

Disaster Response

The Tension Between a Timely Response and Service Learning

Linda Kennedy
Senior Associate Director of Collis
Center &
Student Activities

Stuart C. Lord
Dean of the Tucker Foundation &
Associate Provost

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, HANOVER NH



The Wingspread Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning

An effective program:

- Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
- Provides **structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.**
- **Articulates clear service and learning goals** for everyone involved.
- Allows for **those with needs to define those needs.**
- Clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.
- Matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.
- Expects genuine, **active, and sustained organizational commitment.**
- Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.
- Insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved.
- Is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.

“Dartmouth sent us – it was a gift to us to be able to do this on behalf of the whole Dartmouth Community. I love Dartmouth College and people down here recognize our spirit. I think we did a good job representing the College.”



Dartmouth's Mission Statement

Dartmouth College educates the most promising students and prepares them for a lifetime of learning and of responsible leadership, through a faculty dedicated to teaching and the creation of knowledge.

“The world’s problems are your problems.”



Dartmouth President John Sloan Dickey
Convocation 1946

“We should talk about what you can do beyond knocking down walls – need to convince others to come down – gotta smell it, have a toilet burst on you, feel the dirt on your skin”

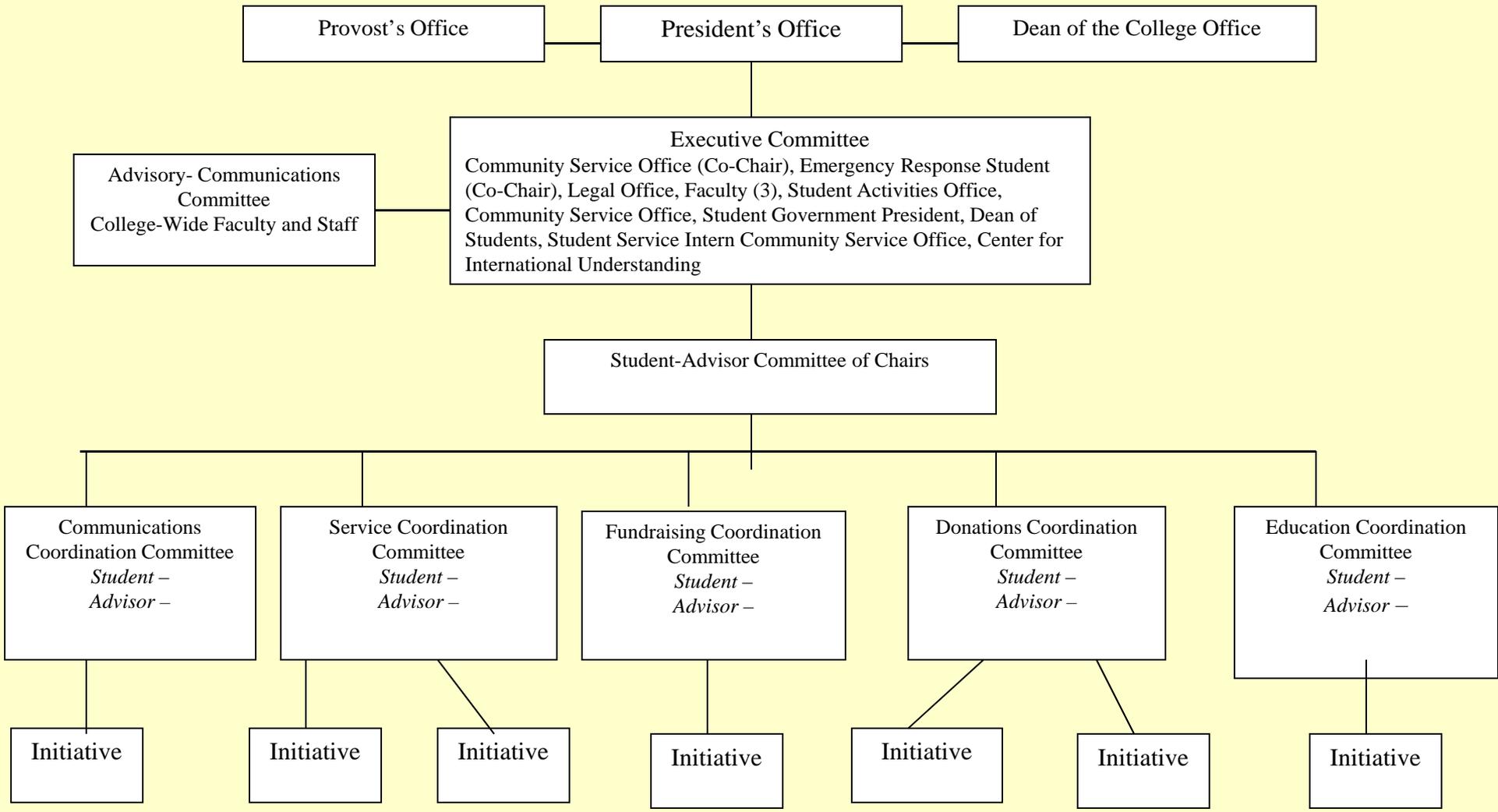
-Dartmouth Student



“Strategic Planning should be a process through which departments, divisions, or entire institutions determine their **highest and best use of their unique resources** to achieve their goals.”



DARTMOUTH COLLEGE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE HURRICANE KATRINA 2005



Katrina: What can I do to help?

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina and having learned from other disasters such as the Tsunami of Southeast Asia, we have developed a means through which we as the Dartmouth Community may respond. We have set up five committees to coordinate the efforts of campus groups, whether students or employee. This committee set up is only to provide a guide for communication; our goal is to have you follow your desire to help and work with others who maybe doing something similar. As you look at each committee represented, and the examples shown, you could see yourself or your project listed. We welcome your participation and your ideas! If you are willing to help, please e mail KatrinaHelp@Dartmouth.edu, and we will help you get connected!

COORDINATION COMMITTEES

EDUCATION – *Educating the Dartmouth community about Hurricane Katrina and related social issues*

- Organize teach-ins and lectures
- Bring speakers from off-campus

SERVICE – *Providing the community with outlets for public activism*

- Alternative Spring and Winter Break Trips to the Gulf Coast
- A goal of 100% community participation
- American Red Cross Disaster Training courses
- Volunteer database and bulletin

