
NOT YOUR ORDINARY VOLUNTEER:

LEVERAGING UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS TO SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMS

Jenel Lao (UC Irvine)



WARM UP

Introduce yourselves at your tables and share the following:

whether or not you currently have **undergraduate** fieldwork students in your program

whether or not you partner with **graduate** students

If yes to either or the above, **in what capacities** do you use them?

Critical reflection on practice is a requirement of the relationship between theory and practice. Otherwise theory becomes simply "blah, blah, blah," and practice, pure activism.

Paulo Freire

QuoteAddicts.com



School of Education

University of California, Irvine

CERTIFICATE IN AFTERSCHOOL & SUMMER EDUCATION (CASE) PROGRAM



Foundations Course

EDUC 160—includes 20 fieldwork hours
(offered Fall & Winter Quarters and online in Summer)

Human Development Course

choose *one*.*

EDUC 107, 108, 124, or 128

Academic Curricula

choose *one*.*

Literacy:

EDUC 132 or 138

Math:

EDUC 122 A, B, or C

Science:

EDUC 161

Tutoring:

EDUC 100

Expanded Curricula

choose *one*.*

Arts:

EDUC 104D or 137

Educational Technology:

EDUC 131

Sports and Fitness:

EDUC 190

Program Evaluation:

EDUC 157

Elective Course

Choose *one* course from

either

Academic *or*

Expanded Curricula in a
different theme area.

For example: EDUC 104D
may not be taken for an
elective if EDUC 137 was
chosen for Expanded
Curricula.



Capstone Course: **EDUC 191**—includes 50 fieldwork hours *Pre-Requisites:*

EDUC 160, 3 other CASE courses; instructor approval required (offered Spring Quarter only)

Sample Student Work

Critical Reflection on Fieldwork

Evidence of Effectiveness

Comparing Afterschool Perception between PRE and POST for Afterschool Foundations Course (Ed 160)

	Pretest		Posttest		Effect Size	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	(Cohen's d) ^a	t
Afterschool promotes:						
21 st Century Skills	4.42	0.70	4.64	0.54	0.17	2.47*
School Success	4.37	0.73	4.67	0.49	0.23	3.36***
Social Skills	4.62	0.58	4.80	0.39	0.16	2.27*
Safety	4.34	0.88	4.59	0.69	0.16	2.32*
Student's Interests	4.42	0.72	4.68	0.49	0.19	2.80**
Student Health	4.27	0.92	4.55	0.71	0.16	2.39*
Student Engagement	4.47	0.70	4.72	0.47	0.21	3.02**
Student Academics	4.51	0.60	4.72	0.44	0.20	2.88**
UG increased interest in:						
Pursuing coursework in after school	3.63	0.98	3.98	1.08	0.17	2.45*
Working in after school settings	3.71	1.16	4.03	1.05	0.14	2.06*
UG confidence in identifying:						
High quality after school programs	3.97	0.68	4.38	0.59	0.23	3.40***
Tools measuring quality	3.78	0.67	4.25	0.69	0.24	3.50***
N	123		92			

Note. ^aSmall effect size = .20; Medium effect size = .50.

Items are rated from a 1-5 scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. The survey includes pre and post tests from Education 160 from Fall 2016 and Winter 2017

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Comparing Afterschool Perception between Introduction to Education course (Ed 50) to Afterschool Foundations Course (Ed 160) at POST

	Introduction to Education		Afterschool Foundations		Effect Size (Cohen's d) ^a	t
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Afterschool promotes:						
21 st Century Skills	4.17	0.84	4.64	0.54	0.34	4.14***
School Success	4.18	0.80	4.67	0.49	0.37	4.56***
Social Skills	4.53	0.73	4.80	0.39	0.24	2.92**
Safety	4.08	0.84	4.59	0.66	0.34	4.13***
Student's Interests	4.15	0.87	4.68	0.49	0.39	4.74***
Student Health	4.05	0.82	4.55	0.71	0.32	3.94***
Student Engagement	4.18	0.90	4.72	0.47	0.39	4.77***
Student Academics	4.43	0.67	4.72	0.44	0.27	3.23**
UG increased interest in:						
Pursuing coursework in after school	3.56	1.06	3.98	1.08	0.19	2.33*
Working in after school settings	3.18	0.82	3.86	1.11	0.32	3.97***
UG confidence in identifying:						
High quality after school programs	3.87	0.78	4.34	0.59	0.37	4.47***
Tools measuring quality	3.82	0.75	4.25	0.69	0.29	3.53***
N	58		92			

Note. ^aSmall effect size = .20; Medium effect size = .50.

