

Teaching and Learning In and About Appalachia
May 21, 2004
Summary of Retreat

A total of 21 persons were available to take part in the retreat. An additional 18 persons were informed about and invited to the event. Although many were extremely interested, their prior commitments did not allow them to take part in the day's events. The following persons attended all or part of the day's events:

The Appalachian FLC members:

Sharon A. Denham
Geoff Buckley
Jack Wright
Betty Pytlik
Lacey Curtis
David Bower
Keith Harris
Merle Graybill
Mike Hess

Invited Guests that attended:

Martha Zinn (facilitator)
Bruce Kuhre
David Descutner
Jackie Glasgow
Erik Perry
Mickey Hart
Charles Bird
Margaret Manoogian
Candy McBride
Carol Kuhre (Rural Action)
Tim Murphy (local geologist)
Kerri Shaw (graduate student and representative for Ted Strickland)
Jillian Berkowitz (Ohio University Press)

The day began with introductions of each of the participants and a brief overview of each person's interests related to Appalachia. This overview provided a sense of the breadth and depth of experience and expertise of those gathered.

Web Chart: What already exists at Ohio University that is associated with Appalachia?

This is a list of existing units, programs, groups, etc. currently having some association with Appalachia:

- Classes with an Appalachian focus in existence: Political Science, English, Geology, Sociology, and Tier III
- Many majors have internships related to Appalachia
- Appalachian Faculty Learning Community

- Appalachian Rural Health Institute
- Regional campuses (located in various Appalachian regions and may have additional programs)
- Ohio University Press (Ethnicity & Gender, interested in publishing books about Appalachia)
- OU COM: Mobile van
- Property/real estate development
- ILGARD/Voinovich Center
- Women in Appalachia Conference (Zanesville Conference)
- Kids on Campus Program
- Pre-service teachers (field experiences)
- Service-learning projects
- Americorp
- WOUB: “This Time Around”
- APAC
- ACENET
- Kilvert
- Dairy Barn
- Research on small schools (Amy Crowley)
- Bluegrass radio programs: Deanna and Ivan Tribe
- CORA
- Ohio for Schools Campaign
- Coal technology (Dr. Bayless)
- Center for Community Service
- Appalachia Reads
- Kennedy Art Museum
- Appalachia Leadership Academy
- Community and Campus Days
- Masters in Social Work (rural focus)
- Athens Film Festival (Appalachian focus)
- High school options
- Central Regional Humanities Center
- Lifelong Learning
- Rural Action (watershed projects/faculty involvement)
- Environmental learning (Geography students)
- Faculty research on topics related to Appalachia: Tim Anderson, Rich Greenlee, Geoff Buckley, Sharon Denham, David Holben, Margaret Manoogian, Deborah Henderson, Chris Simpson, Ann Tichameyer, Darlene Berryman, David Holben, Nancy Nisbett, Sharon Rana (ILGARD has conducted a variety of programs)
- College of Communications: Sharon Romina, work with cancer (John Ray project)
- Viscom Projects: Dawn to Dusk
- Links with non-profit organizations
- Clinical experiences for COM and School of Nursing students often in regional campus areas and various Appalachian counties
- Some clinical experiences for other CHHS students (Physical therapy, Speech, hearing, and language)

Web Chart Picture: What do we see when we view the web chart of Appalachian focused programming?

- Confusion
- Weak on research (but some initiatives started)
- Outreach
- Individual initiatives
- Lots of little pockets
- Lack of connectedness
- Departmental programs
- Low connection with area schools

Past Efforts for Appalachian Focused Activities:

- Some invited guests (persons well known and connected with the Appalachian Region)
- Institute for Democracy in Education (fading)
- Conferences on Appalachian issues
- Some interest in Certificate of Appalachian Studies
- Center for Appalachia in COM

Some Educational concerns related to Appalachian residents:

- Student composition (fewer students from the region at the main campus, larger enrollments at regional campuses, more students in regional campus system)
- Recruiting issues (few students are recruited from regional high schools)
- Sporadic interaction between university and regional campuses (few formal/informal partnerships occurring)

Why has Ohio University not been intentional in embracing Appalachia?

- University has low number of Appalachian representatives in upper administration and faculty (most not from the region)
- Confused about who we are as an institution
- University founders were “passing through” not from the region and had an Eastern orientation (Eastern established university versus Appalachian university)
- 1965 Appalachian Regional Commission created, but OU did not embrace Appalachia
- Recruiting Appalachian students not relational to ideas of “Eastern University”
- Choice has been Ohio identity versus Southeast Ohio identity
- Emphasis on out-of-state recruitment, international recruitment viewed as more important
- Class issues? Economic issues? Concerns with marketability of Appalachian program
- Athens/southeast Ohio viewed as “Ohio Outback” (can we reclaim the positives of the region)

CREATING A VISION

The retreat participants worked in four small groups to identify specific direction that Ohio University might take in relationship to its connectness to Appalachia. Following are the

vision statements, components needed, and strategies for implementation that were identified by each of the four groups:

1. Vision

Because Ohio University is the major university in Appalachian Ohio, we have a responsibility to work at the state level to implement the mission of Ohio University to serve to enhance the quality of life for the population and to reflect the diversity of the Appalachian area.

Components

To express our vision we need:

- A coordinator/spokesperson/advocate for better communication at all levels.
- Improved collaboration in recruiting area students.
- Coordinating body identified with Appalachian concerns.
- Seek money to support for initiatives.

Strategies for Implementation

- Speaker series
- Develop strategic plan
- Faculty orientation
- Student orientation
- Recruitment strategies
- Create formal connections for better communication
- Appalachian Studies Certificate
- Be “good neighbors”
- Research agenda

2. Vision

University that fosters and cultivates a sensitivity to a sense of place and the rich history of the region and works actively to enhance the social, economic, and environmental sustainability in the area and beyond.

Components

- Promote scholarship in and about the region
- Educate faculty and staff through orientation programs
- Coordinate activities and research
- Promote collaboration
- Interdisciplinary Appalachian Studies Program
- Develop Kennedy Museum permanent Appalachian collection
- Center of Appalachian culture

Strategies for Implementation

- Education: Certificate Program; Appalachian Quarter; Residential Learning Community; Scholar in Residence
- Recruitment of regional students
- Orientation: new students, faculty, staff (sense of place)

- Coordination: we are doing things now, coordinate, and collaborate
- Central place (service, research, culture, economic partnerships)

3. **Vision**

Ohio University proudly located in the Ohio River Valley: intentional research, teaching, and service.

Components

- Center or office
- More academic areas with focus on the Ohio River Valley

Strategies for Implementation

- Bridging and integrating main and regional campuses
- Build on previous and existing structures
- Proactively recruit students
- Create an Appalachian calendar

4. **Vision**

In accord with Ohio University's official vision and mission statements, the University will have a fully funded, long-term program that stimulates and coordinates research, courses, field, placements, cultural programs, and service projects that focus on understanding, renewing, and serving the Appalachian region.

Components

- Catalog of internships, services, public service, and research
- Use of African American Studies as a model for development of an Appalachian Studies Certificate Program
- Incentives (\$) for community collaboration
- "Clearinghouse" office where interested parties can access information about Appalachia
- Political relationships: ILGARD, ARC, Voinovich Center

Strategies for Implementation

- Form committee
- Identify budget and space
- Assess political climate
- Coordinate with current programs

Common Ground among the Four Groups:

I. Vision

- Position the regional identity (place-based/cognitive)
- Major University in southeast region of Ohio: Need greater commitment to regional identity (Ohio River Valley)

- Work in conjunction with Governor’s Office on Appalachia at the state level
- Research to promote understanding of the region
- Address needs of student population (inclusiveness)
- Adhere to university mission statement
- Inform about the Appalachian region (diversity includes Appalachian region)
- Directed activities (work to promote understanding)
- Service to the region/community (redefine as public service)
- Teaching (the region as part of the educational experience)
- Appalachia focus needs to be connected with ideas of diversity, growth and economic sustainability

II. Components

- Collaborative model
- Enhance recruitment from the region
- OU official serves as a coordinator (foster better internal/external relationships, overcome problems with lack of centrality, improve communication, establish links to Ohio Governor’s Office of Appalachia, Appalachian Regional Commission)
- Create an educational focus about Appalachian for OU students
- Orientation to Appalachia of all OU groups (staff, faculty, students, administrators, etc.)
- Support academic disciplines around a regional focus
- Enhance use of technology/online capacities for interactions
- Establish a “clearinghouse”
- Encouragement for distinctiveness as Appalachian in academic areas
- Fully funded center (arts, music, culture, Kennedy Center)

