

Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program



FRONT ROW (from left): Teri Henley, coordinator of the Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program, Kevin Whitaker, UA executive vice president and provost, faculty members Melanie Acosta, Lori Lyon, Xabier Granja, Lesley Jo Weaver and Megan Bailey, director of curriculum development for the Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility; BACK ROW (from left): faculty members Wei Song, Andrea Cevalasco-Trotter, Mary Louanne Friend, David Meek and Stephen Black, CESR director.

One-year fellowship provides service-learning training and support to faculty members.

BY MARY SHANNON WELLS

Launched in 2007, the Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program is The University of Alabama's campus-wide initiative dedicated to helping faculty develop and implement service-learning courses. The program includes a series of workshops and has become a source of inspiration for academic innovators.

Approximately 12 faculty members per year participate in the Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program, which now has 98 alumni members.

Dr. Xabier Granja, a 2015-2016 Faculty Fellow and instructor in modern languages and classics, says the program is invaluable for providing both preparation and feedback in developing and improving service-learning courses.

"My experience with the Faculty Fellows Program was enriching, to say the least," Granja says. "The program is well-organized in two phases — an initial one where a lot of re-

search and theoretical work on service learning is reviewed to familiarize participants with critical work in the field, and a posterior one characterized by a more hands-on approach where previously reviewed concepts are applied."

Faculty Fellows meet once a month to explore various aspects of service learning, says Teri Henley, coordinator of the program and an advertising and public relations instructor. She says the Faculty Fellows Program gives participants individualized training in how to incorporate service-learning projects and experiences into their courses.

"They learn how to best structure the curriculum, create meaningful reflection opportunities, work with community partners and assess learning," Henley says.

Housed at the UA Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility, the program is designed to accelerate the work of faculty members who are eager to foster the principles of ethical citizenship, social responsibility and engagement within their students. Fellows receive a modest service-learning-enhancement grant to support course development or the addition of service learning to an existing course, as well as one-on-one assistance during the process. Each faculty member emerges from the program with a completed syllabus and plan of action for his or her new or enhanced course.

Dr. Andrea Cevalasco-Trotter, a 2015-2016 Faculty Fellow and associate professor of music therapy, says the workshops helped her add depth to service learning within UA's music-therapy program, which has included service-learning components since it began in the 1980s.

"I enjoyed collaborating and sharing ideas with other faculty," Cevalasco-Trotter says. "For me, personally, it was intellectually stimulating."

Dr. Katrina Ramonell, a 2015-2016 Faculty Fellow and associate professor in biological sciences, used her service-learning training to create a new aspect of her BSC 422/522 Biology of Cancer course. Students now collect and analyze water samples from a river that serves as a drinking-water source for Alabama residents and relate their findings to particular types of cancer.

"I definitely think it is beneficial for my students," Ramonell says. "They really enjoy it, and it gives a real-life aspect to a subject that was more based in a textbook before."

Ramonell says the Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program offers an excellent pathway for the University as a whole to get involved in the broader community.

The Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program has increased course opportunities for students, produced partnerships between the University and communities throughout Alabama and the world and helped make service learning a vital component of The University of Alabama experience.

During the past two academic years, Faculty Fellows have developed the following courses:

Melanie Acosta
Assistant Professor,
Curriculum & Instruction

CE 370 Teaching Reading in Elementary Schools creates transformative learning experiences for undergraduate pre-service teachers through service learning that cultivates a sense of moral respon-

sibility as part of their teaching habits. Students work in a community-based after-school program to challenge their existing perceptions about reading achievement and their roles as reading teachers. They also gain in-depth knowledge of ways to promote the interests of underserved communities through effective literacy teaching.

Leigh Booth
Instructor, Capstone College of Nursing
NUR 517 Graduate Independent Study offers students in the Capstone College of Nursing a chance to apply skills learned in the classroom during medical service-learning abroad experiences. The course focuses on reflection and pre-service teaching to prepare students to serve communities abroad. Students participate in an immersive learning program in which they live and provide health care in a culture different from their own. Associations among poverty, community resources and citizens' health are central to the learning experience.

Andrea Cevalasco-Trotter
Associate Professor, Music Therapy
MUS 382 Music Therapy Practicum provides music-therapy students supervised experience in facilitating music-therapy sessions in community-agency settings. Students' roles encompass assessment, program planning, implementation, documentation and evaluation of music-therapy services. Students work closely with community organizations to provide services that enhance the mission statements of the organizations and process feedback regarding the outcomes of their services.

