

**Minnesota State University Moorhead
Academic Service-Learning Center & Advisory Board**

Academic Year 2005/2006 Annual Report

I. Description of the MSUM ASL Center & Advisory Board and 2005/2006 ASL Goals

The MSUM Academic Service-Learning (ASL) Center and Advisory Board exist to “work collaboratively with faculty, students, and community organizations to initiate and provide quality academic service learning opportunities that enrich the education and development of MSUM students while fulfilling real needs within the local community”

(www.mnstate.edu/asl/asl/mission.htm). In the 2005/2006 Academic Year, the ASL Center Director was Kathy Scott, Joe Rapp served as ASL Student Coordinator, and Ian Cole worked with the Advisory Board in his capacity as an Honors Apprentice. ASL Advisory Board members were:

- Amy Phillips, Social Work, College of Education & Human Services, & ASL Advisory Board Chair
- Liz Rowse, Corrick Center, College of Education & Human Services
- Steve Bolduc, Economics, College of Social & Natural Sciences
- Michelle Malott, Biosciences, College of Social & Natural Sciences
- Theresa Hest, Communication Studies/Film Studies/Theatre Arts, College of Arts & Humanities
- Craig Ellingson, Communication Studies/Film Studies/Theatre Arts, College of Arts & Humanities
- Scott Seltveit, Construction Management, College of Business & Industry
- Mary Carlson, Community Representative, Meritcare

During the 2005/2006 AY, the Advisory Board, with Center staff, met at least twice per month to carry out ASL goals and objectives and to generally discuss ASL development and activities on the MSUM campus.

The ASL Advisory Board set the following goals for the work of the Center and Board during the 2005/2006 academic year:

- 1) *To expand the use of ASL on campus,*
- 2) *To develop routine mechanisms for assessing ASL outcomes and impact,*
- 3) *To further the recognition and use of ASL resources on and off campus, and*
- 4) *To maintain accurate data on the use of ASL on campus.*

II. 2005/2006 Objectives and Activities Related to ASL Advisory Board Goals

In an effort to achieve its first goal--to expand the use of ASL on campus--the Advisory Board had as an objective *to develop and implement an ASL grant program*. The ASL Board used funds from its budget through the Office of the VP for Academic Affairs to offer four competitive grants of \$1000 each to encourage new ASL courses on campus. Four faculty were awarded grants and are offering their courses in the Fall 2006 semester. Awardees were Laurie Blunsom, Women's Studies, Jason Anderson, Communication Studies, Andrew Chen, Computer Science and Information Systems, and Kevin Anderson and Katherine Anderson, Special Education. Each of these faculty will be discussing her/his course and ASL outcome data at a brown-bag lunch session in February 2007. The Board hopes to offer these grants every other year, with the next round occurring in the 2007/2008 academic year.

A second objective involved the *development of an ASL video* which could be used in classes, campus meetings, and other venues to promote and answer questions about ASL. The Board worked with Tom Brandau, Film Studies faculty, to produce a video as created through a

service-learning project by students in one of Professor Brandau's classes. The video was premiered at the Board's ASL awards reception in April 2006.

The Board also *hosted the annual "community partners breakfast."* This event is held in the fall of each year and brings together representatives from community agencies with MSUM faculty and students. The purpose is to encourage community/campus connections for ASL course development. The September 28, 2005 breakfast was well attended by community partners and MSUM faculty, and the film studies students used it as an opportunity to interview community members, faculty, and students about their perspectives on ASL to be used in the service-learning video.

In response to its second goal--to develop routine mechanisms for assessing ASL outcomes and impact--the Advisory Board purchased the Campus Compact booklet, Assessing Service Learning and Civic Engagement for the ASL grantees and *required grantees to implement assessment mechanisms for determining the impact of ASL* on student learning outcomes, on community partners, and on their own pedagogy. The Board hopes that the grantees will have recommendations for how best to assess ASL learning outcomes that the Board can then use to develop a more useful tool for gathering outcome data related to student learning and faculty pedagogy (currently, ASL data is primarily descriptive and output-oriented in nature). In addition, Mary Carlson, community partner Board member, and Amy Phillips, began *construction of an ASL impact survey* to be completed by community partners upon conclusion of a service-learning project. It is anticipated that this survey will be administered during the 06/07 academic year.