DONATIONS – *Leading the campus drive to collect goods for the people affected by Hurricane Katrina*

- Clothing donations drives
- Organization of donated goods
- Dissemination of goods

FUNDRAISING – *Attracting funds to be given to disaster relief agencies and other groups in need*

- Matching funds campaign
- Walk-a-thon
- Sale of “Katrina Relief” bracelets and ribbons

COMMUNICATIONS – *Publicizing KatrinaHelp events and keeping public awareness high*

- Biweekly pamphlet and e-mail update
- Maintain the webpage

NUTS & BOLTS – Have these tools ready to go:



Financial Account

Email Account

Designated contacts for

- Space reservations

- Risk management

- Legal concerns

- Environmental health and safety

- Media relations

Location for headquarters

Use of an intern

Use of email lists

KNOW THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS



- Can students “charge” donations to their student accounts?
- To whom should I make out my donation check?
- Will academic deadlines be extended to allow for disaster response?
- Is there any course credit for disaster response?

“I got a sense of ownership, and caring for the place, I never expected to feel so attached.”

A Dartmouth student



“Thinking about the power we have as a group makes me think of the power of an individual. My understanding of the realm of influence in the world is growing. We feel so good because we feel that we had some power over an area of the U.S.”

-Dartmouth Student



PREDICTABLE OUTCOMES

- The business school raised the most money, but the other schools did very well.
- Clothing drives were popular. Many donations were not useful.
- Football players helped to load boxes on a truck sponsored by the community.
- Faculty criticized the lack of intellectual rigor in the disaster response.
- Untold number of student projects started, and not completed.
- Disaster response provided excellent public relations material for the institution.
- The staff decided Katrina Trip #1 would be alcohol-free.
- Students resisted staff-driven reflection sessions.
- Many people wanted to join the organized trips, but some had their own ideas of what they would do when they got there – and not with us.

UNPREDICATABLE OUTCOMES

- One student wrote an award-winning play about her experiences.
- A faculty mapping project is ongoing.
- We developed a relationship with a NGO and students still work there.
- Alumni got their own service trip, and now they want another.
- The College President made a 3-year institutional commitment to the Gulf Coast.
- Some students found it difficult to reconcile why they were helping people who had means, and not just those who were destitute.
- Students decided Katrina Trip #2 would be alcohol-free.
- When students took charge of reflection they found them very important.
- Many described their service trips as life-changing experiences.
- One student decided to stay in Mississippi, and worked through Christmas.
- A student received a Fulbright Scholarship; now is at the Kennedy School at Harvard.
- **An officer from the department of safety, embedded in a student trip, described the experience as “the most significant experience of my career.”**

Discussion Questions

- What core values would be important for the institution's disaster response?
- What is not clear? Clarification needed?
- Who are the stakeholders in developing the project?
- What would the project look like?