

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

FACULTY PRESENTATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
“SERVICE LEARNING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA”

Action Requested: Receive the presentation.

Executive Summary: Students in service-learning courses partner with community organizations to address community-identified needs. However, unlike volunteer work, service-learning experiences also enable students to learn course content just as textbooks, classroom discussions, lectures, and labs do. Therefore, students not only learn to serve but they also serve to learn.

Service-learning has a positive impact on students' understanding of course content, as well as leadership skills, social responsibility, and acceptance of diversity. Students in service-learning courses are also more likely to graduate. Alumni who participated in service-learning are not only more involved in their communities but also indicate higher satisfaction with their college experience.

Two years ago, the University of Iowa started training and supporting 30 faculty members in the service-learning approach. Each participant in the weeklong Service Learning Institute was required to create a new service-learning course and teach it for three semesters. Faculty members became so convinced of the academic and service-learning benefits to students and communities, that instead of 30 new courses, they developed and taught 49 new courses. During the 2006-07 academic year, more than 1,273 students devoted more than 28,000 hours of service through these service-learning courses. By enabling community partners to tap into the skills, energy, and commitment of University students and faculty members, service-learning also enhances the University's visibility and positive presence in the state and beyond.

Professors Teresa Mangum and Craig Just, together with two of their students, will describe specific service-learning courses. Dr. Mangum earned her Ph.D. in English at the University of Illinois and joined the faculty of the University of Iowa in 1990. She is an Associate Professor of English and the Faculty Associate Director of the Oberman Center for Advanced Studies. Professor Mangum was the recipient of the President and Provost Award for Teaching Excellence in 2004 and the University's nominee for the Carnegie/CASE U.S. Professor of the Year Award in 2006. She is a well-known scholar of Victorian literature and culture and a leader in the emergence of the interdisciplinary field of critical animal studies.

Dr. Just earned his Ph.D. in Environmental Science from the University of Iowa in 2001. He is an Associate Research Engineer in the Iowa Institute of Hydraulic Research and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Professor Just works at the interface of environmental analytical chemistry and applied engineering exploring topics in water quality, poverty reduction, and community building in poorer countries. Dr. Just is also the Vice-President for Research and Commercial Development at Ecolotree®, Inc., an Iowa-based engineering company that designs, installs, and maintains engineered forests at regulatory-permitted sites, such as landfills and chemical spill sites.