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Title of submission:

Incorporation Service-Learning in an Information Service-Marketing Course: A Reading Promotion Program in a Community Library for Migrant Children

Area (please check the applicable area description with an x):

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Service learning

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Submission abstract (max 150 words):

Information Service-Marketing education provides students skills to identify and develop strategic marketing initiatives which enable them to build branding and promotional strategies. As an increasingly popular and distinct form of experiential learning, service learning is an effective pedagogy to achieve the course goals. This article provides a case study of a service learning program in Information Service-Marketing in the iSchool at the Sun Yat-sen University. Students organized several reading promotion activities in a community library, and most of the users of this library is migrant children. Through the service learning program, students learn to put what they have learned into practice, and obtain a professional identity, values, and service spirit.

Submission description (max 2,350 words):

1.Introduction

Service learning promotes student mastery of conceptual material through active and problem-based experiences within a community based setting (Becker, 2000). Since 1980s, this teaching method has been popular worldwide. In recent years, China gradually introduced this method in higher education, some universities are exploring to use it to improve teaching quality (Hok Ka Carol, 2014). Nancy Becker (2000) has argued that service learning can be especially effective as a tool in Schools of Library and Information Science. It would help instructors “design curricula and courses that will provide students not only with an understanding of traditions, theory, and research underpinning LIS, but also with the experiences and skills that will prepare them to assume their role as practitioners of tomorrow.” In China’s education of library and information science (LIS), however, this teaching method are rarely used until now. Sun Yat-sen University is one of the universities that take the lead in using this method in LIS education(Zhou & Xiao,2013).

The iSchool of Sun Yat-sen University provide the Information Service-Marketing course for Bachelor of LIS program since 2012. Through the network survey, we found that some iSchools also have established relevant courses, such as Commissioned Education-Marketing for Libraries (University of Boras: The Swedish School of Library and Information Science), Marketing of Libraries and Information Agencies (Charles Sturt University: School of Information Studies), Marketing and Planning for Libraries (University of Washington: Information School). These courses are taught in a variety of ways, for example, seminar, presentation, case studies, report and final paper. In the past years, the instructor also applied several teaching methods used by many schools mentioned above. However, the instructor found that those teaching methods were not enough to provide students skills to identify and develop strategic marketing initiatives which enable them to build branding and promotional strategies. Therefore, in the 2017 spring term, the instructor decided to introduce service learning in the course to effectively improve students’ practical ability.

2.Designing of Service learning program for Information Service-Marketing Course

2.1 Design Ideas

To make the program complete successfully, choosing a right place is the first step. Considering that all students are from library science or archival science, the instructor suggested that the place should be related to students' major. There is a community library called Xingren Library. It is funded by the Macau Tongji Charity Society, and is the first nonprofit organization library in the migrant population community of Guangzhou. It is a small community library; the fund and staff are limited and is in an urgent need for volunteers to carry out activities for migrant children (most of them are 5-14 years old). Thus, we decided to carry out reading promotion activities for children in the library.

Laukkanen, Mattila, Salo, and Tikkanen (2013) stress that a live case project must integrate with the course curriculum. After choosing the place, the instructor guided students to link the course content with the service learning program. Table 1 shows the relationship between them.

Table 1: The relationship between the course and the program

The course schedule	The preparations for the program
Introduction: the definition and basic elements(7P) of Information Service-Marketing	Understand what is Information Service-Marketing, what students need to do if they want to conduct reading promotion activities in a community library.
Information Service-Marketing strategy: consumer behavior and psychology	Analyze the characteristics of readers in Xingren Library, in order to understand the community library's responsibilities and the social role; and recognize the real needs of migrant children in the city and understand their family and educational environment.
Information Service-Marketing planning: design and develop a service program	Brainstorm in groups and present ideas in class. Modify the plan based on advice from the instructor, classmates and the director of Xingren Library. Use a blueprint to clarify the process of a reading promotion activity.
Information service promotion and communication	Carry out some publicity work such as designing posters to attract more readers.

2.2 Objectives

The main objectives of the program are as follows:

- Understand Service-Marketing and its application in the library and information environment;
- Understand promotional strategies for products and services in the library and information environment;
- Have knowledge of the different market segments which can be applied to library and information agencies;
- Clarify the meaning of reading in the library, and the significance of reading and promotion for children's reading literacy education;
- Enhance students' theoretical knowledge, the research and practical ability, and expand specific exploration and innovation in the theory and practice;
- Develop students' communication skills, organizational skills, time management skills and solving problem skills.

2.3 Practice of the Ideas

Students are divided into four groups and each group is required to design a reading promotion plan and put it into practice with the help of the instructor and the director of Xingren Library.

