neglecting the body a “loss of opportunity,” arguing that we cannot simply dismiss those with different embodiments than ours. Again, her instinct is to consider this difference positively—a productive addition to the learning environment—not something to be removed out of convenience. Though neither student has the language to articulate the importance of difference, either in their community or their classrooms, both recognize the inherent danger in denying the body in the online classroom and view the potential for difference as productive means by which to connect with others and learn alternate perspectives. This initial openness allows students to grow in their valuation of the body, which is reflected in their closing journals from this phase.

In the last journal of this unit, students reflected on what they learned during this section of the course and reflected on the concept of the body and embodiment as it manifests in the classroom. Omar wrote at length about the importance of the knowledge he gained in this phase:
Throughout this semester, I feel as if I have learned a great deal regarding bodies/embodiment. This knowledge has allowed for me to critically think of bodies within the political sphere, and how they can be utilized to effect change within society. Additionally, the regulation of women's bodies is an excellent reason as to why we should use embodiment to our advantage in the future. In the case of examples like the grotesque protest, direct/focused attention can be brought upon the issues plaguing marginalized groups in our society. With this approach, we will create a new platform for discourse in the community. Bodies can aid us in promoting communication between people and making positive political progress. However, I have found that too often people seek to encapsulate a body within a category and use this as a form of discrimination. For instance, as I researched for my CMP, I found that judgement of those with Autism was a severe problem in our society. These individuals 'bodies' are consistently grouped together, which encourages discrimination. For example, individuals on the spectrum are pitted against each other, as everyone believes that autism comes in one common form. I truly believe this type of discrimination is problematic, as people with Autism and other disabilities will continue to be expected to meet some 'standard.'

I think difference is produced by bodies through culture. Bodies are constantly being produced and reproduced within society. In a sense, culture and ideology is a social construction which changes our mindsets, and we in turn 'live out this culture' through our bodies. (Online Journal 12)

In this response, Omar makes important observations regarding the body/embodiment. First, he notes that our bodies can be used to affect change, which serves as the premise for their work within the community. He notes that the body can foster communication between certain otherwise marginalized groups and “create new platforms for discourse in the community.” Finally, he notes that there is often an intrinsic connection between the body and culture that create the social constructions that we apply to the bodies of others. Omar’s critical reflection addresses difference more directly than his writing could at the beginning of the unit. He sees that difference is sociospatially constructed based on individual embodied experience and sees the body as a valuable communicative tool, bringing the marginalized body into the conversation in a way that many try to avoid.

Annie’s reflection was less explicit than Omar’s, but she also identifies problems with difference as it relates to the body:
Throughout the semester thus far, I have learned a great deal about bodies and embodiment. I have had the opportunity to read many articles in which this is the main topic. There have been multiple examples involving embodiment and bodies that include different viewpoints of various authors. By getting to hear other people’s opinion on what they believe embodiment is, I have been able to take my original definition from the beginning of the semester and expand on it greatly. “The Grotesque Protest in Social Media as Embodied Political Rhetoric” by Bivens and Cole revolves around the idea of using social media to emphasize resistance to political movements and the attempt to control and legislate bodies through the use of grotesque protest. The protest campaigns show that the grotesque can be an effective tool for opening space, transgressing boundaries, demanding attention, and equalizing differential political power relations. Overall, I enjoyed reading this article. One sentence that really stood out to me while reading is ‘One function of the grotesque protest is to remind people (and politicians in particular) that women are not separate from their bodies.’ Being a woman, there are many things I have to deal with that I don’t choose to deal with, one being my period. I find it kind of offensive when people, especially guys, think its gross or get mad when a girl is on their period. There are just some things that we, as women, are unable to control. Similar to women, there are some things that men can’t control. (Online Journal 17)

Ultimately, what Annie notes here is quite like what Omar noted: the body should not be a tool by which to separate certain folks from participating in conversations about their bodies, but rather as a unifying tool designed to foster stronger relationships built on the foundation of individual embodied experiences. While students have been reminded of their bodies daily, taking the time to slow down and focus on the importance of the body as it pertains to the circulation of meaning helped students to see an increased value in the body, as did a critical reflection on how bodies are bound up in socio-spatial constructions of meaning.

Conclusion

The impetus for students to value the body and related conversations comes most evidently as students start to recognize the relationship between the body, difference, and therefore community. By exposing students to embodiment theory and allowing their experiences to frame the conversation, students recognized that bodies allow for the difference produced by the institutions and systems within which we live, work, and learn to permeate and influence our interactions within the community. In the previous chapter, I focused on how students understand SCEL theory
and the problems that manifest through SL courses. This chapter focused on how students see value in the body and its relationship to difference, which is often identified as a means by which to build stronger SCEL partnerships between the university and the community. Though not yet explicitly discussed in class, students recognized that bodies and difference are inherently intertwined—we cannot speak of them separately because, ultimately, bodies are the tool by which groups are systemically demarcated. In the following chapter, I turn toward student’s explicit work with difference and focus on the ways in which embodiment theory improves students’ relationships with community partners. I ultimately demonstrate how EEP improves relationships between the university and the community, advocating for its application in SCEL courses.
CHAPTER 5: PRODUCING STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY BY DECONSTRUCTING DIFFERENCE

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described how embodiment theory informed two sections (one online and offline) of a community writing course that I taught at a public, urban research university in Detroit, MI during Winter 2019. I argued that an ecofeminist embodied pedagogy (EEP) can and should be applied to general education courses to improve students’ connections to the course content. I addressed the research questions: 1) do students value a curriculum that attunes to the body?; and 2) can EEP improve students’ value of a curriculum attuned to the body? The results of pre- and post-class surveys showed that students’ valuation of the body as a course concept increased by over 40% throughout the duration of the course, which proved that a course attuned to the body was beneficial in helping students engage in productive dialogue about the conditions that are often responsible for difference. I then drew from student reflective journals to demonstrate how students came to value the body and embodiment by recognizing its relationship to difference and, moreover, to the influence institutions have on how we perceive our own bodies and the bodies of others. The findings presented in Chapter Four showed that students do see value in an EEP. Though the courses in which I piloted the EEP were community based, these findings could be applied to any course, because these ideas were not directly tied to issues of service- or community-engaged learning (SCEL). This chapter, however, marks a turn toward the relationship between an EEP and SCEL. I draw on the final unit of the course, in which students worked with theories of difference, and the work they did directly with their community partners, to address the research questions: 1) can an EEP create stronger, more productive collaborations between the university and the community?; and 2) how do students approach difference once they have a working knowledge of embodiment theory?
I begin by describing the curriculum from the final unit of the course and the work students did in conjunction with their community partners. I then segue into an examination of student reflective journals and field notes written throughout the semester, drawing on instances wherein students explicitly addressed notions of community, their work with the community partner, or perceptions of the relationships between universities and communities (see Appendix D for a full list of journal prompts). In this chapter, I ultimately argue that students’ increased valuation of the body produces stronger university-community collaborations. This is because students are not simply taught to seek out difference, but instead to question how difference is produced and the influence difference has on the way we interact with others, particularly those from whom we are institutionally separated. Because students have this informed positionality to speak from, they view their partners as human beings with embodied experiences. They then approach those differences as a means to connect with and learn about from partner rather than to isolate themselves. In addition to improving these relationships, an EEP has the means to confront issues of saviorism and volunteerism that often manifest through SCEL curricula by humanizing the community partners. This chapter, then, demonstrates the effectiveness of an EEP for increasing student investment in the community collaboration and illustrates the increased connection students felt to their work with the community through this framework. To do so, I begin with an analysis of student journals pertaining to difference from a theoretical perspective and then present their reflections on their engagement with the community. Collectively, these journal entries demonstrate that through an increased awareness of how differences manifests, students become more empowered to resolve those separations rather than exist within them silently.

Empowering Students to Build Embodied Relationships with Community
As described in the previous two chapters, the first unit of the course focused on SCEL theory to help students identify areas wherein university-student collaborations typically fail. The purpose of this unit was to practice rhetorical listening, which primed students to view their partners as partners rather than another assignment, and to help students understand why the curriculum and projects in this course would differ from that which they were familiar with. The second unit then segued into explorations of embodiment theory and embodied experiences to help students identify the ways in which their bodies—and the bodies of others— influence their ability to collaborate. This unit also encouraged students to question the ways they perceive and assign notions of difference based on the body. The final unit of the course builds on pre-existing material to focus on the following two components: 1) a theoretical examination of how difference is constructed; and 2) work with the community partners and critical reflection on their engagement with said partners. In this unit, students were encouraged to apply what they learned in the classroom to their community partner and their own communities, to reflect thoughtfully on the origins of difference, and to problematize how socio-spatial conditions, and the bodies that circulate within them, reify difference.

The course transitioned to the final unit after Fluri and Trauger’s (2011) corporeal marker project (CMP) which I discussed at length in Chapter Four. This assignment asked students to take up a physical marker of difference and document their experiences embodying the feeling of “otherness.” After this assignment, students spoke with their community partners about the feelings of difference in these spaces. From there, I used David Sibley’s (1995) Geographies of Exclusion to define concepts of “the generalized other” and the “self” and worked with students to deconstruct how we are constantly defining ourselves in relation to others. Understanding
difference, and how it manifests socio-culturally, is essential to productive collaboration. Flower (2003) aptly described this necessity, writing:

For behind the words we use in common like strikingly different life experiences that instantiate a concept (such as ‘police-enforced’) with different flesh and blood realities. Such experiences may allow you, for instance, to make sense of that concept with an image of your own son, in his stocking cap and braids (or whatever was the current urban fashion), who was recently harassed by police on his way to the corner store. As an inner city resident you may instantiate that concept of police-enforced curfew with the visceral feeling of what ‘no recourse’ means in a confrontation with authority. Your mind automatically ‘enacts’ that concept, drawing on neighborhood history and stories of demeaning encounters that are the grounding for presumptions you can hardly articulate—and I fail to imagine. (pp. 38-39)

Understanding how difference informs our reactions to social events, our navigation of public space, and our approach to those from whom we differ is the only way that we can work within communities that differ from our own. Otherwise, we enter those spaces assuming our interpretation of, and relationship to, events, spaces, concepts, and so forth are universal. This is not only ignorant of the multiplicity of experiences that others have, but it is dangerous: to do so is to allow dominant ideologies to dictate our engagements with others and prevent meaningful action and change from occurring. Thus, attention paid to defining the origins of difference specifically within EF, which highlights the interconnection of various forms of oppression, leads to working to understand those articulations of difference which, as Flower rightly noted, we cannot even begin to imagine.

This phase is the glue which holds my EEP together; in this unit of the course students come to understand how we construct our own identities through difference and how that automatically creates within us a desire to other those with whom we do not align. Thus, students come to understand how they have been conditioned, both societally and institutionally, to perceive difference as a negative: as a means to divide rather than unite. The previous two units helped students to understand why confronting difference is important for improving community
partnerships and how difference is fostered through the body. At the start of this phase, the theoretical framework for difference became more tangible to students; a need to question *why* difference exists and how we can subvert its negative influence became tenable. After establishing our own working definitions of difference, the generalized other, and the self, we workshopped two seminal texts on the role difference plays in SCEL: Nedra Reynolds’s (2004) *Geographies of Writing* and Linda Flower’s (2008) *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement*. Students largely agreed that these models could be pushed further and adapted in ways to improve community engagement, and this allowed students to contextualize work from the first unit of the course on frequent SCEL pitfalls. Collectively, we negotiated that it is not enough to confront difference or work productively with those from whom we differ; rather we must recognize its origins and work to combat the influence of those origins on our collaborations. This is the position from which change stems. Essentially, the three units of the course provided a toolkit for students to use in their approach to deconstructing difference as it pertains to SCEL and use that knowledge to build stronger community connections. In the following section, I present an analysis of the ways in which students wrote about difference in their journals. In particular, I focus on how the theory informed students’ changing perceptions of difference, definitions of community, and collaborations with the community partners.

**Defining Difference: Student Perspectives**

In this section, I draw on the same journal coding schema from Chapter Four. In this unit, students took up the concept of difference and maintained this focus for the remainder of the semester. Across the last ten journals, 49.05% of entries coded for difference. I performed an ecofeminist analysis of these journals to explore the ways in which students defined difference in the first journal from this unit and make claims about how students came to view difference
positively rather than negatively; in the following section I draw from these definitions to show how this shift improved the relationships between students and community partners. I include five different student definitions of difference in Table 5 on the following page. I selected these students as a random sample using the same criteria as the students selected from analysis in Chapter Four. Their journals coded similarly to the average of the course, they completed all journals in the final unit, and they had not yet been referenced directly in this dissertation to provide better representation. Each student provides a different definition of difference, but each definition falls within the four frameworks of ecofeminism (EF) in some way. In what follows, I describe the notions of EF that inform their definitions and show how these definitions of difference change students’ approach to the community. Each of these ideas reflects one or more of Herles’s (2018) principles of EF inspired by the pedagogy of the late Victoria Davion: accessibility, praxis, interconnectedness, and dialogue (see italics). These are the principles that inform my teaching, research, and approach to the community and, therefore, inform my study. The implementation of EF, in particular EF attuned to the body, I argue that we can approach difference more productively; as something to confront rather than ignore.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Definition of Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marissa</td>
<td>It is human nature to notice difference. We will point it out and maybe even stereotype those who do notice differences. It is important not to let these differences lead you in life and to let you discriminate against others because they may be different from you. <em>Noticing how other people may be different from you is the perfect time to learn more about those people.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jen</td>
<td>“Difference” is anything that sets the “self” apart from the “generalized other.” These concepts define two spheres a person has, themselves and everything else. <em>Difference is what separates these, and makes it so a person can define themselves and also define what the difference is between them and the other.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jay</td>
<td>Difference is produced by the body in that it is very easy to see the physical characteristics of a person and nothing else. <em>While we preach acceptance and looking more holistically at a person, we still make large judgements of people based on what we see, thus creating a dividing factor in communities that are claiming to have the same goal.</em> We use the body as a way to compare ourselves to others and judge ourselves on a larger scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Difference is produced via people defining themselves as separate from other, and by noticing social standing, they place themselves in a set mindset where distance grows between them and people who are unlike them. I think I indirectly define myself in relation to others. I think it is hard for me to conceptualize what defines me without considering other people and how I define them. I think it is easier for us to start defining/judging other people before we actually define ourselves...My understanding of difference has changed, I never thought about how and why we claim ourselves different from others, I always just thought we innately are different, because everyone thinks, acts, and behaves different naturally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrine</td>
<td>I would define “difference” as how someone would separate different concepts. Our differences are linked to how we look at one another and how we act towards our surroundings. <em>Also, each one of our differences is created by our social surroundings...the world is mapped by race and gender, which makes us different from one another. Since we come from different backgrounds we also have different views on things.</em></td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Table 5: Student Definitions of Difference*

Each of the definitions notes that difference can only exist in relation to others: our definitions of difference are always established in juxtaposition against that which we do not identify. In such a way, difference is an inherently negative term. However, when read through the lens of EF, this same juxtaposition is a platform for interconnectedness and thus viewed positively. For instance, consider the italicized section of Marissa’s definition above. While she rightly acknowledged that difference is what separates two individuals, she indicates that this is an
opportunity to learn about the “other.” This encourages us to ask what perspectives inform those differences and what lived experiences they have had that would inform an interaction. In so doing, she likewise nods to notions of praxis: the literal engagement with the other to learn, grow, and adapt one’s knowledge base is a means of practicing EF. If we do this, it then naturally follows that difference is accounted for, as Corrine says, based on our social surroundings. We cannot ignore the implications of how institutions are responsible for structuring differences based on larger markers, like race and gender, that automatically produce difference. Those differences then, as both Corrine and Flower (2003) noted, change our views of certain concepts, experiences, and beliefs. This is where the EF principle of accessibility manifests. Recall that accessibility, per Herles (2018), is not simply about accommodation, but about allowing our own experiences to influence our readings of theory and its application to our own lives. This is likewise essential with difference: to understand that others will read certain situations, conversations, or interactions differently based on those markers allows us to anticipate this and ask questions rather than make assumptions. Such reframing is important in making productive dialogue across difference possible.

To do so, though, is much easier said than done. As Jay rightly noted, “while we preach acceptance and looking more holistically at a person, we still make large judgements of people based on what we see, thus creating a dividing factor in communities that are claiming to have the same goal.” Jay’s commentary calls out a continued behavior that presents when we engage with difference: many folks preach that they understand other’s perspectives and don’t pass judgement for them. However, it is impossible not to do so. The solution, then, is dialogue: admitting this tendency and engaging in rhetorical listening instead of speaking for other’s experiences must happen if we are to change our understanding of difference and, most importantly, deconstruct its
influence in dividing our communities. This brings me, finally, to a point Emily made: “I think it is hard for me to conceptualize what defines without considering other people and how I define them. I think it is easier for us to start defining/judging other people before we actually define ourselves.” Emily notes here that we almost always begin our definition of self in relation to others; the definition of the other must come first. If we take ownership of this and realize that we do so, we can change our self-definition to one in which we are not different from the other because the other is lesser than, but rather because the other has had different experiences based on the ways in which their body moves through a given space. This acknowledgement allows us to see difference in praxis as a means to unite rather than divide: to produce the conditions necessary for deconstructing how difference can be used to separate groups and empower meaningful change. This is the purpose, I argue, of focusing on difference in the SCEL classroom. EF’s principles of interconnectedness, dialogue, praxis, and accessibility, when accompanied with an embodied pedagogy, helps students to change not only the way they interact with those from whom they differ, but also the way they define themselves in relation to those from whom they differ. This shift is what stands to produce stronger university-community partnerships resulting in change.

The Influence of Difference on Community Collaborations

In these courses, students had the option of working with one of four community partners: Arts & Scraps (A&S), the Detroit Community Wealth Fund (DCWF), Advocates 4 Baba Baxter (A4BB), and the Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice (SLC). For full descriptions regarding each organization, please see Appendix A. Each of these organizations has an inherently activist mission related to the following respective goals: integrating art and recycling into STEM education in the Detroit Public School system, providing non-extractive loans to cooperative businesses run by historically marginalized groups, advocating against ableism in Detroit, and
providing counsel to people engaged in legal suits centered specifically on economic and social justice issues. Each partner invites students into their organization, designs projects collaboratively with the students, and helps educate students on their organizational goals. The partner organizations considered the students interns and expected they take agency over their collaborations by initiating meetings and asserting how their skills and goals could mesh with those of the community organization. I co-taught the community partner projects with my partners; each organization helped to evaluate student projects and I let the partners dictate all deadlines, expectations, and individual meetings. I also shared class time with each of the partners, allowing them each to teach a class session based on their beliefs and roles within Detroit.