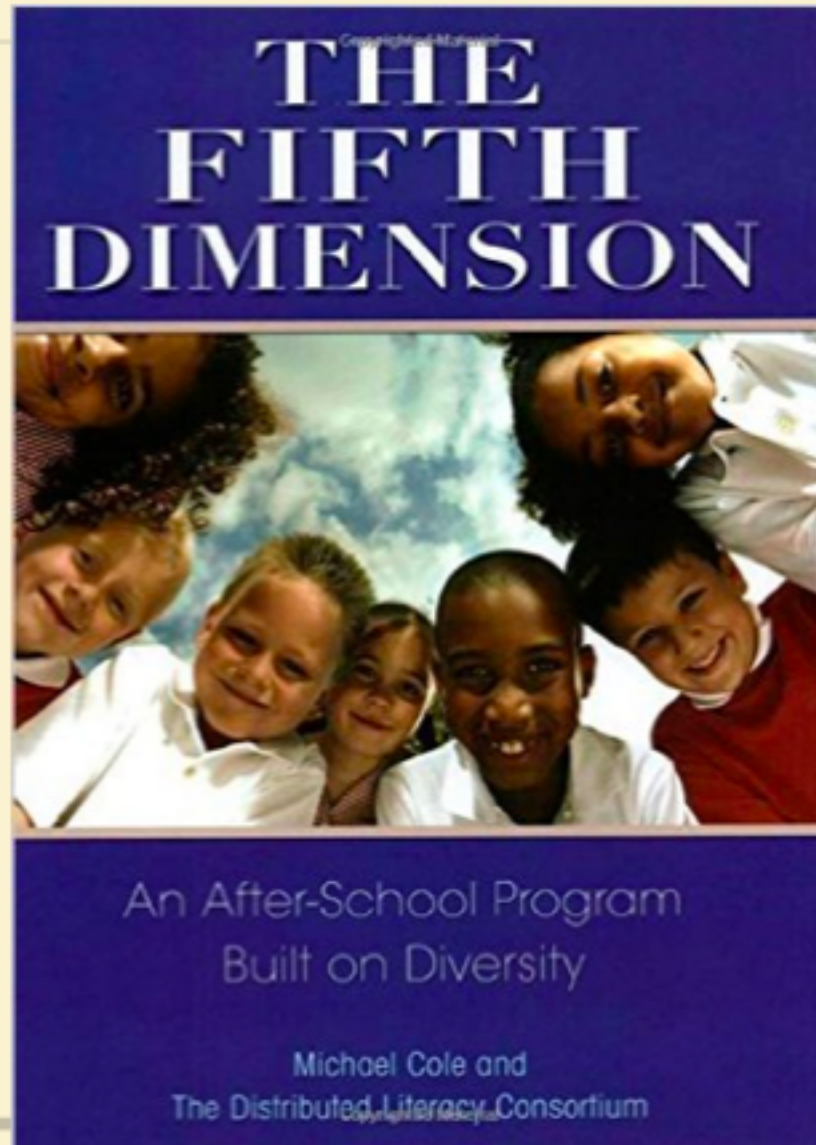
Items are rated from a 1-5 scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. The survey includes courses from Fall 2016 and Winter 2017

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Putting Theory to Practice

The Capstone Course

CASE STUDY ON THE COMPLEXITIES OF DESIGNING & IMPLEMENTING OST PROGRAMS



The Fifth Dimension: An After-School Program Built on Diversity

Michael Cole and the Distributed Literacy Consortium (2006)

Outlines the lessons learned from researchers in **designing, implementing and evaluating** a prototype after-school program to be delivered across multiple and diverse sites

AKA UC LINKS!



Goal-Driven

Promote literacy development through active, engaging and knowledge-generating activities

Theory-Based

Bronfenbrenner

Vygotsky

Dewey

Moll

Flexible & Engaging

Prototype

Computers

Task Cards

The Maze

Mythical Figurehead

Priveleges Diversity

“Variation was the norm, not the exception”

Elements in fifth dimension depend on community institutions.

Local goals and community institutions differ.