First, a pre-research activity was conducted. The director of Xingren Library (who is also the only one staff) introduced the history and status quo of the Library. The director also mentioned that most of the readers were children in primary school, their parents were busy with work and had no time to stay with them, so they came to the library to relieve loneliness and hoped volunteers hold interesting activities. Most of the previous activities were held in the afternoon and related to story-telling or manual activity. The information above was helpful for students to design appropriate activities for the children.



Figure 1: Pre-research in Xingren Library

After that, by reading the relevant literature and materials, each group designed the program before implantation and shared its thinking in class, the instructor and other classmates gave some suggestions. Then, each group adjusted its plan and submitted the plan to the director of Xingren Library. If the director was satisfied with the plan, then the group could prepare for the activity. If not, the group would continue to modify the plan. Finally, four groups determined their activity theme: 1) loving plants, loving nature; 2) environment protection; 3) The Dragon Boat Festival; 4) taking care of books.

After identifying the activity theme, each group draw a service blueprint to help them organize their procedures in order. For example, group 3 draw their blueprint based on main parts of their activity design and the blueprint is shown as Figure 2.

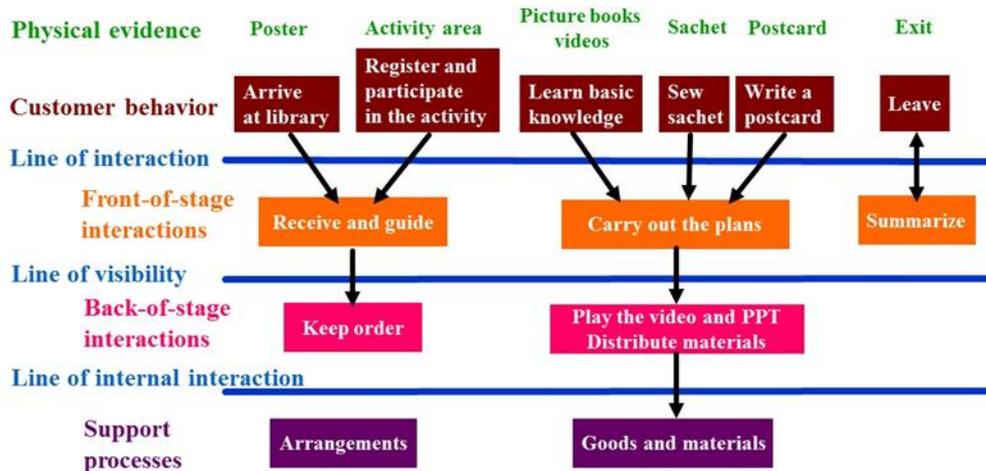


Figure 2: Service blueprint of Group 3

Also, each group prepared materials for activity and design a poster to attract more

children to take part in activity. The posters include: 1) the theme and brief introduction of the activity; 2) the time and place; 3) audience object. Each poster is suitable for children.

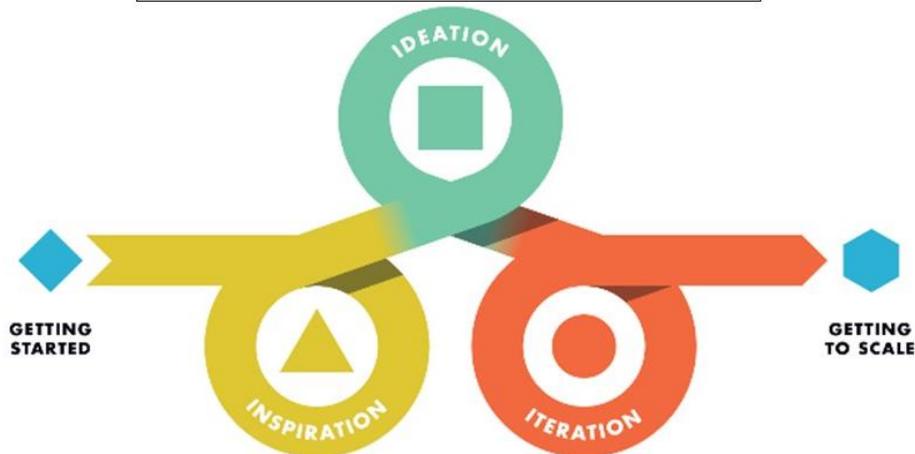
Figure 3 shows one of the posters.



Figure 3: Poster of Group 1

In a word, each group use design thinking to develop better programs (Figure 4), that can help to solve everyday challenges at the library. The basic steps of the design thinking process include inspiration, ideation and iteration. Inspiration is about framing a design challenge and discovering new perspectives on the opportunity. Ideation is about generating ideas and making them tangible. Iteration is about continual experimentation based on user feedback (IDEO,2013).

Group meeting (brainstorming): generate a lot of new ideas, then choose a favorite to bring to life. Ways to prototype include creating a model, role-playing, advertising and so on.