In doing so, I laid the groundwork for students to view the community partners as equally important; at no point did I indicate that they were peripheral to the course. Rather, my partners were active participants throughout the entire class. At the close of the semester, I hosted a public symposium in which students and community members were able to present their collaborations to an audience of students, faculty, administrators, and community members. This public presentation further illustrated the importance of integrating students within the community. In what follows, I draw on the student’s final reflections regarding their community collaborations to show how this approach, combined with our course’s focus on embodiment and difference through my EEP, produced strong, long-lasting collaborations and an impetus for change. While there was substantial evidence to support the success of these collaborations, I acknowledge that this evidence stems from a study of two courses. Based on these experiences, there are curricular and community-based changes that I would make to maintain more successful relationships for all involved-parties. Chapter Six will take up these limitations and make suggestions for future changes and future research.
**Student Responses**

At the end of the semester, students had the opportunity to reflect on how they engaged with their partners and what they found most valuable in the course. I read these reflections to see how students responded to the course content when reflecting on their relationships with their community partners. In the final journal of the course, only 18.67% of student journals coded for explicit ideas of difference. However, more notably, 54.72% of journals coded for recognizing personal growth or a shifting view of the community. These journal excerpts showcased areas where personal growth or change was tied to notions of difference or the body. Overwhelmingly, students demonstrated that the course changed their perceptions of community and, ultimately, their community partner collaborations, for the better. In this section, I draw on examples of student journal entries to demonstrate how an EEP, particularly one that attends to the deconstruction of difference, can be used to improve relationships between universities and communities, thus resulting in stronger, more productive partnerships. In Table 6 I provide a sample of student journal entries that address how their understanding of community changed throughout the semester. Table 7 then presents a sample of student journal entries explaining how students perceptions of their community partners changed throughout the course. I spend the remainder of the chapter drawing from these examples to showcase, ultimately, how an EEP encourages students to deconstruct the difference that is responsible for producing their conceptions of communities. Through this change, students start to recognize their ability to build communities with those from whom they differ and connect more deeply with their community partners through shared commonalities rather than due solely functioning as a course assignment. This is the crux of my pedagogy: through these difficult conversations, both within and outside of
the classrooms, I argue that SCEL can succeed in accomplishing the goals of the community and enhance students’ education and immersion in their respective communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Reflection on changing perceptions of community</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jay</td>
<td>Over the course of this semester my definition of community has become less of a group of like-minded individuals and more of a group of people who are either affected by an issue, or who want to help change an issue for the better. My definition has gone from seeing a community as one large group of people who all have the exact same goal and are affected in the exact same way to several smaller groups of people who are all connected (whether this is through discrimination, some kind of mental or physical disability, race, or those who see that there are problems or policies that affect these groups and want to help change those policies).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Previously, I defined community as being “a wholesome group of individuals who must think collaboratively and with everyone in mind to get the most successful results in regards to impact and change.” Here, I want to question the how—how is it that impact and change can be brought about if certain underrepresented groups are sometimes not even thought of inclusively? … I now have a better idea of how impactful simple interactions can be in terms of activism. I see now that simple conversations are an easy way to spark initial moves toward eliminating negative stigma, preconceived notions, etc. (ex: speaking out/correcting when someone says something that is racist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamayah</td>
<td>At the beginning of the semester, I defined community as a group of people that are willing to engage in activities that will benefit others whether it is short term or long term. It is way more than that. Community is a feeling of fellowship with others resulting to sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals. It is a group of people coming together collectively in the context of social values and responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>[Community] is much more than the way I described it to be, which was ‘a group of people living in a specific place…’ Communities are made up of certain peoples who support the same things, believe the same beliefs, do the same things. It can be a cultural community, work community, certain neighborhood and so on. People who stick together and people who believe in the same things and want the same outcome of something. Of course people can belong to multiple communities. Communities should have strong bonds and people who are devoted to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrine</td>
<td>At first, I defined community as just a group of similar people…. Now I define community as a group of many different people who come together for one main purpose. Also, each individual in a community is different from another. My view has changed because I always thought a community was a bunch of people who were the same, but it's not. Each community has its differences, some can be used to bring people together or help others. ...A community should be made of different people, not all the same, because different people bring different things to the table.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Table 6: Student Definitions of Community*
I selected the excerpts in Table 6 because they demonstrated key themes that emerged across most student responses to questions about how their definition of community changed across the semester. The three main concepts that emerged were: 1) activism/change, 2) social value/responsibility, and 3) difference. Community is often defined based on geographic location or shared ideologies and moralities, which is how students initially defined community. In this case, conflict often arises in SCEL because parties from different communities come together and their different positionalities, ideologies, and priorities clash. While two or more communities may be working toward the same goals, the values and approaches that inform said goals may not coalesce. Romero and Harris (2019) noted this conflict within alternative food supporters in East Austin, TX. While urban farmers and neighborhood members advocating against changing zoning laws claimed they were ultimately working to serve their community, different value systems informed those goals. The urban farmers defined community around values pertaining to access to fresh, healthy food and the advocates for stricter zoning laws described communities around ideas of “race, class, and being a good neighbor.” (p. 2). The urban farmers existed from a position of privilege in which they didn’t understand how their approach might be potentially damaging to the long-term residents of the East Austin neighborhoods that would be affected by such zoning laws. Rightly, those long-term residents struggled to understand how fresh, healthy food would trump safe housing for the marginalized groups experiencing the ramifications of gentrification. Both groups exist in the same place, have the same goals, and their advocacy stems from a desire to improve the community rather than cause it harm. To come together and speak across the different value systems informing their goals was essential to affecting change and thus required a redefinition of community.
This same necessity is present amongst SCEL courses; students often have preconceived notions about what exactly it is that defines a community and assume that all communities adhere to those same definitions. The changed definitions above showcase how students came to see how common goals can be achieved through shared social values and responsibilities and that two or more communities can create a coalesced community (Romero & Harris, 2019). The alternative is to create a space for conversation wherein members of multiple communities listen to and understand how their differences inform their beliefs and approaches to achieving the specified common goal. This allows multiple communities to converge and work together more productively to engage in the change they have identified—through this dialogue, difference is deconstructed.

Originally, all of the students above defined community in terms of a large group of people who are working toward the same goal for the same reasons. However, as their definitions became more nuanced, students started to note that those goals could be slightly different, as could be their reasons for desiring change—thus difference and embodiment became essential not only to their redefinition of community, but to the work they did with their community partners.

Innately, this redefinition of community changes the way they approach a community partner because it becomes okay that their communities are different. What students and partners must do, however, is work together to establish clear pathways to build from that difference to engage productively. This is especially important work to cover inside of the classroom because students naturally exist within the institution responsible for producing a strong divide between “us” (the university) and “them” (the community). As mentioned above, difference is a tool to separate groups who are working toward the same goal, often enforced by their respective communities, and this education helps students to reframe their approach to the community
partner. In Table 7, then, I provide examples of instances wherein students wrote about how the instruction on difference and bodies informed their approach to the community partner directly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Reflection on the connection between the course work and the community partner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jay</td>
<td>The thing that most influenced how I viewed my community partner was the discussions we had about difference and discrimination in class. Both of those conversations brought different aspects of the issues to my attention as well as helped me reframe some of the components to said issues. The reading by David Sibley also really helped me frame my interaction. After this course I will be much more aware of the smaller aspects of difference and discrimination. As I mentioned at one point in class, when I went to interview someone for SLC [the community partner] I was shocked to find that the law firm was primarily black lawyers and staff. I know this shouldn’t be a surprise and that this should be considered more normal than it is. I am now much more contentious of how I react to certain situations as well as where I am while reacting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindy</td>
<td>This class has opened my eyes to the idea and study of bodies and embodiment. I am able to view society in a different and more intimate way other than just as people. Understanding bodies and embodiment helps to understand who a person is and why they are the way they are. It has helped me when joining Advocates 4 Baba Baxter [the community partner], creating my CMP, and I can see it reaching other parts of my life, aside from my class and service learning. In the beginning I thought that I would have nothing to offer a disability rights group and vice versa; however, because of the class conversations and readings, I am able to work together with my group and A4BB in a way that benefits us all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly</td>
<td>This class has really opened my eyes to bodies. To noticing things about the way that I think. This also shows me little things that I think about other bodies and how they react to think. I definitely viewed my community partner differently because he is a part of a completely different community, and a completely different body that I am, but we came together to join the same community. I would not have gotten to really explore outside myself this much if it was not for this class. The discussions we have also had made me think. This class alone is diverse and we all have different experiences that we have all shared which also helps us understand bodies and get a view of their own lived based on their bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alisha</td>
<td>As I am working with my group and brainstorming, one fundamental thought that comes to mind is what benefit can this idea do if we carry out this idea or that idea? How will they utilize what we are working on in the future? Would it be lasting enough for them to take a look at our ideas for future planning? As we thought more and more about this, I realized the importance of this idea or that idea being geared towards the success of Arts and Scraps [the community partner]. Are we writing with the community or are we doing something we feel like is convenient enough for us? In other words, are we actually doing something? When writing with and for the community, not only is it your goal but you are working with the goal of another community. These were reoccurring thoughts as we neared the final ideas of our project. Therefore, as of right now, I am quite nervous, but also curious as to if these</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ideas we have are what Arts and Scraps could genuinely utilize or consider for future kits and goals. Since it is quite open and on the table, I hope we did not fail them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raegan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking back at this semester, I now realize that every assignment/project fit a bigger picture. The overall goal of this course in my opinion was to see that community engagement is way more important than it is perceived. We began by learning about what community is, and how bodies fits into it. Then as the semester progressed, we started to learn about different cultures and the way they emerged into society. We talked about change, and discrimination which all fit into the concept that they are all in a way what form a community. I do 100% think about my community partner differently now.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 7: Student Journals on Relationship between Coursework and Community Work

For many students, their relationships to the community partners were improved for two reasons: 1) they felt as though they were a part of the community organization, and 2) they were able to recognize the relationships could be formed not only despite difference, but as a result of difference. For instance, consider the sample from Carly above. She writes that she looked at her community partner differently at first because they were a part of two separate communities and he, as a wheelchair user, had a fundamentally different lived experience that she did. However, through the coursework, they were able to come together to build a community and work toward a common, activist goal. The ability to make this connection comes through learning about difference and embodiment. Raegan also makes similar notes about the importance of the body and embodiment to change the ways in which she perceived her community partner. Drawing attention to the body and its importance in constructing a community allows students to recognize that interconnection can only exist within a certain space or within a certain group of people if they are willing to converge their perspectives with those of others. This is the work that should inform our approach to SCEL if we are to have more productive, collaborative relationships.

The idea of multiple, converging communities is best showcased in Alisha’s response, wherein she notes that her work with her community partner involved two realms of consideration: her goals and the goals of her partner. This careful navigation of two goals, one of which possesses external accountability, forges a connection rooted in caring. Note that in her response Alisha notes
that she is nervous about the community partner’s response to the writing she has done with them; she is not nervous about earning a passing grade or being successful in the class, but in ensuring that her collaboration with the community was useful and beneficial toward her goals. Thus, when applied to SCEL classes, the EEP approach I have demonstrated serves to eliminate many of the pitfalls associated with student-community collaborations, namely those that cast the community partner as an accessory. The work done in a course such as this one fosters stronger community-university relationships because the relationships are not rooted in semester long projects designed to achieve a certain pedagogical goal without enriching the community. Rather, the work done through an EEP, and in a more integrated community engagement model, builds together so that both sets of goals are achieved. Moreover, students and community members are working together to confront the systems in place that produce difference and oppression rather than allowing them to dictate their interactions based on preconceived notions about the intentions or values of the other. This helps to produce civic mindedness within students and improve transferability beyond the scope of the course because students feel themselves as a part of the larger community organization based on their embodied connections—students attribute this shift to the conversations about the body.

**Post-class survey responses**

While I could ensure that students were having conversations about embodiment and difference in the class, I could not ensure that these conversations were facilitated with the community partner or that, should they come up, students would feel confident engaging those conversations. To gauge how the work done in the class moved into the community, students took an anonymous, post-class survey in which they were asked a variety of questions about their encounters with the community partner and the perceptions of how their bodies or the bodies of
their partners impacted the work they were doing. The responses in Table 8 and 9 are a sample of students in the online and offline classes respectively:

### Online class responses: Describe any scenarios or conversations in which your body or the body of your community partner influenced your interactions.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our work was primarily digital, which did not lend itself to specific encounters of the body impacting our interactions throughout the semester. While issues of the body did not get discussed with our community partner, I believe it is important to have these discussions as it affects the positionality of the community partner when trying to best aid the community. Further, it helps us, as foreigners of the community, to get a better understanding of the landscape we are entering before unintentionally making assumptions about said landscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They were not easy, but they made me come out of my personal space which was good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure, but the last thing on my mind was the bodily differences of the people I worked with. However, I was more conscious of my own differences and my markers when working with a group, or being in a group that are marked differently. Throughout the process of our work though, I just became more aware of our goals instead, and that's why the differences of the community partner did not influence or impact my service-learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity is key to everything. Incorporating different peoples ideas is crucial for a good project. You never want people who all look the same doing a project because it won't have as much value or detail to it. Yes, they looked completely different than me but getting along with them was easy and fair since I knew this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It did because I am African American and most already have their preconceptions about me.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Table 8: Online Student Responses from Post-class Survey*

### Offline class responses: Describe any scenarios or conversations in which your body or the body of your community partner influenced your interactions.

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>The main difference from me was age. I worked with people who were much older than me. However, I also worked with people who grew up in very different geographical areas than myself, mainly Detroit or somewhere closer to the inner city. Topics regarding my sexuality or gender never came up, but age was something that came up non-verbally. Working with people who have much more life experience than myself was something I hadn't considered I would do this young.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The people working with Baba Baxter come from all walks of life. Also seeing and interacting with Baba Baxter himself helped me understand the circumstances of Black disabled men especially when he discussed the denial of his pension. Because I am not mobility restricted, I think this really had an impact on my experience with Baba because he is mobility restricted. He really taught me to value my independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with the community partner made me think differently of how I entered a room because of the work they were doing. How the community partner carries themselves would have an impact on how the group would interact with such.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing really stood out to me but I did not talk to a person with a background that is similar to mine. My views of what co ops were was influenced by where I grew up and it was completely wrong.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Table 9: Offline Student Responses from Post-class Survey*
While few students reported encounters that were impacted by the body, I find the results of this question important. Multiple students indicated that they were not thinking about the bodies of their community partners, but rather they were thinking about their own bodies and embodied experiences. Students were aware of age differentials, their ethnicity and the perceptions that people typically tie to them because of it, their level of ability, their gender and sexuality, or their own markers of difference. Through this curriculum, students not only become aware of how they perceive others, but often of how others perceive them.

It is worth noting that at a racially, economically, and religiously diverse institution, the idea that bodies are marginalized or marked as different problematically is not a new concept. Rather, many students have lived this experience and often when they enter a new community, they are on the defensive because they have been taught that their bodies proceed them and inform their relationships with members of other communities. While many university-student collaborations are unsuccessful because the students fail to recognize their role in the community or care about the community partner deeply, the reverse can also be true. Students can become so caught up in how their bodies are typically perceived that it negatively influences their experiences. Even if those conversations never come up, the fear that a partner will be critical of the student can also have a negative impact on the partnership. This is particularly true in the case of Arab-American students, who have often felt marginalized due to the lack of representation in U.S. Census reporting (“Arab Americans: A Community Portrait,” n.d.). It is important to empower students who feel themselves othered as well as to educate those students who might inadvertently cast non-normalized bodies as the other. An attunement to the body, then, helps to empower students to recognize those perceptions and engage them productively, ultimately producing stronger relationships. And most importantly, the EEP is powerful because of this flexibility and
applicability for giving all students the ability to better communicate about difference, whether they themselves feel different or they are the dominant body in that space.

**Improving Community Engagement through Attention to Difference**

Ultimately, these courses were successful demonstrations of the value in drawing attention to and speaking across difference. Students indicated that they were more aware of how difference is produced through bodies, how difference is produced through institutions, how this knowledge contributed to their redefinition of community, and how this influenced their work with the community partner. I argue that this improves SCEL because, quite simply, this approach encourages students to look past what they have been taught about the “other” and to confront difference. In such, this lessens concerns about saviorism and volunteerism, because students and partners are working together *because* of this difference rather than despite it. These collaborations, particularly in the scope of these courses, allowed students to use their skills to work *with* the community partner to accomplish their shared goals in a way that traditional service does not accomplish. Because of these partnerships, several students accepted long-term internships with their partner organizations and many continued to work with their group to achieve their activist goals by joining into the activities they accomplished. My partnerships with all four organizations continued into the next iteration of the course that I taught and, in many cases, the new students were able to pick up on pre-existing projects and speak with previous students in order to accomplish their goals. Through this work, students came to recognize that activist work isn’t accomplished in the scope of one semester, but rather it is ongoing and continuous. Thus, an EEP is designed to build relationships that last beyond the duration of the semester and establish within students a desire to affect change, both within their own communities and in partnership with other, different communities. In the following chapter, I speak on the best
ways to implement this approach to produce lasting change. I discuss limitations that occurred in my study, describe my future research practices, and advocate for the implementation of an EEP to improve the connections between the universities and communities in SCEL courses to create environments that are more conducive to affecting change.
CHAPTER 6: REFLECTIONS ON THE APPLICATION OF AN ECOFEMINIST EMBODIED PEDAGOGY IN A COMMUNITY WRITING COURSE

Introduction

With about a month left in the semester, a group of students stopped me after class to talk about their interview transcription process. One student, Puerto Rican, had conducted an interview in Spanish because the interviewee felt most comfortable speaking in their native language. He was a native speaker as well, but the translation process was taking a bit more time than he expected given colloquial and dialectical differences. The students shared this with me and mentioned they wished there was a platform for speaking about the work in this course, including these challenges, within the university at-large. I thought about this conversation for a while.

Throughout the course, I acknowledged that the course was hard, the workload was heavy, and that they would be doing more comprehensive, time consuming, and rigorous than students enrolled in other Writing and Community courses. I described the traditional “writing about the community” framework that was employed in these courses, which were almost always service driven. My students would be expected to contribute more time outside of class, do more rigorous readings, and more involved assignments. In return, though, my students had more flexibility and control over their assignments. Further, my partners agreed to fully integrate students into their organizations as interns; they would be considered colleagues, not students.

I was transparent about the difficulty of what I asked them to do, but I was also open about myself as a teacher, researcher, and person. I shared my research journey, my dissertation writing process, and about the setbacks I experienced when designing my courses. I narrated the frustrations I had with the university—the lack of structural support, the lack of funding to support work with community partners, and the necessity of adhering to a final assignment that didn’t address differences between community writing courses and other advanced writing courses. My
students fully embraced the difficult readings, assignments, and community collaborations. And beyond that, they had taken ownership of their work. When my students approached me that day, I realized that the success of this course was evident because they were proud of what they had done within the community. They recognized a need for and wanted to advocate for structural change. In response, I hosted a two hour symposium on April 26, 2019 where my students presented their work to one another, community members, other instructors in the English department, and administrators. Of the 42 students enrolled in both my online and offline class, 29 attended and presented to an audience of over 60 people. My community partners were in the audience and participated heavily in the emergent dialogue. Students spoke about their collaborations—grant applications they wrote, interviews they conducted, narrative histories they compiled Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity (CRI0) violation complaints they submitted, articles they published with activist magazines, infographics, brochures, and social media campaigns they designed, and more. My students had done amazing work, but I was most proud to see that they really saw themselves as a part of their community organizations. They weren’t speaking about these as class projects to be forgotten at the end of the semester; these projects were a part of them. Many students spoke about their plans to continue to work with their respective organizations or future applications of their work. They had strong, generative conversations about how their needs to be a structural change to our approach to community collaborations. My students weren’t students this day: they were advocates for their community and they were passionate about producing structural change.

After a particularly strong student panel on social media analytic research and a revision to their organization’s social media advocacy plan, one student said, “I want to take a moment to thank you, Rachel.” He then spoke about the relationship between embodiment and community
and thanked me for showing him that building relationships between communities, students, and universities is important. As an Arab-American, this student always felt uncomfortable in his body and with his name, often introducing himself with a nickname rather than his full name in order to avoid being typecast as a “dangerous Muslim.” The course made him proud of his body and his identity; he was now proud to be an Arab-American, and motivated to build his community up rather than escape it. The student turned to me and said, “Thank you for trusting us to do this work and thank you for showing us that all bodies have power.” At the end of the symposium, I had a moment to reflect on this comment, and those from other students, about why this course was so successful: I attribute it fully to the framework of care that informs all feminist and ecofeminist teaching and research. My students saw that I cared for them, the community, and the class. They saw that my community partners cared about the way we were collaborating and the students they were working with. And thus, the students reciprocated that care. Through a framework of caring, built by an ecofeminist embodied pedagogy (EEP), we can establish stronger, longer-lasting partnerships. This chapter, then, brings together the findings from each phase of my study to discuss the implications of an EEP in improving community-university collaborations. I make suggestions for doing so while also reporting on setbacks, student disappointments, and considerations for future courses and end with suggestions for future research.

Dissertation Precis

In this dissertation, I argue that service- and community-engaged learning (SCEL) often fail to present community partners as real, embodied beings. Rather, students often believe that there is an “us” (the university) and a “them” (the community). Entering community partnerships with this perspective can be damaging, for both students and community partners, and result in unsuccessful collaborations. My dissertation responds to this problem by offering an EEP as a
solution. I argue that students are eager to learn about difference and that instructors need to provide students with tools and strategies for effectively navigating difference in both the classroom and the community. EEP helps students to understand how their physical and social environments influence the way they perceive the community, ultimately producing more critical engagement with the community, as demonstrated in the anecdote above. When students understand how difference is constructed within institutions, they have a platform to engage in partnerships that are more open, positive, and beneficial to all involved parties.