In relation to its third goal--to further the recognition and use of ASL resources on campus--the Board set and implemented the following objectives:

- a) *To host the annual ASL awards reception.* This event takes place in the spring of each year to honor those who make exemplary use of ASL in the categories of academic department, faculty member, student, and community partner organization. The March 27, 2006 reception was attended by approximately 50 students, faculty, administrators, and community partners. Awards were given to: Lila Hauge-Stoffel (outstanding contribution by a faculty member); Communication Studies/Film Studies/Theatre Arts (outstanding contribution by a department); Jill Kuntz (outstanding student contribution); People Escaping Poverty Project (outstanding contribution by a community partner); and Mary Carlson (outstanding contribution by a community partner).
- b) *To provide consultation and support services* to faculty and community partners interested in developing or improving ASL courses. In this area, the Board chair and other Board members met as requested with individual faculty members interested in ASL. Faculty requesting consultation came from Nursing, the Corrick Center, Social Work, Women's Studies, Computer Science and Information Systems, and Foundations of Education. In addition, Amy Phillips, at the request of Tracy Clark from Social Work, provided several hours of training for the Naytahwaush Charter School which was interested in developing an across-the-curriculum service-learning program for the school.
- c) *To continue updating and expansion of the ASL website and other resources* for use by faculty, students, and community partners. In this area, Joe Rapp and Ian Cole worked on expanding the list of sample ASL course syllabi for posting to the ASL website. In addition, Michelle Malott worked on development of a new ASL brochure

which will be available in the 06/07 academic year. Joe Rapp maintained the ASL website and also maintained the community partners list.

- d) *To provide presentations and informational meetings about ASL on and off campus* through venues such as College meetings, new faculty orientation, course presentations, and meetings with community partner agencies. Board Chair Phillips promoted ASL through presentations at new faculty orientation in August 2005 and through presentations at meetings of the College of Education & Human Services and the College of Business & Industry. Board members Craig Ellingson and Theresa Hest discussed ASL at meetings of the College of Arts & Humanities while Steve Bolduc and Michelle Malott promoted ASL in the College of Social and Natural Sciences. Joe Rapp and Ian Cole also did a poster presentation on ASL at the Spring 2006 Student Academic Conference.

In addition, Honors Apprentice Ian Cole, with input from the Board, constructed an interview survey for use with community partners to determine their interests/needs related to ASL. He and Phillips visited three community agencies, then Cole surveyed an additional six agencies on his own. These visits allowed agencies to learn more about MSUM ASL and also provided more specific information to the Advisory Board about possible points of connection between agencies and academic departments.

Regarding its fourth goal--to maintain accurate data on use of ASL on campus-- the Board continued *compiling data on ASL* courses, faculty using ASL, agencies in which students were placed, services provided, and number of service-learning hours completed.

During the 2005/2006 academic year:

- 19 faculty offered 20 ASL courses. In these courses;
- 847 students engaged in service-learning activities and completed;
- 9,462 hours of service-learning activities in the community;
- Examples of service-learning projects included fundraising for local non-profits, offering health care seminars, map making for schools in Tanzania, serving meals at local shelters, community organizing around local neighborhood issues, making print images of refugees, producing public relations videos, and voter registration drives.

III. Future Directions

As of the beginning of the 2006/2007 Academic Year, the ASL Center and Advisory Board are in transition since Kathy Scott is no longer the Center Director and since none of the Board members is able to be reassigned from departmental duties as Board Chair. Six Board members are currently rotating Chair's responsibility on a monthly basis and have received 1 credit overload each for this work. The Board will continue to promote and support ASL on campus and hopes to continue work on activities related to goals it set last year. It also plans to discuss strategies for developing a permanent structure to support ASL on campus which might include a half-time Director's position and additional support staff time. The Board continues to function as a core of ASL enthusiasts and have enjoyed, and will continue to enjoy, their work together.