

## SLAC MEETING

September 23, 2008

**Attended by:** Laurel Kennedy, Karl Sandin, Dosinda Garcia-Alvite, Jack Shuler, Fadhel Kaboub, Andrea Ziegert, Lindsey Buchanan, Kori Berman, Michele Doran, Susie Kalinoski, Eryn McGowan, Caitlin Fondessy, Jenny Pearlman

**Report on Denison Volunteer Dollars (DVD) program:** Laurel introduced new faculty member Fadhel Kaboub, who has rejoined Denison from Drew University in New Jersey, and is introducing the DVD program in his classes. This program applies macroeconomic issues to the volunteer world at Denison by imposing a tax, payable in "DVD dollars", on the students in his class. Students earn DVD dollars to pay the tax by engaging in volunteer work either with DCA groups, their own volunteer activities, or as part of a group volunteer activity that will be arranged. The idea is to sell students on community service while educating them about macroeconomic concepts such as inflation and full employment. For this to achieve the full benefit, the DVD program will need to expand beyond Fadhel's classroom to other classrooms and the Denison community as a whole. Ideally, the program will come to include more components such as banking, stock and bond trades, retirement plans. It could possibly grow to include students being able to use a portion of their dollars at the bookstore or cafeteria. Assessment at the end of Fadhel's class will include a survey and exam questions. The economics department secretary will be the treasurer for this program. Andrea questioned whether reflection was included in the class, and Laurel noted that one time projects through DCA such as Big Red's Big Day have a reflection component. Dosinda questioned possible pitfalls of this program; philosophically, should students be compensated for volunteer work? Fadhel said that a pitfall is that students could pay others to perform their volunteer work; however a goal of the program is to create a culture of volunteering. Laurel suggested that we see how the program grows and how it can expand through the campus and beyond, and noted that volunteer work is compensated for in other classes by comprising part of the class grade.

**Voter Engagement Grant:** Laurel discussed the grant we received from the OCC which will enable the Center to conduct voting activities such as debate watches, the production of issue briefs, voting posters, and transportation to early voting venues. Ron Abram's classes are doing artwork which will be included in the briefs and also on posters that will be distributed throughout the campus. Laurel reviewed dates for the debate watches and other activities; information about activities and dates will be posted on the Center's web pages.

**State Farm Grant:** The Center, in conjunction with OSU-Newark and COTC, is completing an application for a \$70,000 State Farm grant for next year for college access work. The funds would be used to engage three VISTA representatives, one on each campus, who would work under Janet Schultz in the areas of early awareness, academic readiness, information sessions, and other aspects of college access. Denison students would work with the VISTAs on these programs.

**October SLAC Meeting:** Laurel brought up the idea of having the focus of the October 28 meeting be an introduction to service learning for new and existing faculty. Topics could include what service learning is, benefits of incorporating it into classes, resources available to faculty, etc. Karl agreed this would be a good idea, and suggested that Brad be invited as well. Andrea noted that just inviting everyone may not be enough, but that if a faculty member can make a connection of service learning to their own class, they may want to come to learn more. She suggested that conversations be started within departments to generate interest in the meeting. There was discussion about the definition of service learning, and Jack noted that we shouldn't apply too stringent a definition as some faculty, such as action researchers, might also benefit from the Center. Laurel noted that discussion of this occurred during SLAC meetings last year, and that the Center just doesn't have the administrative or vehicle support to provide resources for all areas, such as independent community research. Laurel asked that SLAC members try to invite two or three other people to the meeting, and Andrea offered to work with Laurel on planning for this meeting. Laurel will invite Brad.

Dosinda pointed out that faculty members have done research that is not readily available on campus, and that we should find a way to make this research more visible and accessible.

Andrea suggested that we invite faculty to a day of planning for service learning classes, and that if we could plan an afternoon of service learning to gain a better understanding of what it is, that they'll be more excited about it. This led into the following discussion about an upcoming community breakfast.

**Community Partners Breakfast:** Laurel reviewed details of our community partner breakfast held last spring, and the decision of SLAC to focus on five thematic areas of service engagement. The Center has decided to highlight one area each year, and that the concentration this year will be homeless issues. Laurel's thought was to hold another community breakfast on November 4, so that schools could also participate. The format would be to have a panel discussion as the centerpiece, with those on panel discussing what they are now experiencing in the trenches regarding homelessness and housing issues. This could tie in with Andrea's idea about faculty finding a correlation between their class and service learning, as faculty attending the breakfast could hear about issues that could relate to their classes. Ideas coming from this could be incorporated into classes next fall. Karl suggested maybe this should be held a little later in the morning as a brunch, so people could vote first and then come.

**Conference for Modern Languages:** Dosinda and other language faculty had talked last spring about having a mini-conference of teachers of modern languages who work with the community. Laurel noted that OCC would be interested in this project.

**Randy Stoker's Visit:** Mary Tuominen has invited Randy Stoker, community researcher, to be at Denison for three days of activities in February.

**Philanthropy as a Teaching Tool:** Laurel talked about a philanthropy program she had discussed with Otterbein faculty, which had been funded by a businessman named Roger Griner. University classes were provided with a donation of \$4000, and the students in the class were then responsible for researching philanthropies

they thought were worthwhile , and then presenting and selling their classmates on the value of their charities. The class would then decide how to distribute the money among the charities. Laurel said Dick Kinsley of OCC has been talking to Park National Bank about funding a similar program; if any faculty is interested in incorporating this into a class, let Laurel know.

**Writers' Group:** Laurel asked if any faculty is interested in forming a writers' group to support each other; if so, let Laurel know.

**Service Learning Library:** Laurel discussed the Center's library, which is available for checkout by all faculty. The curricular learning section of the website includes a complete list of publications.

**Next SLAC meeting will be October 28, 2008 at 11:30 in the Shepardson College Room.**