

ABSTRACT

Service-learning is an integral part of Carson-Newman academic culture. Although the College faculty have long practiced service-learning, to date there has been no evaluation of these practices, particularly in the area of student learning outcomes. Therefore, this QEP seeks to utilize faculty development and training and innovative assessment techniques to institute a core of service-learning courses utilizing reflection as a key component. A cohort of 15 Bonner Service-learning Faculty Fellows will design and implement 15 new or revised service-learning courses that are subjected to external assessment. Areas of student learning that we seek to measure and impact are Critical Thinking and Creative Problem Solving, Civic Engagement, and Openness to Diverse Perspectives. In addition campus wide service events and consultation services will be available to other faculty members to enhance and improve service-learning across all course sections.

INTRODUCTION

Service-learning is necessary and vital part of the culture of service on Carson-Newman. Although the College offers approximately 65 courses that integrate some type of service-learning experience, representing 103 class sections at this time, the College has limited means of supporting the faculty and students in these endeavors. The approaches and quality vary greatly across courses, while faculty and students receive no outside support for the development and implementation of these courses and have no systematic way of evaluating the impact on student learning outcomes.

Currently, the capacity to expand the number of service-learning courses and to improve the quality of existing courses is limited due to a lack of additional staffing and resources to put toward the support of Service-learning. If we are to strive to meet our “unique mission of helping students reach their full potential as educated citizens and worldwide servant leaders,” the College must support the important opportunities offered by service-learning for education both inside and outside the classroom.

Carson-Newman’s strategic plan states that “We will develop additional opportunities to facilitate the blending of faith and learning into curricular and co-curricular programs.” Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service driven by faith praxis with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Service-learning has many positive benefits for students, the community, and the College.

The distinctive element of service-learning is that it enhances the community through the service provided, but it also has powerful learning consequences for the students or others participating in providing a service. Service-learning is growing so rapidly because we can see it is having a powerful impact on young people and their development. It is a dynamic process,

through which students' personal and social growth is tightly interwoven into their academic and cognitive development.

Implementing broader and higher quality service-learning across all disciplines at the College is necessary to provide spiritual formation that incorporates theological knowledge, personal experience, and faith praxis for students. According to scholars Eyler and Giles (1999), with the service-learning model "experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action."

An overview of the current academic research indicates several positive reasons for engaging in service-learning that extend beyond positive student and community impact. Educational institutions have reported that effective service-learning programs increase retention rates, are financially sustainable, have a positive community impact, and provide positive learning outcomes as reported by both students and faculty.

Moreover, service-learning is at the heart of the ethos of Carson-Newman College and its inception as a school to serve the educational needs of Jefferson County, Tennessee. We are an institution founded on a commitment to service, that seeks to honor the five ideals celebrated on its seal and throughout the College's history: Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Justice, and Courage. Engaging in scholarship that also enhances one's fellow human is at the core of the Christian calling to higher education that is embraced by Carson-Newman.

The student body presently participates in a large amount of community service. The Bonner Center recently completed a survey that estimated altogether, Carson-Newman students in engage in over 300,000 hours of community service each academic year, not including ministry service focused on evangelism and Christian education. However, our students need additional support to establish connections between their call to serve and their vocation. Establishing curricular connections with service via service-learning courses is essential in order to emphasize and model a commitment to one's vocation as service, especially to the Body of Christ, the Church, and also to those persons who have been marginalized and wounded by our society.

We also must conduct academic training in the context of an intentional community of faith which will emphasize a balanced approach to spiritual, personal, professional, and interpersonal growth and development, and incorporating experiential service-learning is vital to providing "hands on" encounters that expose students to the integration of faith, learning, and service. The most effective learning does not occur when students are in a passive mode. Learning will be maximally effective when traditional methods are complemented by active learning in a context where there is the possibility of mentorship and apprenticeship relationships with a professional the student can emulate.

Student Learning

Although students at Carson-Newman have long been formally engaged in various

forms of curricular and co-curricular service-learning, we have not systematically implemented reflective strategies in service-learning courses. There exists a need for a systematic identification of what qualifies as service-learning, as well as a set of measures that will measure the impact of service-learning and reflection activities on student learning. These goals are central to our QEP.