Chandra Clark
Instructor, Telecommunication & Film
TCF 335 New Media provides a unique partnership between local organizations and students with skills in news writing, videography and interactive media. The class gives students the opportunity to pull together all the skills they have learned in past classes to

complete comprehensive projects while exploring a possible career option. Students collaborate with nonprofits to produce high-quality, multimedia presentations that include websites, videos, photo essays, public-service announcements, social-media messages, photography and videos and media-marketing plans.

Bartow Jerome Elmore
Assistant Professor, History
HY 400 Coca Cola Globalization: Introduction to Environmental History engages upper-level history students in creating history rather than passively surveying the past. Students helped launch the Digital Center for Environmental History (DCEH), an online clearinghouse for scholarship and digital projects related to environmental history. DCEH's first creation was the Tuscaloosa Environmental Digital (TED) project, which maps the environmental history of Tuscaloosa, Ala. TED allows students to connect environmental history to current environmental issues affecting residents' lives.

Amanda Espy-Brown
Instructor, New College
NEW 243 Interdisciplinary Science is based on scientific exploration through reading assignments and class discussions as well as on interactive, field-based scientific activities. Students engage in independent water-quality monitoring of the Black Warrior River throughout the semester. They gather, organize and analyze findings and share them through the Scientific American Citizen Science program and local advocacy groups such as Black Warrior Riverkeeper.

Mary Louanne Friend
Assistant Professor,
Capstone College of Nursing
NUR 392 Introduction to Inter-professional Health Care Teams & Critical Care Procedures introduces nursing students and medical residents to the core competencies of inter-professional

practice, including values and ethics, roles and responsibilities, communication and teamwork. Students serve together in an outpatient, critical-care clinic, the Transitions of Care Clinic at University Medical Center. The clinic, established by an inter-professional team, was developed with a goal of decreasing hospital readmissions for patients who have chronic conditions and face medical or social issues in the transition from hospital to home.

Memorie Gosa
Assistant Professor,
Communicative Disorders

CD 275 Anatomy & Physiology of the Speech and Hearing Mechanism promotes undergraduate research while offering students an in-depth look at specific diagnoses and the speech, language, hearing and swallowing consequences of those diagnoses. Through the quality-enhancement initiatives of The University of Alabama's Speech and Hearing Center, students participate in a retrospective, descriptive analysis to understand the speech, language, hearing and swallowing needs of individuals served by this West Alabama clinic. Their research assists the center in better serving these patients.

Xabier Granja
Instructor, Modern Languages & Classics

SP 356 Advanced Grammar & Composition helps students improve their Spanish-language skills via traditional activities and bilingual translation for community nonprofits. Students translate texts for: Druid City Garden Project, an educational-outreach program that brings gardening to elementary schools; Good Samaritan Clinic, a medical clinic serving low-income individuals and families; and Turning Point, a nonprofit that combats domestic abuse in West Alabama. These translated texts range from educational materials and patient-information forms to brochures for victims of domestic violence, helping ensure Spanish-speaking community members

have access to information and services from nonprofits.

Bronwen Lichtenstein
Professor, Criminal Justice

SOC 471 Medical Sociology: Health Care Disparity, Poverty and Social Justice addresses patterns of health and illness in modern society. The course covers three fundamental points: how society shapes individual understandings of what it means to be healthy, how people behave when they are ill and how society produces different patterns of health and illness. Students volunteer with FocusFirst to conduct vision screenings for children at child-care centers in low-income areas.

Christopher Lynn
Assistant Professor, Anthropology

ANT 450 Anthropology is Elemental: Teaching Anthropology in Primary and Secondary Settings introduces college students to applied anthropology by giving them the opportunity to design and teach curriculum to elementary- and middle-school students. As part of partnerships between The University of Alabama and Tuscaloosa Magnet Schools – Elementary and Middle and Arcadia Elementary, Anthropology is Elemental trains graduate and undergraduate students while providing a service to the Tuscaloosa community.

Lori Lyon
Assistant Professor,
Capstone College of Nursing

NUR 324 Fundamentals of Professional Nursing Practice is an introductory clinical nursing course in which students serve in a long-term-care facility with a focus on meeting an agency-identified need. While doing so, students develop communication skills, practice working with vulnerable populations and engage in culturally sensitive care across all ages.

