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FRAMEWORK FOR THE SHORT LEARNING PROGRAM: SERVICE-LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COURSE TITLE: Short Program for Service-Learning and Community Engagement (SPSLCE)

SUBJECT AREA: Theory and Practice of Service-Learning as pedagogy within an institutional Community Engagement environment

NQF LEVEL: 9

ENTRY LEVEL: An honors degree or equivalent thereof, and relevant working experience in higher / further education

DURATION OF COURSE: Three X 2 full day seminars spread over 1 semester. (The first program is planned for June, August and October 2009).

PURPOSE:

Community Engagement (CE) has gained substantial ground as a core function of higher education institutions (HEI's) in the last decade in South Africa (SA). In line with international trends, the meaning attached to CE is that universities interact with the rest of society through teaching, learning and research. Increasingly, there is a need for managers/practitioners who are proficient in understanding the political landscape of CE in HE, have the competence to participate in contemporary academic debates, and contribute to the existing stock of knowledge on the subject. Furthermore there is a need for efficient managers/practitioners to implement and manage CE programs in an institutional environment. The latter includes service-learning (SL) and other forms of curricular engagement as well as community-based research methodologies.

The purpose of the short program is twofold:

1. to equip service-learning practitioners to explore, design, implement and assess a service-learning module in a particular academic program and,
2. to assist staff developers/community engagement managers in designing a service-learning (SL) capacity-building program for implementation at their HE institutions or

faculties, based on independent intellectual consideration of key aspects of higher education community engagement.

In cases where a SL capacity-building program has already been implemented, critical reflection, review and improvement of the training program will be included.

TARGET GROUP:

Staff of higher education institutions who are interested in practicing service-learning as a teaching approach and/or managers/administrators who are responsible for faculty development programs aimed at building capacity for community engagement and service-learning.

Students in higher education studies who wish to specialize in the area of service-learning and community engagement.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

The outcomes of this course are aligned to the characteristics of a master level program (NQF 9). On completion of the programme the participant will be able to:

1. Articulate independent academic theses regarding contemporary perspectives on international and national policy directives for CE in HE, and service-learning in particular.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of and key requirement for sustainable partnership-building within the local and regional development context.
3. Apply the principles of collaborative planning, implementation and assessment with partners in the service sector and community through a thorough evaluation of alternative approaches that may be followed.
4. Develop an innovative curriculum for a SL capacity building programme in which SL features as an experiential, transformative pedagogy.
5. Embark on inter-disciplinary, problem-solving scholarly work within the application context of SL and CE.
6. Design a strategy for quality management and benchmarking of SL and CE in terms of what could be regarded as good practice in the South African context.
7. Implement reflective practices and reciprocity in learning in the SL curriculum, based on an advanced insight into the value of reflection as a developmental learning practice.
8. Design appropriate mechanisms for assessment of student learning in a SL environment.
9. Evaluate and select key components for a code of good conduct, ethics and risk management for community-based learning and research.
10. Demonstrate the capacity for Mode 2 research, and a thorough understanding of the principles underlying systematic, participatory research into and through SL and CE.

In addition, the candidate will demonstrate that s/he is acquainted with, and is able to reflect on the following **more advanced** aspects related to capacity-building of SL module convenors. The participant will be able to:

1. Reflect on a macro-vision of HE CE in SA and the place of SL within it.
2. Advocate for the appropriate institutional positioning of SL and CE.

3. Contribute to contemporary discourses on open, collaborative modes of knowledge production.
4. Participate in the debate on SL in relation to notions of "sustainable development".
5. Consider the establishment of an institutional learning community and mentorship programme for SL.
6. Discuss transformational curriculum development in accordance with current educational trends.
7. Implement adult, experiential, co-operative and action learning strategies in the SL context.
8. Utilise online or E-learning and multi-media in SL.
9. Establish the value of SL as scholarship through theory-based research.
10. Develop a SL research project outline, utilising a research design and methodologies of the learner's choice. This component may be transferred to the combined research methodology and mini-dissertation module, MPhil (HE) programme at the University of Stellenbosch if all the requirements for such a study have been attained.