I opened my dissertation with the historical framework for SCEL. I identified common pitfalls that occur in these courses, including: 1) privileging the needs of the university over the needs of the community; 2) community service or work with little community engagement, thus resulting in a savior mentality; and 3) making the community component of the course an additional requirement rather than fully integrating it into the course. Much conversation surrounding SL pitfalls suggests that exposing students to difference and setting the scene for intercultural inquiry can help build strong partnerships. While I agree that these are valuable components for SCEL courses, I push this a step further: instructors must help students not only understand how to engage in conversations about difference with those from whom they differ, but they need to engage critically with the ways in which difference is created by our institutions and the impact of that difference on non-normalized bodies.

In Chapter Two, I detailed my approach to research, which was guided by ecofeminist (EF) principles. EF focuses specifically on the role environment plays in producing power hierarchies and is thus well-suited for SCEL because classes often occur in different settings that influence students’ learning about and interactions with difference. I drew on the work of Greta Gaard (1993) and other EF scholars to confront “the self/other opposition” that many SL models unintentionally
reproduce. I then described both phases of my study: 1) surveys and interviews with current SCEL instructors and 2) a classroom study of two sections of English 3020: Writing and Community (one offline and one online). I explained how the data from Phase One of this study informed my course design for Phase Two. During Phase Two, I collected pre- and post-course surveys, student journals, and post-class interviews. I outlined the EF methodologies used to move between the two phases of the study and drew conclusions about the best practices for attuning a pedagogy of the body, arguing that there is value of an EF methodology in studies of both the community and classroom to advocate for its more frequent practice.

Chapter Three brought my methodology into sharper focus. Specifically, I explored how instructors teach students about potential encounters with difference and how they focus on the relationship between students’ bodies and CEL. Because SCEL almost always task students with understanding the construction of difference, exploring how this goal has been promoted so far allowed me to orient my study within pedagogical approaches that are already practiced. My project considers the physical body as a means by which one might assume another’s identity. I analyzed the results of the first part of my study and drew conclusions regarding the relationship between physical and mental conceptions of embodiment that naturally manifest in SCEL. As SCEL initiatives proliferate the university, and as those courses become further entrenched in online instructional settings, it becomes increasingly urgent to teach students that the body, identity, and the construction of difference are interconnected and environmentally situated in institutionally reinforced hierarchies. Empowering students in the classroom, either physically or online, does not always empower them in external spaces. Thus, this chapter offered strategies that other instructors used to help students move from the classroom to the community.
Throughout both components of this study, I focused on the role experience plays in constructing and reinforcing existing notions of difference. Experience is fundamental in feminist and EF research practices because they emphasize the individual over the collective. Thus, Chapter Four continued this reflection and answered the research question: do students value courses that attune to the body? I focused on the body because in limited encounters with difference, one’s body often produces the encounter rather than their identity. For example, one might not identify based on their physical disability, but their wheelchair, as an extension of their body, might influence that interaction in a variety of ways. I traced the shift in valuation from pre-class to post-class surveys and analyzed student journal responses to argue that students value conversations of the body but must be taught how to move those conversations out of the classroom and into the community.

While Chapter Four was applicable to a variety of courses, Chapter Five focused solely on the ways in which a course focused on concepts of the body, embodiment, and the socio-spatial production of difference changes students’ approaches to SCEL and the collaborations students have with community partners. I focused explicitly on how students defined the notion of difference and showed how that definition grew throughout the semester as a direct reflection of the EEP I implemented. I showcase how this shifting definition was responsible for improving the relationships between students and their community partners and ultimately argued that a more generative understanding of difference and its socio-spatial construction allowed for students and university members to build relationships because of difference rather than in spite of it.

Holistically, I have presented the results of this mix-methods, two-part study to ultimately advocate for a shift in the ways instructors approach difference and the body in courses with SCEL components. Instructors must teach students to deconstruct the origins of difference if they are to
build stronger relationships. EEP is one such method for improving student-university collaborations and building more meaningful connections across difference because it is rooted in the concept of care and, as mentioned above, prompts students to care deeply about their communities. Finally, this chapter makes suggestions for adapting curricula based on the course learning environment as well as the needs of students, educators, and community partners. I place the results of both phases of my study into conversation with one another and ultimately suggest future avenues for research that must be done to determine best practices for teaching about the body in the SCEL classroom. I bring together EF theory, methodology, and pedagogy to describe how this research contributes to the current conversation surrounding SCEL curriculum.

Reflections on this Research Study

At its simplest, this research project presents a solution to the most prominent pitfalls emergent in SCEL courses described above. Most foundationally, though, is the strong relationship between student and community partners. As much of the scholarship on SCEL shows, there is often a large disconnect between the goals of the university and the goals of the community that can result in failed collaborations wherein both students and community members feel dissatisfied, unheard, or under represented. Many present solutions focus on the negotiation of difference, but there has been little emphasis on how to best negotiate these boundaries or how to instruct students on the existence of difference. Aside from that, there has been little recognition given to the fact that the self-other binary responsible for instilling notions of difference in us from birth (Sibley, 1995), meaning that at minimum our students have nearly two decades worth of establishing definitions of the self in opposition to that from which they differ. While the self-other framework is not an inherently negative belief system as it is born out of a desire for self-preservation and protection, it becomes negative when coupled with the narrative that so often frames SCEL. Often
this narrative is that the community being “helped” is lesser than the university and the students in some way and therefore needs “rescuing” by the university. Again, while this is most always not the intended message, it is a belief that will often manifest when students engage in service if they do not have conversations about why conditions are the way that they are. In that scenario, students complete hours working in a soup kitchen, tutoring, or perform some other sort of work for the community, and they have a few brief conversations with those from whom they differ. The purpose of SCEL is to help students develop a critical consciousness, but this approach does not guide them in the process of doing so. By no fault of the students, their instructors, or the community partners, little sustainable change is born from these partnerships. The work of establishing a critical consciousness looks at the why; students must be led to question why conditions are the way that they are (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002; Mitchell, 2007). The work of doing so is difficult, especially in the scope of a one-semester course, and research has consistently provided new frameworks for improving these partnerships.

My research responds to this difficulty and offers a framework that satisfies both students and community partners. By centralizing the collaborative work done with the community, rather than adding service onto a pre-existing course, I framed the entire course around the body/embodiment and difference as they pertain to community. In this study, I focused on the perspectives of instructors and students for two reasons: 1) while I know that a successful partnership must take up projects that are of importance to community partners and privilege their needs, if instructors and students do not find the approach valuable, it will never work. The main need for a shift in approach that I see is in the way we talk to students about difference. It is not something arbitrary that exists because they are separated by university and community affiliations; it is a deeply ingrained belief system that is used to systematically oppress many non-
normalized bodies, particularly within the university system. 2) In many cases, the instructors teaching these courses are, like myself, White, able-bodied, relatively privileged individuals. In many cases, so are their students. Mitchell, Donahue, and Young-Law (2012) theorize that service-learning is a “pedagogy of whiteness – strategies of instruction that consciously or unconsciously reinforce norms and privileges developed by, and for the benefit of, White people in the United States” (p. 613). Often, the idea of whiteness is ignored in the classroom because its dominant, and therefore its influence on the space goes unaddressed (Bocci, 2015). This conversation should first, then, be had amongst the purveyors of SCEL. A pedagogy attuned to the body must confront the ways in which normative bodies dominate the space—a conversation that must begin in the classroom if it is to be successful beyond the university. This approach is well suited to do that while simultaneously empowering those students who feel themselves marginalized by the dominant group because it advocates for deconstructing difference to understand how the socio-spatial conditions we are situated in inform our relationship to a space. This allows students to individualize their learning in the course—the dominant body can learn how they inform a space while those who feel traditionally othered can find power in speaking for and with their body.

**Implications of the Research**

In both stages of this project, my study proved that there is a necessity for a revision of SCEL courses to focus more directly on the body. Phase One showed that instructors see this work as valuable, but often struggle to teach these concepts or speak about them appropriately, so the conversation is often unaddressed. Phase Two showed that students initially did not value conversations of the body and didn’t want to have said conversations in the class. However, the post-class survey shifted dramatically, with over 80% of students claiming that there is in fact value in speaking on issues of the body in the classroom, particularly as it pertains to work within
the community. The narrative surrounding this shift showcases that students want to have the conversations, but have such negative experiences speaking about their bodies and the bodies of others that they would rather avoid them. They are seeking instruction on these conversations and practice. Students, particularly those with diverse lived experiences, know that their bodies are important and are hyper-aware that their bodies precede them; thus, without practicing these conversations, the students do not have the framework necessary to engage with those from whom they differ.

This is the hallmark of this dissertation: I went into this project anticipating that students would be of the mentality that it was the community that was different in a problematic way—this was true in some cases and will be true, I imagine, in many settings. However, I had the opportunity of teaching a diverse group of students who were concerned about their own different bodies rather than the difference that they might confront in the community work. Much research presumes that service-learning develops a negative savior mentality—this is certainly true. However, little research recognizes how students’ own difference might result in unsuccessful collaborations. Monberg (2009) speaks to something similar when advocating for a writing as the community approach to SCEL. A quiet, dismissive student might not be removed because they do not see value in the community collaborations, but rather because they are hiding their own body. Students enter our classrooms with years of beliefs regarding their bodies and the bodies of others influencing their approaches. This is what my EEP remedies: the classroom becomes a space for students to understand why these beliefs exist, to confront them, to practice speaking on them, and then work to affect change in their communities that works to deconstruct the systems of oppression put in place. With more research, and more practice, this is the largest benefit of an EEP: the ability to work together with our communities to dismantle the systems of oppression
that separate groups based on the body and to find a platform for connection across difference. For example, such work could be applied within the community: students and community members can come together to create publication outlets or presentation outlets to discuss embodied experiences holistically. The principles of the EEP can be shared to create safe spaces for dialogue or to eventually implement training programs for being more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. I envision creating a student driven communication course wherein students are trained in the facets of EEP and they help non-profit organizations and other local activist groups to adapt those principles to their community organizations. This approach would infuse the community with the knowledge of the university and build partnerships that lasted far beyond the scope of the course, working to eliminate those separations between universities and communities.

Another implication of this research is the possibility of improved university-community partnerships. Much of this comes in the planning stages. For example, I selected four organizations with whom my values aligned, I spent a lot of time before the course began talking with them about their goals, the goals of my course, and how those goals might align. I invited them into the classroom, I asked them to help teach segments of the course, and I deferred to them for all community projects. By prioritizing my partners so heavily, I modeled for my students that this wasn’t simply an additional requirement, but integral to the work that we were doing. However, I attribute the success of this course and these projects to the EEP. In the course itself, students went through three phases of readings and discussions: 1) the foundations of CEL/SL and pitfalls that emerge; 2) embodiment theory and experience; 3) theoretical and socio-spatial constructions of difference. This model was successful because it began with a direct connection to the community: partnerships fail for a multitude of reasons that can all be connected to ideas of the body and difference. From there, students become eager to discuss notions of embodiment and to learn about
different experiences. Reading these experiences through the principle of rhetorical listening encourages students to confront whiteness as the dominant bodily discourse and to “listen to the texts,” considering how those perspectives come to be. This translates fluidly to the community because students see that their community partners have had similar experiences that have shaped not only their personal experiences, but their organizational goals and missions. At this stage, it becomes foundational for students to engage with the community partners and for them to have conversations with one another and engage in the process of rhetorical listening. Finally, students work to think about how it isn’t just that these divisive beliefs exist at the interpersonal level: difference is systemic and reified through the institutions within which we work. This is the space wherein partnerships can really grow: students and partners are working together and using their combined resources to fight against these interlocking systems of oppression: this is the work of ecofeminism.

The element of embodiment, however, is the method by which to build bonds. Rather than ignoring our bodies, the body comes to the forefront and we can use this as a means to bridge our communities permanently. An EEP builds care in a way that other pedagogical approaches might not because students see that they are working toward a common goal shared between themselves and other people with lived embodied experiences that unite them. It no longer serves as a school assignment, but as a meaningful, foundational collaboration—one that can continue beyond the completion of the semester with individual students or with the instructor. An EEP, then, is suited to build lasting relationships between the university-community that are more transparent and generative, helping to alleviate the “us” and “them” binary and produce communities out of people working together to produce change.
Setbacks and Disappointments: The Difficulty of Reframing CEL within an EEP

As mentioned in previous chapters, I recognize that this was a study of two courses and that a longer, larger scale study must be conducted on the benefits of EEP in shaping university-community partnerships. Despite this, both courses went extremely well, students did strong work, and the partnerships were all maintained beyond the conclusion of the semester. There were, however, three main categories of setbacks and disappointments that emerged throughout the semester which warrant discussion: 1) student disappointments at the type of collaboration; 2) miscommunication between student and partner; and 3) maintenance of partnerships. In this section, I speak on each of the above and discuss these implications.

At Wayne State in particular, the Writing and Community course is well known and has been taught for quite some time, which I imagine is the case at other universities as well with prominent SCEL courses. Because of this, students are familiar with the type of work that they will do, be it from their advisor, their peers, or the previous experiences in service-based class. My pedagogy is built on the non-negotiable premise that traditional volunteerism, which promotes saviorism, is not a productive means by which students and the community can build relationships. It does not emphasize interconnectedness and shared experiences, but rather a hierarchy in which the community is inferior to the university. Many students, however, find satisfaction in the immediate gratification of working with underserved populations because they can see the immediate benefit of their work and there are a handful of students who report dissatisfaction in not having done traditional service.

For example, when asked to reflect on their community work, one student writes “something that could be done to enhance the partnership would have been volunteering or going on a field trip to schools with them,” and another writes “I thought that our work with the
community partner was going to be more interactive, such as actually volunteering with the organization and the kids that come to the programs. If we actually did that, then I would have to be open minded, a better communicator, and caring.” Both of these students were working with their organizations to do more back-end work. The first was working with her partner to write a grant while the latter was working with her partner to produce a donation marketing campaign. In both instances, students were more immersed in the community and were engaged in the type of work that affects change, allowing these organizations to better serve their community, yet in both cases, despite our numerous conversations about the pitfalls of service, these students indicated their desire to work directly with the underserved population rather than to do the work that needs to be done to benefit the community. This self-serving interest arises because students are so familiar with volunteerism and the positive ways that these experiences make them feel.

This criticism arose in isolated instances, and it did not impact the relationship with the partner, but it brings to light an important issue: there is nothing glamorous about grant writing, researching, programming, and other back-end work that needs to be done should these organizations be successful. I argue that until there is a systemic change to integrate the university and community more holistically, there will always be outliers who want the less immersive, more immediately rewarding work of volunteering. The best approach to remedying this situation as it stands is to continue having conversations in the classroom and with the partners about the necessity for the work in which students are engaging. While the instructor can tell them of the value of immersive work in the community, students need to hear from the partners how these projects fit within the larger scheme of their organizational goals. In many cases, students will not see the fruits of their labor during the semester. Partner’s speaking transparently about what the outcome of this project will help them achieve can help to eliminate this particular disappointment
on behalf of the students. Another potential solution to this pitfall is, of course, to ask students to engage in work that results in change in addition to doing the volunteer work that generates positive feelings amongst students. While this could improve morale, it’s worth noting that an approach would require even more time on behalf of the students. It’s also important to recognize that facilitating volunteer work does require a lot of effort on behalf of the partner that often provides minimal reward. It should not be assumed that partners are prepared to support students in both volunteer work and in the advocacy work or the writing that students do. Finally, when working with smaller non-profit organizations like I was, it’s often rare that there is volunteer work for students to do. Only one of my organizations had a space where students could potentially volunteer. It is not always possible to find partnerships that have volunteer opportunities and, many times, our support is best offered to smaller organizations working to affect change. Rationalizing why this solution is not preferable or most beneficial can additionally help students to understand why the work of writing and advocacy is essential to productive relationships.

The next setback, that of miscommunication between the students and their partners, is even less frequent, though worth speaking about. One of my community partners, Advocates 4 Baba Baxter (A4BB) is a grassroots activist organization which was not yet established as a non-profit during our partnership. For this reason, they had been rejected by another university partnership program the previous summer. I do not think that establishment as a non-profit is a necessity for a strong university-community partnership; in many cases the resources of the university can help the organization to achieve their goals and expand more productively. Hence, I wanted to work with A4BB and make one of our first projects the application to become a 501(c)3. We were both excited about the potential of our collaboration; however, this was the partner’s first experience working with student interns. They anticipated that students would
already know how to engage in a lot of the work that they were doing. And, out of a desire to impress the group, the students were not eager to ask for help. Out of this collaboration, a lot of very productive work was born and a lot of immediate changes were made, as this organization was an advocacy group fighting against ableism in the city of Detroit, but in many instances this group went through several rounds of miscommunication.

Typically it worked itself out, as communication does, and the goal of both parties was still achieved. There was one instance during this collaboration wherein the students and partner miscommunicated with negative outcomes. The students were submitting Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity (CRI0) violation complaints to the city of Detroit based on interviews they were conducting of people living with disabilities in the city. In one interview, the speaker went on a diatribe against a congresswoman in Detroit—one he was in a legal case with due to a non-ADA compliant bussing situation in the city—and the student wrote this down and included it in the complaint which would be forwarded directly to that congresswoman’s team. The student was under the impression that they were to transcribe and submit what the individual said directly, while the partner’s protocol was to take this information, revise it to be more concise, professional, and free of any personal identifiers that could tie the complaint to the reporting individual.

Both the student and the partner were upset, rightfully so, as a result of this miscommunication. I was able to intervene by calling the CRI0 department, explaining that one of my students had improperly submitted a complaint, and having it removed from the system and this became a good opportunity for the team to discuss what communication protocol they would follow for the remainder of the semester. This raises another important question though: how do we negotiate the line between student and university? Collaborations are best when students become a part of the organization, but how do we best facilitate that to avoid these
miscommunications or differences in expectations? How do we avoid too much control over their projects, but also too little? That particular partner and I, in a later version of the course, revised it so that students spent time observing the group’s advocacy, their meetings, and their day to day operations for several weeks before participating actively. This allowed them to understand the mission, ask questions, and participate more actively as members rather than as students, thus remedying the disconnect that existed. This is a rare occurrence in more developed non-profits as they are familiar with leading projects and working with student partners; however, as the EEP opens the door for more activist work, I envision the types of partnerships shifting and productively remedying this miscommunication becomes an important area to focus on.

Finally, there is an issue of continuation. Often, the types of projects that students work on cannot be completed in the duration of one semester. While it is easy to continue lasting partnerships with other courses taught by the same instructor, it is worth commenting on the difficulties posed when instructors are graduate students or contingent faculty. Because their teaching is so precarious and/or short-lived, these partnerships often fall apart or fail to continue. This is due to a lack of structural support, and for that reason it is often rare that part-time faculty or graduate teaching assistants engage in SCEL. It’s important that non-permanent faculty have support available to make these courses a possibility, both at the departmental and institutional level. While one solution that is often suggested is to only allow permanent, full-time faculty to teach these courses, there becomes the issue of training and support. Graduate students and part-time faculty often take pedagogy courses, have teaching mentors, observations, and other training processes that full-time faculty do not. If these courses are to be reserved exclusively for those instructors in full-time positions, it is increasingly likely that the work of developing strong partnerships and innovative approaches to teaching will not be as supported. Further, because this
work is rarely valued in the same way that research is, if it were to be delegated to those on the tenure-track, it is likely that these courses continue to follow a volunteer model, as they are easiest to facilitate and would allow the instructor to focus more thoroughly on their research.

Additionally, because many instructors actively teach volunteerism, it can be difficult to pass the partnership off to another instructor. Partners do build connections with their instructors, rightfully so. For instance, one of my community partners was hesitant to work with me because he had previously worked with a university course (unaffiliated with WSU’s Community Writing program) and had a bad experience wherein the instructor had the students do something entirely different than what was needed. Once we worked together, he was satisfied with the work I was doing and my students were doing. However, at the conclusion of my time teaching at WSU that partnership came to an end, as he refused to be connected with another instructor due to, again, differences in the approach. If the approach I advocated were integrated across the curriculum, however, the partner would have been more inclined to partner with a new instructor. When partners become integrated into the course, and when instructors universally value the input and approaches of the partner, it becomes easier to move between instructors and courses. It is not individual instructors who are making the partners feel valued, but the programs themselves. This is an anecdotal scenario, but it is not unique: the struggle to build lasting partnerships is one that must be addressed in the context of any SCEL pedagogy. This is the main value of an EEP; such an approach has the potential to normalize the teaching of these courses and make them continuous and transferable between instructors—and across programs—because of the goal to end oppression across binaries rather than continue to exist within structures that support them. If this approach is supported at departmental or university levels, it is likely that there would then be more resources available to support more instructors in teaching the course and to create partnerships that are
connected to the university rather than to the individual instructor. To approach this goal, however, requires more research.

