

# ***The Neumann University Core Experience***

**October 2012**

## **Newsletter**

**Volume 2, Issue 2**

Dear Colleagues,

The most significant changes in the Neumann University Core Experience may be practically invisible. Although students (and perhaps faculty and staff) may continue to think of Core as a set of required courses, the most significant change shifts the focus of Core to specific learning outcomes promoted in the classroom and in every experience on campus throughout the student's entire career. Outcomes introduced in the classroom within a specific course are developed through clubs, teams, plays, musical performances, trips, art exhibits, honor societies, invited speakers – in a word – everywhere, through every encounter! This issue of the Core Newsletter focuses on the ways that the Student Affairs unit is intentionally fostering the Core Learning Outcomes: ***Comprehension, Contemplation, Conscience, Compassion, and Communication!***

This issue also announces several upcoming workshops designed to promote understanding and development of the Core Learning Outcomes.

Sincerely,

*Sr. Pat Hutchison, OSF*

### **Professional Development Opportunities** (see page 6 for details)

#### **Service Learning**

November 15th  
4:30 - 6:00 PM

#### **Student Survey Information**

December 13th  
4:30 - 6:00 PM

#### **Faculty Senate Workshop**

January 15, 2013  
10 AM – 3 PM

- ◆ ETS Testing results
- ◆ Fostering Meaningful Reflection
- ◆ Promoting Ethical Reasoning

### ***The Neumann University Core Experience Task Force***

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Please contact members of the Core Task Force with questions and suggestions.

### **Inside this issue:**

Task Force	page 1
Student Affairs Department Supports Core Learning	pages 2-5
Faculty Feedback Desired	page 5
Core Experience Website	page 5
Professional Development	page 6
Questions & Answers	page 6

# **Student Affairs Department Supports the Core Learning Outcomes**

Student Affairs offices have taken seriously the invitation to promote the learning outcomes of the Neumann University Core Experience. The following paragraphs highlight a few of the current and ongoing initiatives.

## **Comprehension: Think critically, creatively, and analytically**

*Analyze and solve complex problems; demonstrate quantitative reasoning and scientific literacy; and explore the relationship of contemporary and historical events and issues.*

The Residence Life office recently initiated Scholars! Scholars! is a bi monthly activity that invites Resident Assistants to think critically, creatively, and analytically by identifying and sharing something new that they learned in class or about themselves during the weeks preceding the meeting.

Students are organizing and attending various trips which increase awareness of historical events and issues related to multiculturalism and diversity; eg. Viewing the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Franklin Institute and exploring ancient cultures and modern social issues at Penn Museum.

At their Orientation Leader Training, student leaders process case studies to explore scenarios they may encounter in their work with first year students.

## **Contemplation: Engage in meaningful reflection**

*Apply the principles and values of the Catholic Franciscan tradition to personal, professional, and societal questions and issues; engage in self-reflection; embrace life-long learning; discern career and vocational choices; and recognize and appreciate creative expression.*

Participants in the Institute for Student Leadership Formation experience two Leadership Conferences each year (August and January) and attend (and often present) learning modules throughout the semester. Students then write reflections on what the content means in their individual lives and how this material will help them to “give back” in the future.

Awareness Posters are displayed in every Living and Learning Center. These posters pose *Eleven Questions for Community Living and Learning at Neumann University*.

Student leaders organized a prayer service and night of reflection around the events and healing process of 9/11. Approximately 125 students attended this event!

Orientation Leaders who serve as mentors to students in INT 101 classes reflect regularly on this experience. Such reflection has led to wonderful discussions on what it means to be at Neumann and our point of difference.

At their monthly meetings, Emerging Leaders (First year students identified as potential leaders), reflect on and discuss their experience as new students and aspiring leaders.

Inspired by an article entitled “The Power of the Pen,”

[http://www.athleticmanagement.com/2011/10/20/power\\_of\\_the\\_pen/index.php](http://www.athleticmanagement.com/2011/10/20/power_of_the_pen/index.php)

four teams have decided to introduce the process of journaling. The men’s soccer team used this technique to process through the pre-season segment of the year. This is a time of transition for all team members; the coach thought it would help team members learn and understand their roles better. The volleyball team has used journaling throughout the season, and it has helped the coach better understand the issues and challenges team members face on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. The coach has responded to the women’s reflections and offered guidance on a variety of issues related to athletics, personal development, and spirituality. Men’s Basketball and Women’s Lacrosse plan to incorporate similar programs as their seasons start up later this year.

### **Conscience: Act ethically and responsibly**

*Demonstrate personal, professional, and academic honesty; accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions; engage as responsible members and leaders of diverse groups; and exercise ethical decision-making, informed by the Catholic Franciscan tradition, in a variety of settings.*

The Neumann University student judicial system stresses restorative justice and emphasizes the importance of students taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Relatively few students have requested a formal hearing, evidence that students are grasping the concept of “acting ethically and responsibly.”

*Healthy Relationships*, a program presented each year by Residence Life, defines healthy relationships for resident students in a Catholic/Franciscan context using Theology of the Body and Pre-Cana material, as well as best practice ideas from Women Against Rape (WAR) and student development theory.

Students organized information tables and engaged in a Drunk Driving Simulator to raise awareness of the dangers of drunk driving.