Resources vary in each program

Results in uniqueness in each fifth dimension activity

OVERVIEW OF KEY ELEMENTS

- Identified gaps/need
 - Created goals around addressing those gaps
 - Developed a prototype that could adapt to local needs and contexts
 - Grounded in theory
 - *Privileged diversity*-ongoing adaptation to local context
 - Field tested
 - Evaluated-engaged in critical examination
-





The principles in the Fifth Dimension also align well with **LIAS Principles*** learned in CASE because it promotes learning that is:

Active

computer use/ enriching activities

Collaborative

student involvement/technology

Meaningful

the task cards

Supports mastery

the maze

Expands horizons

explore interests and activities
outside of schools

**LIAS is a program self-assessment tool developed by Temescal and Associates and aligned to the CA program quality standards*

SAMPLE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCES ALIGN WITH FIFTH DIMENSION

Opportunities:
develop new activities

free access for parents and
children

provide bilingual communication

technological advantages

literacy development

Challenges:

financial- afterschool programs lack funding

lack of consistency with attendance

chronic staffing problem

Low enrollment

children's lack of participation (engagement)

Faculty- lack of technology skills and experience

IMPACT PROPOSAL

Conduct a critical analysis of their own fieldwork experiences by applying and engaging in key design principles from a case study on program development and expansion.

1. Collaborate on the development of an **impact proposal** that is aligned to student needs at the fieldwork sites and is supported by research-based practices.
 2. Demonstrate depth of understanding about some of the operational, developmental, and/or socio-ecological factors that may account for the success of or threats to the implementation of a program proposal.
 3. Field test the proposal by getting feedback from their sites- SWOT analysis
-
-

IMPLICIT GOALS

Build awareness of the complexities related to designing and implementing high-quality programs

Practice developing theoretically-informed practices

Practice thinking about what change they want to see and how they could get there

Empower undergraduates to be agents of change in after school

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Groups identified needs common to all of their programs (SWOT)

Used the SMART Goal framework to develop 2-3 goals

Developed a conceptual plan that could reasonably be implemented to meet that need

Identified at least 5 theoretical principles from CASE courses

Identified desired signs of success- Change in knowledge, behaviors and/or attitudes

Field-Test (SWOT)

Critical Reflection

SWOT

Overall my experience at Turtle Rock, had some similarities and a lot more differences in comparison to my groups.For instance, my site worked with elementary school students at a community center while the other two worked with high school students at a high school and at the Discovery Science Center.

Despite the difference in our sites, this project and the **SWOT** analysis really helped us figure out what three main areas of focus can help any after school program succeed.

Strengths

- The staff decide on the activities, as they are the ones that know the kids the most (*Safe and Supportive Environment/Sense of Belonging*).
- Each week, the program has a Character Counts lesson where a certain aspect of good character is taught to the kids of a specific grade level. The lessons are catered to the grade level so that the kids can understand the lesson better. (*Stage-Environment Fit Theory*).

Weaknesses

- Few activities that can be considered project-based learning (*Expectancy-Value Theory and Fostering Initiative*).
- Lessons do not go in depth with the subject area. Activities are very on the surface and are done just to get done (*Learning in Afterschool and Summer Principles*).

Opportunities


- Parents are seen as a very important part of the program. They are greeted at the sign out sheet and given updates on their children. They can also come in and help with certain events throughout the year. (*Safe and Supportive Environment/Sense of Belonging*).

Threats

- The program does not have a clear goal that they are working towards (*Safe and Supportive Environment/Sense of Belonging*).
- A good number of the kids do not participate in the planned activities. They instead go outside for free play the entire day (*Expectancy-Value Theory*).



OVERVIEW OF PROPOSALS



Majority of proposals focused on fostering high-quality staff-through staff development or volunteer development

*There are unprepared staff entering the afterschool programs. It is vital to have quality staff to create quality afterschool programs. **There is a lack of staff and leaders who have prior experience, able to engage the students, and are willing to go beyond their own knowledge and skills and seek out innovative ways to teach the students.** -Gregory*

I

*I also see volunteer development having an impact on student engagement. Most of us volunteers go in with that mentality of helping students as much as we can **however several programs provided very little direction to their volunteers.** I have seen volunteer presence go to waste because of the minimal attention they receive. Speaking from personal experience and from informal feedback I've gathered from other fellow volunteers we would like to do more to help the students and would appreciate some guidance either from staff or directors.*

- Lizette

SAMPLE PROPOSALS

Website

<http://ucispring16educ191-group6.weebly.com/>

Common Identified Need:

Common Identified Need:

Increase attendance of High School students in afterschool programs

(Limited amounts of after school programs/clubs-Do not reflect diversity or interests of students)

Goal: Provide variety of services and resources that are accessible to students and parents

Proposal:

Provide **college preparatory workshops, panels, events, seminars, field trips, and exam fee waivers**

Promote the after school programs through flyers, networking, and word of mouth

Mention program events and services during morning announcements over the PA system

Create partnerships with local schools, organizations, and other programs

Visit other clubs/programs and host informational sessions about our program services to raise awareness among the student population

Highlight organizations that serve traditionally marginalized students (Ex: Bilingual Club, English Language Learner students, Culinary Club)

Provide more quality **training** (e.g., workshops, meetings, conferences) for staff members and volunteers

Meet with school faculty to create a set of **“community agreements”** regarding student needs

“Looking at the Fifth Dimension sites as local communities of practice helps both

“Looking at the Fifth Dimension sites as local communities of practice helps both to motivate and to explain the design strategy of selecting program content that reflects the host community’s history and identity as natural means for enhancing local activities” (FD, Pg. 174)

Given that our proposal intends to increase our participant numbers we need to be critical of understanding the role and impact that ethnicity, cultural values, socio-economic status, and immigration status have on the population we are working with. Given that most of our sites work with communities of color who experience discrimination, that might hold different cultural values than the average American, that are low income, and have recently immigrated to the US, it is pertinent to implement a successful outreach strategy. -Tonix

Develop sense of community through partnerships (Mahoney & Hinga)

Theoretical & Developmental Principles (cont.)

Creating collaborative partnerships

"We are ultimately interested in developing ASP staff to provide high quality program offerings that will lead to better developmental outcomes for participating children. To evaluate the impact of these approaches of program staff grow, program quality changes, and child outcomes are affected in relation to the types of training that after-school workers at different stages of staff development receive" (p. 101).

Our proposal intends to create a sense of community for students, in that, the program creates awareness of the resources and afterschool activities it offers. In doing so, the focus should also be on the development of staff, so the students may build those relationships that encourage engagement and participation. If there are more collaborative partnerships in fact, the students will feel the support from donors, trained staff, and growing resources. The collaborative efforts may encourage a positive learning and school culture.

Mahoney, Joseph L., Levine, Mark D. and Hinga, Brian (2010) [The Development of After-School Program Educators Through University-Community Partnerships](#) Mahoney, J, Levine, Hinga, 2010.pdf, *Applied Developmental Science*, 34: 2, 89-105

Theoretical & Developmental Principles (cont.)

- In "Children's Organized Activities" by Deborah Vandell et al one focus it talks about is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory in which he identifies 4 types of systems, from small to large, that are useful in conceptualizing the different levels of factors that influence young people's experiences in organized activities (Pg. 307)
 - The individual
 - Microsystem
 - Mesosystem
 - Exosystem
 - Macrosystem
- As stated in our proposal, creating partnerships with local schools, organizations, and other programs meaning interaction between the different systems, is important in order to benefit the individual

Honor socio-cultural factors influencing participation (Simpkins)

Theoretical & Developmental Principles (cont.)

In the article titled, Socioeconomic Status, Ethnicity, Culture, and Immigration: Examining the Potential Mechanisms Underlying Mexican-Origin Adolescents' Organized Activity Participation, Simpkins (2013) argued that the ecological theory and the integrative model for child development suggest that macro factors, such as ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, and immigration influence the settings in which adolescents engage.



What is contingent to the proposal, is to providing services to the public. Given that our proposal intends to increasing our participant numbers we need to be critical of understanding the role and impacts ethnicity, cultural values, socio-economic status, and immigration status has on the population we are working with. Given that most of our sites work with communities of color who experience discrimination, that might hold different cultural values than the average American, that are low income, and have recently immigration to the US is pertinent to implement a successful outreach strategy.

Simpkins, K. D., Delgado, M. T., (2013). Socioeconomic Status, Ethnicity, Culture, and Immigration: Examining the Potential Mechanisms Underlying Mexican-Origin Adolescents' Organized Activity Participation, 76 - 72. DOI: 10.1037/a0028399

FIELD TEST!



SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths Ideas were practical and seem easy to implement. Well written and sensible.	Weaknesses Could be challenging to sustain, volunteer turn over rate can be high and achieving specific goals + communicating those goals by may get tricky.
Opportunities Will strengthen communication and ensure everyone is on the same page. Provides tangible goals. Great to get student input.	Threats Could leak into the structured 60 minute time frame.