**Continuing to Develop and Ecofeminist Embodied Pedagogy**

This study was productive in highlighting instructor and student perspectives on an EEP as it pertains to community partnerships and showcasing that an EEP has the potential to improve community partnerships. I acknowledge, however, that this reports on the results of two courses taught in the same semester by me alone. To develop a more complete EEP, it is necessary to study its impact across several courses taught by the same instructor and to then study its impact across several courses taught by a variety of instructors. Once the EEP has proven successful in both of those environments, a study should be conducted that focuses on the responses of community partners and how they perceive changes in student collaborations between traditional partnerships and partnerships developed within an EEP. Additionally, a study should consider how instructors might be taught the same framework as students to lead and develop more constructive conversations across difference. If all involved parties are speaking within the same context, then the relationships within the community can only stand to improve. Finally, it is worth noting that this particular course is a writing intensive general education course. I did teach students advanced academic research and writing skills in addition to their community writing work. However, this study did not assess my students’ writing in comparison to students enrolled in other sections or other writing intensive general education courses. In the future, a study should be conducted to validate that students enrolled in a more immersive SCEL course attuned to the body are successful in achieving the course learning outcomes that pertain to the course content.

While not the focus of this dissertation, I did teach this course in both the online and offline learning environment. Future research needs to focus on teaching successful community
collaborations in the online learning environment, in particular an EEP as it humanizes the digital classroom. A study across online SCEL courses is necessary as the future of higher education continues to evolve toward more online courses. There are difficulties that manifest in teaching online courses that do not exist in traditional classrooms that I intend to study and address, producing a more actionable framework for instructors who are interested in facilitating SCEL in this setting. If this research is not done, there is a danger that SCEL classes continue to fall into existing pitfalls, or even worse. Thus, there is an urgency for research that focuses on best practices for facilitating SCEL online, which frames the next avenue in which I intend to further develop an EEP. I want to explore how this pedagogy can best be implemented in an online learning environment and evaluate the best practices for engaging the students and community in productive relationships that can happen in the online classroom just as successfully in an online classroom. This research can help alleviate instructor concerns about such a course adaptation, which will become valuable with the continued increase in online learning.

**Looking Toward the Future: Care as an Essential Element of an EEP**

If an EEP is to succeed, it must be rooted in care: this is foundational in all feminist and ecofeminist teaching. As previously described, EF teaching has four main tenets: accessibility, dialogue, praxis, and interconnectedness. Together, these four principles require a vulnerability on behalf of the instructor, which can be difficult. When speaking about the body, the instructor cannot ignore their own, or their responses to others. The most difficult, and most valuable, part of this pedagogy is the openness that instructors have with students, that students have with instructors, and that carries into the community. Creating an environment rooted in care comes from addressing the above four components, which comes through producing a reciprocal dialogue. Our students recognize that when we care, and we speak openly, they can do the same
thing, and it motivates them to be more transparent with us and within their community. This is the hallmark of an EEP, as expressed in a student journal:

I love the fact that you are open with how you feel about certain things. It truly warms my heart that you take the time out to communicate in these journals with us, individually. I have never had a professor leave long comments and also at the same time open up and also include how they feel. It is such an amazing feeling knowing that you go to the extent to reach out to us, and I see it. I feel motivated by every comment that you leave.... I just tend to feel appreciative to the point where I don't know how to respond or show my gratitude towards how much you try and connect with us.

While this student speaks directly on the value of my teaching in their academic sphere, another student showcases how that ethics of care moves beyond the classroom and into the community, writing:

Because of this class, I think that some of my outlooks on life and society have transformed as well. As stated throughout the semester, I entered the class misunderstanding the reasons people showed pride for their identity. Throughout the course of this semester, the various readings helped to shed light on the existence of and necessity for this pride. Further, I think that this class provided me with methods to better approach those who differ from me in any regard (politically, ethnically, etc.). Readings like Reynolds piece on dwelling and concepts like Rhetorical Listening work to bridge the divide we often see where people misunderstand one another. Further, understandings from readings, like Cushman's, could be further extended outside the frameworks of this classroom and can influence the ways we approach others. Stenberg's notes within "Embodied Classrooms, Embodied Knowledge" about being a partial knower remind us that we aren't omniscient beings and should always yearn to grow as knowers and individuals. We should not become complacent within our own existence or toward the structures that we see around us. Ultimately, I believe that the importance of this class stems from the ways in which we approach difference in the world around us. While many innately approach difference with caution or disdain, it would be better approached through a lens of understanding the context behind the conditions of those within a community (an idea which was echoed in "Reasons to Hope"). Rather than shut down any possibility of interacting with those who differ, the core understandings of this class show that it is almost exclusively beneficial to think about how we can better every community through understanding and reflecting upon difference. Further, we should stay mindful of the voices within communities that have direct knowledge of the structures that plague certain identities and work to include said voices to evoke change in the world around us.

When we teach students to care, and we care about them, their work in the community becomes more developed. They focus on change rather than immediate gratification, and they embrace
difference rather than fear it. Therein lies the benefit of this approach: students question why the conditions are the way that they are. They do this first in the classroom, challenging their own beliefs, the beliefs of their peers, and the beliefs of their instructors. As they achieve comfort in these conversations, they take this approach into their community partnerships. The community engagement becomes more meaningful for students because they think more critically about how they can engage with the community and why their differences have been so frequently divisive. Students leave the course comfortable to speak about and advocate for their bodies and the bodies of others and do so informed about the role of bodies in producing systems of oppression. They question difference and work to deconstruct its power to divide. And most importantly, they leave the class with a better understanding of what community means and where they themselves fit within the communities they engage.
APPENDIX A

In this Appendix, there are longer descriptions of each community partner organization and the work that students did for and with the partners during the course.

**Detroit Community Wealth Fund (DWCF):** The DCWF provides non-extractive loans to cooperative businesses in Detroit, particularly though run by traditionally marginalized groups. DCWF became an official non-profit in 2016 and they distributed their first load in 2018 to a Latina worker-owned cleaning cooperative called Cleaning in Action. Since then they have fully supported three worker-owned businesses, met with over forty groups in Detroit interested in learning more about cooperative business, launched two co-op academies to support other cooperative business in their development and have hosted monthly community events to establish within the community a commitment to supporting cooperative businesses. Students partnered with the DCWF conducted and transcribed interviews from members of Cleaning in Action, produced a series of infographics about cooperative businesses, created slide decks for DCWF to use in meetings with investors, produced a booklet on the cooperative business model, and ran their Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

**The Maurice and Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic & Social Justice (SLC):** The SLC, founded in 1991, was established to continue fostering the ideals of activists Maurice and Jane Sugar. Their mission is to advocate for fair treatment of low-income workers and their families while holding their communities accountable during times of economic upheaval. They exclusively represent people, not corporations, and their defense is rooted in the belief that economic and social rights are civil rights, which are inseparable from human rights. They are a national non-profit law firm that provides advocacy, representation, education, research, and technical support to low income individuals. Students working with the SLC produced a written,
digital, and oral history. They conducted and transcribed interviews with former and current members of the staff and former representatives. They wrote a fifteen-page narrative history weaving together the interviews with secondary, archival research. This was translated digitally to be housed on their website as well.

**Arts & Scraps (A&S):** A&S is a non-profit organization in Detroit “that uses recycled industrial materials to help people of all ages think, create, and learn.” They have a store, which sells these recycled materials to the public at a low rate, and they have programs for children in the Detroit Public School system which use these recycled materials to integrate art into science, technology, and math education (STEM). They also provide programming for adult learners with disabilities, servicing over 115 individuals weekly. Students partnered with Arts & Scraps performed a social media analytics campaign, performed grant research and filed one grant applications, updated their program marketing materials, produced a scrapbook for promotional purposes, and researched more comprehensive donation marketing strategies.

**Advocates 4 Baba Baxter (A4BB):** A4BB is a grassroots activist organization that fights to protect the most vulnerable among us: the young, elders, and those living with disabilities, to advocate for a more interconnected world. Their primary mission is to fight against ableism in the city of Detroit through their namesake Baba Baxter Jones, but they fight for equity in all facets. Their work aligns with the Poor People’s Campaign and requires mass organization and action because they are without financial support. Students partnered with A4BB researched disability pension laws, filed Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity (CRIO) violation complaints with the city of Detroit, wrote two articles about non-ADA compliant bussing and living situations, ran their Facebook page, aided in the caretaking process, and produced a series of digital advocacy videos.
APPENDIX B

Phase One: Survey Questions for Instructors

1. What is/was the title of your service- and/or community-engaged learning (SCEL) course?

2. In what department do/did you teach this course?

3. How many times have you taught this course?

4. What was the format of this class (online, offline, hybrid)?

Considering the service-learning course which you presently teach or have previously taught, please answer the following questions.

For all questions that ask you about "the body" or "embodiment," please consider those physical features by which one might define themselves or others might define them. This might also include extensions of the body, such as clothing, piercings and tattoos, or hair color. For example, you might talk about how a student's gender or disability impacts their interaction with a community member. Further, you might talk about how their tattoos could result in an interaction with the partner. However, if they skinned their knee before going to the service site, this might not impact the encounter.

In this context, the "body" is different than "identity" because someone could make a perception based on your physical body that does not align with how you chose to self-identify.

5. How often do or did you address issues of either your student's body or the bodies of your community partners (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, ability, age, health status) in your instruction (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

6. Can you give some examples of assignments, readings, or activities that you have done or would do in your class to facilitate conversations about the body? Please consider readings
and assignments that were focused on either physical markers (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, health status) or perceptions of the body (e.g. stereotypes, difference)?

7. Do you think an instructor should incorporate issues related to bodies into a course? Please elaborate on why.

8. Do or did you provide your students with class time to talk specifically about their encounters with difference that occur in the service-learning component of the course? Why?

9. If you do provide your students with this class time, can you explain how you do so? For example, is this time open ended? Do you facilitate conversation in a structured way?

Consider the service-learning component of your course and answer the following questions:

10. In working with your community partner, how frequently do/did your students perform service in physical location outside of the college/university campus (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

11. How frequently do/did your students engage with community members during their experience (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

12. How frequently have students described embodied experiences (those in which they felt that either their race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc. or those features of the community member influenced the encounter) at their sites of community engagement (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

13. Please describe the type of service-learning encounters your students have. For example, what type of service do students do? How often and for how long? What are the community partners like? Please include any information you'd like that is not directly covered by the previous questions.
14. Do you/have you ever facilitated conversations about the body between students and community partners (yes/no)?

15. If you have, who normally initiates those conversations (students, community members, you, these conversations do not come up)?

16. If you do or have had these conversations, how did/do they come up and how did/do you facilitate them?

17. Do you think your students' physical bodies (health status, race, sexuality, gender, ability, etc.), or the ways in which someone might perceive their physical bodies, can impact their encounters with the community during service-learning experiences? Why?

18. Do you think that community members' bodies (race, sexuality, gender, ability, etc.), or the ways in which your students might perceive the community members' physical bodies, can impact your students service-learning experiences? Please elaborate on your response.

19. Do you think your course prepares students for embodied experiences with their community partner? Why? ("Embodied encounters" are any situation in which your body, the body of a community member, or the ways in which either of you perceived the other's body might have impacted your interaction.)

20. Please provide your email address if you are willing to participate in a follow up interview.

21. Please provide any general comments you would like concerning your service-learning courses and physical encounters with community partners.

22. Do you have any general questions or comments about the questions that were asked?
Phase One: Interview Questions for Instructors

1. Thinking about your own experiences, how would you define the following concepts:
   a. Difference
   b. The body/embodiment
   c. Embodied encounters

2. What is the connection between the class itself and the community partner?

3. What do you do to prepare students for community engagement and when does this happen during the course? Do you do anything in prepare them specifically for encounters with difference?

4. Can you give examples of how you prepare them? Readings, discussions, assignments, etc.

5. How important do you think it is for an instructor to prepare students for embodied encounters? Why?

6. Do you have any suggestions for instructors who are approaching this preparation in an online classroom specifically?

7. Have your students described specific encounters with difference in their experiences with the community?

8. How do they describe the ways in which their bodies—or the bodies of those they encountered—shaped those experiences?

9. Do students seem comfortable engaging with the community partner? Why or why not?

10. Do you think it is important for instructors to facilitate conversations about the body? Why or why not? If so, how do you think instructors can best facilitate conversations about the body?

12. If you were to design a course specifically focused on embodied encounters with difference in the community, what readings, assignments, and activities do you think should be included?
Phase Two: Pre-class survey

1. Should you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, please feel free to leave them blank.
   
   a. What is your class rank?
   
   b. What is your gender?
   
   c. What is your race?
   
   d. What is your sexuality?
   
   e. What is your age?
   
   f. Do you have a disability or health concern? If so, what is it?

2. Based on your pre-existing knowledge, please define the following terms:
   
   a. The body
   
   b. Embodiment
   
   c. Embodied Encounter
   
   d. Identity
   
   e. Difference

Considering the service-learning course which you are about to begin. For all questions that ask you about "the body" or "embodiment," please consider those physical features by which you might define yourself or others might define you. This might also include extensions of the body, such as clothing, piercings and tattoos, or hair color. For example, you might talk about how your gender or disability impacted your interaction with a community member. Further, you might talk about how your tattoos resulted in an interaction with the partner. However, if you skinned your knee before you went to the service site, this might not impact your encounter.
In this context, the "body" is different than "identity" because someone could make a perception based on your physical body that does not align with how you chose to self-identify.

3. How often is it valuable for your instructor address issues of either your body or the bodies of your community partner (e.g, race, gender, sexuality, ability, age, health status) (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

4. If conversations about the body should come up in your class, how should they be facilitated?

5. How often is it valuable to address issues of the body specifically in terms of working with your community partner (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

6. If conversations regarding the body in relation to service-learning do come up, how should you/the community partner/the instructor lead the discussion?

7. How often is it valuable for students to address issues of the body in class (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

8. How important do you think it is for an instructor to incorporate issues of the body (race, sexuality, gender, physical ability, etc.) into the course (extremely important, very important, moderately important, slightly important, not at all important)?

9. Why do you think these conversations are or are not important?

Consider the service-learning component of your course and answer the following questions:

10. In working with your community partner, how frequently do you think you will encounter people from whom you differ (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

11. Please describe what you think these encounters might be like.

12. Do you think your body will impact your encounter with the community during your service-learning experiences (definitely yes, probably yes, might or might not, probably not, definitely not)?
13. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

14. Do you think the bodies of community members will impact your service-learning experience (definitely yes, probably yes, might or might not, probably not, definitely not)?

15. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

16. Please provide any general comments you would like related to your service-learning and/or your physical encounters with community partners.

17. Do you have any general questions or comments about the questions that were asked?

   Phase Two: Post-class survey

1. Should you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, please feel free to leave them blank.
   a. What is your class rank?
   b. What is your gender?
   c. What is your race?
   d. What is your sexuality?
   e. What is your age?
   f. Do you have a disability or health concern? If so, what is it?

2. Based on your knowledge from the course, please define the following terms:
   a. The body
   b. Embodiment
   c. Embodied Encounter
   d. Identity
   e. Difference

Considering the service-learning course which you just completed. For all questions that ask you about "the body" or "embodiment," please consider those physical features by which you might
define yourself or others might define you. This might also include extensions of the body, such as clothing, piercings and tattoos, or hair color. For example, you might talk about how your gender or disability impacted your interaction with a community member. Further, you might talk about how your tattoos resulted in an interaction with the partner. However, if you skinned your knee before you went to the service site, this might not impact your encounter.

In this context, the "body" is different than "identity" because someone could make a perception based on your physical body that does not align with how you chose to self-identify.

3. How often is it valuable for your instructor address issues of either your body or the bodies of your community partner (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, ability, age, health status) (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

4. If conversations about the body came up in your class, how were they facilitated?

5. How often is it valuable to address issues of the body specifically in terms of working with your community partner (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

6. If conversations regarding the body in relation to service-learning did come up, how did you/the community partner/the instructor lead the discussion?

7. How often is it valuable for students to address issues of the body in class (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

8. How important do you think it is for an instructor to incorporate issues of the body (race, sexuality, gender, physical ability, etc.) into the course (extremely important, very important, moderately important, slightly important, not at all important)?

9. Why do you think these conversations are or are not important?

Consider the service-learning component of your course and answer the following questions:

10. In working with your community partner, how frequently did you encounter
people from whom you differ (always, most of the time, about half the time, sometimes, never)?

11. Please describe what these encounters were like.

12. Did your body impact your encounter with the community during your service-learning experiences (definitely yes, probably yes, might or might not, probably not, definitely not)?

13. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

14. Do you think the bodies of community members impacted your service-learning experience (definitely yes, probably yes, might or might not, probably not, definitely not)?

15. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

16. Please provide any general comments you would like related to your service-learning and/or your physical encounters with community partners.

17. Do you have any general questions or comments about the questions that were asked?
APPENDIX C

ENG 3020: Community Writing
Section 001
Wayne State University
Winter 2019

I've been thinking we should start doing some kind of volunteer work, Earl.
You know... do our part to give something back to the community.
I'm already doing that. Just yesterday I helped a little old lady cross the street.
Oh, for Pete's sake! That was me, Earl!!

© Brian Crane

Instructor: Rachel Dortin (call me Rachel!)  Time: M & W 10:00–11:15 AM
Email: rachel.dortin@wayne.edu  Location: SH 335
Office Location: 9405.2 @ 5057 Woodward (Maccabee’s Building)  Office Hours: M & W 11:30 AM-12:30 PM and by appointment

Department of English Course Description

As a course that fulfills the Intermediate Composition (IC) general education requirement, English 3020 prepares students for reading, research, and writing in their upper-division courses and majors. Students in English 3020 achieve these outcomes through collaborative community engagement, which combines hands-on experience in a community setting with academic work and writing tasks related to that setting. Unlike volunteers, students in such a class get as much as they give. Students offer their time and labor to the community partner and, in return, get the chance to develop many types of intellectual skills in real community contexts. The course emphasizes researching local problems, analyzing various kinds of texts, writing for different purposes, listening, negotiating with people of different ages and from different backgrounds, and learning to work collaboratively with a diverse array of people and organizations.

What this means to you. You will be required to provide at least 20 hours of service to one of the non-profit community sites affiliated with this course. For most of you, this will work out to 2-3 hours per week for seven or eight weeks, beginning week 4. Any orientation or training period provided by the community partner can be included in your 20-hour minimum. You will need to work out an individual schedule and specific projects with the site coordinator at the site.
WSU Undergraduate Bulletin Description
Cr 3. Prereq: grade of C or better in ENG 1020 or equiv. Students develop and write about
community-based service-learning projects. (F,W)

Course Placement for English 3020
To enroll in ENG 3020, students must have completed their WSU Basic Composition (BC)
requirement (ENG 1020 or equiv.) with a grade of C or better. Students who have not completed
this requirement will be asked to drop the course.

General Education Designation
With a grade of C or better, ENG 3020 fulfills the General Education IC (Intermediate
Composition) graduation requirement. Successful completion of an IC course with a grade of C
or better is a prerequisite to enrolling in courses that fulfill the General Education WI
graduation requirement (Writing Intensive Course in the Major).

More information on the General Education requirements is available from the Undergraduate
Programs office: http://advising.wayne.edu/curr/gnd1.php

Learning Outcomes
A passing grade in ENG 3020 indicates that students are able to demonstrate the
following course outcomes:

- **Community**: Engage communities in collaborative work that aligns with community
  members’ values and expectations and demonstrates the ethical application of
  academic research and writing skills to community-based projects.

- **Research**: Write within the conventions of research genres; use ethical research
  methods, and conduct primary and secondary research to design an extended
  research project that draws on perspectives from academic disciplines and is useful
  for community partners.