Aligned to the requisite critical cross-field outcomes of higher education, the following outcomes are also supported in this program:

Participants will be able to demonstrate that they have gained the necessary competencies to:

1. develop a macro-vision on the integration of teaching-learning, service and research;
2. identify and solve problems pertaining to the development of SL modules (i.e. problem-solving skills);
3. work effectively in a team, using critical and creative thinking to design a SL capacity-building program (i.e. cooperative skills)
4. organize and manage themselves and their activities, namely planning, preparing, conducting and recording the SL process (i.e. self-efficacy skills);
5. collect, analyze, organize and critically evaluate information on community engagement activities on their campuses (i.e. research skills);
6. communicate effectively in order to build trust among all involved in the SL capacity-building context (i.e. communication skills);
7. demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems and understanding the impact of SL on lecturers, students and external partners;
8. use technology effectively and critically in the SL capacity-building process (e.g. online learning);
9. demonstrate reciprocity in a compound, diverse learning context; and most importantly,
10. demonstrate a sense of social responsibility and an understanding of the need to participate as a responsible citizen in the life of local, national and global communities.

METHODS OF PRESENTATION:

The theoretical content of the course will be presented as a resource based component where participants will need to do literature study in order to prepare them for contact sessions. Participants are also required to perform practical tasks linked to literature prior to contact session which they will report in the form of presentations and essays.

The contact sessions will include oral interactive Power Point presentations based on readings by the presenters.

LIST OF PRESENTERS:

Prof Rona Newmark, Coordinator: Service-Learning and Sexuality Education, Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University

Ms Antoinette Smith-Tolken, Deputy Director: Community Interaction (Service-Learning & Community –Based Research), Community Interaction Division, Stellenbosch University.

In addition, guest lecturers from leading universities will be invited to do presentations.

FREQUENCY OF PRESENTATIONS: One course per year in the second semester

TYPE OF CERTIFICATION: A certificate of competence will be awarded to students who pass the course with an average of 50%.

BUDGET: The cost of the short program will be afforded by the Division for Community Interaction (DCI) for 2009. A registration fee of R200 will be applicable to all staff of Stellenbosch University which might be subsidized by the DCI. Participants and their institutions will be responsible for their own travel expenses. Hereafter, and to all external participants, a course fee of R6000 will be payable by each participant.

NUMBER OF CREDITS AWARDED: 24 credits are awarded on the basis of 48 contact hours and 240 learning hours in total. The formula used to calculate credits is: 1 credit=2 contact hours + 8 self study/preparation hours.

ASSESSMENT:

Contemporary, authentic assessment methods will be used.

Formative: Continuous assessment that includes a variety of tasks and activities. Participants are expected to study literature, apply it in practice and be able to present their work to peers during contact sessions. Each of the sub-modules is formatively assessed through a mini-assignment that demonstrates the participant's level of understanding and critical evaluation of its applicability in practice in their particular context. The assignments take any of the following forms: practical tasks, presentations, reflections or essays. It includes the SL research project outline, utilising a research design and methodologies of the learner's choice.

Summative: An exam equivalent multimedia portfolio of evidence (representing a culmination of mini-assignments of the formative assessment). The portfolio will reflect the achievement of the envisaged outcomes. The final summative evaluation takes the form of presenting a CE plan for their particular institution and demonstrated proficiency in the planning of a service-learning module according to theoretical grounding and the good practice requirements subscribed to in this module. If the summative module assessment is successfully completed and a mark of at least

60% is obtained, the module might be presented as an elective in the MPhil (HE) in the Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

The following themes pertaining to SL and CE are appropriately identified, explained, distinguished, reflected upon, communicated, critically evaluated and/or practically applied in the context of a learner-centered and community-oriented service-learning and community engagement environment for a particular institution where the SL capacity-building program or module will be implemented.

1. Policy directives for CE and SL.
2. Theoretical and conceptual grounding of CE and SL
3. Experiential and action learning strategies for SL and CBR.
4. A partnership model and partnership-building for SL and CE.
5. Collaborative planning, implementation and assessment with partners.
6. Curriculum and programme development to include SL.
7. Quality management and benchmarking of SL and CE.
8. Reflective practices and reciprocity.
9. Assessment of student learning in SL.
10. Risk management strategies for SL and CE.
11. A code of good conduct and ethics for community-based learning.
12. Research into and through SL and CE.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	50%
Assignment 1: Institutional, theoretical and conceptual perspectives	15%
Assignment 2: Reflection and framework for Partnership Development	15%
Assignment 3: Development of a SL module <u>or</u> a SL Capacity Building Course and the integration of a research idea	20%
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
Final portfolio of evidence including a research idea, topic or outline.	50%