David Meek
Instructor, Anthropology

NEW 413 Politics of Food Sovereignty

& Society helps students better understand the opportunities and constraints involved in practicing sustainable agriculture. In Spring 2016, students participated in four interrelated service-learning projects. These included: helping an heirloom seed bank digitally categorize its inventory; conducting a survey with Tuscaloosa-area gardeners and farmers concerning their interest in saving seeds; learning about sustainable agriculture while working with area farmers; and helping organize the West Alabama Seed Swap.

John Myrick
Clinical Instructor, Special Education & Multiple Abilities

SPE 300 Survey of Special Education Accommodation Strategies partners students with the Tuscaloosa Park and Recreation Authority's physical-therapy department, which gives individuals with various disabilities the chance to be involved in competitive sporting events, exercise and community activities. Students help facilitate events and activities, providing everyone involved with opportunities for social interaction while exposing UA students to individuals with disabilities in a broader community setting.

Katrina Ramonell
Associate Professor, Biological Sciences

BSC 422/522 Biology of Cancer introduces students to the biological principals that explain the origins, development, pathology and treatment of cancer. Students work in teams to investigate particular types of cancer. They collect data on national, state and county cancer rates and forms for the Tuscaloosa Environmental Digital (TED) website. The class also partners with Black Warrior Riverkeeper to collect and analyze water samples from companies that discharge materials into the river. Students present data regarding chemicals/toxins present in the samples to the Black Warrior Riverkeeper and relate the data to their assigned cancers.

Wei Song
Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering
CE 434 Structural Steel Design I introduces students to the basic plan design for community houses and associated controlling factors, including safety requirements, cost estimation and local housing policy impact. This course enables students to analyze, synthesize and think critically about various design strategies that can influence decision-making regarding house plans. Through the service-learning component of the course, students work with Habitat for Humanity of Tuscaloosa to address housing needs.

Lesley Jo Weaver
Assistant Professor, Anthropology
ANT 450 Anthropology, Psychology & Mental Health helps students learn about mental health through volunteering at two residential mental healthcare facilities in Tuscaloosa – one catering to a wealthy population and the other serving a poorer population. The course provides manpower to those institutions and outside interaction to socially isolated patients while giving students a firsthand look into how mental health and healthcare are socially influenced.

Monika Wedgworth
Assistant Professor,
Capstone College of Nursing
NUR 374 Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing focuses on skills such as therapeutic communication in mental health, inter-professional collaboration, outcome evaluation and the application of evidence-based practice models. During a service-learning experience with a clinical partner, students offer interactive learning opportunities to adults with developmental disabilities. Activities focus on essential life skills such as infection control, hygiene and healthy food choices. Students evaluate outcomes through reflective journals.

STEPHEN F. BLACK
DIRECTOR, CENTER
FOR ETHICS & SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY



Stephen Foster Black has directed the UA Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility, which houses the Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program, since the Center's founding in 2005.

Grandson of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black, Stephen also is founder and president of Impact Alabama: A Student Service Initiative, the state's first nonprofit organization dedicated to developing and implementing substantive service-learning projects in coordination with colleges and universities throughout Alabama. In October 2014, Impact Alabama became Impact America, which currently operates in Alabama, Tennessee, South Carolina and Florida.

Black earned a bachelor's degree from The University of Pennsylvania in 1993 before attending Yale Law School, where he graduated in 1997. After three years in private practice, he spent a year as an assistant to the governor of Alabama, researching policy issues and working on economic development projects. In 2008, Black was named one of 10 recipients – out of more than 800 nominations nationwide – of the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Community Health Leaders Award for creating the FocusFirst vision screening initiative.

Contact Black at stephen.black@ua.edu.

TERI K. HENLEY
FACULTY FELLOWS IN
SERVICE-LEARNING
COORDINATOR



Teri Henley has more than 30 years' experience in the academic and nonprofit communications field. Throughout her academic career, Henley has provided her students the opportunity to be involved in course-relevant, "real-life" service experiences, in an effort to instill in them an ethic of service and a lifetime commitment to civic participation.

She is adviser for The Capstone Agency, a student-run organization that has implemented numerous award-winning campaigns. Since joining The University of Alabama faculty in 2007, she has worked with more than 50 community partners on service-learning activities. Previously, Henley spent 15 years at Loyola University New Orleans, where she was associate professor and chair of the Communications Department and director of the Shawn M. Donnelley Center for Nonprofit Communications.

Her work through the Center gave her the opportunity to supervise more than 300 projects for nonprofit clients. She is author of 21 articles and three book chapters in the field of nonprofit communications, which is her research and teaching passion.

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