



The Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative
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INSTITUTIONALIZING SERVICE-LEARNING

HDSLCLC Teleconference Call #6

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ISCOPEs SUMMARY OF Q&A (see speaker slides for presentation posted at www.depts.washington.edu/ccph/disparities.html password: servteam)

Strategies for engaging faculty in service-learning

- Secure release time for faculty to develop service-learning. ISCOPEs found that compensation, even when nominal and primarily symbolic, is highly motivational for faculty involvement.
- Faculty modeling successful service-learning stimulates interest among other faculty. Success breeds success!
- Support faculty by helping them tying their interests and needs to service-learning (e.g., multi-cultural course component can be met through SL activities)
- Request that faculty who benefit from service-learning activities (e.g., meets a required component of their course) be involved in service-learning administration and planning.

Strategies for engaging administrators around service-learning

- Invite key administrators to service on advisory boards and committees that address service-learning.
- Invite key administrators to banner events that showcase service-learning and partnerships.

ANDY FURCO'S "SEVEN POINTS OF LEVERAGE"

1. Understand the culture of your institution – Institution cultures differ so there is not one particular way to go about institutionalizing service-learning. Rather, you need to develop your strategy according to what resonates with your institution and its mission (e.g., social justice, public works, participatory democracy).

2. Identify institutional hooks – You need to think about service-learning not solely as an objective or program in itself, but as a way to accomplish other institutional goals and priorities. Ask how service-learning can meet the objectives of the institution. Likewise, identify and address points of resistance.

3. Address service-learning institutional principles

- Have a service-learning definition (what it is and what it is not). You can't institutionalize if you don't know what it is!
- Engage high-profile faculty to legitimize service-learning.
- Offer faculty incentives (e.g., mini-grants, faculty development, learning communities)
- Provide opportunities for students to highlight and build on prior experience. Tie service-learning to long-term goals.
- Establish service-learning goals that impact a broad group of students, not just those most interested in service-learning
- Establish a center to coordinate activities, present a consistent message, etc.
- Community partners.
- Administrative supports.
- Develop a strategic plan and ask yourself what would service-learning mean within this plan? What would it look like for students, faculty, and administration? Generate multiple options for service-learning.

4. Acknowledge epistemological and pedagogical shifts are required to institutionalize service-learning. In regard to epistemology, service-learning encourages knowledge gained outside the class and from others beyond faculty. Pedagogically, service-learning supports high-quality learning, as students learn best through active engagement.

5. Avoid departmental bottlenecks

- Move beyond individual faculty and ask what service-learning means for the discipline for the school/university, etc.
- Embed service-learning into departmental goals around teaching and research
- Promotion and tenure – educate faculty and P&T committees about how to support service-learning.

6. Engage faculty by personalizing service-learning to fit their needs – e.g., link service-learning to faculty research and courses; ask faculty what they want students to learn and how service-learning can fit in; mentor faculty support (e.g., faculty-to-faculty dialogues) can highly motivate new faculty to service-learning.

7. Start small and allow time to build capacity – reduce the “overwhelm” often experienced when first engaging in service-learning. For example, begin with a 2-week unit in a course, then expand; use service-learning as a learning assessment or performance measure to evaluate how well students apply a classroom concept to a real world setting. Also, it takes about 15 years to fully institutionalize service-learning.

Three Stages in Institutionalizing Service-Learning**

- #1. Build critical mass by increasing stakeholder involvement (e.g., community, faculty, students) and supportive structures (e.g., courses)
- #2. Build service-learning quality through standards, criteria and course review
- #3. Sustain an institutional base through tenure and promotion, service-learning coordinating center, etc

** It takes 5-7 years on average to move from one stage to the next, so 15 years to fully institutionalize service-learning