

Service-Learning Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, November 14, 2006 3:30-5:00 pm
LRC 507

Meeting Minutes

Present: Michele Dickinson, Rob Manzke, Shari Ellertson, Diane Bywaters, James Sage, Lance Grahn, Rachel Hildebrandt.

The meeting began with an overview of upcoming events:

- James and Michele have been awarded a UPDC Curriculum Development Grant for a Service-Learning Colloquium to be held: Friday, February 16, 2007. They are currently seeking OPID funding as well.
- Service-Learning Brown Bag Discussions:
 - December 1st from 1:30-2:30 in LRC 604
“How to Start a Service-Learning Course”
Faculty Presenter: Karyn Biasca
- Teaching Commons Conference: December 8, 2006. Register here (deadline is Nov. 10, but they might be able to let more people register:
<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/acadaffairs/caese/Conferences/Teaching%20Commons/registration.htm>
- The Center for Academic Excellence and Student Engagement (CAESE) website:
<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/acadaffairs/caese/>

Discussion of VISTA/WiCC Sustainability

For three years, UWSP has enjoyed the benefits of being a WiCC member and having an AmeriCorps VISTA member on campus (first Scott Winn, then Michele Dickinson). Beginning Fall 07, UWSP will be expected to “cost share” by providing \$10K toward the VISTA salary. Headed up by CAESE, Michele and James have been discussing plans on how to approach the administration to keep such a position.

Michele provided a rough draft of a document listing (1) the rationale for retaining a service-learning coordinator position on campus, (2) the “pros/cons” of keeping the WiCC/VISTA arrangement, and (3) the “pros/cons” of funding such a position without going through WiCC.

Discussion and feedback about the document included:

Connect to the NSSE and Criterion 5, Chancellor’s Vision 2015 (including her 3 key points), Financial return on investments, ask for both WiCC VISTA and a campus-funded Service-Learning Coordinator, Dream BIG! (ask for Suzuki House, involve all Colleges on campus, include faculty release time), and connect to fundraising.

Discussion of Service-Learning Forms

Michele distributed copies of the various service-learning forms that she has adapted from Marquette. The group discussed a few changes and the overall rationale for using forms. Please send any further feedback to Michele and/or James by December (so that Michele can use these forms in spring semester).

Discussion of Definition of Service-Learning on UWSP Campus

In addition to discussing the need for a common definition of service-learning on campus (a definition that also matches the “national conversation” about service-learning), the group discussed the various dimensions to defining service-learning, including: paying students, having students work at for-profit businesses, having students complete service outside of the academic semester, having students engage in service-learning in non-credit-bearing situations, and the emphasis on social action and civic responsibility.

Formulating a “mission statement” or definition of service-learning will require a bit of planning, research, and discussion. Shari and Michele recommended that we gather various “expert opinions” regarding definitions of service-learning, and then tailor such a definition to UWSP.

Service-Learning Self-study

The group was asked to work through a variety of issues related to the “self-study” handouts provided by Michele (behind “tab 4” in the green binders). As a group, we identified a number of components:

- *needs that must to be addressed* (basic information, examples of service-learning, etc.),
- *barriers that must be overcome* (fragmented departmental structure, lack of a common place to share teaching/learning strategies, etc.), and
- *support structure that must be provided* (campus-wide, institutionalized support such as release time, reduced students, etc.).

The group discussed a variety of ways that the UWSP campus can bring about these positive changes, including: distribution of service-learning ideas in media (brochures, websites, the Sundial, in the library, undergraduate research symposium), highlighting community connections and completed student projects, and working with various departments/colleges in order to engage in meaningful collaboration.

James offered the general reminder (mostly for himself) that for each of the above (ambitious) tasks that we face, each “sub-group” of the committee (policy, resource, promotion) should be working to identify appropriate areas to address.

So, if you are part of the “resource” sub-committee, think about ways to contribute to gathering and distributing resources on campus about service-learning (both within our committee, and to the wider campus). If you are on the “promotion” sub-committee, think about ways to promote service-learning among faculty and students (How can we showcase the good work being done in the community?). And if you are on the “policy” committee, think about ways to lobby for institutional support for service-learning on campus (How can we better support faculty, students, and community partners when engaging in service-learning?).

Next Meeting: December 12 at 3:30 in LRC 507