Service-learning is become a central component to the best practices of higher education. The need to develop young professionals who create meaningful and sustainable communities is central to the mission of Carson-Newman College. Service-learning is a way to create a focused education that inculcates a balanced approach to spiritual, personal, professional, and interpersonal growth and development by integrating academic coursework with application, reflection, and service to the community.

Community service has long been an important contributor to the learning and personal development of students. Annarelli (1999) has observed that, "Volunteer community service has long been a dimension of the extracurricular experiences of college students in the United States through campus-based service clubs, ministry groups, national civic or service organizations, and various fraternities and sororities" (p. 2). However, service-learning is a relatively new pedagogical approach, first appearing in research in the mid-1960s. Service-learning developed into a full-fledged movement in higher education in the 1970s and 1980s. Howard (1998) summarized the explosion of faculty interest in service-learning with these comments: "Some see service-learning as a way to prepare students for active citizenship. Others perceive it as a means to involve universities in socially responsible action. Still others find in it a panacea for the perceived shortcomings of the information dissemination model that prevails in higher education" (p. 21). Service-learning now is a remarkable presence in higher education (Butin 2006).

The growth and centrality of service-learning is also evident in the founding (in 1985) and expansion of Campus Compact. Carson-Newman is a member of the Tennessee chapter. Campus Compact is a national higher education association intended to develop and support campus based civic engagement. Campus Compact's (<http://www.campuscompact.org>) membership now includes "more than 1,100 college and university presidents representing some six million students who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education."

As faculty, students, and administration have begun to observe the effectiveness of service-learning as an integrative learning tool, research on best practices and outcomes has grown. One of the most referenced documents is "Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning," created by the Wingspread advisory group (Honnet & Poulsen, 1989), who state an effective program:

- o provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience;
- o articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved;
- o allows for those with needs to define those needs;

- o clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved;
- o matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances;
- o expects genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment;
- o includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals;
- o insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved; and
- o is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.

The goal of this QEP is to build upon Carson-Newman’s current practices into a robust, effective standardized service-learning program that capitalizes upon and measures current successes while also providing increased capacity and support for expanding service-learning campus wide.

Service-Learning Defined

Most definitions of service-learning include references to course goals or learning objectives that integrate classroom learning and community service, collaboration between the campus and the community (the servers and those being served), and the opportunity for reflection. Howard (1998) states that “academic service-learning is a pedagogical model that intentionally integrates academic learning and relevant community service” (p. 22).

The methods for conducting service-learning are many, including curricular or extra-curricular, credit-bearing, integrated with course goals, an “add-on” course component, or a separate track within a course. One key component of service-learning is that it “crosses so many boundaries that it offers new opportunities to think more consciously and more creatively about relationships, including those of faculty and student, disciplinary and interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary knowledge, campus and community” (Weigert 1998, p. 9).

In a frequently-cited definition (that is compatible with the practice of service-learning at Carson-Newman College), Bringle and Hatcher assert that “service-learning is a course-based, credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility” (1995, p. 112). Service-learning provides motivation for learning, raises analytical academic questions concerning issues related to the area of student service, and enhances critical thinking skills (Beckman, 2004).

Focusing on its active, cooperative, and reflective dimensions, Ash, Clayton, and Atkinson (2005) see service-learning as “a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to

promote academic enhancement, personal growth, and civic engagement. Students render meaningful service in community settings that present them with experiences related to academic material. Through guided reflection, students—individually and in groups—examine their experiences critically and articulate specific learning outcomes, thus enhancing the quality of their learning and of their service” (p. 51). The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) defines service-learning as (cited in Annarelli, 1999): “Any carefully monitored service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience. Service-learning programs emphasize the accomplishment of tasks that address community or global issues and include features which foster participants’ learning about larger social issues and an understanding of the reciprocal learning and service which can occur between students and community members” (p. 4).

