

**Audit Report for Goal 2: Advance experiential learning  
FY 2012**

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Dr. Lindsey Eberman – Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation

Dr. Kimberly J. Bodey – Department of Kinesiology, Recreation & Sport

Dr. Yasenka Peterson – Department of Applied Health Sciences

**Overall, we are making significant progress to advance experiential learning, particularly in the area of assessment and measurement. In addition to developing programs and financially supporting new projects, the Goal Team is more effectively measuring outcomes that demonstrate this advancement (95% response rate on Community Engagement Inventory). We can accurately report that 66% of students were exposed to community engagement in their courses resulting in over 1.4 million hours of engagement in 2010-2011. Furthermore, almost 29% of the sections resulted in an undergraduate thesis or referred publication. These findings, and those discussed below, suggest that the institution has thoroughly embraced this goal and is working toward implementing all of the initiatives.**

**At the onset of the Strategic Plan, only 3 initiatives existed for Goal 2. That number has nearly tripled, primarily due to the bold nature of the objectives.**

The eight initiatives, for 2011-2012, to achieve Goal 2 are:

*Initiative 1a. Infuse experiential learning as a core component in all academic programs.*

*Initiative 1b. Center for Student Research and Creativity*

*Initiative 2. Apply the science of learning to the learning of science*

*Initiative 2a. Climate Control Plan*

*Initiative 3. Coordinate and elevate leadership studies*

*Initiative 4. Enhance legacy programs and create icon services and programs that reflect the changing needs and interests of today's students*

*Initiative 5. Enhance the co-curricular experience and value of participation*

*Initiative 6. Student Government Association (SGA)*

**Initiative 1a** has made progress in more accurately accounting experiential learning opportunities in academic programs. The Community Engagement Inventory has helped to synthesize the data for the entire goal; however, in regard specifically to domestic and international travel, the Initiative has made moderate but steady gains. Concerning study abroad, even with open and substantiated support, we have yet to make substantive advances. We suggest the Initiative Implementation Team survey undergraduate students about barriers to participation to identify ways to better engage students in study abroad. Furthermore, we believe that success with this initiative is not only measured by participation rates, but also in the descriptive and quantitative data students share about their program satisfaction and specific learning outcome achievement. In future evaluations, we would like to see student satisfaction and exit survey data to assist in articulating success for this initiative.

**Initiative 1b** was initially included in Initiative 1, but with the development of the Center for Undergraduate Research and Creativity, and the appointment of a Director, the initiative has evolved significantly. Dr. Steiger and the implementation team have made progress in creating an infrastructure and support system for the Center. Further, the Center has started to allocate funds for student projects. The Center is also in an information gathering phase to solidify baseline data prior to setting benchmark gains for the coming years. We believe the interconnectedness with the College of Graduate and Professional Studies will significantly aid this initiative.

**Initiative 2** has made progress in 2011-2012, particularly concerning growth in research projects and sections of courses using the SENCER model. Although the Implementation team is working to incorporate faculty from other departments in the model, it appears that we have made few gains. At present, this initiative appears to be the work of few people, even with efforts to communicate and publicize SENCER programming. We worry about the sustainability of this initiative without additional faculty involvement and student participation. In addition, the strategic planning funds are the primary resource for this initiative. Without external funding to support the active group members, this initiative may suffer from diminished returns.

**Initiative 2a** has made substantial progress in 2011-2012. In just one cycle, the Climate Action Plan has saved the University \$22,000 and reduced carbon emissions by 10% by avoiding electrical use, reducing trash tipping fees, and selling recycled materials for new manufacturing. Again, it appears this is the work of few key personnel and we worry about the sustainability; however, with such significant gains in one year, we think marketing and publicity of the progress can integrate more members of the campus in this initiative. Furthermore, the faculty and students involved in this project continue to seek alternative funding sources and we commend their efforts.

**Initiative 3** has worked to evaluate the current campus climate for leadership and develop the necessary infrastructure for the Leadership Consortium. After substantial information gathering and exploration, the Initiative team has made tangible progress toward achieving the goal. Positions for a faculty fellow and administrative support have been created and financially supported. Curriculum has been developed and is in the process of implementation. An accurate account of the University's leadership activities has allowed the Initiative team to establish attainable benchmarks. However, a failed internal search for the Faculty Fellow raises some concern. A position like this may help to attract a quality external candidate to campus.

**Initiative 4** has significantly narrowed its focus in 2011-2012. In particular, the Initiative team has concentrated its efforts on the addition of Legal Services and Recreation Center Weekend Events and the advancement on the Tandem and Tricycle Races. Budgets have been approved on 3 of the 4 programs and progress has been made; however, we urge the Initiative Implementation team to broaden the scope of the Tandem and Tricycle Races beyond the focus of Greek participants to include other campus groups to have more impact throughout the campus community. Success of these programs should not only be measured by participation. Measures of satisfaction and the relationship to student retention should also be evaluated.

**Initiative 5** has experienced multiple iterations in an attempt to find an effective means of recording and reporting students' co-curricular activities. Although the Initiative team has significantly increased the number of student organizations within the reporting warehouse (70 in 2008 to 170 in 2012), the group is still working on the best way to produce the Co-Curricular Record. The Initiative team is committed to a third iteration of the Co-Curricular recording and data transfer, and a customized program should be in effect by Fall 2013. We recommend the Initiative team develop a campus wide training plan to acculturate faculty and students to the recording and reporting processes.

**Initiative 6** has narrowed its focus to objective and measurable goals. The Initiative team has focused on InShape ISU, an Emerging Leaders Program, Awareness Campaign, Media Services, Student Organization Funding, and Spirit activities. We currently struggle to define spirit activities as experiential learning and although we think this is an important part of the student experience, we suggest SGA focus more on reporting their other achievements. The group has seen substantial gains in Student Organization funding requests and has allocated almost \$20,000 in Fall 2011. The outreach to students groups throughout campus and SGA specific initiatives should be commended.