Working Group on “Learning Outside the Classroom”

Block 4 Report (12/14/22)

Committee members:
Karen Roybal (co-chair)
Matt Cooney (co-chair)
Andrea Culp
Edwin Hamada
Maddi Schink
Peyton Marshak
Eli Fahrenkrug
Ibrahima Wade

We last met as a sub-committee on Monday, December 5 and focused our discussion on the following action items:

1. Emphasizing our campus-wide commitment to the value of learning outside the classroom and its importance of connecting students to the world beyond them.
   a. This action item requires that we commit as a campus to investing in “learning outside the classroom” via study abroad opportunities, by engaging and supporting students with opportunities to study and/or work within the local Colorado Springs community, and to invest in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that emphasize opportunities for engaging with the local community throughout the duration of their time at CC.
   b. This action item could include developing an internship opportunity for a cohort of students in which they work for/with a local organization.
      i. This action can build on models already in place, such as the QUAD program.
      ii. This action could support co-curricular experience for a cohort of students to participate in a local internship during their sophomore year of college, and expand to a junior year cohort beyond Colorado Springs (regionally or broader, with a similar work/focus/discipline as the previous year).

2. Developing a sustainable financial model through which each student who enrolls at CC will participate in, and can request financial access to at least one form of learning outside the classroom (e.g., study abroad, community engagement, internship, substantive on-campus employment).
   a. This action item ensures equity across the student experience at CC and allows students with work obligations the opportunity to participate in the program without loss of income.
      i. CC would likely have to develop a pool where students can request additional funding for lost employment opportunities if they study abroad.
b. This action item can build on models already in place such as the transition scholarship, internship and research funding, the Butler Center’s DACA work study fellowship, and CCE fellowship programs.

3. Developing a format through which **students reflect on their learning outside the classroom experience(s)**.

   a. This action item might incorporate student portfolios that include reflections on students’ overall learning outside the classroom experiences across blocks, areas of study, impact on personal values, and across their four years at CC as they focus on common themes and working with common community partners.

   b. This action item could incorporate student cohorts meeting each semester or annually to share their experiences of learning outside the classroom. Based on comments shared by the sub-committee on Integrating Learning Blocks, this reflection and cohort development could align with their suggestion for synergy semesters, in which students take a cluster of courses based on a common theme.

   c. This action item would support student’s reflection on what they are learning both inside and outside the classroom to emphasize connections between learning, current interests, and future goals, and to ensure that students are identifying connections between their co-curricular and extra-curricular learning outside the classroom experiences.