

LEAP Action Plan University Center

LEAP Workshop Year: 2011 Action dates: Spring 2011-Spring 2012	For more information, contact: Bob Barry, x6223, barryr@uww.edu Dave Halbach, x5749, halbachd@uww.edu
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<p>General Goal: The University Center's objective regarding LEAP (Liberal Education and Americas Promise) is to help student employees understand the current and future value of their liberal education. This will be accomplished by incorporating the Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO's), Principles of Excellence (PoE) and High Impact Practices (HIPs) of LEAP into University Center processes and daily operations. We'll work to help students link what they learn in the classroom to the jobs they perform in the University Center and finally to the skills employers need them to have when they graduate. To meet this objective the UC will educate staff members at all levels on the LEAP components and the personal roles they have in contributing to the liberal education of UW-Whitewater students.</p>	
<p>Planned Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University Center will begin infusing the LEAP initiatives into the culture of the organization by educating staff on LEAP and helping them personally define the relevance of the LEAP initiative to their role within the University Center. • During the 2011-2012 academic year and ongoing, the University Center staff members will continue infusing the LEAP components into the culture of the organization through discussions and exercises at bi-weekly and monthly meetings. Additionally, other tools will be developed and implemented including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ student assessment instruments ○ LEAP informational components for student employees ○ Incorporating LEAP as a theme into the UC orientation ○ Developing a semester long project for teams of students to do a LEAP project based on a Principle of Excellence ○ Identify which High Impact Practices the University Center can utilize ○ Incorporate into each student employee job description the relevance of their job duties to Essential Learning Outcomes 	
<p>Deliverables, Completed Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UC staff took LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, Principles of Excellence and High Impact Practices and put them into redefined terms that are relevant to UC staff members. These components are shared and discussed with all full-time staff members through conversations, posters, social media and publications. 	

- UC staff members worked together to define the roles each person has in the UW-W student learning experiences beyond the operational services they provide. We all worked to understand the role we play in helping students connect their classroom learning with their learning on the job and finally the skills required by employers.
- In the spirit of the LEAP program, developed an assessment tool to be used at the end of each semester that helps student employees connect current job duties to the liberal education they're receiving in the classrooms. This helps students recognize key LEAP components, their value to a liberal education and the relationships between their academic classes and the jobs they hold within the University Center.
- Implemented a LEAP related performance evaluation as a student assessment instrument
- Developed LEAP informational components or modules focusing on key LEAP ideas that supervisors use during monthly departmental meetings with student employees
- Incorporated LEAP as a theme into the UC orientation held at the beginning of the fall semester and end of semester receptions for student employees
- Developed a semester long project for teams of students to do a LEAP project based on a Principle of Excellence. The plan had teams use liberal education skills (Essential Learning Outcomes) to solve a "real-world" issue and had them present the project to UC student and full-time employees toward the end of the semester
- Identified which High Impact Practices the University Center could utilize most effectively and developed plans for magnifying the benefits of those practices (internships are a main focus, on-campus employment has also proven to have high-impact attributes)
- Incorporated into each student employee job description the relevance of their job duties to Essential Learning Outcomes and skills employers' desire of students upon graduation. This is intended to help students identify the relevance of their liberal education to their future careers

Notes:

We learned that by taking LEAP step by step over a semester it was easier for the staff to buy in to the ideas. By the end of this semester the majority of our staff had a firm understanding of all the principles of LEAP. Also, re-defining the system in terms that associate the University Center and UW-W Dining helped our staff recognize that what they are doing currently already incorporates LEAP into their daily practices. Our staff realized the process wouldn't be as grueling as they initially thought.

We also learned that LEAP could be used as a basis for a student employment program. Initially we were thinking of it as a framework for educating our students in how their classroom experiences connected with their employment. As we dug further into it, we realized this may be the perfect student employment program we've been searching for, for a long time. We learned that it's difficult to create new instruments that can be standardized across all departments (performance evaluations and assessment) however, with continual coaching and guidance, the student interns who worked on the process were successful and gained much from the process.