- **Writing**: Use a flexible writing process and varied technologies to produce texts that
  address the expectations of academic disciplines and professional community
  partners in terms of the writing’s content, form, style, responsiveness to rhetorical
  situation, and genre.

- **Reading**: Analyze genres from chosen discourse communities, academic disciplines,
  and community partners, including aspects of audience, rhetorical situation,
  rhetorical purpose, strategies and effects.

- **Reflection**: Use reflective writing to describe developing knowledge about writing,
  about oneself as a writer (including ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one’s own
  writing), and about relationships within communities and with community
  partners.
Community Partners

You will choose to engage in collaborative work with one of the community partners listed below. Representatives from the community sites may visit class to discuss their organizations and the types of work that they do. Your collaborative work will begin sometime during the first few weeks of class; however, you are responsible for coordinating orientation times and a consistent schedule with your community partner. You are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours of work with your community partner. For most of you, the 20 hours should probably work out to about two to three hours of service work per week, but you’ll work out individual schedules with your community site contact person. You’ll be graded on this portion of the course based on demonstrated completion of your service hours and an independent evaluation completed by your community site coordinator. Failure to complete a minimum of 20 hours of work will result in a ½ grade reduction of your overall course grade. Translation: you cannot pass this class without completing this work.

You will have the opportunity to work with one of the following organizations:

- **Arts & Scraps** is an “Education, Arts & Culture, and Environmentalism” 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has helped educate communities since 1989. We operate nationally with a specific focus on the low-income children of Southeastern Michigan. Arts & Scraps reimagines recycled industrial materials, inspiring people of all ages to think, create and learn.

- **Detroit Community Wealth Fund** exists to empower innovative historically marginalized Detroits by providing non-extractive and supportive loans to cooperatives and community-based businesses in Detroit. Acting as partners lets us focus on what’s really important: the stability and growth of businesses that are based in and built to serve low-income neighborhoods. It also means that we never take a single dime from the people we work with that doesn’t come from income we’ve helped generate. No community will ever be made poorer by working with us.

- **The Maurice and Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice** is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing advocacy and support to poor and working people on important societal issues with national impact. The Sugar law Center’s work is guided by the principle that economic and social rights are civil rights, inseparable from human rights and more sacred than property interests. We provide legal assistance, advocacy, and technical support to individuals, community organizations, unions, attorneys, and other people who are working for economic and social justice.

- **Advocates for Baba Baxter (A4BB)** is a grassroots Disability Justice organization, addressing concerns of people with disabilities and their caregivers. We fight for radical inclusion and representation for people with disabilities, intersecting with all justice issues, including housing and water rights, LGBTQIA rights, racial justice,
economic justice, and more. Our namesake, Baba Baxter Jones, is a beloved elder, a wheelchair user, and renowned activist.

Commitment

This course is rigorous and challenging. This course requires a lot of reading that you will need to complete in order to be successful as well as a significant amount of writing. In order to do well in this class, you will absolutely have to complete all readings and writing assignments according to a clear schedule. You should anticipate spending approximately 6-9 hours of work outside of class per week in order to succeed in this class. This does not include the work with your community partner. I suggest that you budget this time in a planner or calendar so that you do not fall behind. If you would like to talk strategy, please let me know. Scheduling is my guilty pleasure.

Due to the nature of our course, we are responsible to our community partners to provide excellent quality work. You are expected to uphold the absolute highest standards of professional conduct and communication with all partners. You are making a commitment to them and, in turn, they are providing you an invaluable learning opportunity. You must approach all work with respect. Additionally, you must commit to be present and complete work for your partner according to their timeframe. Community partners reserve the right to remove you from their project for poor behavior. If that becomes the case, you will not pass this class. My best advice, then, is to approach this commitment like you would a job. You should show up, on time. You should dress appropriately. You should treat partners and community members with the respect you anticipate they will reciprocate.

Reading

There is no grade assigned specifically to reading in this class. However, for each class session you will be asked (either in an in-class writing or a homework assignment) to reflect on the reading for that week. More information is available on the field note, journal, and in-class reflection handout. You need to be able to participate in class conversations and the readings frame not only your entry into the conversation but into your work with your community partner. If I notice a pattern in which you are failing to read for class, you will be asked to leave class and return when you have prepared. This will result in a reduction of points. I know this sounds harsh, but the reading is essential to your ability to understand the course concepts and participate in conversations. You will get out of this class what you put into it. Finally, the first step to becoming a good writer is becoming a good reader: be engaged, take notes, make highlights. Most important: ask questions.
Required Materials

- There is no textbook for this class; all readings will be posted to Canvas. You will be expected to download and/or print these materials so that you are able to annotate them and engage with them prior to class.
- Notebook and a pen or pencil for each class session
- Access to Canvas, your WSU email, and a word processor
- While not required, you may benefit strongly from maintaining a notebook for “field journal entries.” You will turn these in via a OneDrive notebook in Canvas, but being able to write and record notes at your partner site or when you do not have access to Canvas may be beneficial.

Project Formats and Submission

- Assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point serif font, with one-inch margins.
  - Under no circumstance should you turn in anything written in Arial or Comic Sans. Not only are they sans-serif fonts, they are painful to read. This is my biggest pet peeve and I will not accept your work if it isn’t a serif font. This syllabus is written in Palatino Linotype (a serif) and Garamond (a serif) is my favorite font. I encourage you, however, to select your own signature (serif) font.

Serif

Serifs are the decorative parts of each character. These details guide the eye along which is why serif typefaces are best to use for body text.

Sans

Sans serif typefaces don’t have these decorative details. This makes the type easier to read at a glance which is why Sans fonts should be used for headings, tables and figures.

- Please use MLA format for citations.
- Assignments must be submitted electronically through Canvas in a .docx format.
- Please insert page numbers in the top, right-hand corner of your assignments.
- Always take the time to proofread. We are not perfect, and I expect mistakes, but a proof-read essay is easier to grade because ideas are not obscured by typos and grammatical errors.
Assignments

Students are required to write 32 pages or more (approx. 8,000-9,000 words) in ENG 3020 (not including drafts and informal writing). This course will feature a minimum of 4 major projects along with 1 multimodal presentation and less formal writing for in-class activities and homework. Students are required to submit at least 1 formal project that is between 12-18 pages in length, not including any associated requirements for Works Cited and/or reflective writing. The major projects for the course are intended to scaffold together, building upon students’ emerging writing capacities, community awareness, familiarity with a central research focus, and a body of written content. Taken together, these emerging competencies and artifacts should lead students to develop a longer, higher-stakes project which not only models an effective process for research and writing in their associated communities, but also resembles an important genre of that community.

Please note: students must complete all major projects in order to pass this course.

1. Out of class essays: 65% of final grade
   a. Corporeal Marker Project (2-3 pages)
   b. Position Statement (2-3 pages)
   c. Institutional Rhetorical Analysis (3-5 pages)
   d. Academic Literature Review (6-8 pages)
   e. Collaborative Community Research Project (15-20 pages)**
   f. Reflective Letter (2-3 pages)
2. Field notes, journals, and in-class reflections: 20% of final grade
3. In class discussion lead: 5% of final grade
4. Process assignments: 5% of final grade
5. Homework assignments: 10% of final grade

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporeal Marker Project</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Statement</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Rhetorical Analysis</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Literature Review</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Community Research Project **</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Portfolio and Letter</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes, journals, and in-class reflections</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class Discussion Lead</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Assignments (3 drafts, 2 conferences @ 10 pts each)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework assignments (10 @ 5 pts each)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 1,000 points
**Indicates assignment is co-graded with the community partner. They require excellent work and if you do not provide them with that work I will lower your grade accordingly. Please note: it is possible to fail this class based on negative feedback from a community partner.

### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing 3020 Grades</th>
<th>Important Note: Students will not pass this class without having submitted all major assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: 94-100% 940-1000 pts</td>
<td>D+: 67-69% 670-699 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+: 90-93% 900-939 pts</td>
<td>D: 64-66% 640-699 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+: 87-89% 870-899 pts</td>
<td>C+: 77-79% 770-799 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: 84-86% 840-869 pts</td>
<td>C: 74-76% 740-769 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C: 70-73% 700-739 pts</td>
<td>F: &lt;59% 0-599 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Important Dates**

- Last day to drop w/ tuition cancelled: Jan. 18
- University closed: Jan. 21
- Spring break: Mar. 11-16
- Last day to withdraw: Mar. 24
- Last day of classes: Apr. 22
- Final Exams: Apr. 24-Apr. 30

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

All forms of academic dishonesty including but not limited to collusion, fabrication, cheating, and plagiarism will call for discipline. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for individual credit. Fabrication is defined as intentionally falsifying or inventing any information or citation on any academic exercise. Cheating is defined as intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of any other person’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own work offered for credit. The full policy is available at [https://doso.wayne.edu/conduct/academic-misconduct](https://doso.wayne.edu/conduct/academic-misconduct)

I often find that plagiarism is not a malicious attempt to use someone else’s work. Instead, students are typically confused, stressed, swamped, or frustrated and embarrassed. If you are feeling one of these ways: it is okay! Reach out and we can
come up with a plan of attack to avoid academic dishonesty; once you have submitted something that demonstrates any type of academic dishonesty, I am obligated to say something. If you ask for help before doing so, it is a valuable learning opportunity.

Late Work Policy

Late work presents problems for everyone. I can’t give your work the attention it deserves. You miss out on helpful feedback and have increased stress as you’re working on more assignments at one time, often resulting in more late work. Please turn your work in on time.

However, should you find yourself unable to meet a deadline, negotiate with me as soon as you realize that to determine a feasible extension. **You must contact me before the 11:59 PM deadline** (I do not have to respond, but as long as you have emailed me before the deadline I will negotiate with you). When negotiating with me regarding extensions, I reserve the right to require additional components of the late project, such as an additional reflective assignment or an ASC visit. **If you turn in an assignment late without consulting with me, I will give you a zero without question.**

*Please note:* The final project of the semester, as well as final revisions for any assignments, will not be accepted after the posted due date. **Extensions cannot be given for the final project.** Additionally, all work for community partners **must** be completed on time. No exceptions.

Revision Policy

Writing is a recursive process that improves with practice. Thus, you have the option to revise the institutional rhetorical analysis and the academic literature review. Should you be interested in revision, **you are required to contact me within 48 hours of receiving your grade** so that we can discuss the revision process and schedule a timeline for turning in the revised essay. These revisions must be accompanied by a short piece of reflective writing (I will provide the prompt) and must address my *all* of my comments. In addition, I reserve the right to require a Writing Center appointment, additional reading, or conference with me.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is required. I anticipate that you will arrive on time and be ready to begin each class session promptly at 10:00 AM. This is a professional course; your professional behavior is expected. While things may come up, which I anticipate you’ll inform me of, I will begin class on time every day. This course is one in which dialogue is essential to your ability to succeed and if you continuously miss class you will not pass. Work completed in class will count as 20% of your overall class grade and **cannot**
**be made up.** Once you miss 3 classes, your grade will be lowered each day. **If you miss more than 6 classes, you will fail this class.** Should you miss class, please send me an email in advance. Communication with me is important for your ability to succeed.

If you miss class, you should reach out to a peer and check Canvas for any updates. Please do not email me asking what you missed in class (hint: it’s listed on the syllabus). I prepare lessons for a reason and am not going to attempt to deliver 75 minutes worth of content in an email. You are responsible for getting notes and other missed updates. If you are confused after having spoken with a peer, please schedule a time to meet with me so that I can catch you up through conversation.

**Classroom Etiquette Policy**

Our classroom should be an open space where we communicate freely and safely with one another. We will often be discussing sensitive topics and you may have strong reactions or opinions. You should feel confident voicing those beliefs in class in a respectful and appropriate way. I hope to deconstruct power binaries between teacher and student to encourage the free flow of ideas and beliefs without judgment or repercussion. That said, I will not accept any behavior that is disrespectful toward another member of our class. **If you engage in hate speech or bullying, you will be asked to leave the class immediately.** Don’t do it. In general, language will not be tolerated if it intends to exclude a classmate from participating in discourse; this language is often rooted in racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or ableism, but extends to include anything that could make a classmate feel discomfort in a space that should otherwise be safe. Further, our classroom is a community that we construct. When someone shares something in class, it is expected that information remain within our classroom. We owe one another loyalty and respect. This policy extends to any work done with the community partner. **If I hear of any violation, you will be removed from the community project and will fail this course.**
Homework Policy

College is hard and you’re often juggling a lot of things at one time. While it is your responsibility to keep track of your assignments and turn them in on time, sometimes a free pass is needed. Thus, you can skip one of the ten homework assignments this semester with no ramifications. If you haven’t turned it in, I will simply excuse the first missed assignment. All subsequent missed assignments, though, will earn a zero.

Severe Weather and University Closure Policy

Occasionally, harsh weather conditions lead the university to cancel. Please check email, the WSU’s website, and Canvas for the status of classes on such days. I will make announcements specific to our course and post assignments should cancellations occur. I live in Detroit and, thus, will most likely not cancel if the weather is bad. However, if you commute, please, please, please do not place yourself in danger to attend class. English 3020 is important, but is not worth your life! If you find yourself uncomfortable coming to campus, please reach out to me before the start of that class session to negotiate arrangements.

Email Policy

As an experiment several years ago, I counted the number of hours I spent reading and replying to emails each week. That number was, alarmingly, in the double digits. To free up time, decrease anxiety, and help you to learn email best practices, I’ve implemented the following policy. If you’re interested, read this essay on minimizing email practices which led to what follows:

I will check and respond to emails once in the morning and once in the evening Monday-Friday. Please allow me at least 24 hours to respond to your messages during the week (note: this is still pretty fast!). On weekends, I will check my emails daily, but will not reply until Monday unless you indicate the matter is urgent.

If a question is clearly answered in the syllabus or assignment sheet, I will not reply to the email. These questions might include: when is this assignment due? what is the homework? what did I miss in class?

I also anticipate that you will respond to all emails from me or a community partner within 48 hours. This is appropriate communication etiquette for professional settings and you must treat your partners with respect. The template below is appropriate for communication with your both me and you partner, but do be mindful that they may ask you to use an honorific (Dr., Mr., Miss, etc.). Follow their lead.
Email Etiquette Checklist

Below are guidelines for our written communication. While this may seem “strict” or weird to you, learning proper email etiquette early in your college career will strongly benefit you in the future. And make my responses timely and warm.

✓ Use a descriptive subject line that summarizes the subject of your message, such as “English 3020” or “Community Project Rough Draft.” Please refrain from subject lines that have little to do with the message (“hi,” “class,” “question,” “help,” or leaving the subject line blank).
✓ Start your email off with a proper greeting, such as “Hi Rachel.”
✓ Use a proper closing (such as “Best”), and then finish with your name.
✓ Only email me from your WSU email account. I cannot reply to emails from other accounts.

To encourage you to get in the habit of better email etiquette, my plan is as follows: If I receive an email message from you that does not make a sincere attempt to follow the suggestions outlined above, I may respond with a message that will politely ask you to rewrite your email and send again. Below is a rough template to follow when composing an email:

Hi Rachel,

I hope this email finds you well. Here is the topic I’d like to talk about.

Best,

Your Name Here

Please note: My email policy may seem daunting, but I genuinely look forward to having productive email relationships with each one of you. Email is my favorite means of discourse, and having a structured, clear method of communication improves that experience for both of us!

A Note about Research Ethics

Within the academic community, we divide the practice of research into two separate kinds of tasks. Research that involves looking at sources authored by other people, often found in a library or on the internet, is called secondary research. You may already be very familiar with this kind of work and you’ll be doing it for several projects in this class. The other kind of research we call original (or sometimes primary) research. Instead of reading someone’s else’s presentation of knowledge, original research creates or gathers knowledge together in a way that was not done before. For
instance, a biologist might conduct an experiment to test the effects of a drug or a fertilizer and write an article to explain her research process and results—again, you’re probably familiar with this kind of research. But some academics, especially those in the social sciences, do original research by gathering stories and knowledge from human participants through interviews, focus groups, surveys, or other methods. You won’t be doing biological experiments in this class, but you may end up using some of these other methods of original research in your projects. As you involve other humans in your research processes, you must respect their rights to maintain their privacy and to choose how and when their information or stories get shared. As members of the academic community, we expect you to be responsible researchers as you gather and disseminate this data, as well as any data obtained through secondary research.

*Please note: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus and schedule at any time. These changes will always be communicated to you in class and via announcement, as well as uploaded on Canvas.*

**Resources Available to You at WSU:**

**Warrior Writing, Research, and Technology (WRT) Zone**
The WRT Zone is a one stop resource center for writing, research, and technology. The WRT Zone provides individual tutoring consultations, research assistance from librarians, and technology consultations, all free of charge for graduate and undergraduate students at WSU. Tutoring sessions are run by undergraduate and graduate tutors and can last up to 50 minutes. Tutors can work with writing from all disciplines. Tutoring sessions focus on a range of activities in the writing process – understanding the assignment, considering the audience, brainstorming, writing drafts, revising, editing, and preparing documentation. The WRT Zone is not an editing or proofreading service; rather, tutors work collaboratively with students to support them in developing relevant skills and knowledge, from developing an idea to editing for grammar and mechanics.

Librarian and technology support is a walk-in service. Consultants will work with students on a first come-first serve basis. Consultants provide support with the library database system, finding and evaluating sources, developing research strategies, organizing sources, and citations. Consultants will also provide technology support including, but not limited to: video editing, graphics creation, presentation building, audio recording, MS Office support, and dissertation formatting. The WRT Zone has several computers with the Adobe Creative Suite for students who want to work on multimedia projects. Our location is also equipped with two Whisper Rooms where students can work on multimedia projects in a more private and sound isolated environment.
To make a face-to-face or online appointment, consult the WRT Zone website: <http://wrtzone.wayne.edu/>.

For more information about the WRT Zone, please contact the Director, Jule Thomas (email: au1145@wayne.edu).

**The Academic Success Center (ASC):** The Academic Success Center is located in 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library and assists students with content in select courses and in strengthening study skills. For schedules and information on study skills workshops, tutoring and supplemental instruction (primarily in 1000 and 2000 level courses), and study groups, visit [www.success.wayne.edu](http://www.success.wayne.edu).

**Student Disability Services (SDS):** Students who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Additionally, the Student Disabilities Services Office coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library and can be reached by phone at 313.577.1851. Please consult the SDS website for further information: [http://studentdisability.wayne.edu](http://studentdisability.wayne.edu).

**Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS):** CAPS provides many free and confidential services to Wayne State students, including but not limited to: individual therapy, couples therapy, support groups, crisis intervention, and workshops. If you are feeling overwhelmed, or simply need someone to talk to, CAPS is a great resource. You can call for an appointment (313.577.3398) or stop in at the office for an initial assessment between 8:30 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The CAPS office is located on the 5th floor of the Student Center building. CAPS also offers support 24 hours a day through their crisis hotline, which can be reached at 313.577.9982. For more information, please visit: [http://caps.wayne.edu/](http://caps.wayne.edu/).