Weigert (1998) identifies six key elements that distinguish service-learning from other forms of community service: “In the community, the student provides some meaningful service (work), that meets a need or goal that is defined by a community (or some of its members). On the campus side: the service provided flows from and into course objectives, is integrated into the course by means of assignments that require some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives, and the assignment is assessed and evaluated accordingly” (p. 5). Although the emphases may differ in each of these definitions, each is predicated on enhancing student learning outcomes in significant ways, including the areas emphasized by the Carson-Newman College QEP: critical thinking and problem solving, civic engagement and leadership, and multiple perspectives on issues and openness to diverse perspectives with understanding of the centrality of service to the theological and faith praxis.

Reflection in Service-Learning

One of the key components of service-learning is the incorporation of reflection. Reflection is the means by which students get the most possible benefit through the integration and assessment of reflection activities in service-learning (Ash and Clayton, 2004; Ash, Clayton, and Atkinson, 2004; Eyler, 2000; Hatcher and Bringle, 1997; Rogers, 2001; Steinke and Buresh, 2002). Reflection is integral to taking service from charity to a life changing, curricular component that draws on academic learning.

The centrality of reflection is pervasive in service-learning literature. The key components of service-learning include:

- “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives” (Hatcher and Bringle, 1997, p. 153).”
- ...helping “students connect what they observe and experience in the community with their academic study” (Eyler, 2001, p. 35). ¶
- “the ability to step back and ponder one’s own experience, to abstract from it some meaning or knowledge relevant to other experiences” (Hutchings and Wutzorff, 1988, p. 15).”
- “It is through careful reflection that service-learning—indeed any form of experiential education—generates meaningful learning” (Ash, Clayton, and Atkinson, 2005, p. 50).

- “reflection involves a hard balancing act. A teacher must be willing to intervene, pose tough questions, and propose often uncomfortable points of view for a student’s consideration. A teacher must also be ready to back off and give support in order to nurture the independence and autonomy that are the lifeblood of experiential learning processes” (1998, p. 54).
- “the best reflection is continuous in time frame, connected to the ‘big picture’ information provided by academic pursuits, challenging to assumptions and complacency, and contextualized in terms of design and setting” (Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede, 1996, p. 21; and echoed by Ash and Clayton, 2004; Felton, Gilchrist, and Darby, 2006; Hatcher, Bringle, and Muthiah, 2004),
- “the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences; learning is the creation of meaning from past or current events that serves as a guide for future behavior” (Weisskirch, 2003).
- “it is important to create space in our courses for reflection on the learning process itself” (Clayton and Ash, 2004, p. 67).
- “Reflection is the hyphen in service-learning; it is the process that helps students connect what they observe and experience in the community with their academic study” (Eyler, 2001, p. 35).
- “reflection acts as a bridge between conceptual understandings and concrete experiences” (Felton, Gilchrist, and Darby, 2006, p. 38).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

One key objective of this QEP will be to encourage students to impact of their service-learning, and establishing student learning outcomes. Traditionally, self-reports have been found to be a very weak measure of the more complex learning objectives hoped for in service-learning. The error of equating student satisfaction with amount of learning is a common one. Therefore, we seek to utilized measures and reflection activities that demonstrate to professors and instructors that they have learned what is set out in the course’s intention such as “greater understanding, ability to apply their knowledge, problem solving skills, and cognitive development” (Eyler, 2000, p. 13).

The best outcomes are associated with more rigorous reflection that incorporates the following (Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 140):

- linking experiences to learning objectives
- scheduling time regularly for reflection
- using journals that encourage reflection and critical thinking, such as personal journals, double-entry journals, directed writings, and structured class discussions
- inviting feedback and assessment
- providing plenty of guidance for the activities and a clear understanding of expectations, tasks, and the evaluation criteria (Goldsmith, 1996).

Effective service-learning emphasizes the connection between experience and knowledge with the opportunity for reflection before, during, and after service. The outcome is student ability to apply subject matter to real life, being open to new and challenging perspectives, and gaining an emotional coaching relationship with the academic and administrative staff members involved (Bringle and Hatcher, 1999; Eyler and Giles, 1999; Mills, 2001).