FIELD TEST RE: RECRUITING MORE VOLUNTEERS

Field Test Results

- Mark: At my site I was able to go over the impact proposal with the site director. **Strengths** of recruiting volunteers is that they can be positive role models for the children. It is agreed that professional training for volunteers would be very beneficial if a program's core staff is made up of volunteers. But **weaknesses** include the cost of training volunteers. It could be a waste if they are just in and out very quickly. Other weaknesses in the plan include finding other incentives of motivation since course credit does not intrinsically motivate volunteers and may give them wrong reasons for working with kids. Some threats present within the plan is addressing personal problems with volunteers such as the way they dress and the amount of cell phone use. This can be a great threat since it can affect public perception of the program, since they may mistake volunteers for staff members. Another threat is how involved volunteers are with children and if they are involved enough. **Opportunities** that sites can provide may be online training for volunteers which is not costly. Having volunteers open up more opportunities for a greater impact and providing more one on one experiences with children. Volunteers also can gain knowledge as seen through leading and participating in programs.

Threats: From surveys I have learned that both staff and the site coordinator share perceptions of volunteers that they are just trying to complete hours and that they may be possible future staff. The site does not have an application process they recruit through UCI and require that they fill out an emergency form and show a negative TB test.

The reason for the more lax process is because they never leave kids alone with volunteers. Fingerprinting is not needed because staff should always be present with the children. The site reviews expectations of volunteers to them, but do not provide any formal training. The preferred amount of students per day given by the site director is at most six because more than that they begin to talk amongst one another. Staff gave about a 12:1 ratio between students and volunteers to be good. Overlapping expectations from staff and the site coordinator is the interaction volunteers should have with children, they should never just be standing around. Adding on from the site coordinator they should also connect and learn kids' names as well as dress and act appropriately. On the basis of need for volunteers the site coordinator believes they are helpful with games and homework, but they are not necessarily needed for the program to function. Staff say they are needed because they provide good company for the kids. Currently there are more than enough volunteers at my site (so the field study was asked drawing from their experience, how well this proposal would work if they were suffering from a low amount of volunteers). Volunteers positively impact the program by forming connections and using their own personal skills to help contribute to the program. Volunteers could improve by not riling up the kids. Staff would like to work with volunteers and wish it would happen more. Volunteers are beneficial by providing a good distraction for kids and giving them good interactions with adults.


FIELD TEST!

FIELD TEST:



Field Test


Monica- KidWorks is a great afterschool program that serves students from pre-k to high school. After speaking to the program leaders, they all agreed that increasing staff development would be very beneficial to their jobs. Some staff members recalled a time when they felt like leaving KidWorks because they felt they were not qualified or was too stressful. However, their passion for teaching and working with students was very rewarding and quite fun which is why they continue to work at KidWorks. It did seem this was important to them but they had not spent a lot of time thinking about it. The program leaders said they would be willing to attend workshops, especially those that dealt with discipline. One program leader, who I volunteered for often, loved the idea of providing more incentives to staff. She went on to say that she uses incentives in her classes which often do work to encourage students to follow the rules.



Josephine- My site coordinator was kind enough to allow me some time to sit down and discuss this plan with her. I proposed first about our weak retention in staff members and how staff came in pretty unprepared - she found my observation to be pretty accurate and encouraged me to continue. I proposed ideas about the shadowing and having more structured staff trainings/orientations, and explained how this could strengthen our staff and in return the parents' and students' confidence in us. Wendy thought it was a very cool idea, however she does bring up the fact that Karis, as of this moment, lacks the facility-resource to host certain trainings. Along with the dense number of students per classroom, and considering the number of student volunteers/staff members, it would be difficult to coordinate schedules of all sorts. She did really like the shadowing program, however! She noted how I briefly tried this with a new staff member (to replace me) on Saturday. I approached that person and she expressed to me how much better she felt after directly learning from me on the site for two Saturdays instead of just one.

Field-Test

Edward- I spoke to my program director, Alessandra Pantano during her office hours about my proposal to change the state of our current staff training. She loved the idea of getting the more experienced staff members involved with helping guide newer staff as they start the program as well as having more workshops to get the staff involved with each other. One problem she noticed; however, was that the size of our staff was increasing rapidly, and we would soon run out of space within our small classroom at UCI. We could reserve more classrooms to accommodate, but we would also be splitting up the expertise to lead workshops and training. We would also need more incentive to get volunteers who normally do not even go to training to come.



Judy- I spoke with the volunteer coordinator about our groups plans on implementing staff development into the afterschool program. He shared that Karate For All full-time staff had the same vision and are in the process of expanding volunteer training, and other professional development opportunities for the volunteers. However, the concern they shared with me regarding their investment in staff development was the need for similar reciprocity of the volunteers to be willing enough to put in lots of effort and have enough to support provide a quality afterschool program.

