

SERVICE LEARNING PLANNING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2006

SUMMARY

In Attendance: Co-chaired by Jerome Kukor, and Isabel Nazario.

Amy Michael, Kamal Khan, Joana Regulska, Raphael Ortiz, Roland Anglin, Jeff Rubin, Peter Guarnaccia, Monica Devanas, Monica Mazurek, Becky Sapora-Day, Susan Keith, and Martin Markowitz.

The meeting opened with Isabel Nazario recapping the discussion of the previous meeting and reviewing the seven guiding areas that were established: define language, identify current service activities, set benchmarks, identify best practices for service learning, suggest marketing and development strategies, collaboration across disciplines and assessment strategies. The goal of the meeting was to focus on the kinds of experiential learning programs that are currently taking place in schools and departments. This discussion uncovered several other issues for the committee to further explore:

- 1) Is the goal of service learning to instill a sense of civic responsibility in our students or to provide vocational training? How can its impact on students be measured?
- 2) Where does service learning fit within the umbrella of experiential learning?
- 3) In identifying service, we need to also have a clear idea of what community is being served and be able to measure our impact.
- 4) How do we structure service learning to address the “nuts and bolts” issues of how to track students and facilitate communication among faculty and community partners.
- 5) How will recommendations be implemented across schools given the rigid curriculum requirements of certain disciplines?

On the question of how service learning should be defined, there was a consensus that service learning was only one of several forms of experiential learning that should be made available to students in addition to internships and co-op programs. It is unique in that it is directly applied to coursework. To make this option available for students, some departments will have to revise a part of their curricula; however, there should be agreement on principles that carry across disciplines. It was recommended that the goal of service learning include instilling a sense of civic engagement and advocacy provided that it is not colored by any one faculty member’s own personal beliefs. There was also agreement on the need to construct a repository of all service activities including engaged scholarship to aid the central administration in its efforts to articulate how Rutgers is fulfilling its service mission to the state.

The meeting ended with Isabel Nazario informing the committee that it will be necessary to organize several subcommittees to begin to do some research and prepare to share ideas that can be incorporated at a later into a draft for the report. IN said she will be sending a list of subcommittees asking committee members to join one. The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm.