

Launching a Bonner/ Student Leadership Team: A Retreat to Move from Vision to Action

The Bonner Community Engagement Curriculum

BWBR Description: *Bonner Curriculum workshop is geared at running a half-day retreat consisting of a visioning and planning session for a student leadership team. This builds the effectiveness of student voice and leadership within the Bonner Program.*

Overview:

In this guide, you'll find three pieces for a half-day (or full-day if you build in meals and other activities) retreat. This is designed to take a small group through semi-structured activities that will result in improved approaches for leadership, a sense of ownership for their work, and investments in a plan.

The first section is designed to lead staff and student leaders through a visioning process for their Bonner Program (or other program), one that is informed by a thoughtful analysis of leadership and management.

The second activity focuses on strategy, turning the group's attention towards ways they will help to lead and shape the Bonner Program at large.

The third activity then turns to planning and issues of implementation.

Category:

Visioning, management, leadership, facilitation

Level:

Advanced



**suitable
for mixed
group**

Recommended

Bonner Sequence: This training was designed to help launch a student leadership team through a longer retreat. Hence, it could involve students at multiple levels, but likely with some leadership inclinations.

Learning Outcomes:

- Provide a Bonner (or other) leadership team with the opportunity to assess and refine their approach to management and leadership
- Provide the team members with a deeper understanding of their own balancing of relationships, process, and results.
- Coordinate a visioning activity for the leadership team

Materials:

- Handouts
- Something to write with and on
- Flip charts (prepared)

How to Prepare:

Read the activity. Become familiar with how to present the exercise. Plan handouts. Adjust any scenarios.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

This is constructed for about four hours. It could be a 2 pm to dinner or 10 am to 2 pm weekend retreat, or something like that. Combine with other activities (like the Challenge Building / Ropes Course or making a meal together) for a full-day leadership retreat. If you are doing that, you may want to integrate other suitable leadership trainings (like Leadership Compass, Facilitation, etc.).

The first session needs about 90-minutes:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Tower Building Activity | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 2. Self-Assessment & Problem Solving | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 3. A New Vision | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 4. Building Shared Vision & Commitments | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 5. Break | suggested time 10 minutes |

The second session needs about 70 minutes:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 6. Round Robin-Year Experience | suggested time 15 minutes |
| 7. Working in Teams: The Class Challenges | suggested time 25 minutes |
| 8. Presentations and Feedback (5 min each) | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 9. Break | suggested time 10 minutes |

The third session needs about 80 minutes:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 10. Skit and Vision Preparation | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 11. Stand and Deliver, with Feedback | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 12. Turn attention to community | suggested time 15 minutes |
| 13. Walk through Process, discuss facilitation | suggested time 15 minutes |
| 14. Final thoughts/next steps | suggested time 10 minutes |

Part 1) Tower Building Activity

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Give instructions to the team. They have 15 minutes to construct a five feet (or taller) tower out of the materials provided. They should appoint a team leader and a silent observer (who should take notes).

As facilitators, we will also observe and make additional comments.

Once the time has passed, we will:

- Conduct a team assessment of the Dimensions of Success.
- Hear from the silent observer.
- Transition into a debrief of the Bonner Program as a whole.

Part 2) Self-Assessment & Problem Solving

Suggested time: 20 minutes

As the group to then apply the same dimensions of success to the Bonner Program as a whole. Here we will try to identify and clear out the challenges, in terms of results, process, and relationships. This will require lots of facilitation. We will:

- I. Have the group comment on the results issue. Note on flip chart.

2. Have the group comment on the processes. Note on flip chart.
3. With the caveat that individual relationships should be handled one-on-one, have the group comment on relationships. Note on flip chart.
4. Have the group comment on balance of these elements.
5. Have the group share concrete ideas and suggestions for change.

Note to facilitators: Provide people with the opportunity to tackle questions and share responses. Use skillful facilitation to pull out common themes and elements. If you want, synthesize elements of the discussion, possibly by turning the group's attention toward agreeing on a simple statement that captures their visions and purposes.

Part 3) A New Vision

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Have the group break into three small groups:

- Student development, student learning and leadership
- Community partnerships, relationships, and impact
- Campus-wide, culture of service, center

Each group should have 15 minutes to reflect on what has been discussed and articulate a visionary statement that reflects a collective goal; **where do we want to be by Fall 2008**. These statements should be broad in nature, presenting a goal that is encompassing (not for specific initiatives, which will come later).

In addition, each group should make concrete notes about the roles of the Leadership Team (staff and students) in bringing this vision to reality; **what kinds of structures and roles are needed?**

Part 3) Building Shared Vision & Commitments

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Great, we have done some good work to talk about our big visions for these three core aspects of our program.