Marie- After speaking with Linda, Kgo, and Matt some of the higher ranking staff officials, I gave them a full presentation about the proposal and my opinions on how beneficial it would be for Turtle Rock After school Academy, they mentioned how it was a great idea and how in the past they have tried to implement a type of staff training but never got it fully implemented due to conflicting programs. They also mentions how at Turtle Rock a type of side by side guidance that they do is having a higher staff official observe over the other staff members since there are multiple staff watching over a class. They also mentioned that the overall impact proposal that I presented to them had great ideas and they said they would try to forward it to a head supervisor member and let me know how it goes.

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY

The Fifth Dimension talked about how being able to adapt to a certain location is key. A project or proposal can only go so far if it is not malleable to fit one's needs. Cole talked about how his projects were different at each location, and this was an amazing thing to me. This is why our group strongly pushed for a template that was general but had the capability for the program to address specifics for the children. -Reyna

GOAL SETTING

GOAL SETTING

What can be learned from these three sites in regards to the impact project is that flexibility and simple goal setting are key to successful implementation. Again from the Friday panel, "**after-school programs need to be flexible**" which means our project also needs to be flexible. **It can be done with simple goal setting**; ours focuses on providing youth with new, non-traditional and enriching experiences to academic topics. These lessons are meant to be nontraditional and the innovation from undergraduate volunteers will certainly provide activities that motivate youth to be excited about what they are learning.-

Donna

MEMBER FLUIDITY

At my fieldwork site I am able to view how leaders are trying to **close the gap between them and the youth**. Not only in the area of learning but also in the are of **building an environment full of diversity and treating each and everyone of the youth equally**. -Kim

HIGH-QUALITY STAFF/
VOLUNTEERS

A looming threat to our impact project can be the undergraduate volunteer's effort and motivation to their lesson....There is a lot of planning and work involved to creating a lesson that is nontraditional to the regular school day and undergraduate volunteers need to be well prepared for it.

Volunteers need to understand their academic subject the students chose, provide creativity so that the lesson is engaging and also be proficient in classroom management. **If the undergraduate volunteer is well prepared and motivated to present the project, then the students will want to participate. -Donna**

Overall my experience at Turtle Rock, had some similarities and a lot more differences in comparison to my groups.

However, the Fifth Dimension has also taught us that even though we think we might have the perfect plan to fix all of the after school programs, it is important to realize the implementation at the after school sites require continuity, and can not just be “planted” and left there. It is a never-ending need to deal with change, whether it be change to accommodate with an after school site’s location/population or change in the actual after school program during the implementation of workshops because if there was anything I learned through this experience, it is that there is no one-way to create a successful after school program.

-Jasmin

A FINAL WORD

While working at our perspective sites, we all agreed that it was **exceedingly helpful** to be able to read and learn from **The Fifth Dimension** as they dictated their own challenges, successes, and experiences.- Michaela

REFLECTION

Does this Impact Proposal give you
new ideas of how to use
undergraduates in your program?

Explain/Share

GRADUATE RESEARCH





REACH Lab

The REACH Lab, organized by Dr. Sandra Simpkins, aims to connect families of Latino/a youth to high quality after school programming.

The Out of School Research Lab

The Out of School Research Lab, led by Founding Dean Dr. Deborah Lowe Vandell, serves as a collaborative work space to conduct high quality research studies of out of school contexts.

Center for Afterschool and Summer Excellence

The Center for Afterschool and Summer Excellence, directed by by Founding Dean Dr. Deborah Lowe Vandell, connects out of school researchers with community based programs on assessing after school programs.

Certificate in Afterschool and Summer Education

The Certificate in Afterschool and Summer Education (CASE) Program, co-directed by Dr. Sandra Simpkins and Dr. Jenel Lao, brings together researchers and leaders in after school and summer education to improve the engagement of K-12 students. This certificate is open to all undergraduate students of University of California, Irvine.

Meet the Researchers

[http://ucioutofschovertime.weebly.com/
students.html](http://ucioutofschovertime.weebly.com/students.html)

Overview of Research

[http://ucioutofschoolltime.weebly.com/
ost-groups.html](http://ucioutofschoolltime.weebly.com/ost-groups.html)

REFLECTION

If you had access to graduate students,
what research would you be most
interested in for your program?

Explain/Share

ACTION PLANNING

Group Activity

SWOT it OUT

CASE CERTIFIED!





<http://case.education.uci.edu>

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