Reflection is a skill that is learned and one that prepares students to learn from experiences. Adhering to good practice, such as integrating service-learning objectives with course objectives and incorporating structured multiple opportunities to practice reflection, is the key to successful service-learning. Research by the Higher Education Policy Institute indicates that effective service-learning has a positive impact upon student learning. In the literature, a longitudinal study with a national sample of 22,236 students at 19 undergraduate institution found that students participating in service-learning were positively impacted on each of 35 different outcomes measuring academic development, civic values, and life skills. “Participation ...during the undergraduate years appears to *enhance* academic development” (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000). Therefore, the student learning outcomes of the Carson-Newman QEP focus on three areas: critical thinking and problem solving, civic engagement and leadership, and multiple perspectives on issues and openness to diverse perspectives.

Further results from this seminal study guide the foci of this service-learning QEP. The “the single most important factor associated with a positive service-learning experience appears to be the student’s degree of interest in the subject matter” and observed that “the frequency with which professors connect the service experience to the course subject matter is an especially important determinant of whether the academic material enhances the service experience, and whether the service experience facilitates understanding of academic material” (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000, p. iii). They suggest that “service-learning is effective, in part, because it facilitates an increased sense of personal efficacy, an increased awareness of the world, an increased awareness of one’s personal values, and increased engagement in the classroom experience—as well as a heightened sense of civic responsibility . . . Both the quantitative and qualitative results underscore the power of reflection as a means of connecting the service experience to the academic course material and strongly support the notion that service-learning courses should be specifically designed to assist students in making connections between the service experience and the academic material” (iv).

Under the auspices of two national research projects, supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and the Corporation for National Service (CNS), Eyler and Giles (1999) also examined the impact of service-learning on student outcomes. Using focus groups, interviews and surveys with more than 1500 students from 20 colleges and universities, they documented that “service-learning makes a difference—and higher-quality service-learning makes a bigger difference” (xvii). In keeping with findings from earlier studies (cited in this review), they demonstrated that reflection is the fundamental link between service and learning: “The quantity and quality of reflection was most consistently associated with academic learning outcomes; deeper understanding and better application of subject matter and increased knowledge of social agencies; increased complexity of problem

and solution analysis; and greater use of subject matter knowledge in analyzing a problem” (Eyler & Giles, p. 173).

Sample Student Learning Outcomes

Our QEP student learning outcomes were developed after an extensive review of the literature on service-learning, and informed by the service-learning QEPs of other institutions (including Eckerd College, Mercer University, Rice University, and Lipscomb University). Measuring the learning portion of service-learning has its challenges. As stated previously, self-report of student satisfaction has previously been an important indicator. However, this QEP’s focus is on the reflective portion of service-learning, meaning our outcomes will go beyond student satisfaction. It is our goal to provide support for faculty and staff development that will allow for all new service-learning courses and those desiring to be recognized as service-learning courses in the catalog, will have individualized assignments from the subject matter of each course, as well as common assignments and assessments that all service-learning courses will implement.

Over the course of the College’s QEP, faculty designated as Bonner Service-Learning Fellows will design reflective service-learning courses that address specific course objectives and the following student learning outcomes:

1) Critical Thinking and Creative Problem Solving

SLO 1.1 – Students will connect knowledge (facts, concepts, theories, etc.) from their academic study/field/discipline to their service-learning experiences.

SLO 1.2 – Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze their own and others’ assumptions about an area of service, identifying key issues, analyzing and evaluating evidence, and articulating a logical argument about an issue.

SLO 1.3 – Students will demonstrate the ability to identify real-world problems and create multiple solutions to address these from various perspectives.

2) Civic Engagement and Leadership

SLO 2.1 – Students will demonstrate an understanding of social problems and practical knowledge about community decision making.

SLO 2.2 – Students will demonstrate leadership in civic activities.

SLO 2.3 – Students will demonstrate the ability and commitment to work collaboratively across and within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.

3) Multiple Perspectives on Issues and Openness to Diverse Perspectives

SLO 3.1 – Students will demonstrate comprehension of the issues relevant to their service-learning course (e.g., environmental, global, or social issues).

SLO 3.2 – Students will demonstrate the ability to critique the assumptions and attitudes they bring to service-learning issues.

