Natural Resources and Environmental Issues

Volume 12 *University Education in Natural Resources* Article 20

1-1-2004

Teaching leadership and public speaking through service-learning and independent study

John R. Seiler
Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg

Jeffery L. Kirwan
Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei

Recommended Citation

Seiler, John R. and Kirwan, Jeffery L. (2004) "Teaching leadership and public speaking through service-learning and independent study," *Natural Resources and Environmental Issues*: Vol. 12, Article 20.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei/vol12/iss1/20

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Quinney Natural Resources Research Library, S.J. and Jessie E. at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Natural Resources and Environmental Issues by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact becky.thoms@usu.edu.

Teaching Leadership and Public Speaking Through Service–Learning and Independent Study

John R. Seiler[1] and Jeffrey L. Kirwan[2]

In 1998, we began offering an independent study to primarily juniors and seniors that has served as a substitute for public speaking in most of our majors in the College of Natural Resources. Selected, outstanding students in our college develop a natural resources based presentation that they then deliver to between 15 and 20 middle school biology classes. An interactive on-line outline of each presentation allows the public school teachers to review and schedule presentations to meet their curricular needs and situation. The students keep track of all their scheduling on-line and through e-mail. Students are also required to develop web pages that contribute to our FORSite web page (http://www.fw.vt.edu/dendro/forsite/welcome.htm). Some of the presentations and web sites developed involve scientific investigations performed by middle-school students who then report their results and conclusions over the web. The Virginia Tech Service-learning Center supplies financial support and assistance in syllabus development and evaluation and reflection procedures. Undergraduate student performance is based on teacher evaluations of their presentations, success in communicating and scheduling with teachers, and their web site contribution. Insights and observations gathered over the five years we have offered this course will be presented.

[1] Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061, (540) 231-5461, jseiler@vt.edu
[2] Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061, (540) 231-7265 jkirwan@vt.edu