

Proposal to Establish the
**Fredonia Academic Community Engagement (FACE) Center
at SUNY Fredonia**

Rationale

As a public, regional university, SUNY Fredonia includes in its mission statement these commitments to public engagement: “to develop and support service to individuals and organizations beyond the campus” and “encouraging faculty and staff to contribute their expertise to the variety of community-based endeavors.” Across the campus, much is currently being done in these areas and there is an active Volunteer and Community Services office that has a long tradition of successfully coordinating student volunteers. However, there is currently no infrastructure to encourage or publicize academic efforts in service and no centralized data collection about these efforts and their impact. Establishing the Fredonia Academic Community Engagement (FACE) Center would provide the necessary visibility and coordination for such work.

Purpose

The FACE Center is the coordinating unit for academic initiatives related to community engagement. The Center provides guidance and administrative oversight of service-learning efforts in courses across campus. As a complement to the Volunteer and Community Services Office, which works closely with community partners to coordinate student and student group volunteer opportunities, the FACE Center provides opportunities to connect the work of academic units to our institutional work related to the American Democracy Project, the Technology Incubator, and the Center for Rural Regional Development and Governance. Through the Professional Development Center, It provides faculty and staff with opportunities to learn more about scholarship of engagement, service learning, and the documentation and evaluation of such efforts. The FACE Center also collects information about academic community engagement—including assessment of such efforts—at SUNY Fredonia.

Structure

The FACE Center includes a Director, a Coordinator of Service-Learning, a Coordinator of Sustainability Projects, and an Advisory Board. All leaders of the Center are full-time, tenure-track SUNY Fredonia faculty who serve in this role at the discretion of their departments. They receive some course release and a stipend for their work. If a federal Learn and Serve grant, *FACE the Community*, submitted in March 2009 is funded, the FACE Center will also include an Academic Community Coordinator who will be the contact person for community partners. The Center currently has no physical office and uses its website to communicate and coordinate efforts.

Goals

- To encourage and support faculty in community engagement efforts in their classes, in student research and creative activity, and in their own scholarship/creative activity
- To promote and coordinate academic engagement efforts related to the American Democracy Project, Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, Imagining America, and Campus Compact
- To provide training and administrative structure for service-learning
- To serve as a point of contact for community partners seeking student and faculty involvement
- To serve as a point of coordination for faculty interested in community engagement
- To collect information about the academic engagement efforts of faculty, staff, and students