

Student Affairs and University Planning Program Review Summary

Program Name	Community Service-Learning
Date of Review	Spring Semester 2011
Major Findings	The overall finding of the review is that Community Service-Learning (CS-L) is providing excellent services given the resources available to the department. The review committees recommended the consideration of additional resources to meet the increase demand for CS-L services and to allow CS-L to expand programs and services to meet identified JMU and community needs. Minor program and administration modifications were identified as needed. These are listed in the recommendations and actions section below.
Contact Person	Rich Harris, Director, Community Service-learning – harrisra@jmu.edu and 568-3463
Location of Report -Hardcopy	JMU Institutional Research website - http://www.jmu.edu/ie/SAUPProgramReviews/PR_summaries.shtml
Recommendations and Actions	<p>Goal One: Develop program outcomes and assessment plan for the following CS-L programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of academic service-learning • Federal Work Study • Alternative Break Program • Student leadership development among CS-L student staff <p>Action – Each program will identify the specific evaluation and assessment tools and timeline for collection by September 2011. Each program will then collect the data from these assessment instruments throughout the 2011-12 academic year. This information will be analyzed at the end of the academic year with a brief report citing finding and actions for improvement. This report will become part of the CS-L annual report. This will become an annual process for each program area after the 2011-12 academic year.</p>

Goal Two: Develop student learning outcomes and assessment plan for the Alternative Break Program and the Federal Work Study Program.

Alternative Break Program – The Alternative Break Program will continue to assess the student learning outcomes using the established assessment plan and ABQ instrument identified in the Findings section of this report. This information will continue to be reported, analyzed and recommendations for improvement made in the Center for Research and Assessment (CARS) reporting template (found on the N drive in the assessment folder) . A summary of this assessment and actions for improvement will be included in the CS-L annual report. Because multiple years of assessment information is now available for the ABP student learning outcomes, Misty Newman, Assistant Director for ABP along with the CS-L Assessment GA and staff from CARS will develop a multiple year student of this information, longitudinal findings and recommendations for action based on these findings.

Action – continue with ABQ assessment and use results for both program improvement and demonstration of student learning.

Federal Work Study Program - Student learning outcomes and a general assessment plan were developed during the program review period noted in the Findings section of this report. The 2011-12 academic year will be used to refine and evaluate the assessment plan by developing specific assessment instruments and piloting their implementation. This effort will be led by Walt Ghant with support from CARS and the CS-L Assessment GA. The final assessment plan with specific instruments, timeline, data collection and analysis will be developed by June 2012. This final plan will be implemented in the 2012-13 academic year and each year thereafter. Beginning in the 2011-12 academic year the Federal Work Study student learning assessment activities will be reported in the CARS reporting template (found on the N drive in the assessment folder) and a summary of the FWS assessment actions and actions for change will be included in the CS-L annual report.

Action – develop and pilot the assessment plan and instrument in 2011-12 year. Fully implement the assessment plan in 2012-13 and use the results for program improvement.

Goal Three: Update the CS-L website to better support the CS-L mission and programs, better inform users about CS-L and better facilitate student learning and development.

The web development process and timeline is currently on track to have the new CS-L web site operational by the August 8, 2011. This newly designed website will have several advantages for CS-L:

1. An attractive and functional technology invites a broader audience to service-learning.
2. CS-L purpose and goals will be clearly outlined and easy to identify.

Updated content and new features will contribute to the overall success of the website.

3. Maintenance of the website will be done Student Affairs Technical Services (SATS) are trained professionals invested in the success of the CS-L website.

Action: The new website will be operational by August 2011. To continue the successful use and update of the site the following actions will take place:

- Walt Ghant, CS-L Associate Director will serve as the coordinator of the web site and the CS-L liaison to SATS.
- CS-L will develop with SATS, the protocols and procedures and training to ensure effective operation of CS-L web site.
- CS-L will need to identify which student staff can have access to changing content on the website and how this will be done.
- Training all CS-L staff on the functions and location of information on the new site.
- Developing protocols, procedures and training to insure timely updates of website content.

Goal Four: Actions based on the faculty and student surveys.

1. The methods used in developing the Alternative Spring Break and Alternative May Break/Hurricane Katrina Relief programs; namely the ways in which they were created, supported, marketed and otherwise implemented should be documented and replicated in and beyond the CS-L office as a model for future programs in CS-L and at James Madison University as a whole due to the high (nearly 100%) perfusion of knowledge about these programs, and high rates of participation in these programs (68%) at JMU.

Action #1 – Rich and Misty will create an outline based on existing CS-L documents by August 2011.