## Compassion: Respect all of creation

*Honor the worth and dignity of each person; interact respectfully in the local and global community; engage in service to promote the common good; and demonstrate environmental awareness and stewardship.*

When students are in crisis, their needs are heightened and respect for their dignity and individual sensitivities are of particular importance. Compassionate care is at the core of the job of the Wellness Educators. This involves recognizing the worth of each student who comes into the Wellness Center and helping them to feel respected and know that they are cared for by our community and by our staff.

Student leaders, through the Institute for Student Leadership Formation, give service on and off the campus. Student leaders staffed the Aston Community Day, coordinated Peace Day activities, and implemented a Student Summit to reflect on environmental stewardship. In addition, members of the Institute coordinated and hosted a Student Leadership Conference on August 20, 2012 for 96 students from Catholic high schools in the tri-state area.

Students in the Buoni building monitor their own efforts to conserve energy with data driven results provided by metering of each apartment unit. Besides fostering healthy competition, this activity heightens students' awareness of their own energy consumption and encourages students to adopt life-long habits which respect the environment.

Senior Nursing community students participate in the Health Fair every April to present Health Initiatives related to "Healthy People 2020." The students create a presentation board with information and research related to their topic. They also present this information to the community to promote the common good.

Ten sophomore nursing students volunteered to have at least 10 people sign up to donate blood at the drive on October 3, 2012. This required the students to understand the requirements for blood donation and how to educate the prospective donors to the benefits of donating blood to help others. The students also were trained by the American Red Cross to be volunteers the day of the blood drive. The students helped at the registration desk, acted as "Hand Holders" and sat at the recovery table observing the donors for reactions. The students then wrote a reflection paper to discuss the importance of the service and how it impacted them. Student efforts resulted in the largest number of donors ever!

The Athletic Department coordinates service projects for all NCAA teams. Members of the men's basketball team recently helped an elderly man clear his yard of overgrown bushes. Over lunch the young men listened to the elderly man's stories and struggles and shared their own challenges, learning in the process the similarities across generations. Women's field hockey players spent an afternoon with fifth graders at Drexel Neumann Academy. In addition to instructing the younger students in the basics of field hockey, the women answered the children's questions about college! Sixth graders at DNA traveled to Ice Works where the men's ice hockey team introduced the children to skating and then joined together in a discussion about the overwhelming feelings the experience promoted. As a result of the contact, one DNA student called Coach Dawes and asked for assistance in locating and joining a youth ice hockey team.

## **Communication: Communicate effectively**

*Express ideas clearly and effectively in spoken and written form; use technology competently; and access, evaluate, cite, and credit information using accepted conventions.*

Resident Advisors (RAs) create and present a 40 minute presentation to all incoming first year students.

In October 2012, students attended the National Student Government Summit in Washington, DC where they communicated with students from around the country and around the world.

Through a club called “Coffee and Conversation,” students meet four times each semester to discuss meaningful (and sometimes controversial) topics, communicate their ideas and beliefs, and listen respectfully to the ideas and beliefs of others.

***Suggestion for Faculty:**  
As you prepare your syllabi for the Spring semester,  
include the Core Learning Outcomes which you address.*

## **Faculty Feedback Desired**

A Future Core newsletter will highlight the ways faculty support the revised Core. What are you doing explicitly and intentionally to promote the Core Learning Outcomes:

**Comprehension, Contemplation, Conscience, Compassion, and Communication?**

How are you raising students’ awareness of these outcomes?

**Email your ideas to [hutchisp@neumann.edu](mailto:hutchisp@neumann.edu) by December 14, 2012!**

## ***The Neumann University Core Experience webpage***

Don’t forget to visit the new Neumann University Core Experience website!

<http://www.neumann.edu/CoreExperience/default.asp>

Send questions, suggestions, and comments  
to any member of the Core Curriculum Task Force!

# Professional Development

For those who did not have the opportunity to participate in the **Oral Communication** workshop presented by Erik Palmer on May 8, 2012, a video recording of the presentation and a limited number of Palmer's books are available. Contact Sr. Pat Hutchison at [hutchisp@neumann.edu](mailto:hutchisp@neumann.edu) to borrow the video or obtain a copy of the book. Erik Palmer's recommendations for *Building and Performing a Speech* are available on the Core Experience website under Communication.

Those in attendance rated the workshop on **Information Literacy** presented by Tiffany McGregor and Maureen Williams on August 23 as "very worthwhile." Are you interested in participating in an abridged version of this workshop? If so, please contact Sr. Pat.

To deepen understanding of the Neumann University Core Experience the following professional development opportunities will be offered in November, December, and January. Spring workshops will be announced at a later date. These workshops are a collaborative effort of the Faculty Senate Development Committee, Office of Academic Affairs, and Core Task Force. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend!

**Service-Learning** – November 15<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:00 PM in the Assisi Room, third floor of Bachmann

**Understanding and using Student Survey information** – December 13<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:00 PM in the Assisi Room, third floor of Bachmann

**Faculty Senate Faculty Development Workshop Day**—January 15, 2013 from 10 AM to 3 PM  
Choice of two of three workshops:

*ETS Testing Results*

*Promoting Meaningful Reflection* (This workshop is linked to the assessment of **Contemplation** competencies.)

*Developing Ethics in the Major: Extending the Foundation laid in Philosophy 102 (Exploring Ethics)* This workshop is linked to **Conscience** competencies.

## Core information sessions and Q & A

During September three information sessions provided an overview of the revised Core and time for questions and answers. The fourth session, scheduled for September 27, was cancelled. If you would like to attend a Core Information session please contact Sr. Pat at [hutchisp@neumann.edu](mailto:hutchisp@neumann.edu)