**The Office of Multicultural Student Engagement (OMSE):** Wayne State University represents a diverse student body with a variety of personal, gender, racial, religious, and ethnic identities. It is expected that all classroom conduct and digital communications are respectful toward all members of our group. From the OMSE website, “The Office of Multicultural Student Engagement strives to cultivate safe and engaging environments where we value, honor, promote and celebrate the difference and similarities among all students who arrive at our office with multiple layers of identity. Part of our mission is to promote and support students of diverse racial, ethnic, gender identities, romantic attractions, mental and physical capabilities, citizenships, and other identities both academically and professionally.” OMSE is located in room 331 on the 3rd floor of the Purdy/Kresge Library. [http://wayne.edu/diversity/omse/](http://wayne.edu/diversity/omse/)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What you need to do to prepare for class</th>
<th>What you need to turn in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td>1.7.19</td>
<td>Syllabus; introductions; what is community?; introduce Project 1</td>
<td>^ Read: <a href="#">Deans, Writing Partnerships Ch. 1</a></td>
<td>Homework #1 due by start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td>1.9.19</td>
<td>Service-learning frameworks; community engagement</td>
<td>^ Read: [Cushman, &quot;Rhetorician as an Agent of Social Change&quot;]</td>
<td>Homework #2 Due by start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>1.14.19</td>
<td>Visit from Arts &amp; Scraps</td>
<td>^ Read: [Cushman, &quot;Rhetorician as an Agent of Social Change&quot;]</td>
<td>Homework #3 Due by start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>1.16.19</td>
<td>Visit from Detroit Community Wealth Fund</td>
<td>^ Read: [Ruggles Gere, &quot;Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms&quot;]</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>1.21.19</td>
<td>No class!</td>
<td>^ Read: [Ruggles Gere, &quot;Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms&quot;]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>1.23.19</td>
<td>Visit from Sugar Law</td>
<td>^ Read: [Bickford &amp; Reynolds, &quot;Activism and Service-Learning&quot;]</td>
<td>Homework #4 Due by start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>1.28.19</td>
<td>Visit from Advocates for BaBa Baxter; introduce Project 2</td>
<td>^ Read: <a href="#">A4BB Website</a></td>
<td>Homework #5 Due by start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>1.30.19</td>
<td>Select organizations; rhetoric refresher</td>
<td>^ Read: <a href="#">Coogan &amp; Ackerman, &quot;Public Work of Rhetoric&quot; Ch. 1 – Carolyn Miller’s “Should We Name the Tools”</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
<td>2.4.19</td>
<td>Rhetorical Listening; Community Writing</td>
<td>^ Read: <a href="#">Ratcliffe, “Rhetorical Listening”</a></td>
<td>Homework #6 Due by the start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>2.6.19</td>
<td>Potential Problem in Service-learning and what do we do?</td>
<td>Read: Mathieu, <em>Tactics of Hope</em> “Students in the Street” (Canvas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>2.11.19</td>
<td>Sample Rhetorical Analysis; Peer review in class</td>
<td>Read: Phelps-Ward, Allen, &amp; Howard, “Rhetorical Analysis of Beyonce’s ‘Freedom’” (Canvas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>2.13.19</td>
<td>Defining the body/embodiment; introduce Project 3</td>
<td>Read Knoblauch, “Bodies of Knowledge: Definitions, Delineations, and Implications of Embodied Writing in the Academy”</td>
<td>Institutional Rhetorical Analysis Draft due by 11:59 PM on 2.17.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>2.18.19</td>
<td>Conceptualizing the body</td>
<td>Read Dolmage, “Metis, Metis, Mestiza, Medusa”</td>
<td>Discussion led by: Ajitha, Ray, Priya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>2.20.19</td>
<td>Writing for the community; community partner check in</td>
<td>Deans, <em>Writing Partnerships</em> Chapter 8</td>
<td>Institutional Rhetorical Analysis Final due by 11:59 PM on 2.24.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>2.25.19</td>
<td>Conceptualizing the body</td>
<td>Read Harold and Deluca, “Behold the Corpse”</td>
<td>Discussion led by:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>2.27.19</td>
<td>Conceptualizing the body</td>
<td>Read Gleeson, “The Social Space of Disability in Colonial Melbourne”</td>
<td>Homework #7 Due by the start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>3.4.19</td>
<td>Conceptualizing the body</td>
<td>Read Haas, “Materializing public and private: The spatialization of conceptual categories in discourses of abortion”</td>
<td>Discussion led by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>3.6.19</td>
<td>Preparing for the literature review; Introduce Project 4</td>
<td>Read <em>Wadsworth Guide</em>, Chapter 4 and the DIY at the end (starts on page 40 of the PDF). Chapter 5, 6, and 7 are optional resources you might refer to.</td>
<td>Homework #8 Due by the start of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>3.11.19</td>
<td>No class this week: spring break</td>
<td>Take advantage of this time to read and prepare for your literature review. Read, read, read! And, don’t forget to have a little bit of fun.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>3.18.19</td>
<td>Embodied acts of writing</td>
<td>Bivens and Cole, “The Grotesque Protest”</td>
<td>Discussion led by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11 3.20.19</td>
<td>Spatializing difference</td>
<td>Read: <em>Geographies of Exclusion</em>, Chapter 1 and 2</td>
<td>Homework #9 Due by the start of class Discussion led by:</td>
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<td>Week 12 3.25.19</td>
<td>Introducing Project 5; Peer review in class</td>
<td>Read <em>Wadsworth Guide</em>, Chapter 10</td>
<td>Literature Review Rough Draft Due @ 11:59 PM</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12 3.27.19</td>
<td>Confronting difference</td>
<td>Read <em>Flower, Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement</em> Chapter 4</td>
<td>Discussion led by:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13 4.1.19</td>
<td>Embodied difference</td>
<td>Read Reynolds, <em>Geographies of Writing</em> Chapter 5</td>
<td>Discussion led by: Literature Review Final Draft Due 3.31.19 @ 11:59 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13 4.3.19</td>
<td>Saviorism</td>
<td>Read Maurantonio, “Reason to Hope?”</td>
<td>Discussion led by:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14 4.8.19</td>
<td>Rhetorical agency as embodied</td>
<td>Read Cooper, “Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted”</td>
<td>Homework #10 Due by the start of class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14 4.10.19</td>
<td>Writing as social action</td>
<td>Read Miller, “Genre as Social Action”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15 4.15.19</td>
<td>Peer review in class; introduce Project 6</td>
<td>Deans, Chapter 10</td>
<td>Project 5 Rough Draft Due @ 11:59 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15 4.17.19</td>
<td>Brown bodies/Ari Mokdad visits</td>
<td>Read Howell, “Speaking for/about Brown Bodies” Read Mokdad, “Body Studies: Arabets”</td>
<td>Project 5 Due by 4.24.19 @ 11:59 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16 4.22.19</td>
<td>Difference in Detroit; Last class</td>
<td>Read: DeGenaro, “Eight-Mile and Woodward: Intersections of Difference and the Rhetoric of Detroit”</td>
<td>Project 6 Due by 11:59 PM</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructor: Rachel Dortin (call me Rachel!)  
Email: rachel.dortin@wayne.edu  
Office Location: 9405.2 @ 5057 Woodward (Maccabee’s Building)  

Time: N/A online  
Location: N/A online  
Office Hours: M & W 11:30 AM-12:30 PM and by appointment

Department of English Course Description

As a course that fulfills the Intermediate Composition (IC) general education requirement, English 3020 prepares students for reading, research, and writing in their upper-division courses and majors. Students in English 3020 achieve these outcomes through collaborative community engagement, which combines hands-on experience in a community setting with academic work and writing tasks related to that setting. Unlike volunteers, students in such a class get as much as they give. Students offer their time and labor to the community partner and, in return, get the chance to develop many types of intellectual skills in real community contexts. The course emphasizes researching local problems, analyzing various kinds of texts, writing for different purposes, listening, negotiating with people of different ages and from different backgrounds, and learning to work collaboratively with a diverse array of people and organizations.

What this means to you. You will be required to provide at least 20 hours of service to one of the non-profit community sites affiliated with this course. For most of you, this will work out to 2-3 hours per week for seven or eight weeks, beginning week 4. Any orientation or training period provided by the community partner can be included in your 20-hour minimum. You will need to work out an individual schedule and specific projects with the site coordinator at the site.
WSU Undergraduate Bulletin Description

Cr 3. Prereq: grade of C or better in ENG 1020 or equiv. Students develop and write about community-based service-learning projects. (F,W)

Course Placement for English 3020

To enroll in ENG 3020, students must have completed their WSU Basic Composition (BC) requirement (ENG 1020 or equiv.) with a grade of C or better. Students who have not completed this requirement will be asked to drop the course.

General Education Designation

With a grade of C or better, ENG 3020 fulfills the General Education IC (Intermediate Composition) graduation requirement. Successful completion of an IC course with a grade of C or better is a prerequisite to enrolling in courses that fulfill the General Education WI graduation requirement (Writing Intensive Course in the Major).

More information on the General Education requirements is available from the Undergraduate Programs office: http://advising.wayne.edu/curr/gnd1.php

Learning Outcomes

A passing grade in ENG 3020 indicates that students are able to demonstrate the following course outcomes:

- **Community**: Engage communities in collaborative work that aligns with community members’ values and expectations and demonstrates the ethical application of academic research and writing skills to community-based projects.

- **Research**: Write within the conventions of research genres; use ethical research methods, and conduct primary and secondary research to design an extended research project that draws on perspectives from academic disciplines and is useful for community partners.

- **Writing**: Use a flexible writing process and varied technologies to produce texts that address the expectations of academic disciplines and professional community partners in terms of the writing’s content, form, style, responsiveness to rhetorical situation, and genre.

- **Reading**: Analyze genres from chosen discourse communities, academic disciplines, and community partners, including aspects of audience, rhetorical situation, rhetorical purpose, strategies and effects.

- **Reflection**: Use reflective writing to describe developing knowledge about writing, about oneself as a writer (including ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one’s own writing), and about relationships within communities and with community partners.
Community Partners

You will engage in collaborative work with the community partner listed below. Representatives from the community sites will provide a video presentation for you of their organizations and the types of work that they do. Your collaborative work will begin sometime during the first few weeks of class; however, you are responsible for coordinating orientation times and a consistent schedule with your community partner. Your partner requires that you make a minimum of one physical visit to the community partner location within the first few weeks of class. If you are unable to do so, you will be asked to drop this course. You are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours of work with your community partner. For most of you, the 20 hours should probably work out to about two to three hours of service work per week, but you’ll work out individual schedules with your community site contact person. You’ll be graded on this portion of the course based on demonstrated completion of your service hours and an independent evaluation completed by your community site coordinator. Failure to complete a minimum of 20 hours of work will result in a ½ grade reduction of your overall course grade. Translation: you cannot pass this class without completing this work.

You will have the opportunity to work with the following organization:

- Arts & Scraps is an “Education, Arts & Culture, and Environmentalism” 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has helped educate communities since 1989. We operate nationally with a specific focus on the low-income children of Southeastern Michigan. Arts & Scraps reimagines recycled industrial materials, inspiring people of all ages to think, create and learn.

Please note: If you would like to arrange a different service opportunity with an organization of your choosing, you must approach me by the end of the second week of classes (January 20th) with your proposal.

Commitment

This course is rigorous and challenging, made increasingly more difficult due to the asynchronous nature of our communications. This course requires a lot of reading that you will need to complete in order to be successful as well as a significant amount of writing. In order to do well in this class, you will absolutely have to complete all of your readings and writing assignments according to a clear schedule that I have provided. You should anticipate spending approximately 9-12 hours of work per week in order to succeed in this class. Note that, if we were in a real classroom setting, you would spend approximately 3 hours in a face-to-face environment and approximately 6-9 hours completing outside work. I suggest that you budget this time in a planner or calendar...
so that you do not fall behind. It is a lot of work, but it is both doable and rewarding if you put forth the appropriate effort. I’m looking forward to seeing you all succeed.

Due to the nature of our course, we are responsible to our community partners to provide excellent quality work. You are expected to uphold the absolute highest standards of professional conduct and communication with all partners. I will always defer to community partners for the sake of scheduling that work as well as for grading that component of the course. They are the authority and you should take their word for all deadlines/expectations/etc. related to community work. You are making a commitment to them and, in turn, they are providing you an invaluable learning opportunity. You must approach all work with respect. Additionally, you must commit to be present and complete work for your partner according to their timeframe. **Community partners reserve the right to remove you from their project for poor behavior. If that becomes the case, you will not pass this class.** My best advice, then, is to approach this commitment like you would a job. You should show up, on time. You should dress appropriately. You should treat partners and community members with the respect you anticipate they will reciprocate.

**Reading**

There is no grade assigned specifically to reading in this class. However, each week you will be asked to reflect on that week’s readings through a discussion post. More information is available on the field note, journal, and discussion post handout. You need to be able to participate in dialogue with me, your peers, and your partner; the readings frame not only your entry into the conversation but into your work with your community partner. If I notice a pattern in which you are failing to read for class, you will not earn credit for those responses and this will result in a reduction of points. I know this sounds harsh, but the reading is essential to your ability to understand the course concepts and participate effectively in your community engagement. You will get out of this class what you put into it. Finally, the first step to becoming a good writer is becoming a good reader: be engaged, take notes, make highlights. Most important: ask questions. I’ve curated readings that I find valuable and important. These readings have guided me to do the work that I do and I am so excited to share them with you and watch you grapple with them.
Required Materials

- There is no textbook for this class; all readings will be posted to Canvas. You will be expected to download and/or print these materials so that you are able to annotate them and engage with them as you read.
- Access to Canvas, your WSU email, and a word processor
- A means to record yourself using a webcam and a microphone—I suggest downloading the Loom chrome extension for free.
- While not required, you may benefit strongly from maintaining a notebook for “field journal entries.” You will turn these in via a OneDrive notebook in Canvas, but being able to write and record notes at your partner site or when you do not have access to Canvas may be beneficial.

Project Formats and Submission

- Assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point serif font, with one-inch margins.
- Under no circumstance should you turn in anything written in Arial or Comic Sans. Not only are they sans-serif fonts, they are painful to read. This is my biggest pet peeve and I will not accept your work if it isn’t a serif font. This syllabus is written in Palatino Linotype (a serif) and Garamond (a serif) is my favorite font. I encourage you, however, to select your own signature (serif) font.

Serif

Serifs are the decorative parts of each character. These details guide the eye along which is why serif typefaces are best to use for body text.

Sans

Sans serif typefaces don’t have these decorative details. This makes the type easier to read at a glance which is why Sans fonts should be used for headings, tables and figures.

- Please use MLA format for citations.
- Assignments must be submitted electronically through Canvas in a .docx format.
- Please insert page numbers in the top, right-hand corner of your assignments.
- Always take the time to proofread. We are not perfect, and I expect mistakes, but a proof-read essay is easier to grade because ideas are not obscured by typos and grammatical errors.
Assignments

Students are required to write 32 pages or more (approx. 8,000-9,000 words) in ENG 3020 (not including drafts and informal writing). This course will feature a minimum of 4 major projects along with 1 multimodal presentation and less formal writing for in-class activities and homework. Students are required to submit at least 1 formal project that is between 12-18 pages in length, not including any associated requirements for Works Cited and/or reflective writing. The major projects for the course are intended to scaffold together, building upon students’ emerging writing capacities, community awareness, familiarity with a central research focus, and a body of written content. Taken together, these emerging competencies and artifacts should lead students to develop a longer, higher-stakes project which not only models an effective process for research and writing in their associated communities, but also resembles an important genre of that community.

*Please note:* students must complete all major projects in order to pass this course.

1. Out of class essays: 65% of final grade
   a. Digital Corporeal Marker Project (2-3 pages)
   b. Position Statement (2-3 pages)
   c. Institutional Rhetorical Analysis (3-5 pages)
   d. Academic Literature Review (6-8 pages)
   e. Collaborative Community Research Project (15-20 pages)**
   f. Reflective Letter (2-3 pages)
2. Field notes, journals, homework, and discussion boards: 25% of final grade
3. Digital discussion lead: 5% of final grade
4. Process assignments: 5% of final grade

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Corporeal Marker Project</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Statement</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Rhetorical Analysis</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Literature Review</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Community Research Project **</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Portfolio and Letter</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes, journals, homework, and discussion boards</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Discussion Lead</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Assignments (3 drafts, 2 conferences @ 10 pts each)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 1,000 points
**Indicates assignment is co-graded with the community partner. They require excellent work and if you do not provide them with that work I will lower your grade accordingly. Please note: it is possible to fail this class based on negative feedback from a community partner.**

### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Passing 3020 Grades</th>
<th>Important Note: Students will not pass this class without having submitted all major assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong> 94-100%</td>
<td>940-1000 pts</td>
<td>D+: 67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B-:</strong> 90-93%</td>
<td>900-939 pts</td>
<td>670-699 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B:</strong> 84-86%</td>
<td>840-869 pts</td>
<td>D: 60-63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B+:</strong> 87-89%</td>
<td>870-899 pts</td>
<td>630-639 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C-:</strong> 70-73%</td>
<td>700-739 pts</td>
<td>F: &lt;59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C:</strong> 74-76%</td>
<td>740-769 pts</td>
<td>0-599 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C+:</strong> 77-79%</td>
<td>770-799 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D-:</strong> 64-66%</td>
<td>640-699 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>670-699 pts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Important Dates

- Last day to drop w/ tuition cancelled: Jan. 18
- University closed: Jan. 21
- Spring break: Mar. 11-16
- Last day to withdraw: Mar. 24
- Last day of classes: Apr. 22
- Final Exams: Apr. 24-Apr. 30

### Academic Dishonesty Policy

All forms of academic dishonesty including but not limited to collusion, fabrication, cheating, and plagiarism will call for discipline. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for individual credit. Fabrication is defined as intentionally falsifying or inventing any information or citation on any academic exercise. Cheating is defined as intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of any other person’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own work offered for credit. The full policy is available at [https://doso.wayne.edu/conduct/academic-misconduct](https://doso.wayne.edu/conduct/academic-misconduct)
I often find that plagiarism is not a malicious attempt to use someone else’s work. Instead, students are typically confused, stressed, swamped, or frustrated and embarrassed. If you are feeling one of these ways: it is okay! Reach out and we can come up with a plan of attack to avoid academic dishonesty; once you have submitted something that demonstrates any type of academic dishonesty, I am obligated to say something. If you ask for help before doing so, it is a valuable learning opportunity.

Late Work Policy

Late work presents problems for everyone. I can’t give your work the attention it deserves. You miss out on helpful feedback and have increased stress as you’re working on more assignments at one time, often resulting in more late work. Please turn your work in on time.

However, should you find yourself unable to meet a deadline, negotiate with me as soon as you realize that to determine a feasible extension. You must contact me before the 11:59 PM deadline (I do not have to respond, but as long as you have emailed me before the deadline I will negotiate with you). When negotiating with me regarding extensions, I reserve the right to require additional components of the late project, such as an additional reflective assignment or an ASC visit. If you turn in an assignment late without consulting with me, I will give you a zero without question.

Please note: The final project of the semester, as well as final revisions for any assignments, will not be accepted after the posted due date. Extensions cannot be given for the final project. Additionally, all work for community partners must be completed on time. No exceptions.

Revision Policy

Writing is a recursive process that improves with practice. Thus, you have the option to revise the institutional rhetorical analysis and the academic literature review. Should you be interested in revision, you are required to contact me within 48 hours of receiving your grade so that we can discuss the revision process and schedule a timeline for turning in the revised essay. These revisions must be accompanied by a short piece of reflective writing (I will provide the prompt) and must address my all of my comments. In addition, I reserve the right to require a Writing Center appointment, additional reading, or conference with me.
Attendance Policy

As this is an online class, there is not a formal attendance policy. However, this course is one in which dialogue is essential to your ability to succeed and if you continuously fall behind schedule, neglect the readings, or ignore the discussion boards, you will not pass. Discussion boards, reading responses, and journals will count as 20% of your overall class grade and **cannot be made up if the deadline is missed**. Should you fail to participate at least once in the online course each week, your grade will be significantly lowered and you will risk failing the class. If you are falling behind or something takes place that causes you to miss extended classwork, please send me an email in advance. Communication with me is important for your ability to succeed.

If you fall behind, you should check Canvas for any updates. Please do not email me asking what you missed (hint: it’s listed on the syllabus). I prepare video lessons for a reason and going back to those is ALWAYS your best bet.

Homework Policy

College is hard and you’re often juggling a lot of things at one time. While it is your responsibility to keep track of your assignments and turn them in on time, sometimes a free pass is needed. Thus, you can skip one of the journals, discussion board posts, or other small assignments this semester with no ramifications. **This does not include rough drafts, conferences, major projects, your discussion lead, or field notes.** If you haven’t turned it in, I will simply excuse the first missed assignment. All subsequent missed assignments, though, will earn a zero.

