

Discipleship Ministries Use of Evidence of Student Learning

As a means of on-going assessment and evaluation, the Discipleship Ministries area collects feedback twice within a given academic year. These surveys are administered to the Covenant Group Leaders mid-year and at the end of each spring semester. In addition to this assessment tool, the Discipleship Ministry area also has each student leader complete a "Ministry Reflection" short-answer questionnaire that outlines specific details, themes, and overall tone of their individual group.

Upon the collection and review of the 2010-2011 data, the Covenant Group leadership team determined that the weekly Student Leader Training Meeting was not an effective model for developing and training students to lead small groups. Primarily a skill-based informational experience, student feedback suggested that training times were too content driven and did not allow space and time for individual and corporate processing. In addition to this feedback, students also suggested that the informational approach made assumptions about prior knowledge of small-group dynamics, prior knowledge of spiritual formation concepts and theory, and a personal readiness to lead others spiritually.

Reflecting on this feedback, the Covenant Group leadership team revamped the weekly Student Leader Training Meeting maintaining pertinent small group dynamic information; however approaching this information from a story-based pedagogy. By doing so, students still engage in important skill-based content, while learning interpersonal techniques of sharing and leading a small group through group discussion. In addition to this change, the weekly Student Leader Training Meeting incorporated spiritual formation concepts, themes, and practices also from a story-based model; focusing on key aspects of Christian journey and growth in hopes of teaching spiritual formation material as well as providing a context where individual students can experience private and corporate spiritual growth and maturity.

During the 2011-12 academic year a year end assessment was given to all student leaders in the program to assess their leadership skills (one of the learning outcomes for the program). This was a pilot test of the instrument and was conducted by a new Director of Discipleship Ministries who has been in the job for less than a month when the assessment was given. A few things that were learned:

- It doesn't seem like there was specific/ shared language for the leaders of the covenant groups. Which leads to the question of whether or not the planning of group meetings had been discussed in terms of actual steps or if the training contained values and general concepts only.
- Some sort of rubric to assess the answers to these leadership questions needs to be designed and used in common with Community Ministries.