

cnvolved
Carson-Newman University
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Executive Summary

Carson-Newman selected service-learning as its Quality Enhancement Plan from a number of proposals submitted by faculty, staff, students and alumni. In January 2011, a committee representing administration, faculty, staff and students began the process of developing the QEP in order to comply with SACSCOC standards. The plan, now called *cnvolved*, is a campus-wide program designed to integrate undergraduate students' service experiences into the academic setting. Service-Learning is a natural choice in light of Carson-Newman's mission: *to help our students reach their full potential as educated citizens and worldwide servant leaders by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment with a caring community* (Carson-Newman, 2011). Additionally, *cnvolved* will fulfill a goal stated in our 2009 Strategic Plan to "create a service-learning program that provides opportunities for service" ("Future of the Past," C-N Strategic Plan 2009).

There are two goals for *cnvolved*, the first addresses impact on campus and the second addresses student learning. By the end of the five-year plan, our goal is that 70% of students who graduate from Carson-Newman with an undergraduate degree will have had a developmental service-learning experience within their academic discipline. Among the students participating in the standardized service-learning program, our goal is that 80% of those students will show improvement in identified student learning outcomes. We will assess two student learning outcomes in each service-learning course: students will compare and contrast disciplinary concepts, frameworks, and/or theories with their service experiences in the community and explain similarities and differences and students will articulate insights into their own cultural assumptions and attitudes and describe how their classroom and service experiences shape assumptions and attitudes. Professors will use common assessment tools and will use assessment data to adjust the service-learning activities. The *cnvolved* Committee will use the assessment data to determine progress toward the goals.

The institution will implement *cnvolved* gradually over the course of four years with LA101 course sections introduced in year one, 200-/300-level courses in years two, and three and 400-level courses in year four. Departments will volunteer majors through which to implement the program. The gradual implementation gives professors a chance to develop skills and improve course design through periodic faculty development. This gradual implementation provides students with a developmental service-learning experience, and the built-in assessment tools allow for the tracking of student improvement during the time span of the program. By the fifth year of the plan, the ongoing assessment will have brought about a regular pattern of faculty development, student participation, and necessary adjustments.