III. Strategies for Implementation

- Catch in-coming OU President’s attention (seems interested in collaborative action)
- Create more formal exchanges between main/regional campuses to enhance Appalachian identity
- Inform of the richness of Appalachia: Identify speakers, artists, etc (Appalachian Quarter, Appalachian Calendar)
- Embody mutuality (create a community-university voice)
- Bridge gaps among the Athens campus and regional campus system
- Get political (Strickland) support/endorsement
- Create an Appalachian Scholar in Residence Program
- Identify scholarship dollars for regional students
- Focus on Ohio River Valley
- Build on existing structures

Faculty Learning Community: Future Roles and Activities

- Continue as a group and spawn new ones (get institutionalized/integrated)
- Conduct, compile, share survey results (promote survey at regional campuses)
- Encourage wider promotion and participation

- Approach new OU incoming President, new admission director, faculty senate (getting commitment, legitimacy, ambition [growth] and diversity through retreat follow-up)
- Press release (communicate to community)
- Take program focus to the regional campuses (get more visibility/participation)
- Plan long-term for continuing interest (integrate into the University/institutionalize)
- Collect information about what other universities are doing in this area (invite folks from other universities to share)
- Identify possible private fund sources
- Look into student demographics related to regional campuses (where do they go, why are more not transferring to the main campus, etc?)
- Enhance “civility” between town/gown (Halloween, Palmerfest, study what other universities in small towns do, identify exemplars)
- Create “new” initiatives within budget constraints (Danforth Foundation, Lilly Foundation, Kettering Foundation)

What are the Stereotypes Associated with Appalachia and What does use of Stereotypes say about “other”?

- Source is related to WASP culture
- Create a difference/divisions (“I’m not that”)
- Scapegoating
- Don’t have to share
- Related to class issues
- Lack of understanding group’s values
- Overlap with rural stereotypes
- Media perpetuates them and people participate (need to internalize the stereotype and reclaim being Appalachian for oneself)
- Economic benefits to “commodifying”
- Depersonalize, degrade, dehumanize
- Some people emulate the stereotype: “Which comes first?”
- Makes it harder to see fuller culture/values (uniqueness and cross-cultural commonalities)
- Intolerance and judgment of Appalachian language/speech/literacy
- Need to identify the positives associated with stereotype (embody versus negation of values, what are the positive exchanges, uniqueness of culture versus similarities across culture, find positive ways to name self)

Wrap-up of the Retreat: Final ideas

- Opportunity to meet others (putting faces and names together)
- Across campus representation
- Enthused about possibilities
- Validation of ideas of the Faculty Learning Community
- Identify where we are, where we have been... need to move forward
- The retreat was actually realized

Presidential Mission Statement

A comprehensive, national university, Ohio University offers both distinctive, high quality undergraduate education and excellent, focused graduate education. The University's educational enterprise is strengthened by superiority in research and creative activity and a fundamental service commitment to its region. The educational mission is realized in a residential setting on the main campus in Athens and through outreach and access efforts on five regional campuses.

The mission of Ohio University is articulated through five major goals.

Ohio University will:

1. **Provide undergraduate students a distinctive education that prepares them for life and career.**

The foundation of this undergraduate experience is the University's general education program. This program provides active learning opportunities, gives students a breadth of learning experiences, hones creativity, and engenders a commitment to life-long learning. First-year student programs are structured to engage and challenge students, thereby establishing a framework for success in later academic life. Programs in the major disciplines and other initiatives such as "Writing across the Curriculum" build skills and enhance future scholarship. This curriculum, in combination with the residential campus experience, fosters good citizenship by integrating civility and an understanding of the importance of diversity.

Academic programs such as the Honors Tutorial College and departmental honors programs offer special opportunities for students. Undergraduate research, cooperative education, and on-site internship experiences provide special paths to academic excellence. Undergraduates emerging from our programs will have the prerequisites to become national leaders in their disciplines, holding significant positions in government, academia, the arts, business, and industry. The unique opportunity afforded by Ohio University's academic programs and residential environment serves to bind students to the University and each other for life. The recruitment of students focuses on establishing a diverse and talented student body that will accept the challenge the University offers. Ohio University is committed to providing the resources needed for students to excel.

2. **Emphasize distinctiveness in graduate education through program focus at the advanced graduate level and creative approaches to master's education.**

Graduate education is essential to the mission of Ohio University. The University fosters both distinctive academic masters programs, emphasizing preparation for further graduate work, and innovative professional masters programs that provide students with the skills and knowledge to excel in professional roles. Ohio University offers both traditional on-campus residential programs and creative distance learning programs that combine technology-intensive, independent studies with brief residential stays on the Athens and regional campuses. Outstanding undergraduate students also may explore programs that allow accelerated access to graduate study.