SLO 3.3 – Students will demonstrate an ability to recognize, understand, and value the diverse perspectives of others.

SIGNIFICANCE AND URGENCY

In order to establish baseline information about faculty and student practices in regard to service-learning at Carson-Newman College, our Community Service and Service-learning Committee completed a community service and service-learning survey that was distributed campus wide. The survey indicated that 35 faculty and 15 staff currently conduct service-learning in their courses. These faculty members represent 65 courses, 101 course sections. In an academic year, Carson-Newman students contribute an estimated 48, 500 hours of service in the community through service-learning courses. However, there is no standardized procedure for determining service-learning, its impact, or how effectively it is carried out. There is no way to insure that service-learning is effective for our students, that best practices are being followed, that the service is of benefit to the campus, community, or student learning outcomes.

One distinguishing characteristic of Carson-Newman is reflected in our new slogan, “Higher Education for a Higher Purpose.” Service is a defining characteristic of Carson-Newman, one that has brought the College recognition and funding for such high quality endeavors. Focusing on service, a positive characteristic of our current culture, is necessary to fully integrate our higher purpose into our higher education through academic service-learning.

In addition, the impact of service-learning on students goes beyond simply a call to serve, but intersects with other higher level goals for our students. Service-learning is not only an end, but also a means to greater critical thinking, deeper learning, and truly graduating world citizens. This will hopefully be reflected in future evaluations such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Graduating Student Evaluation. Items 11m. and 11o. on the NSSE, which measure *To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? Solving complex, real-world problems (11m). Contributing to the welfare of your community (11o).*

IMPLEMENTATION AND SCOPE

Overview of Year One:

Fall:

- *Launch QEP on campus;*
- *Offer Fall Faculty Workshop on Service-learning*
- *Appoint QEP Advisory Committee;*
- *Plan spring workshops;*
- *Choose first cohort of Service-Learning Fellows;*
- *Establish process for annual review and assessment of QEP;*
- *respond to recommendations of SACS On-site Committee*

Spring

- *Hire Service-Learning Consultant in Bonner Center*
- *Winter Faculty Workshop offers Reflective Service- Learning and Assessment workshops with outside consultants;*
- *Select common assessment tools for new reflective service-learning courses;*
- *Review and assess first year of QEP;*
- *Plan for campus wide day of service and learning incorporating Operation In As Much*
- *Make necessary revisions for Year Two.*

Year One: Launching the QEP

In the fall, the College would offer the Faculty Development Workshop with a focus on service-learning and invite an outside consultant or Campus Compact and its resources to lead the Fall Faculty Workshop. At this time, Provost Kina Mallard would introduce the Bonner Service-Learning Fellows, a program open to faculty to receive intensive training on Service-Learning and some monetary compensation for developing service-learning courses. We will publish information about the QEP on the College's website and disseminate information at faculty and staff meetings.

In the Fall, Provost Kina Mallard will announce the appointment of the QEP Director. The QEP Director, in consultation with *ex officio* members of the QEP Advisory Committee, the Director of the Bonner Center and Provost Mallard, will invite two faculty members, one academic dean, and one student to serve with them on the QEP Advisory Committee. This committee will advise and support the QEP Director; facilitate communication about the QEP with the campus community; assist with the selection of Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows; contribute to planning the workshops with outside consultants; and serve as a clearinghouse of ideas about service-learning pedagogy and programming. Fall Activities of the QEP Director and Advisory Committee During Fall 2010, the QEP Director and Advisory Committee will collaborate with the relevant offices in reviewing the recommendations of the On-Site Committee and modify the proposed QEP as necessary; plan the Spring 2011 orientation and training sessions with outside consultants who have expertise in reflective service-learning and assessment; select the first cohort of five Service-Learning Fellows; and establish a process for the annual review and assessment of the QEP.

Spring In January, the College will add a part-time Service-learning Consultant (SLC) in the Bonner Center for Service-learning and Civic Engagement in order to assist faculty and Bonner Service-learning Faculty Fellows with constructing courses and syllabi that incorporate reflective service-learning and in improving current service-learning practices. The SLC will act as primary liaison with community partners, acting as a matchmaker between community partner needs, faculty requests, and student course needs. Faculty Winter Workshop will focus on Reflective Service-Learning. In addition, two additional workshops on reflective service-learning will be offered in the Spring, led either by the SLC or a hired consultant.

Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows will receive stipends, a total of 15 faculty members over the duration of the QEP. These 15 Fellows will attend all reflective service-learning and

assessment workshops, design and offer new reflective service-learning courses, and assess student learning outcomes in these new courses using a common set of measurement tools. Because it is our intention that students become engaged in service-learning early in their careers at Carson-Newman, we will encourage the Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows to develop introductory service-learning courses that meet the particular needs of first- and second-year students. The first cohort of five faculty selected as Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows will each receive \$150 for attending the February 2011 and March 2011 training sessions and the May 2011 assessment workshop (a total of \$450 for attending all three sessions). We expect Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows to revise existing courses significantly or design new reflective service-learning courses and offer these new courses either in the Fall or Spring semester of the following academic year. The Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows will receive a \$500 stipend for offering these new courses in Year Two of the QEP.

The SLC or an outside consultant will visit our campus in May of the first year Spring Semester to lead a faculty workshop and to advise the QEP Director and Advisory Committee as they make plans to review and assess Year One of the QEP. The QEP Director will report the Year One findings and recommendations to the campus community and determine necessary modifications for Year Two of the QEP.

During the Spring Semester, the QEP Director, SLC, and Advisory Committee will also plan with Campus Ministries for Operation InAsMuch (OI) the following Fall to become a campus-wide day of service, where classes are suspended. Faculty will collaborate with the SLC to develop service experiences that can be incorporated into academic coursework. Class sections, majors, or other subgroups can be matched with a service opportunity during OI that will then be integrated into the academic course work of a particular course. Faculty will be encouraged to serve alongside their students, creating an intense reflective experience for those courses that are involved.

Students not in a course taking advantage of the service-learning opportunities will be matched with a site for service in a manner similar to the current manner employed for OI. The weekday service will allow students to volunteer a longer amount of time for a more productive experience for students and for the community partners. During OI, faculty may opt to participate in service with their students, or they can take part in service-learning mini-workshops on specific service-learning topics, offered by the SLC. OI is currently has a high level of student leadership as well as input from Campus Ministries and Student Affairs. These collaborative relationships will continue, with student leadership being central to OI and students receiving CLW credit for their OI participation.

Year Two: Incorporating Reflection in Service-Learning Courses

- *Select second cohort of five Service-Learning Fellows*
- *First cohort of Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows will offer five new reflective service-learning courses.*
- *Offer Reflective Service-Learning and Assessment workshops;*

- *Monitor new courses.*
- *Carry out Operation InAsMuch with new service-learning component added.*
- *Review and assess second year, and make necessary changes based on findings.*

Fall To accommodate the increasing number of students and faculty who will be involved in service-learning as a result of our QEP, and (ultimately) to conduct a successful QEP, we will add an student federal work-study student, and two Community Connections scholarship students who will act as the principal source of administrative and logistical support for the QEP Director, particularly with Operation InAsMuch. The offices overseeing assessment will allocate approximately ten hours per week from its staff to assist the QEP Director with ongoing QEP assessment activities. The QEP Director, SLC, and the Advisory Committee will plan two Spring reflective service-learning workshops with an outside consultant, plan and carry out mini-workshops during OI for interested faculty, select the second cohort of five Service-Learning Fellows; and monitor the delivery and outcomes of the five new reflective service-learning courses introduced into the curriculum by the first cohort of S-L Fellows.

Spring The QEP Director, SLC and Advisory Committee will organize three spring workshops with outside consultants, two on reflective service-learning and a third on assessment of student learning outcomes. The QEP Director and the Advisory Committee will regularly confer with the SAC Reaccreditation Committee as they review and assess the activities of Year Two (e.g., outcome assessment data, distribution of new service-learning courses, effectiveness of faculty support and financial resources) and use their findings to determine necessary modifications for Year Three of the QEP. The QEP Director will disseminate these findings to the campus community.