Action #2 – Employ a student (tentatively Elenor (Sarko) Sarkodie) to research and compile ABP history and development information. Rich and Misty setup monthly meetings with student to review information and progress. Student should have draft complete by December 2011. With the final draft completed by June 2012.

Update – July 1, 2011 – Misty and Rich have scheduled a meeting with Dietrich Maune, professor in School of Media Arts and Design to his class taking on the ABP history and development as a semester project.

2. For both faculty and students who participate in CS-L programs, the most effective form of program awareness is personal contact or presentation. Although JMU prefers as a whole (University Unions Program Review) electronic media, that media may not be the richest source of participant

for CS-L. More personal interaction, informational presentations and word of mouth may mean greater participation.

- a. Spend the most efforts and resources marketing that involve personal interaction as this leads to the greatest possibility that both faculty and students will participate in CS-L programs.

Action #1 – All areas programs will take steps to increase the number of presentations each year.

Action #2 – When other forms of marketing are used, specific reasons for their selection should be identified.

- b. For students, it is recommended that some small amount of time be dedicated to examining if JMU preferred media, electronic, web, paper ,etc. can be targeted students in such a way to increase CS-L program participation. This approach would serve as a test market to an otherwise less participatory student audience.

Action – No action. CS-L does not have the resources to do this.

- c. For faculty, a modest concern is the small but significant reduction in more “personalized” methods of reaching potential CS-L faculty participants. Efforts should be developed to increase these personal forms of contacts and marketing of CS-L programs to faculty.

Action – Increase departmental presentations to faculty.

3. There will likely be fewer potential participants in areas with higher degrees of specialization and or competition. This may be visible among tenure track faculty, students attending the business school (results from non-published OIR study) and students in honor societies. Efforts to market to these groups will probably not be as successful.

Action – CS-L will follow the recommendation.

4. Explore additional ways for CS-L programs can be imbedded and supported in the “JMU learning experience” as significantly more students are reporting that CS-L is can be an important contributor to their overall JMU learning experience.

Actions

- SACs QEP may do this depending on the selection.
- Rich Harris will serve on the JMU Carnegie Community Engagement Committee for the purpose of embedding CS-L in the JMU learning experience.
- Rich Harris will meet with Mark Warner and Jerry Benson to explore additional ways to imbed CS-L programs in the JMU

learning experience.

- Rich Harris will present to the JMU Academic Council for this purpose.

5. Explore possible ways to list service-learning courses in the course schedule as students report that this would increase the likelihood of them participating.

Action – This has been explored in several times in the past and found not to be feasible at that time. This recommendation is beyond the authority of CS-L. Rich Harris will consult with Academic Affairs to see if this is desired or possible in the future.

6. An important finding of the surveys shows that over time as faculty and student CS-L program participation has increased the desire for incentives such as recognition has decreased. This author believes that is a sign of the success of the project. Psychology research shows that expected rewards have a dulling effect on motivation, whereas unexpected ones do not reduce motivation. Having said this incentives that are congruent with the types of needs of students (money and credit) and faculty (reward in the tenure process and opportunities for research), seem sensible ways to expand participation as long as they do not detract motivationally from the intent of service.

- a. Faculty continues to report rewarding service-learning in the tenure process and opportunities for research and tenure rewards as important ways to increase their participation in service-learning. This is consistent among all faculty responding. JMU needs to develop means to consistently do this.

Actions

- CS-L will continue to work with Academic Affairs to increase the consistent reward of service-learning for faculty.
- CS-L will consult with interested faculty to develop more research opportunities.
- Rich Harris will work to schedule a presentation to the Academic Council to address tenure issues.
- Rich Harris will work to schedule a meeting with Jerry Benson, Provost of Academic Affairs to discuss how including service in the new Academic Affairs mission statement might increase reward for service-learning in the tenure process.

- b. The primary rewards for students to increase participation are funding and academic credit. While these are the factors most often reported, these reports are not consistent among all students.

Actions

- CS-L will continue to offer need based trip reductions to make ABP trips more affordable.
 - CS-L currently coordinates a letter writing campaign and a minimum of one fund raising event each year to reduce the costs of ABP trips..
 - CS-L will continue to offer and expand credit bearing ABP trips with academic programs.
 - CS-L will continue to support credit bearing service-learning courses and continues to develop relationships to increase academic AB trips.
2. Faculty continue to report the same learning benefits of service-learning; Understanding and empathy of others, Personal understanding and development, and Opportunities to apply what students are learning in the classroom, however the application value increased markedly in 2011. This should be reinforced when speaking and working with faculty. Efforts to provide faculty more ways to create these learning experiences ought to enhance both student and faculty participation.

