ABSTRACT

We have designed a multi-year workshop program that builds the Building Strong Geoscience Departments workshop into campus support networks and planning to the departmental level. This session offers a range of resource services that can be adapted from previous workshops and incorporated into the program. The program is unique in that it brings together participants from across multiple organizations in an effort to provide professional development opportunities, as well as a wealth of new resources. The session was initially funded by NSF CAREER Grant 0814267, and it continues in its second year.

INTRODUCTION

The Visiting Workshop Program builds on the success initiated by the Building Strong Geoscience Departments program in 2007 and 2009, which provides a forum for departments to think about the present and future of their geoscience programs. The workshop is designed to provide a range of strategies to departments that want to improve student preparation for employment opportunities. The workshop is offered in a range of formats, including a 3-day program in November and a 1-day program in June. The 3-day program focuses on developing a strong geoscience department, while the 1-day program is designed to provide a range of strategies to departments that want to improve student preparation for employment opportunities.

ORGANIZATION

The session consists of a brief presentation on where students with geoscience degrees now work, the changing of the workforce through time, and the disjoint between academe and business. In addition, it identifies sources outside the department that can be used in the workforce preparation process and provides links to other ways to change departmental activities to better prepare students for employment opportunities. Comments from the last two participants were used to improve the session for the 2010-2011 workshop program.

SESSION ACTIVITY #1

• Explore ways to obtain feedback on workforce preparation
• How to use feedback to improve curricula and student activities
• Plan ways to ensure changes are implemented

SESSION ACTIVITY #2

• Survey alumni that would help the department. The questions we asked, as well as some of the responses we received, are shared.

CASE STUDY

We conducted a survey of 22 recent alumni from a geology program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, to assess the impact of changes in the curriculum on the workforce. We found that the majority of alumni expressed interest in being asked to provide feedback on several changes made in the curriculum. The questions we asked, as well as some of the responses we received, are shared.

WORKFORCE PREPARATION - A BREAKOUT SESSION FOR THE "BUILDING STRONG GEOSCIENCE DEPARTMENTS VISITING WORKSHOP LEADERS"

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