Pre-research in Xingren Library: interview the director and librarians about the characteristics of children and watch the children closely.

Get critical feedback and reflect: put our program in front of users to hear what they think, to get honest, critical and constructive feedback.

Figure 4: Design thinking in the program

3. Implementation of the program

The four groups held their activities during May 6th 2017 to June 4th 2017. Among these activities were handcrafting that emphasized environmental protection, like making plants calendar, planting and making sachet that helped students to understand Dragon Boat Festival. In addition, the students helped cultivating the kids' awareness of loving books, leading the children to create personalized hand bookmarks. In the processes, students guided the children, interacted with them thus taught them knowledge from different disciplines, shared interesting knowledge of traditional Chinese. Each group found some related books in the library, so when the activities were finished, children could borrow these books to better understand the themes of the activities.

Table 2: The Reading Promotion Activities

Activity	Time
Loving plants, Loving nature	May 6 th , 2017
Environment Protection	May 7 th , 2017
The Dragon Boat Festival	May 27 th , 2017
Taking care of books	June 4 th , 2017

3.1 Reading Promotion Activity I: Loving Plants, Loving Nature

In this activity, students designed some games to introduce unusual plants such as *dionaea muscipula* to stimulate children's curiosity about nature. The highlights of this activity were:(1) Teaching children to draw representative plant of each month on calendar (Figure 5) in groups; (2) Telling children to grow Pitaya by themselves. Two weeks later, our students found that many children had successfully grown Pitaya and written their thoughts about nature on the feedback board.



Figure 5: The plant calendar

3.2 Reading Promotion Activity II :Environment Protection

This group tried to tell readers to protect environment through manual activity. The students taught the children to make animal models using waste paper. Gratefully, with the help of our students, these children made great models in a short time like owl and shrimp

(Figure 6). What's more, students launched an essay writing activity to teach children to make waste profitable. Eventually, this activity was successful in improving children's practical ability, imagination and writing ability.



Figure 6: The animal models made by the children

3.3 Reading Promotion Activity III: The Dragon Boat Festival

This group held their reading promotion activity from the perspective of a Chinese traditional festival: The Dragon Boat Festival. The main parts of this activity were:(1) Learning customs about The Dragon Boat Festival: Five-color Line, Zhong Kui, Ay Tsao, Sachet; (2) Sewing sachets; (3) Writing a postcard for friends or commenting on the activity. After the activity, the students asked some readers about their feelings and gained positive feedback. Many of them said they learned a lot about The Dragon Boat Festival and wanted to borrow books about it in the library. Figure 7 is a group photo with children holding sachets.



Figure 7: A group photo with children

3.4 Reading Promotion Activity IV: Taking care of books

This group launched a series of activities aimed at telling children to take care of books:

(1) Scene play: Demonstrate some wrong practices such as throwing books, tearing books, reading while eating and scrawling. Then, tell children the right way.

(2) Bookmark making: Use acid-free paper to make bookmark for protecting each book instead of bending the corners of book pages. Figure 8 shows the bookmarks made by the children.

(3) Video playing: The video contains nearly all key points of taking care of books in a humorous way.

After these activities, students made an appointment with children for protecting books and wrote a doggerel helpful to remember main points. The whole activity was in a lively atmosphere and gained good reputation.



Figure 8: The bookmarks made by children

4 Evaluation

At the end of the event, the instructor required each group to complete a project summary report, share their experiences in the class and hold a poster exhibition.

4.1 Through Summary Report to Share Experiences and Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, all groups reported and reviewed their reading promotion activities, and discussed with the instructor and classmates what they have learned from this program. Many students observed that they gained real-world application for what they learned in their classes. One student shared that he could “explore the feasibility and practicability of promoting reading activities through planning, organizing, executing and self-assessing.” Besides, according to the feedback from the director of Xingren Library and children who attended these activities, all the activities were very interesting, inspired and helpful, and they did spread the notions of reading importance and happy reading, effectively enhance the reading influence of Xingren Library.

4.2 Hold a Poster Exhibition to Get Reviews from other Faculties and Students

Poster exhibition is the final summing part of the course, all four groups present the wonderful reading process in the poster (Figure 9). The poster exhibition is set up in the lobby of the School of Information Management, Sun Yat-sen University for a month. All teachers and students in the college can see it. They also pay acknowledgement to this service study.



Figure 9: Poster exhibition of all groups

5 Conclusion

The course structure includes clear learning objectives that guide the service learning program grading, program management with an established Action Plan, a course schedule with assignments aligned with program outcomes, and peer reviews for feedback. It is important to note that this program improves students' communication and problem-solving skills, and cultivate their service spirit and humanistic spirit. Sharing experiences and best practices for success may encourage other LIS faculty to pursue experiential-learning projects with local community.

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