

Minutes of the JSCC Service Learning Committee

Feb. 20, 2013

The Service Learning Committee met at 10:00 A.M. on Feb. 20, 2013, in the Van Veatch Room of the JSCC Library. The following members were present: Vivian Grooms, Chair; Scott Woods, Dean; Carla Simpson, Angee Taylor, John Tibbs, Amy Wake, Mary Wadley and Frances Anthony, ex-officio. China Horton, SL student worker, was unable to attend due to personal illness.

The Chair welcomed Ms. Frances Anthony as an ex-officio member of the committee and Scott Woods as institutional liaison to the committee. Mary Wadley volunteered to take notes on a rotating basis for our meetings.

Old Business:

I. Future location of the Office of Service Learning and Civic Engagement:

The basement in the Nelms Classroom Building is being considered for future housing for the Office of Service Learning and Civic Engagement along with Phi Theta Kappa and Honors. No dates have been approved for remodeling this space, but the college is open to suggestions on how to arrange this area for optimal space utilization. Grooms mentioned a possible nickname of "The Cave" for this repurposed area since the J-HUB is already being used for the newly remodeled Student Center. Woods described his vision of cubicles for working, a central area for multiple user groups to congregate and network as well as kitchen space for food/beverage prep and storage. The consensus was that this committee could have input on the design/arrangement before remodeling gets underway.

II. Americorps/VISTA application process

Woods said that he had the data he needs to get started on our application for a VISTA worker to coordinate community partnerships. China Horton has already started organizing the previous data and will continue to assist with that process.

III. Process of future partnerships with programs which have existing VISTAS

Grooms mentioned some of the opportunities for students to partner for service learning with local organizations that already have VISTA volunteers. These include but are not limited to RIFA, Hands Up! Preschool (Donna Agnew), and the STAR Center (Carilyn Daniel). Wadley mentioned financial literacy work and career skills training at RIFA through the CWJC under the direction of Jenni Thorne. She also mentioned the possibility of future work with the Hispanic population through another local non-profit Adelante (if it is still active.)

IV. Grooms asked members of the committee to report from their respective divisions about other faculty members who are engaged in service and/or service learning at this time. Taylor shared that her microbiology students will be doing some bacterial testing off campus and also will follow-up by sharing the results with other BIO classes.

Wake shared that nursing students had been participating in food drives to benefit RIFA as well as a toy drive which would culminate in a reflection paper on choosing developmentally appropriate toys as well as part of a pediatric nursing course. Other nursing students in Adult Health I have been doing in-services for hospital staff to share current best practices in the field of nursing. Students from Adult Health II who are almost ready to graduate practice their skills by going out into local communities to provide services. She mentioned the need to include more conscious reflection as part of the service learning component associated with these activities.

Simpson shared that MLT students had been participating in local high school recruiting during events such as “Advances in Healthcare” and by doing blood pressure checks for free at health fairs. Some activities are service-oriented while others might fit under the umbrella of “service learning.” Grooms reminded the committee that some activities that are required or included as part of the course syllabus can still be counted if the student or the agency does not get paid for providing these services.

Grooms requested that both Carla Simpson and Amy Wake write up a paragraph about the types of activities in nursing, medical technology/MLT, and other allied health fields that could be considered “service learning.”

Grooms shared an email forwarded by Cleveland State to Mani Hull giving examples of activities that they considered to be service learning in their nursing department. CSCC won a national Campus Compact Award for setting up free health screenings for an underserved Hispanic population in their area. In contrast, at Volunteer State, service learning is pretty much left up to the discretion of instructors.

Tibbs shared that students in Business and Computer Science have been helping displaced workers with budgeting and résumé preparation. Dean Terri Messer had asked him to find out more about the status of SLR 299 for one hour credit for students engaged in service learning. She also wanted more clarification about how to count service learning hours for activities within a course. Some faculty members require service learning of all students but provide options such as a research paper in lieu of a required SL activity that requires significant time outside the classroom. Becca Rhea includes service learning in her Speech classes but gives extra credit points. Activities that are required of all students in a course as part of regular coursework still may be counted if they fit the parameters of “service learning.”

Grooms reiterated the importance of “capturing” hours of service to use as in-kind matching for any future service learning grants for which we might want to apply. Grantors like to see concrete numbers on grant applications such as pounds of food donated to RIFA or the total number of toys collected for the RIFA toy drive at Christmas.

New Business:

The Chair passed around a sample Service Learning Journal which we might want to order or to have available for purchase in our bookstore at approximately \$10 each. Since there is approximately \$600 in the Service Learning budget, Wadley made a motion that we purchase at least 20 journals to share among the members of the committee and with other interested faculty members. Simpson suggested that we consider making our own JSCC service learning journal to include opportunities for reflection. One or more copies could be placed on Reserve status in the library.

Simpson asked if the course SLR 299 were still available as an option for students at JSCC. Dean Woods will investigate further and report back at a future meeting.

Since the committee does not have a mission statement in writing, that topic will be considered at the next scheduled meeting.

The question was raised about the criteria being used to approved Experimental Service Learning Projects at JSCC. Dean Woods explained that about two years ago, JSCC created an Internal Review Board to oversee “research” at JSCC since the college occasionally gets requests for data to use for dissertations and other special projects. The first priority is to protect the confidentiality of the student(s) and the second would be to “do no harm” in the process. In addition, parental permission must also be requested for any research data that involves students under age eighteen. A form may be revised in the future to address these needs. For now, faculty may submit their proposals and make requests by e-mail to Scott Woods at JSCC.

At 11:05 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Mary Wadley