Classroom Etiquette Policy

While this is an online classroom, it should still be an open space where we communicate freely and safely with one another. We will often be discussing sensitive topics and you may have strong reactions or opinions. You should feel confident voicing those beliefs in a respectful and appropriate way. I hope to deconstruct power binaries between teacher and student to encourage the free flow of ideas and beliefs without judgment or repercussion. That said, I will not accept any behavior that is disrespectful toward another member of our class. If you engage in hate speech or bullying, you will be asked to leave the class immediately. Don’t do it. In general, language will not be tolerated if it intends to exclude a classmate from participating in discourse; this language is often rooted in racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or ableism, but extends to include anything that could make a classmate feel discomfort in a space that should otherwise be safe. Further, our digital classroom is a community that we construct. When someone shares something in class or in a discussion board post, it is expected that information will remain within our classroom. We owe one
another loyalty and respect. This policy extends to any work done with the community partner. **If I hear of any violation, you will be removed from the community project and will fail this course.**

![Image of respect and diversity in our community]

**Email Policy**

As an experiment several years ago, I counted the number of hours I spent reading and replying to emails each week. That number was, alarmingly, in the double digits. To free up time, decrease anxiety, and help you to learn email best practices, I’ve implemented the following policy. If you’re interested, read [this essay](#) on minimizing email practices which led to what follows:

**I will check and respond to emails once in the morning and once in the evening Monday-Friday.** Please allow me at least 24 hours to respond to your messages during the week (note: this is still pretty fast! most people ask for 72 hours). On weekends, I will check my emails daily, but *will not* reply until Monday unless you indicate the matter is urgent.

If a question is clearly answered in the syllabus or assignment sheet, I will not reply to the email. These questions might include: when is this assignment due? what is the homework? If you’re not sure, always watch the videos for that week!

I also anticipate that you will respond to all emails from me or a community partner within 48 hours. This is appropriate communication etiquette for professional settings and you must treat your parent with respect. The template below is appropriate for communication with your partner, but do be mindful that they may ask you to use an honorific (Dr., Mr., Miss, etc.). Follow their lead.
Email Etiquette Checklist

Below are guidelines for our written communication. While this may seem “strict” or weird to you, learning proper email etiquette early in your college career will strongly benefit you in the future. And make my responses timely and warm.

✓ Use a descriptive subject line that summarizes the subject of your message, such as “English 3020” or “Community Project Rough Draft.” Please refrain from subject lines that have little to do with the message (“hi,” “class,” “question,” “help,” or leaving the subject line blank).
✓ Start your email off with a proper greeting, such as “Hi Rachel.”
✓ Use a proper closing (such as “Best”), and then finish with your name.
✓ Only email me from your WSU email account. I cannot reply to emails from other accounts.

To encourage you to get in the habit of better email etiquette, my plan is as follows: If I receive an email message from you that does not make a sincere attempt to follow the suggestions outlined above, I may respond with a message that will politely ask you to rewrite your email and send again. Below is a rough template to follow:

Hi Rachel,
I hope this email finds you well. Here is the topic I’d like to talk about.

Best,
Your Name Here

*Please note:* My email policy may seem daunting, but I genuinely look forward to having productive email relationships with each one of you. Email is my favorite means of discourse, and having a structured, clear method of communication improves that experience for both of us!

A Note about Research Ethics

Within the academic community, we divide the practice of research into two separate kinds of tasks. Research that involves looking at sources authored by other people, often found in a library or on the internet, is called secondary research. You may already be very familiar with this kind of work and you’ll be doing it for several projects in this class. The other kind of research we call original (or sometimes primary) research. Instead of reading someone’s else’s presentation of knowledge, original research creates or gathers knowledge together in a way that was not done before. For instance, a biologist might conduct an experiment to test the effects of a drug or a fertilizer and write an article to explain her research process and results—again, you’re
probably familiar with this kind of research. But some academics, especially those in the
social sciences, do original research by gathering stories and knowledge from human
participants through interviews, focus groups, surveys, or other methods. You won’t be
doing biological experiments in this class, but you may end up using some of these
other methods of original research in your projects. As you involve other humans in
your research processes, you must respect their rights to maintain their privacy and to
choose how and when their information or stories get shared. As members of the
academic community, we expect you to be responsible researchers as you gather and
disseminate this data, as well as any data obtained through secondary research.

*Please note:* I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus and schedule at any time.
These changes will always be communicated to you via announcement, in a video, and
also uploaded on Canvas.

**Resources Available to You at WSU:**

**Warrior Writing, Research, and Technology (WRT) Zone**

The WRT Zone is a one stop resource center for writing, research, and technology. The
WRT Zone provides individual tutoring consultations, research assistance from
librarians, and technology consultations, all free of charge for graduate and
undergraduate students at WSU. Tutoring sessions are run by undergraduate and
graduate tutors and can last up to 50 minutes. Tutors can work with writing from all
disciplines. Tutoring sessions focus on a range of activities in the writing process –
understanding the assignment, considering the audience, brainstorming, writing drafts,
revising, editing, and preparing documentation. The WRT Zone is not an editing or
proofreading service; rather, tutors work collaboratively with students to support them
in developing relevant skills and knowledge, from developing an idea to editing for
grammar and mechanics.

Librarian and technology support is a walk-in service. Consultants will work with
students on a first come-first serve basis. Consultants provide support with the library
database system, finding and evaluating sources, developing research strategies,
organizing sources, and citations. Consultants will also provide technology support
including, but not limited to: video editing, graphics creation, presentation building,
audio recording, MS Office support, and dissertation formatting. The WRT Zone has
several computers with the Adobe Creative Suite for students who want to work on
multimedia projects. Our location is also equipped with two Whisper Rooms where
students can work on multimedia projects in a more private and sound isolated
environment.
To make a face-to-face or online appointment, consult the WRT Zone website: <http://wrtzone.wayne.edu/>.

For more information about the WRT Zone, please contact the Director, Jule Thomas (email: au1145@wayne.edu).

**The Academic Success Center (ASC):** The Academic Success Center is located in 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library and assists students with content in select courses and in strengthening study skills. For schedules and information on study skills workshops, tutoring and supplemental instruction (primarily in 1000 and 2000 level courses), and study groups, visit www.success.wayne.edu.

**Student Disability Services (SDS):** Students who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Additionally, the Student Disabilities Services Office coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library and can be reached by phone at 313.577.1851. Please consult the SDS website for further information: http://studentdisability.wayne.edu.

**Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS):** CAPS provides many free and confidential services to Wayne State students, including but not limited to: individual therapy, couples therapy, support groups, crisis intervention, and workshops. If you are feeling overwhelmed, or simply need someone to talk to, CAPS is a great resource. You can call for an appointment (313.577.3398) or stop in at the office for an initial assessment between 8:30 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The CAPS office is located on the 5th floor of the Student Center building. CAPS also offers support 24 hours a day through their crisis hotline, which can be reached at 313.577.9982. For more information, please visit: http://caps.wayne.edu/.

**The Office of Multicultural Student Engagement (OMSE):** Wayne State University represents a diverse student body with a variety of personal, gender, racial, religious, and ethnic identities. It is expected that all classroom conduct and digital communications are respectful toward all members of our group. From the OMSE website, “The Office of Multicultural Student Engagement strives to cultivate safe and engaging environments where we value, honor, promote and celebrate the difference and similarities among all students who arrive at our office with multiple layers of identity. Part of our mission is to promote and support students of diverse racial, ethnic, gender identities, romantic attractions, mental and physical capabilities, citizenships, and other identities both academically and professionally.” OMSE is located in room 331 on the 3rd floor of the Purdy/Kresge Library. http://wayne.edu/diversity/omse/
English 3020 is a challenging course with a lot of work involved. Because of this, it will become increasingly difficult to succeed in this class if you fall behind schedule. It is assumed (and in your best interest) that you will complete everything by midnight on the listed date. **Assignments that must be turned are in bold.** All materials for each week will be posted to the module for that Week. I have them listed in the order it makes the most sense to complete the assignments. You might, for example, struggle to complete the assignments on due on Friday if you haven’t completed the readings I asked you to do on Wednesday.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1:</strong> 1/7-1/13</td>
<td>1. Read Syllabus and Schedule 2. Watch Video 1 3. Homework 1 Due</td>
<td>1. Watch <em>The Spirit of Community: A need to Commune</em> by Maira Hassan 2. Homework 2 Due 3. Watch Video 2 4. Make initial video introduction on Discussion Board: Introductions</td>
<td>1. Watch and Respond to at least 2 discussion board introductions 2. Write Journal 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


| Week 5: 2/4-2/10 | 1. Watch Video 1  
2. Read, Mathieu, *Tactics of Hope* “Students in the Street”  
3. **Write Journal 5** | 1. Read Knoblauch, “Bodies of Knowledge: Definitions, Delineations, and Implications of Embodied Writing in the Academy”  
2. Read: Fluri & Trauger CMP Article  
3. **Write Journal 5** | 1. Watch Video 2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 6: 2/11-2/17 | 1. Watch Video 1  
2. **Submit Institutional Rhetorical Analysis Rough Draft** | 1. Read Knoblauch, “Bodies of Knowledge: Definitions, Delineations, and Implications of Embodied Writing in the Academy”  
2. **Write Journal 5** | 1. Read Project 3 Assignment Sheet  
2. Read Dolmage, “Metis, Metis, Mestiza, Medusa”  
3. **Write Journal 6** | 4. Watch Video 2 |
| Week 7: 2/18-2/24 | 1. Watch Video 1  
2. Read Deans, *Writing Partnerships* Chapter 8 | 1. Read Harold and Deluca, “Behold the Corpse”  
2. **Submit Final Institutional Rhetorical Analysis** | 1. Read Gleeson, “The Social Space of Disability”  
2. **Journal 9**  
3. Watch Video 2 |
| Week 8: 2/25-3/3 | 1. Watch Video 1  
2. Read Alexander et al., “Queerness, sexuality, technology, and writing” | 1. Read Doshi, “Barbies, Goddesses, and Entrepreneurs”  
2. **Journal 10** | 1. **Submit Digital Corporeal Marker Project** |
| Week 9: 3/4-3/10 | 1. Watch Video 1  
2. Read Haas, “Materializing public and Private” | 1. Read Project 4 assignment sheet  
2. Watch Video 2  
3. Read *Wadsworth Guide*, Chapter 4 and the DIY at the end (starts on page 40 of the PDF). Chapter 5, 6, and 7 are optional resources you might refer to. | 1. Find resources to read for lit review. |
| Week 10: 3/11-3/17 | **No class this week—spring break! Take advantage of this time to read and prepare for your literature review. Read, read, read! And, don’t forget to have a little bit of fun.** | **No class this week—spring break! Take advantage of this time to read and prepare for your literature review. Read, read, read! And, don’t forget to have a little bit of fun.** | **No class this week—spring break! Take advantage of this time to read and prepare for your literature review. Read, read, read! And, don’t forget to have a little bit of fun.** |
| Week 11: 3/18-3/24 | 1. Watch Video 1  
2. **Write Journal 13** | 1. Watch Video 2 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12: 3/25-3/31</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Watch Video 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Read Reynolds, <em>Geographies of Writing</em> Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Read Flower, <em>Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement</em> Chapter 4</td>
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<td>3. Write Journal 14</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13: 4/1-4/7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Submit Literature Review Rough Draft</td>
</tr>
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<td>1. Write Journal 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Read Maurantonio, “Reason to Hope?”</td>
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<td>3. Write Journal 16</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 14: 4/8-4/14</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Watch Video 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Submit Final Literature Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Write Journal 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Watch Video 2</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 15: 4/15-4/21</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Watch Video 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Submit Collaborative Community Project Rough Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Read Howell, Speaking for and about Brown Bodies”</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Read Mokdad, “Body Studies: Arabets”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Write Journal 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Watch Video 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Read Deans, Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Read Project 6 assignment sheet</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 16: 4/22-4/28</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Watch Video 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Write Journal 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Submit Final Collaborative Community Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/30 Submit Final!</td>
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</table>
Project One: Position Statement

Introduction and Rationale:
Our first project in this course asks you to explore your positionality and its potential influence on your interactions with the community. My research and teaching are inspired by ecofeminism—an area of scholarship that draws connections between the historical oppression of women and the degradation of the land. Throughout its longevity, however, ecofeminism has become something much more intersectional. Ecofeminism is interested in the abolishment of all forms of oppression and looks to build a more interconnected world in which the validity and usefulness of all people and materiality are recognized. Yikes, lots of big words! Essentially, by employing an ecofeminist pedagogy, I am “interested in our location, participation, and involvement within a broader historical cultural pattern of intersecting oppressions” (Houde & Bullis, 1999, p. 149). What this means, then, is that all of your beliefs come from a historical framework and your experiences. We cannot remove those from our interactions with other. In fact, the best way to move forward productively is to understand how we exist within these intersecting systems and how we can use that positionality to eliminate the sociospatial systems that oppress others. More big words! But not to worry—this is the entire goal of this class.

The first assignment is actually quite simple. This essay asks you to navigate how you exist within the world, including your assumptions, experiences, feelings, commitments, biases, etc., and reflect on how that positionality informs your identity, your expectations and, in turn, your research. You will be asked to reflect honestly on how these factors might influence your work as a researcher and a participant in the community. This is an important first step to succeeding in this class because it helps you to understand your perspectives and biases and has the potential to provide you with a framework for speaking with and connecting to the perspectives of others. This position paper will guide you through this semester and I will frequently ask you to return to this assignment and reflect on how your position has changed. I ask, most importantly, that you are honest with yourself and with me in this assignment. Next, I ask that you embrace the potential for growth.

Assignment Prompt:
In this 2-3 page essay, you will work to position yourself begin by describing your own lifestyle, beliefs, ideas, and behaviors and explore what their origins are and how they might pertain to “community engagement” in general. In the body of your essay, honestly describe any thoughts, assumptions, or preconceived notions about Detroit and the citizens with whom you’ll be working. Consider why you hold the beliefs you do. Consider what the benefits and detriments of those beliefs are. The most important thing for you to do is to be honest about your identity, experiences, and positionality as it pertains to difference. This might seem vague
to you: it is. Intentionally so. I want this paper to be an open and honest examination of how you came to be situated within the intersections of oppression and to reflect on what that means for you and your work in this class. After you frame your own positionality, you want to think about how this situatedness within a series of beliefs, sociospatial conditions, and ideologies might influence the work you do in this class. What are your expectations? Your fears? Your concerns? What are you excited about? What do you want to maintain about your current positionality? What are you open to changing? Again, I want you to be honest. You will not be graded on your beliefs, ideologies, etc., but rather on your attempts to openly and honestly confront them.

Most importantly, make sure that any statement you make is accompanied with a “why.” You may not have all of the answers. I want you to push yourself to think about what motivates your beliefs and why they’ve developed in the way that they have. Please include descriptions of your personal life experiences, values, and beliefs (or lack thereof) that inform your point of view and impact your stance as you begin your community engagement. Then think about how these factors might influence the research that emerges out of this class.

I want you to conclude with a nod toward the future. How do you think what you’ve described in the bulk of this paper will inform your work in this class? What goals do you have for yourself? How do you think your positionality and research stance will influence your work with others from whom you might differ? How might you engage in conversations with those individuals?

While I am expecting this to be a well-written, polished paper, we will continuously return to this throughout the course. In fact, your final reflection will be a direct correlative to this initial paper. My goal in doing so is to ask you to think about how you are constantly changing in response to your positionality. Our ideologies, beliefs, and identities are almost always in flux. To get the most out of this project and this course, you should devote a good portion of time digging into your own beliefs and assumptions and coming to explore why you hold these. This may be a vulnerable paper for you. If you want to talk to me about your beliefs, please do so. But most importantly, protect yourself. Often, reflecting on why we believe the things we do asks us to confront things from our past that we try to avoid. Take care of yourself first and remember that you do not want to simply recount those experiences from your past, but rather evaluate its influence on you and your interactions with individuals, communities, and the world at large.

**Due Date:** Upload to Canvas in a .docx file format by Sunday, January 27, 2019 at 11:59 PM
Project 2: Institutional Rhetorical Analysis

Introduction/Rationale: Project one asked you to reflect on your positionality, beliefs, identity, and perceptions and consider how those tenets of who you are might influence your approach to the community partner. Essentially, I asked you to analyze yourself and explore how you think about and interact with those from who you differ. This project is similar, but instead asks you to engage in an analysis of the organization you are working with. To work productively with your organization, you need to come to understand who they are, why they do what they do, and what sorts of beliefs form their philosophies. I want you to think about how these organizations exist within the larger community of Detroit. By better understanding their goals and approaches, you will be better prepared to work with them, conduct and present research and writing in ways that are more meaningful to them, and be generally more successful in your collaborations with those from whom you differ.

Assignment Prompt: You are welcome to complete this assignment with your group or alone. If you choose to complete this with your group, the entire group must agree to work together or all members must write their own. This is an exercise in building successful collaboration. Please let me know if your group has chosen to write this assignment together so I can prepare a different Canvas submission for you.

In this essay, you will write a rhetorical analysis of your community partner’s organizational communication and positionality. You will not do this alone, though. You will do this in conversation with your partners. You can draw from a variety of sources, including interactions with the community, any web presence they might have, your visit to their site, etc. You may choose to reach out to your contact person and ask if they have time to answer some questions for you. If they do, you might use that interview. If not, you’ll have to work from other sources. You might ask if they’d be willing to share any materials with you that are not publicly available (note: even though you are not required to work as a group, if you work individually, all contact with the organization should be done through one person from your group). You need to draw from at least four different “sources” to make this analysis. Once you have selected your documents/examples, you will sit down with your partner and analyze these together. You will employ your rhetorical listening approach. If you perceive the outcomes of these documents differently, why? Really get at the heart of what motivates their communication.

Using the principles discussed in class, from traditional rhetorical analysis to the concepts of rhetorical listening, I want you to write a 3-5 page paper where you identify your organization and their goals, analyze how they present themselves through their existing communication, and reflection on what those strategies mean in terms of their approach to the community. Are they reaching the best audience? Are their communications in line with their goals? How do you think the community at large might perceive this organization? Are they intentionally or unintentionally exclusionary to any aspect of the community? You should also reflect on how your positionality aligns with their positionality and how that may or may not work in collaboration.
Minimum Requirements:

- 3-5 pages
- Relies on at least 4 sources from your community partner
- MLA format

Due Dates:
Rough Draft due 2/17/19 at 11:59 PM
Final Draft due 2/24/19 at 11:59 PM

Grading: This assignment will be worth 100 points (10% of your final grade).

You will be assessed based on your reading of the existing communications from your community partner, your accuracy in identifying their goals, and the thoughtfulness of your interpretation of the efficacy of their communication and its connection with your own positionality.

Assessment will be based on these criteria:

1. How well do you attempt to analyze your organization’s communicative practices using a rhetorical listening framework? Do you indicate what questions guided your analysis and how you came to ask those questions through Ratcliffe’s model of rhetorical listening?
2. How accurate are you in identifying the organization’s goals?
3. Do you thoughtfully examine the relationship between those goals, their intended audience, and their execution?
4. Do you attempt to thoughtfully interpret the ways their communication practices are executed based on their positionality?
5. Do you thoughtfully explore how this connects to your work with the community partner? Do you see your positionalities meshing? Might this create conflict or result in productive collaboration? Please feel free to cite your position statement paper if it works in making this connection clear.
6. Do you explore connections between this organization and Detroit?
7. Do you reference at least four communicative modes used by the partner (face-to-face dialogue, emails, social media, web pages, YouTube videos, etc)?
8. Is this paper written in MLA format? Is it 3-5 pages? Does it reflect thoughtful editing?

Advice on formatting: If I were you, I would take this approach. However, there is not only one way to write. This is just a guide because I have been asked for one:

1. **Introduction:** Provide relevant background information about the community partner. Who are they? Where are they located? What is their mission? How long have they existed? Etc. Then, describe your process of reading through a rhetorical listening lens. Indicate the questions that motivated you as you worked through their communication. Conclude with a thesis statement that guides the reader through the paper. Something
like, “After reading (documents you read) through a rhetorical listening approach, I have concluded (your main claim about the way your organization communicates). In what follows, I will demonstrate how this (informs their relationship to Detroit, impacts their reach, etc)

2. **Body Paragraphs:** I would either walk through your answers to each rhetorical listening question or address one impact in each paragraph. I would not go through each artifact you analyzed as that can seem meaningless. Refer to the sample analysis of Beyoncé’s Freedom to see how one author organized an advanced analysis.