Action –CS-L will take this finding into accounting when developing faculty presentations, however all three learning outcomes will be presented.

3. There was a significantly large percentage of faculty speculating that, “not knowing the program existed” might be a potential obstacle preventing faculty participation. Efforts need to be developed to make CS-L programs better known among faculty.

Actions

- Increase the number departmental presentations to faculty.
- Continue service-learning presentations and information as part of new faculty orientation.
- Present to Academic Counsel.
- Participate in the JMU Carnegie Community Engagement Committee to make CS-L better known among the faculty.
- Develop a new faculty section on the CS-L website.

Program Review Committee Recommendations:

1. Program Administration

- Committee recommends that a specialized mission statement be developed. This will be a useful and necessary tool that will assist CS-L in identifying and achieving unit planning objectives. The current use of the JMU Mission

Statement is too broad to assist in program assessment and review. Committee suggests that learning and development outcomes be incorporated into this departmental statement. Development and refinement of such a mission statement will assist in addressing several areas that rated lower scores in the CAS standards self-assessment.

Action - COMPLETED – The CS-L staff met on June 20 and created the new mission statement below:

Community Service-Learning prepares the James Madison University community to be educated and enlightened citizens committed to positive social change by providing reflective experiential opportunities with diverse community partners.

- As the CS-L team develops a new mission statement, the committee recommends creation of a statement of ethical practices that supports the mission statement.

Action - June 20th retreat, CS-L professional staff developed value statements that support the mission statement. Walt Ghant will research professional ethical standards based on CAS standards by January 2012.

- Social constructs are appropriately addressed in Alternative Break training, via the Active Citizen Continuum. Reflection is well-emphasized. However, the committee suggests that faculty be required to obtain reflection for classroom visits rather than do this by request only.

Action – CS-L currently offers reflection services for all class based service learning faculty. Some faculty invite CS-L to lead reflection activities while other faculty lead these reflective activities themselves. CS-L feels this partnership is the most effective way to ensure quality reflection in the classroom.

- Director should stay abreast of risk management and legal issues. Training in this area should be required minimally for all first time student and staff participants, and potentially a brief “refresher” session for returning participants.

Action – Rich Harris will identify a JMU authority on risk management in order to develop a plan for an annual review and update of CS-L risk management policies and procedures. These policies and procedures will be reviewed with the CS-L staff least annually and with CS-L program participants as needed. and communicate current risk management practices for CS-L. Maggie Burkhart Evans further recommended paying particular attention to FERPA regulations

- Committee finds that training the employees and volunteers complete regarding policies and privacy laws is adequate, but there are times when it could be better organized. Creating and maintaining a set training schedule, inclusion of periodic updates on laws and liability issues as they change and clear direction on management of sensitive information would be helpful.

Action –see action above.

The committee was rather surprised by the low CAS self assessment score that was assigned to informing users and officials of legal obligation and limitations. Committee member experiences are that this is well implemented. However, this could be further addressed the periodic electronic updates. Committee is confident that the staff desires to be updated and knowledgeable on this topic.

Action – Upon follow up with Maggie Burkhart Evans, no action needed. CS-L team needs to learn more about the perceptions of accessibility among the JMU community. Interested persons may not apply to participate if they expect a special need might not be accommodated, even though the office is able to accommodate a variety of needs.

Action – CS-L will invite the Office of Disabilities Services to a staff meeting to talk about their services and what CS-L might do to make its programs more accessible.

- How do we know what needs must be addressed for Distance Learners? This area is a challenge that requires additional review. The committee recognizes it is difficult to manage local agencies. Potentially developing relationships for service in new and random cities each semester without appropriate contacts and planning time could be difficult.

Action – Do to resources and time requirements, CS-L chooses not to pursue this recommendation at this time.

- Consider the development of a closer working relationship with Fraternity and Sorority Life. Given the large volume of service work done by these student organizations, the committee feels this could be a beneficial collaboration.

Action – CS-L will provide awareness and information for long term service commitments for fraternities and sororities. As with all other groups CS-L will discourage short term one day service events unless it is initiated by a local service agency

- Committee recommends the creation of an active Faculty Service Learning group. This team could actively promote the programs campus wide and assist in program administration and development.

Action – CS-L currently offers monthly faculty meetings and a service-learning blackboard site. The idea of a standing advisory committee has been tried in the past with poor attendance. CS-L will again survey faculty for serving on a faculty Service-Learning committee. .

- Offer smaller, faculty targeted training and support workshops throughout the academic year in addition to May session training.