Year Three: Building on Strengths

Fall

- *Select third cohort of Service-Learning Fellows;*
- *Offer five new reflective service-learning courses.*
- *Operation InAsMuch*

Spring

- *Use Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows as internal consultants;*
- *Review and assess third year of QEP, and make necessary changes based on findings.*

FALL In collaboration with the appropriate offices, the QEP Director will prepare an interim program review and assessment documenting outcomes and findings through the project so far. The Director will also interpret the implications of these data and possible modifications of the QEP as it continues to evolve and disseminate this information on campus. Activities of the QEP Director and Advisory Committee During Fall 2012, the QEP Director and the Advisory Committee will: monitor the delivery and outcomes of the five new reflective service-learning

courses introduced into the curriculum by the second cohort of S-L Fellows; select the third (and final) cohort of five Service-Learning Fellows; and review and assess the activities of Year Three and determine whether to modify or revise the planned activities of Year Four of the QEP.

In Year Three, the QEP Director will tap the growing expertise of the first and second cohorts of Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows by inviting them to participate in leading the spring seminars for the third (and final) cohort of Service-Learning Fellows. They will share their research on best practices and the strategies they have found successful in delivering their reflective service-learning courses; offer a seminar on “What We Have Learned So Far” about designing reflective service-learning courses; and organize a session on measuring the outcomes of reflective service-learning.

Year Four: Expanding the Reach of Reflective Service-Learning

Fall

- *Add five new reflective service-learning courses to curriculum.*
- *Operation InAsMuch*

Spring

- *Expand web-based, digital, and print Service-Learning Resource Center; review and assess fourth year, and make necessary changes based on findings.*

We will continue to monitor the delivery and outcomes of the new reflective service-learning courses introduced into the curriculum by the S-L Fellows and add five new reflective service-learning courses to the curriculum. In the Spring, the Service-Learning Administrative student workers through federal work-study and Community Connections will oversee and assist the Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows as they catalog and assemble resources that they have successfully incorporated in their reflective service-learning courses or identified through their research. These resources will be included in an expanded web-based, digital, and print Service-Learning Resource Center available to all faculty and students. The QEP Director and Advisory Committee and SLC in consultation with the appropriate offices, will review and assess the activities of Year Four and use their findings to determine whether to modify or revise the activities planned for Year Five of the QEP. Their findings will be disseminated to the campus community.

Year Five: Embedding Reflective Service-Learning in the Curriculum

Conduct comprehensive review of the QEP and its impact on student learning outcomes and our academic program.

The QEP Director will coordinate data collection for a comprehensive analysis of the QEP. Along with the SLC, previous consultants will return to campus to help us review and evaluate the outcomes of our project. As a consequence of this review, the QEP Director and Advisory

Committee will make recommendations about how best to implement the findings from our QEP and embed reflective service-learning in our curriculum, perhaps considering such ideas as: offering an annual summer workshop that is planned, organized, and delivered by Bonner Service-Learning Faculty Fellows to orient new faculty to service-learning and give them tools and support for designing and assessing new reflective service-learning courses; giving a special designation to service-learning courses that incorporate significant reflective components and requiring that every student complete at least one such designated course during his or her academic career at the College; and offering a Certificate in Service-Learning.

Commitment To And Support Of The Topic

Several key players have expressed support and willingness to participate in the Carson-Newman Service-learning QEP. Faculty from diverse academic backgrounds including, Larry Osborne of Psychology, Julie Rabun of Art, Mike Bundy of Graduate Counseling have expressed support and interest for the entirety of the QEP. Members of the committee for Community Service and Service-learning such as Ray Dalton, Shelia Gaines, Allison Jones, Beth Fiske, and Bonner Center Staff members have been integral in developing the ideas and activities proposed within this plan. A wide range of departments on campus, such as Education, Nursing, Counseling, Religion, Psychology, Sociology, Linguistics, History and Political Science, Biology, and others have a substantial history of service-learning as an integral part of their pedagogical approach and would easily integrate the QEP into their courses.

