



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

**LAURA GRAY | UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS**

## **DEEPENING ENGAGEMENT IN A BARE-MINIMUM WORLD**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

The national emerging trend in student attitudes is toward a bare minimum, with college degrees valued as products, above the actual experience of learning. The institutional response arising from this affects our ability to offer deeply engaged experiential and community work at all levels. This presentation examines current research within the trend, and shares challenges and opportunities from a general studies decade-long experiment at an R-1 institute. Together, we will consider how we might adapt in this dissonance to build resilience to include more varied models and opportunities for engagement, especially for more diverse student populations in core and lower-level courses.

### **THEMATIC FOCUS: DISSONANCE & RESILIENCE**

### **BIO(S):**

#### **LAURA GRAY**

Working in S-L, experiential learning and international community development for over 20 years as a site coordinator and educator, I am sold on the benefits these practices have to create dynamic opportunities for student learning at all levels. With long-term international project sites in Belize, Vietnam and Bali, and work in Kazakhstan, community development work has focused on humanities, literacy, wellness, sustainable energy resources and economic development. Local community work includes medical humanities in Washington Regional Medical Center Health Coaches program and research into rural healthcare deserts in Arkansas, as well as partnerships for sustainability and research delivery with community partners nationally and in the Northwest Arkansas area.

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