

SLAC MEETING

January 27, 2009

Attended By:

Mary Tuominen, Dosinda Garcia Alvite, Lyn Robertson, Joanna Mitchell, Cassandra Secrease-Dixon, Amanda Gunn, Laurel Kennedy, Michele Doran, Susie Kalinoski, Eryn McGowan, Jenny Pearlman

Announcements

Laurel announced that Dosy has been recommended for tenure and she was roundly applauded.

Laurel announced that Susie wrote and received a Community Development Block Grant for \$4000 for the Garden of Hope next summer. This additional funding will subsidize a third intern for the summer, and at Eryn's suggestion, might be used for additional outreach by working to get additional plots planted by neighbors or other community members. Susie had worked with the Mayor's office closely last year on Big Red's Big Day cleanup project and has consistently and successfully worked to build relations between Denison and the office.

Fadhel is speaking at the March 31 Tuesday lunch about the Denison Volunteer Dollars program he instituted last fall.

VISTA plans are moving forward for next year, with Denison, OSU-N and COTC working together to try to each engage a VISTA and have the three work as a team with Janet Schultz and A Call to College on early college awareness. If successful, they'll work to try to mobilize resources on our campus for college awareness and readiness programs, as well as get Newark students to our campus. Michele had brought 22 Ben Franklin students to Denison in November for activities with the America Reads tutors, which was a great success. Lyn mentioned that the Education Honor Society students might like to be involved in future events like this. Brother to Brother is a new DCA group that is also working to mentor Newark students and expose them to our Denison community.

CBR Event with Randy Stoecker, February 9 and 10

Mary spoke about the upcoming CBR event with Randy Stoecker, professor of sociology at University of Wisconsin. February 9 will include a panel, dinner and workshop from 4:30-8:30 with faculty, staff and community partners. The panel will include a faculty member, a "bridge" member and a community partner. February 10 will be a workshop for students. We are now sending out invitations to students; please send any recommendations to Mary or Laurel.

The Service Learning Center

Laurel reflected on the year she has been directing the Center. Her goal is to ensure that “the work we do in the community *matters*,” on the premise that if we achieve that goal with each engagement, we’ll achieve the rest of our goals regarding meaningful student engagement, rewarding teaching experiences, and rich community relationships. We’ve made headway in efforts with community partners and students, and it’s time to devote attention to inviting more faculty to participate. As an example of how that invitation process will work, Laurel asked Eryn to review an example of the resource guides she has prepared for Science division departments.

Eryn has put together a resource guide for each of these departments, which she handed out for review. These will be posted on our webpages once they are complete, and include examples of syllabi as well as references to applicable books, journals, and website resources.

Laurel asked input on whether to transfer the Center’s library holdings to the main library, to improve access and use. Mary suggested that she thinks we need to give more time for faculty to learn about the Center; if we can host a SL workshop in the summer, then faculty may begin to view our office as more of a resource and might then think of coming to the Center for books and other needs. Cassie thought it might be possible to keep the books in the Center, but have them in the main library catalogue with the location listed as the Center. Amanda felt if we want people to come to the Center, then we should keep the books here. Lyn noted that we need to get faculty to view these books as a resource that would be helpful. Amanda suggested having the annotated bibliography available at meetings, and also mentioned we should have website links for this as well as Eryn’s resource guide.

Laurel mentioned that the Center has funds to send faculty to conferences, to learn about incorporating SL into classes or to present papers. She is also meeting with faculty who taught service-learning courses last fall to debrief their experiences.

Laurel asked for comments on the role and purpose of SLAC, and noted that we should make sure we’re using our meeting time to accomplish what faculty want and need. She recognized that as faculty move to different places in their careers, they may need different things from SLAC. Amanda agreed, and noted the value of practical information. Joanne mentioned that she taught a SL course first, then started learning more about it, so she’s now using SLAC to help learn more about SL in a curricular setting. Lyn thinks the advisory component is important to help ensure that the Center works for people involved in SL, and that the fellowship with other committed SL faculty is also important. Mary said that, like Women’s Studies and similar organizations, it’s important to develop a community around the organization and to work on program development; SLAC is necessary for both of those functions. Laurel asked if we are effectively doing what needs to be done, and the consensus was that we are. Amanda said she is a convert to SL after teaching two courses this fall, and that she would benefit from having structured information about student conferences, calls for papers, information about the

national conversation occurring about SL, etc. In the future, we'll post more information on the website and alert faculty with brief emails including relevant links.

Laurel taught two courses this fall, which impacted the amount of time she could spend on program development. Her plan is to use spring term to do all the planning for the year, so that when she is teaching in the fall, the bulk of that work will have been done.

Carnegie Classification

Laurel distributed a timeline and handout about Carnegie classification for the Center. Dale wants the Center to pursue this, and we are planning on submitting the application next winter. Laurel met with Jen Gilbride-Brown regarding the benefits of undergoing the process and learned that other colleges have valued the opportunity to have a campus wide conversation about community engagement. Laurel also noted that the guidelines for the classification constitute a useful assessment package. Mary pointed out that the document also can serve as a program development guide. Laurel will be surveying and compiling the document for submission and will return to SLAC at key points for input on matters like curricular service learning assessment and questions related to tenure and promotion.

A large part of the classification is assessment, and Laurel has been working on this recently and will continue to do so as part of the Carnegie process. Laurel is working on a new mission statement for the Center and will bring this back to SLAC for review. With regard to assessment measurements in place, Laurel noted a few: she described the Center's census of students and how we use it to measure the extent to which we are serving the Denison community, the use of Survey-Monkey to get feedback from community partners, and the expanded uses of structured reflection activities. She reported Eryn's idea of soliciting reflective senior narratives for one assessment piece, and having them presented at the DCA banquet. The senior narratives would be a way to see how students perceive their own development. Lyn brought up the idea of contacting students five years after graduation as part of assessment. Laurel will see what URPA does in this regard. She noted that, to achieve these life-changing goals, we need to be intentional about moving students along in their thinking about the significance of what they're doing, and help them develop a language to describe this and to recognize the limits to their contributions as well.

Wrap up

Laurel would like ideas about the process for taking tenure conversations to Advisory. She may ask Brad to meet with SLAC about this.

Next year, the Center's focus will be on education, access and literacy, including access to higher education. Laurel recommends reading [Whatever It Takes](#) by Paul Tough about the Harlem's Children Project and its focus on college awareness.

This spring, many students will be working on financial literacy in the community.

Laurel will be meeting with Natalie Pariano in the Student Activities Office to bring more students into Big Red's Big Day of community service this spring.

Next SLAC meeting will be Tuesday, February 24 at 11:30 in the Shepardson College Room.