

SUMMARY

ESLARP 2007 annual retreat Anita Purves Nature Center, Nov. 19th

The Strategic planning part of the retreat generated the following guidelines/ideas and needs:

Strategic Planning breakout: General ESLARP Operations (ESLARP leadership and future leaders)Results:

- ESLARP bylaws should be created.
- Replace rotating faculty director with an academic professional model where the Executive Director works closely with strong CAC.
- Outcomes and in-house skills should be continuously recorded.
- ESLARP's place in the U of I accreditation process.

Strategic Planning breakout: Service learning and faculty (Geographic scope – Springfield/Sao Tome)

Results:

- The idea that ESLARP can be the handle that holds the umbrella encompassing several different projects was discussed. Action research University of Illinois was suggested as an additional brand name. Examples of projects to include under this umbrella were: Sao Tome, Springfield, Chicago, C-U and others. Many projects share the approach of ESLARP and ESLARP faculty are involved in other projects that could benefit from being part of the umbrella. Additionally we discussed that it might be fundable and a good way for ESLARP to grow using as our model is used in new cities..
- Guiding principles for projects that could fit under the umbrella includes:
 - Communities first
 - Action as a necessary part of research
 - Working with disadvantaged communities
 - Service learning
 - Outreach

Strategic Planning breakout: Community partners (Empowerment vs. technical assistance)

Results:

- We discussed the fact that ESL is still adjusting to our changed model (RAs and campus staff vs. NTAC). We need to remember the history and also explain this evolving relationship to new RAs and faculty.
- A need for offering training and networking opportunities for our partners was identified.

- As we discussed how to move towards empowerment the idea of an “ESLARP portfolio” was discussed. This would be a way to show partners “what we do well” and be a starting point for discussion and definition of the roles of each side of the partnership in a shared project.

Strategic Planning breakout: Student outreach and development (Supporting the student experience)

Results:

- Look into the possibility of creating an ESLARP reading group to supplement the existing faculty based service-learning reading group that currently meets on Tuesdays with participation from some ESLARP CAC members (Funding might be available from Center for Teaching Excellence). This would create a setting for RAs, staff and faculty to discuss, share experiences and learn about ESLARP and service learning and action research.
- It was suggested to combine a need for “social bonding” with a need for broad campus wide outreach. It was also suggested to have an RA-flyering event. It would be a social event that would include intensive flyering across campus to reach out to departments that we have not worked with in the past.
- It was suggested that we take a close look at ways to improve orientations and reflections for outreach weekends.
- Early recruiting of new RAs and possibly set up mentoring relationships with current RAs.