3. **Conclusion:** Briefly recap what you have shown. Then I would focus on your connection to the group. Is there anything about the way they are positioned and the way you are positioned that you view as divergent? Anything that you see as productive? Focus on the main take away in relation to the work you will do in this course.
Digital Corporeal Marker Project

Inspired by Flauri and Trauger’s [Corporeal Marker Project (CMP)](https://example.com), this assignment asks you to reflect on embodied experiences in a physical space. This project, first and foremost, should be fun. I want you to enjoy this experience of othering yourself in order to learn about alternate perspectives. Of course, this has to be done tastefully and appropriately. You’ll note that marking yourself as the other is appropriate; however, doing something like wearing blackface would absolutely not be appropriate. This work needs to be done respectfully and thoughtfully. To ensure this is most beneficial, you will complete this assignment under the guidance of your community partner. They will help you decide how to best mark yourself and ensure that you are not alone during the assignment.

Once you have had this conversation with your partner, you and your group will enter a public space in such a way that marks you as different. This is the same model as followed in the article. Spend a good amount of time in this scenario. Walking around campus for five minutes isn’t going to cut it. You and your partner will negotiate locations and expected time stamps. You really, really can get out of this what you put into it.

**Assignment Prompt:** Once you have done the above, you can document your experiences one of two ways: 1) write a 3-5 page paper, or 2) record a 3-5 minute vlog

In whichever option you choose, you should:

1. Describe what corporeal marker you emulated, how you did so, and why. You need to provide proof of having completed this experience. For example, you might video yourself walking around.  
2. Describe why your community partner choose that option and that marker.  
3. Describe your preconceptions: what did you think would happen? How were you feeling beforehand?  
4. Describe what actually happened and how you felt in the moment. What were the reactions of individuals (who were not marked) to your presence?  
5. Describe how you felt after. What did you learn? What are the takeaways?  
6. Imagine your corporeal marker as something you either cannot or choose not to change, and one that is considered socially, politically or economically abhorrent in public space. How would you negotiate through public space?  
7. Consider the implication of this corporeal marker if it were used to identify you as a member of specific group & subsequently monitor and/or control your mobility in public space.  
8. Discuss how this experience shaped related conversations between yourself and your community partner

This paper is worth 50 points and is due on March 3rd by 11:59 PM.
Project 4: Literature Review

Introduction/Rationale:
When people conduct research in disciplinary and professional contexts, they do so in order to answer questions related to a specific need or problem. Literature reviews, as a research genre, collect, organize and synthesize the relevant secondary research in a systematic way that provides highly condensed and heavily documented information related to your particular question or problem. The primary purpose of the review is to provide your audience and/or collaborators with an overview of what experts have said about the problem or research question under investigation. This assignment requires you to move through the messy and recursive stages of researching, analyzing, organizing, and writing in order to draft a formal literature review. Throughout our work on this project, you will have to decide what information from which resources to include in your work. This will also require exercising your critical and creative thinking capabilities to draw parallels and connections between the problem/context of your question and information from the sources you find.

Assignment Prompt:
Literature reviews synthesize information, compare and contrast ideas, and clearly describe relationships between well-cited texts so that readers get a sense of a broader conversation and its importance to a particular discourse community. Literature reviews are organized topically with frequent citations and dense prose that is frequently signposted to help readers navigate both conceptual and structural complexity (we will unpack all this - don’t worry). Generally, you should show readers how experts have approached the problem or question, what has already been said about it, where contradictions or discrepancies occur, and what still needs to be learned about a topic.

To complete this project, we will move through several smaller, yet still formal scaffolding steps. Not only will these steps aid you in successfully researching and writing a literature review for this course, but when paired with critical reflection, they will also help you to devise a personal process for researching and writing literature reviews as well as more complex projects with larger stakes. You will begin by revising initial research questions about a topic of interest connected to your professional/academic discourse community. To answer these questions, you’ll need to find, follow, and organize a sustained research agenda consisting of multiple searches and myriad texts. Your first goal here is to secure one or two core sources, or launch texts, that significantly address your research questions. From those sources, you will continue to build your answers by forging a research path using the keywords, footnotes, and citations gleaned from your launch texts. Follow your research path through at least five iterations or “moves” for a total of 6 texts.

To complete this project, you need to select a topic related to community and/or the course. In particular, I am going to ask you to synthesize academic and non-academic texts to make a claim about the ways in which different stakeholders speak about the same issue in different perspectives and what this might mean for the goals of activists.
Learning Objectives:

Read
+ Develop advanced reading strategies (i.e. skimming, key word recognition, selective reading) to evaluate and choose secondary sources for further reading
+ Use information visualization and/or citation management strategies to track and organize larger disciplinary/professional conversations about a topic of interest.

Write
+ Deploy a flexible process for planning, drafting, and revising that responds to the rhetorical contexts of different writing situations in academic and professional discourse communities
+ Emulate genre conventions of Literature Reviews such as synthesizing multiple sources, situating diverse perspectives, and reproducing the stylistic, formatting, and citation practices of specific academic/professional discourse communities

Research
+ Use advanced Boolean search protocols and keywords strategies to navigate library research tools, article databases, and other scholarly/professional knowledge-bases in order to address clearly defined questions or problems of interest
+ Deploy a formal process for defining and revising a specific topic of inquiry (question or problem), research goals (outcomes and artifacts) as well as various ways of addressing those inquiries (methods and solutions).
+ Identify and emulate diverse research genres such as annotated bibliographies, research journals, and literature reviews

Reflect
+ Plan and evaluate appropriate procedures for researching and writing about topics of inquiry for professional/academic audiences
+ Identify and implement needed adjustments to research and writing processes and products
+ Describe, with predicted examples, how skills, procedures, and knowledge acquired in this unit might apply to future contexts

Minimum Requirements:
Each step in the process will include more specific instruction to help guide you through the process safely and securely. Such instructions will include more thorough descriptions, research and writing tips, structural guides, and examples for your reference. Below, I have listed the minimum requirements for submission, which means that if your project meets all of the conditions, it will be accepted and its quality will be assessed for a grade.

Literature Review:
+ APA formatting
+ 2,500 minimum words (excluding references), double spaced
+ Features correct in-text and bibliographic citation of 6-8 scholarly sources and 4-6 non scholarly sources
+ Uses section headings to organize and sign-post content for readers

Due Date(s): Final draft: Sun, 3.31 at 11:59 PM (Sec. 01)/Wed, 4.3 at 11:59 PM (Sec. 03)
**Grading:** Your work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

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<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
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<td><strong>Basic Content:</strong> Meeting Itemized demands of the project as described above. Demonstrating a body of research that is synthesized, developed, and supported with details where appropriate.</td>
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<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> The essay serves a clear research purpose and logically leads readers through intellectual moves that support its conclusions</td>
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<td><strong>Audience:</strong> Addresses a clear and authentic of audience. Situates the essay in ongoing professional/academic conversations.</td>
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<td><strong>Organization:</strong> The essay establishes clear relationships between the various sources AND the structural parts of the essay. The introduction establishes an exigence and guiding questions. Transitions between paragraphs and sections guide readers in understanding the scholarly conversation.</td>
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<td><strong>Clarity:</strong> Sentences exhibit clear meaning that is easy to read</td>
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<td><strong>Presentation/Professionalism:</strong> Attention to timeliness, scaffolding, and submission protocols. The essay demonstrates academically acceptable Standard Written English, exhibits a minimum of grammatical or structural errors, and meets the basic formatting guidelines for the discourse community it is intended to serve.</td>
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Final Project: Reflective Letter
(Department Required Final Assignment)

Introduction/Rationale: One of the learning outcomes of ENG 3020 is reflection. Specifically, you are expected to “Use reflective writing to describe developing knowledge about: writing; oneself as a writer, (including one’s ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one’s writing process and texts), and one’s relationships with/in communities and community partners.”

Throughout the semester, you have worked on describing your developing knowledge about writing and reflection in both your major projects and in your reflective journals and field notes. To demonstrate your learning in this final project, you will compose a reflective essay in which you articulate your growth throughout the semester drawing on specific examples of your own work in English 3020.

Assignment Prompt: For this project, you will compose a 3-4 page reflective essay in which you articulate three principles from the course and describe your development or application of these principles in the work you’ve completed so far this semester. These principles can stem from the foundational work we did in service-learning, any of the readings we’ve done, and any of the work you’ve done for the community partner. These principles can also come from the listed learning outcomes. To draft your reflective essay, begin by reviewing your major course projects, your journal entries, and your field notes. How do you describe your writing process and learning throughout this semester? What specific examples from your reflective journals, field notes, or completed projects can you draw from to show evidence of what you have learned about writing, the community, and yourself this semester?

Once you have gathered and reviewed examples and evidence of how you have learned about writing and the community, compose three principles translating what you have learned about writing into clear and coherent statements. For example, if you learned about writing using interview data, you might write a principle like, “writers using interview data must work to accurately represent the voices of the people they interview.” If you learned about how to research the needs of a community partner organization, you might write a principle like, “writers who are working with a community partner must prioritize the knowledge of the community partner in the work that they do.” Your principles can be about writing, reflection, time management, service-learning, etc.

Finally, for each principle, compose a paragraph or series of paragraphs explaining how you have come to understand this principle through your work throughout the semester, and showing evidence of this learning and understanding with examples from your own work. You will have to cite your own work. You can cite anything from this course, be it writing, emails, class notes, discussions, journals, field notes, etc. Do make sure that at least one of these principles draws from the community partner project you worked on.
As you draft the reflective essay, remember to organize these three principles and explanations into a clear, coherent, and organized document that your audience can follow.

**Learning Objective:** Use reflective writing to describe developing knowledge about: writing; oneself as a writer, (including one’s ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one’s writing process and texts), and one’s relationships with/in communities and community partners.

**Minimum Requirements:**

- 3-4 pages (double spaced, 12-point serif font, 1 inch margins)
- Portfolio completed that includes all materials that are cited in the body of the paper and:
  - you should include in the portfolio, at the minimum, a final copy of each of the following: position statement (project 1), institutional rhetorical analysis (project 2), corporeal marker project (project 3), literature review (project 4), evidence of your community partner work (project 5), and this paper (project 6). Each should be listed in a folder with the corresponding name and any other materials you’d like to include (such as journals, field notes, discussions) should go in a separate folder labeled “process work.”
- At least 3 “guiding principles” for reflection to structure this paper and a thoughtful examination of your achievement of each of these principles based on your work in the class
- Evidence of editing and revision

**Due Date:** This paper must be uploaded to Canvas no later than 11:59 PM on May 1st. **Late work cannot be accepted.**

**Grading:** This project is worth 50 points and is graded on a pass/fail gradient. If all of the requirements above are met, you will earn 50 points. If they are not met, you will earn a zero. **If you turn this in by April 30th at 11:59 PM, you will have a chance to revise any missing components. If you wait until May 1st, you will not.**
APPENDIX D

Student journal prompts throughout the semester. In addition to these prompts, students free-wrote after every meeting with their community partners and at the end of each class unit.

1. Use journal one as a free-write. You have just watched "The Spirit of Community: A Need to Commune" by Maira Hassan. I want you to write for about 10 minutes about this TEDxTalk and your own personal understanding of community. How do you define community? What makes communities? What communities do you see yourself as belonging to? What does community mean to you? How does difference create community? Use these questions to guide you, but ultimately I want you to openly and honestly reflect on community and its importance to you. Use that, then, to frame briefly what you think this class focus should be.

2. Deans and Monberg each describe frameworks for service-learning. Between the two of them, there are four frameworks described. I'd like you to outline those frameworks as you understand them and compare/contrast their benefits and detriments. I'd like you to then close with a reflection on what you might think “community engagement” is and how it differs from “service.”

3. Last week, you read Ellen Cushman's "Rhetorician as an Agent of Social Change." This week, you read Anne Ruggles Gere's "Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms" and Donna Bickford and Nedra Reynolds' "Activism and Service-learning." Each one of these articles approaches the concept of community engagement in a different way. I'd like you to draw on each of the three sources to think about that. I'd like you to then take some time to journal about how you define community engagement and what that means as we prepare to begin our collaboration with the community. Set some intentions.
4. Free write in response to Miller’s “Should We Name the Tools.” You should generate several paragraphs of writing.

5. In the chapter "Students in the Street" from Paula Mathieu’s Tactics of Hope, she describes some potential downfalls of student-community collaborations. What are some of these? How might we, as critically conscious students and citizens, combat these?

6. In the readings for today, Knoblauch outlined a series of definitions about bodies and embodiment. How do you define these terms? After having read the Fluri & Trauger article, how do you think this same type of work might be replicated online? What is the importance of thinking about bodies online?

7. Free write in response to Stenberg’s “Embodied Knowledge, Embodied Classrooms.” You should generate several paragraphs of writing.

8. Drawing primarily on Dolmage's article, but referencing Stenberg, Fluri & Trauger, and Knoblauch as needed, I want you to think through the concept of knowledge as embodied and reflect on what that means for certain bodies. Do we value certain knowledge more than others? How do we define embodied knowledge? What does this mean for work in the community? What do *you* think about the concept of embodied knowledge?

9. After having read the two articles assigned this week, reflect on how certain bodies are excluded from certain spaces and how these authors describe the reclamation of those spaces. Why is this important in terms of our course?

10. This week, I'm asking you to step away from the traditional journal to give me a mini-progress report on your success in this course: What have you learned so far? What connections are you making between the readings, the assignments, the community work? What are you
doing well as a student? What could you improve on throughout the rest of the semester? What am I doing well as an instructor? What can I improve on throughout the rest of the semester? Do you have any questions/comments/concerns about the course, assignments, community work, groups, etc. Anything? Totally optional: if you want to make notes on this week's readings, please do so! I'd love to read them. If not, I'm not going to make you. This is a bit of a "freebie" week.

11. Re-read your first journal from this semester (A definition of community inspired by a TEDxtalk). Reflect on that journal and all of your work since. How do you define community now? What has changed and why? What considerations came into play as you were working to redefine this concept?

If you didn't do journal one, you can write generally about how you've seen your definition of community develop across the semester and still address the questions above.

While I will not require you to write explicitly about Haas, I strongly encourage you to think about how the experience of space/bodies in her piece might challenge the definition of community.

Any questions? Comments? Concerns?

12. The Bivens and Cole reading marks the last reading that explicitly addresses issues of the body. Use this journal to reflect on the following: What have you learned about bodies and embodiment throughout this semester? How do bodies function within community? How can this be either positive and/or negative? This might be speculative, but how is difference produced by the body? You should draw on Bivens and Cole directly to answer this response, but also feel free to refer to readings done over the past few weeks and to the CMP you just completed.
13. For today, you read the first two chapters of David Sibley's Geographies of Exclusion. In this text, he discusses notions of "difference," "the generalized other," and "the self." Drawing on his work, but in your own words, how do you define these concepts? How do you see them interrelated? And most importantly, how does this tie into the class? Remember, we started out with theories of community and then shifted into theories of embodiment. The remainder of the class attends to difference.

14. This week, you read a chapter from Nedra Reynolds' Geographies of Writing and a chapter from Linda Flowers' Rhetoric of Community Engagement. Each chapter discusses the notion of difference as it relates to community engagement/service-learning. How does each author address difference? Do you feel as though their proposed solutions to difference are appropriate? Based on your beliefs and what we've learned this semester, how do you think we should attend to difference in community work? Feel free to speak on difference and community/service-learning in any capacity that makes sense to you.

15. This journal is personally reflective in nature. Go back to your position statement. Reread the paper. Has anything changed? If so, what? Based on what you wrote, do you think that anything in the course has given you tools and strategies for having productive conversations about that concept, positionality, belief, etc.? If you were to rewrite your position statement now, almost at the end of the semester, what might you change?

16. In the article that you read this week, Nicole Maurantonio addresses "the white saviour myth." What is this? How does she define it? Where do you see this emerging in your communities? Do you think, since we've made it through the semester, that you're thinking about this reading differently than had I assigned it at the beginning? Use these questions to guide you, but I'm really interested in your open response to this reading.
17. This journal is an open, critical reflection. Use the questions to guide you, but if there's anything else you'd like to say, please feel free to go in that direction. Ultimately, I want you to reflect on how everything in this course works together in your perspective, but I don't want to guide you too much. Be honest. Be open. We're nearing the end of the semester. I'd like to know, looking back, how you see all of the course concepts fitting together. Do you think about community differently now? How so? Do you think about bodies differently now? How so? Once you leave this class, will you use any of the information that you learned in this course? How so? What, if anything, do you think is important about this class?

18. We've been journaling all semester and I can say without a doubt that you are all experts at it. Thus, there's no prompt for this one. You know the course themes: the body/embodiment, difference, community engagement. Reflect on these in whatever way you see fit.
CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

To: Rachel Dorin  
English  
5057 Woodward, Suite 9408  

For: Dr. Deborah Ellis  M. Tancer, MD 8C  
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)  

Date: October 30, 2018  
RE: IRB #: 103218B3X  
Protocol Title: Toward an Embodied Pedagogy: A Study of Difference in Service-Learning Courses  
Protocol #: 1610001614  

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for Exemption according to paragraph #1 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46.101(b)). The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for Exemption according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46.101(b)).

- Revised Social/Behavioral/Education Exempt Protocol Summary Form (revision received in IRB Office 10/18/2018)
- Research Protocol (received in the IRB Office 10/15/2018)
- Medical records are not being accessed therefore HIPAA does not apply
- Research Informed Consent (revision dated 08/07/2018)
- Research Information Sheet (revision dated 06/07/2016)
- Recruiting Script for ENG 3020 student participants
- Canvas Advertisement
- Student Interview Questions
- Data Collection Tools (2): (I) Pre-Course Student Survey and (II) Post-Course Student Survey.

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

* Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
* All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB BEFORE implementation.

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CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

To: Rachel Dottin
   English
   5057 Woodward, Suite 9408

From: Dr. Deborah Ellis
       Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)

Date: June 07, 2018

RE: IRB #: 0563183X
Protocol Title: Toward and Embodied Pedagogy: A Study of the Body in Online Service-Learning Courses
Sponsor: Protocol #: 1806001484

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for Exemption according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 46.101(b)].

- Social/Behavioral/Education Exempt Protocol Summary Form (received in IRB Office 05/31/2018)
- Research Protocol (received in the IRB Office 05/31/2018)
- Medical records are not being accessed therefore HIPAA does not apply
- Research Informed Consent (revision dated 06/07/2018)
- Research Information Sheet – Instructors (revision dated 06/07/2018)
- Research Information Sheet – Student (revision dated 06/07/2018)
- Listerv Template
- Instructor Interview Questions
- Student Interview Questions
- Data Collection Tools (2): (I) Instructor Survey and (II) Student Survey

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

* Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
* All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB.
REFERENCES

Abes, E. S. & Wallace, M. M. (2018). People see me, but they don’t see me: An intersectional study of college students with physical disabilities. *Journal of College Student Development, 59*(5), 545-562.


ABSTRACT

TOWARD AN ECOFEMINIST EMBODIED PEDAGOGY: A STUDY OF DIFFERENCE IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE COMMUNITY WRITING COURSES

by

RACHEL DORTIN

May 2020

Advisors: Dr. Donnie Johnson Sackey and Dr. Jeff Pruchnic

Major: English (Rhetoric and Composition)

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Toward an Ecofeminist Embodied Pedagogy: A Study of Difference in Online and Offline Community Writing Courses argues that service-learning and community-engaged learning (SCEL) often fail to present community partners as real, embodied beings. Rather, students often believe that there is an “us” (the university) and a “them” (the community). Entering community partnerships with this perspective can be damaging, for both students and community partners, and result in unsuccessful collaborations. My dissertation responds to this problem by offering an ecofeminist, embodied pedagogy (EEP) as a solution. I argue that students are eager to learn about difference and that instructors need to provide students with tools and strategies for effectively navigating difference in both the classroom and the community. EEP helps students to understand how their physical and social environments influence the way they perceive the community, ultimately producing more critical engagement with the community. When students understand how difference is constructed within institutions, they have a platform to engage in partnerships that are more open, positive, and beneficial to all involved parties. I present the results of this mix-methods, two-part study to ultimately advocate for a shift in the ways instructors approach difference and the body in courses with a SCEL component. We must teach students to navigate
how difference comes to exist if they are to build stronger relationships. The impetus to care about
the personal, which is central to feminist and ecofeminist research, informs this suggestion. EEP
is one such method for improving student-university collaborations and building more meaningful
connections across difference.
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Rachel Dortin earned her BA in Literature from Ohio Northern University and her MA in Rhetoric and Writing from the University of Findlay. Her academic interests include service- and community-engaged learning, feminist and ecofeminist research, and composition pedagogy.