VCU: MAKING IT REAL

RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL AND APPLIED LEARNING

Faculty Senate May 2, 2017
RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL AND APPLIED LEARNING
STEERING COMMITTEE CHARGE

• Creating an inventory of current REAL practices and activities
• Provide criteria for defining REAL activities as part of the curricular experience of undergraduates
• Recommend a process for establishing new REAL activities with necessary academic components
• Use data to inform recommendations and link REAL activities to important student success outcomes
• Involve and engage the internal and external community in the implementation recommendations for REAL activities for undergraduates to ensure buy-in, coordination and support of the effort
• Submit recommendations for consideration/adoPTION
RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL AND APPLIED LEARNING STEERING COMMITTEE

FACULTY

• KRISTINA ANTHONY (MATH)
• DAVID COOGAN (ENGLISH)
• HERB HILL (UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH)
• SHAJUANA ISOM-PAYNE (STUDENT SUCCESS — WILDER SCHOOL)
• PAMELA PARSONS (NURSING)
• ZEWELANJI SERPELL (PSYCHOLOGY)*
• DEBORAH NOBLE-TRIPLETT (ACADEMIC AFFAIRS)*

STUDENTS

• ARZAN DOTIVALA (ENGINEERING)
• SHANIQUA THORPE (HUMANITIES & SCIENCES)

* CO-CHAIR
THEMES: RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL AND APPLIED LEARNING

- Career Driven
- Create
- Discover
- Serve
NSEE Criteria: Experiential Learning

- Intention
- Preparedness & Planning
- Authenticity
- Reflection
- Orientation & Training
- Monitoring & Continuous Improvement
- Assessment & Evaluation
- Acknowledgment

Source: National Society for Experiential Education http://www.nsee.org/8-principles
CAREER-DRIVEN:

RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL & APPLIED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

• DESIGNED TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH EXPOSURE TO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT
• CAN BE PAID OR UNPAID; CREDIT BEARING OR NOT
• PROPOSED CRITERIA:
  • AT LEAST ONE MENTOR FROM THE FIELD (UNIVERSITY AND/OR SITE SUPERVISOR)
  • INTENTION
  • PREPARATION
  • REFLECTION & INTEGRATION
  • EVALUATION & GRATITUDE
• EXAMPLES
  • INTERNSHIPS
  • PRACTICA
  • CO-OPS
  • WORK-STUDY*
• VCU EXEMPLARS

* WORK STUDY COULD APPLY IF ALL OTHER CRITERIA ARE MET IN A WORK STUDY EXPERIENCE
CREATE:

RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL & APPLIED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

• DESIGNED TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH
  • THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFORM AN ORIGINAL CREATION INTO REALITY
  • USING AN ACADEMICALLY-ANCHORED APPLICATION IN REAL SETTINGS

• CAN BE PAID OR UNPAID; CREDIT BEARING OR NOT

• PROPOSED CRITERIA:
  • SOCIALLY EMBEDDED
  • PROMOTES PROFESSIONALISM
  • COMMITMENT TO PROGRESS
  • ENGAGE MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES
  • REFLECTION & REPORTING

• VCU EXEMPLARS
DISCOVER:

RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL & APPLIED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

• DESIGNED FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE COMPELLED
  • BY THE CONCEPTS OF INQUIRY, EXPLORATION, AND INVESTIGATION
  • TO ENGAGE WITH NEW KNOWLEDGE THROUGH AN ACADEMICALLY–ANCHORED INVESTIGATION
  • TO EXPLORE IDEAS, EXPERIENCES, AND INFORMATION THROUGH CRITICAL LENS
  • TO DEVELOP LIVING/LEARNING SKILLS

• CAN BE PAID OR UNPAID; CREDIT BEARING OR NOT

• PROPOSED CRITERIA
  • FACULTY GUIDED/FACULTY MENTORED

• EXAMPLES
  • UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
  • EDUCATION ABROAD
  • WORK STUDY*

• VCU EXEMPLARS

* WORK STUDY COULD APPLY IF ALL OTHER CRITERIA ARE MET IN A WORK STUDY EXPERIENCE
SERVE:

RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL & APPLIED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Designed to provide students with
  - The opportunity to engage in off-campus experiential learning through community work or place-based education programs
  - Using an academically-anchored application in real settings

- Can be paid or unpaid

- Must be credit bearing***

- Proposed Criteria:
  - Faculty monitor and evaluate for quality standards outlined by the NSEE criteria
  - Deepen connections to academic work done in degree programs, broaden connections to knowledge and skills beyond the major, and create opportunities to practice and improve communication, management and leadership skills
  - Take the form of service-learning courses (variable credits, 1-3) that include a minimum of 20 hours of service and that meet the standards outlined by the Office of Service Learning in the Division of Community Engagement: clear definition, quality control designation criteria, banner attribute, faculty training, student orientation, resources for instructors, links to research/scholarship, and assessment and program evaluation.

- Examples
  - Academic Service Learning

- VCU Exemplars

*** The workgroup did not include non-credit bearing opportunities in its consideration. This will be an ongoing point of discussion given the rich and growing opportunities at VCU

Faculty Senate May 2, 2017
STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:
RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL AND APPLIED LEARNING

- Communication
  - Vetting and Engagement
- Administration: Central vs. Academic Unit
  - Central office
  - School/College Liaisons
  - Other Unit Liaisons (Career Services, Community Engagement)
- Governance Structure
  - Proposal Review & Approval
  - Faculty and Student Engagement and Buy-in
- Tracking Activity & Completion
  - Credit bearing: REAL Attribute
  - Non-Credit bearing: Completion Notation
  - Transcript Notation
- Resources: People & $$$

- Implementation: Scaling Up
- Assessment: How do we know it’s effective?
- Overcome barriers to access
- Role and Engagement of Faculty
  - Overcoming Initiative Fatigue
  - Building Buy-in
  - Institutionalizing Activities
- Defining “Program of Study”
- Capstone Courses
- Externally Funded Opportunities
- Rethinking Student Driven and Staff Driven Opportunities
- Technology Interface
**Next Steps**

- **Finalize Recommendations**
- **Share & Grow Inventory**
- **Communication & Vetting**
  - Council of Deans
  - Faculty Senate
  - Board of Visitors
  - REAL Subcommittees
  - Associates Forum
  - SEM Leadership
  - Student Affairs
  - Units engaged in REAL activities
  - New Student Orientation
  - Who’s Missing?
- **Growing the Momentum: Fall 2017**
  - Implementation Plan