Action – CS-L is currently pursuing these options with CFI.

- Committee concurs that offering financial incentives for faculty participation, (some feedback received on faculty survey) is not a good idea and in direct conflict with the nature of the program. Could provide more focus on recognition instead.

Action – Agrees with financial incentives, but does not have the financial

resources to do so at this time. CS-L will explore this with CFI. CS-L believes the greatest incentive for faculty is rewarding service-learning in the tenure process.

2. Resources

- Committee supports findings and feedback that CS-L has demonstrated need for increased staffing and resources. This should be a top priority as recommendations from this program review are developed.

Action - CS-L agrees with this recommendation. The greatest identified needs are additional professional staff and resources in ABP, increased Federal Work Study funds and people and resources for faculty development.

- Committee finds that increased human, financial and space resources would better position the CS-L team to assist leaders in feeling empowered to accomplish the program mission. The staff is currently challenged by the limits on time and finances for reflection, planning, and meeting growth demands.

Action – Human and financial resources are needed– see action above. Space resources will be adequately addressed when CS-L moves to the former Rockingham Memorial Hospital building.

- Committee finds that both hardware and software within the office should be increased to support program. Both website and technology related to assessment need additional human financial resources in order to improve functionality.

Action – CS-L feels we are adequately resources in hardware and software.

- CS-L needs to further review the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and blogging in order to enhance programs and participation. This cannot be accomplished unless additional staff and funding are devoted to this effort.

Action – CS-L agrees that with additional staff and funding, they will further review the use of social media.

3. Promotion, Marketing and Awareness

- Garnering support for CS-L among Deans and Department Heads would help in promoting participation from faculty at large

Action – Rich Harris will increase more departmental presentations to the identified groups above.

- Consider targeting education efforts toward specific colleges that have low involvement.

Action – Based on results from faculty and student surveys, low involvement may be predicated on higher degree of specialization and/or competition. These areas should not be targeted. Other low involvement colleges will be considered for target presentations.

- Survey results indicated that a lack of reward or incentives contributes to faculty desire to be involved. Committee

recommends that CS-L highlight personal stories of faculty participants and communicate the impact the experience has on the self and profession. Place these personal stories on website or Facebook page.

Action – CS-L will identify appropriate faculty. For those that agree, CS-L will interview them.

- Continue to encourage word of mouth promotion of CS-L opportunities. This is a strong indicator that programs are becoming an integral part of the general university culture.

Action – CS-L agrees and will continue.

- Given the desire among students for service opportunities that allow them to participate with groups of friends, we recommend that this be considered as a separate promotional area; i.e., advertise service as an activity available to individual students and their friends and not just groups from classes or student organizations.

Action – CS-L disagrees with this recommendation as these “clicks of friends” will inhibit the learning in the service experiences. This recommendation will not be acted on.

- Committee finds that while CS-L does an admirable job of encouraging and supporting scholarly contribution to the profession, given the many accolades and awards received and being seen as a model program; the staff should consider publishing articles to further promote their good efforts. Committee recognizes that staffing and resources would need to be increased in order for staff to devote time to this important effort.

Actions

- CS-L is currently writing down its history and development recording history in written form.
- Rich Harris and Walt Ghant are interested in writing and publishing the CS-L knowledge base, history and best practices given release time and appropriate resources.

- Need to raise awareness of scholarship opportunities as economic hardships continue to be a factor that could inhibit student participation in some programs.

Active – CS-L ABP currently has trip cost reduction application available to all students that sign up for lotteries.

- Overall, need to improve all advertising and promotion efforts related to the office and programs. The JMU website, CS-L website, Twitter, Facebook, and the Breeze all need to be utilized and have an improved and updated presence. In particular, the website needs to:
 - Look better
 - Function to manage class sign ups
 - Provide support for better individual reflection

- List ongoing events and news
- Highlight and incorporate social media outlets
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Action – These areas will be addressed with the new CS-L website. Specific actions are listed in Goal Four.

Final Committee Comments

All members of the committee were impressed with the results and data submitted for review. The committee concurs that the Office of Community Service-Learning is functioning at a high level and producing important and quality work. The engagement of students, faculty, staff and community in departmental efforts is impressive. The award winning programs and staff JMU’s CS-L are to be commended for their consistent stellar performance. This office is nationally and internationally recognized as a model program, and all committee members are proud to be associated with the office, and that this department is such a positive reflection on the larger university. The impact that CS-L programs have on the JMU participants and community members that benefit from their efforts is inspirational. They are doing the right thing, day after day, and we thank the entire staff for their passion, commitment, and expertise.

Action Plans