Other key constituencies have pledged their support. The Bonner Center for Service-learning and Civic Engagement will offer substantial support and resources, as available. Students, along with Campus Ministries and Student Development were the originator of the service-learning ideas in Operation InAsMuch. Due to Carson-Newman's heart for service that is a part of its mission and vision, formalizing service-learning in our courses seems a natural transition and a part of Carson-Newman's institutional DNA.

ASSESSMENT

"The creation of an assessment strategy is as important as the articulation of the learning goals and associated objectives, and all should be developed in parallel during the design of the reflection activities" (Ash & Clayton, 40).

The Carson-Newman College QEP is designed to strengthen the academic program by incorporating structured reflection in credit-bearing service-learning courses. Through the creation of 15 new reflective service-learning courses with individualized subject-matter content but a common strategy of enhancing the reflective dimension of service-learning, the goals of the QEP are to have a significant impact on students' critical thinking and creative problem-solving, perspectives on issues and openness to diverse perspectives, and the quality of their civic engagement.

Although the College has had, since its founding, a commitment to and involvement with community service, it is only since 2008 with the founding of the Bonner Center for Service-

learning and Civic Engagement that we began to emphasize service-learning pedagogy. Our assessment plan will include mapping measures to outcomes.

Service-Learning Fellows will develop classroom assessment techniques (CATs) appropriate for their courses and collect the data from these activities for the assessment process. They will also collect data with the agreed-upon, common set of measures that will be used in all 15 new service-learning courses. CATs will be integrated into course objectives, and then be measured both through evaluation of final projects and papers of learning produced by students and via collection of objective data.

Faculty will be introduced to the *Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education* (VALUE) rubrics developed by the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2010). The purpose of these training sessions is to give our first cohort of Service-Learning Fellows sufficient knowledge and information to collaborate with the QEP Director, QEP Advisory Committee, and Office of Institutional Effectiveness in selecting and articulating common assessment measures for the new reflective service-learning courses being developed under the auspices of the QEP.

The Fellows will directly assess student learning outcomes using multiple measures of multiple dimensions of student learning; identify areas for improvement, based on analysis of assessment results; and identify modifications in their courses to address areas in which improvement is needed. They will provide documentation of these assessment results and their impact that will be incorporated in annual reports prepared by the QEP Director. Based on their experiences and the assessment data, each cohort of Service-Learning Fellows will make recommendations to each subsequent cohort about ways to improve the design and delivery of reflective service-learning courses.

In addition, the QEP director, SLC, and QEP Advisory Committee will take a random sample of work produced by students in service-learning courses, such as journals, cumulative papers, or other course work related to service-learning and evaluate these produced products using VALUE rubrics each year. The committee will produce a comprehensive report on the outcomes of these VALUE rubric evaluations to see if the new service-learning courses are meeting the stated course objectives.

Once the *NSSE* is administered annually in the spring to all freshman and seniors, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will prepare reports annually, comparing students in Reflective S-L courses to comparable students who have not taken these courses. Suggested relevant items by other service-learning researchers include items: 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 6d, 11e, 11m.

Finally, community partners involved in service-learning with Carson-Newman College will complete evaluations at the end of each project to gauge the effectiveness of the service-learning from multiple perspectives.

Other Outcomes

One area of key concern, outside of student learning outcomes, is retention rates among the student body. There is evidence that service-learning improves retention and graduation rates,

and results in a higher likelihood for students to enter service related fields upon graduation. The correlation of this data among students who complete or do not complete service-learning courses at Carson-Newman would also be collated.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

		Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
Salaries	Student Federal Work Study	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
	Community Connections Students*	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00
	Service Learning Coordinator	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 14,000.00
Stipends	QEP Director	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
	S-L Fellows-Workshop Attendance	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00		
	S-L Fellows-Delivery of new S-L Courses		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	
Conferences	SACS Annual Conference	\$ 500.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00
	Service-Learning Conferences		\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00	
Consultants	Reflective Service-Learning Workshops	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00			
	Operation InAsMuch Workshops	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
	Assessment Workshops	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00			
Other	Programming Costs	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
	Incentive funding		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
	Totals	\$ 28,650.00	\$ 37,400.00	\$ 28,900.00	\$ 28,650.00	\$ 25,650.00

*Already budgeted in Community Connections Funds

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