At the doctoral level, Ohio University offers a select set of programs that include focused disciplinary programs as well as innovative collaborative and interdisciplinary programs linked to special themes. These programs are closely linked with areas of excellence in research. Students are prepared for careers in academic as well as research, professional, or industrial settings.

3. Maintain excellence in research through support for creative activity and the search for new information, knowledge, and understanding.

Ohio University has achieved a national academic reputation in selected areas of research and creative activities. This reputation helps to attract additional resources and recruit outstanding faculty and graduate students. Centers and institutes are established to enhance this reputation, and outstanding research and teaching in the graduate programs blend to improve both the research and graduate training missions. Research and creative activity at Ohio University are supported by a nationally ranked library that provides comprehensive collections and services.

4. Maximize the learning opportunities afforded by a residential campus environment.

The historic residential nature of Ohio University has encouraged the formation of a community of scholars. Ohio University students on the Athens campus benefit from a residential experience that combines learning with extensive opportunities for student engagement in the community. This level of campus and community engagement contributes a special distinction to the educational experience. The student residential community and the community of scholars are complementary and contribute to the advancement of teaching, learning, and research.

Established in 1787 and chartered in 1804 as the first center of learning in the Northwest Territory, Ohio University is committed to an environment conducive to learning. The University strives to preserve and enhance the beauty of the campus buildings and grounds to attract and retain faculty, staff, and students. It enhances the academic community by the way in which it designs and constructs its buildings and uses technology to link faculty, staff and students to one another and the outside world.

5. Expand Service to the Region.

Ohio University, located in the Appalachian area of Southeastern Ohio, has a unique opportunity and a special obligation to enhance and extend cultural and educational opportunities to the region. Through programs on the Athens campus and five regional campuses, and within units such as the College of Osteopathic Medicine (OUCOM) and the Institute for Local Government Administration and Rural Development (ILGARD), the University builds partnerships responsive to the needs and interests of the region. The University has a special mission to support and extend economic development and service to its geographic area. This goal is accomplished in part by encouraging students to seek service-learning opportunities throughout the region. These programs benefit the communities and provide invaluable lessons for students.

In Conclusion

Ohio University strives to enhance its scholarly and student-oriented reputation through pursuit of these goals. Important core values guide the University as it fulfills its mission. The University values the individuals who create its community - its faculty, students, and staff. It encourages and supports programs that enrich their lives and improve their knowledge and skills. Ohio University values the nurturing of a diverse community of individuals who work cooperatively and collaboratively to accomplish its mission, and it strives to create a climate of civility where leadership and innovation are prized and responsibility and accountability are fostered. Ohio University values the internationalization of its curriculum and its campus community and it encourages programs that strengthen multicultural awareness. Finally, the University values the creation and maintenance of an attractive and technologically sophisticated campus that helps to attract and maintain a special community of scholars and students.

August 2001

Pew Roundtable at Ohio University

SHARED VISION FOR OHIO UNIVERSITY

Mission

I: Maintaining, strengthening, and enhancing a learning-centered community

II: Providing a superior undergraduate experience: Commitment to educational excellence through focus on the individual learner

III: Distinctiveness in graduate education through program focus at the advanced graduate level and creative approaches to Masters education

IV: Excellence in research through support for creative activity and the search for new information, knowledge, and understanding

V: Connecting university with community by integrating service and learning

Values

- **Diversity:** *dignity, respect, and learning from the differences that enrich our environment*
- **Cooperation and Collaboration**
- **Civility**
- **Internationalization:** *curriculum, cultural awareness, campus community*
- **Leadership and Innovation**
- **Responsibility and Accountability**

Strategies

- Increasing connections and appreciating similarities among teaching, learning, and research
- Promoting professional development of faculty, staff, and administrators
- Facilitating learning through appropriate use of technology
- Utilizing the unique characteristics of each of our campuses -- residential and regional
- Offering a variety of high-quality academic programs
- Seeking innovative approaches to enhance learning
- Maximizing meaningful interaction between faculty and students
- Customizing curricula based on the educational needs of individual students

Themes

- Allocate financial resources to support university priorities
- Ensure that promotion and tenure criteria are consistent with university priorities
- Reward, recognize, and honor those who make outstanding contributions to university priorities