Now, we want to interject some important kinds of thinking and preparation: **how do we as a leadership team share this vision in a way that builds unity and support? How do we build a shared vision?**

Let's take a look at the handouts about sharing vision.

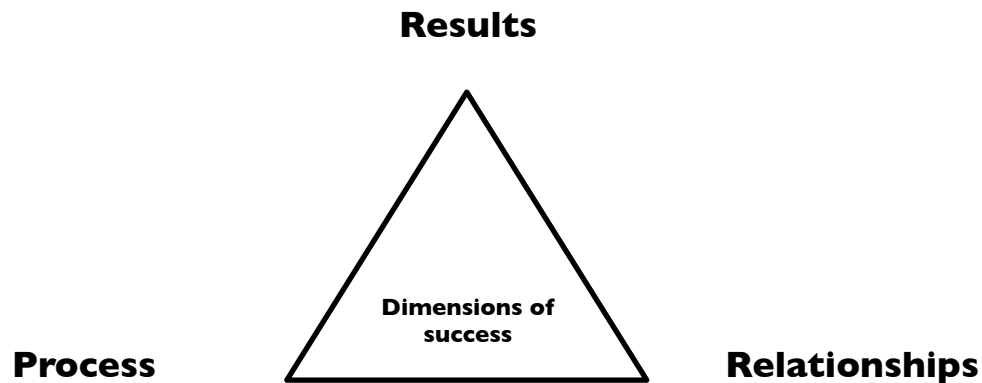
Explain: later in this session, we are going to plan ways to have you lead the Bonner Meeting tonight, involving the rest of the Bonners in shaping the program.

So, before moving forward, we need to think about:

- What is the vision we (you) as a collective can share for this team?
- What can you agree as to how to work together?
- What are some of the individual roles you want to play?
- What are some of the individual commitments you can make?
 - For now, we're going to leave aside the question of 'what committees, what structure', because that will come later

We want to end this portion with a few simple statements that represent the vision you have for yourselves as a Leadership Team.

Tower Building



Purpose As a team, experience dimensions of success while you work with others to accomplish a challenge.

Challenge Build a free-standing tower using materials provided.

Success Criteria

- Tower must be 5 feet tall or more.
- Tower must be able to withstand a moderate breeze.

Guidelines

- Your group has 10 minutes to plan and 5 minutes to build the tower.
- You cannot touch materials during the planning phase.
- Your tower must stand free of any outside support (e.g., cannot be leaning on something or attached to ceiling).

Phases

PLAN

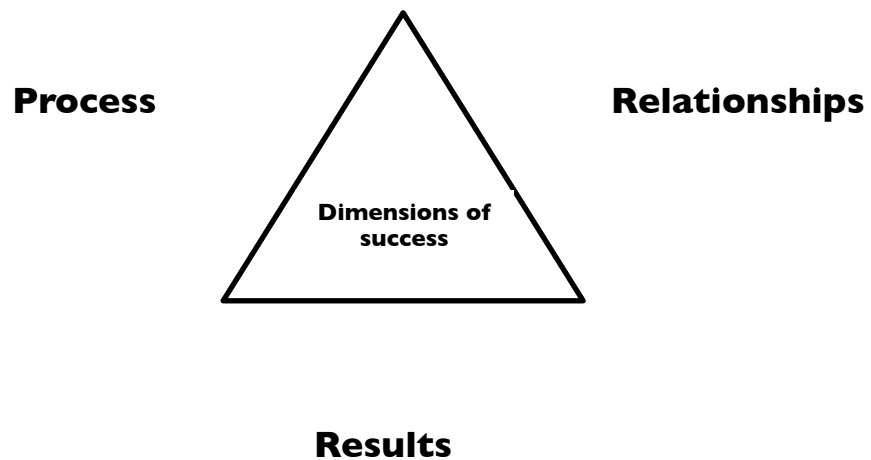
- Choose a Team Leader.
- Facilitators will appoint a silent observer.
- As a team, plan how to build the tower.

BUILD

- Construct a free-standing tower.

DEBRIEF

- Conduct a team assessment of the Dimensions of Success.
- Hear from the silent observer.



Tower Building: Team Debrief

Desired outcome Make a list of 4-6 things that worked and 4-6 things that could have been improved about your team's results, process, and relationships.

Process

- The Team Leader facilitates the discussion using the questions below.
- Choose a recorder to take down notes and report out.
- The Silent Observer should continue to do so.

Questions to answer

- What did you like about your results? What could have been better?
- What worked about the process? What could have been better?
- What relationship issues emerged over the course of the challenge? What worked about how you dealt with them? What could have been improved?

	<div>+</div> <div>What worked?</div>	<div>Δ</div> <div>What could have been improved?</div>
Results		
Process		
Relationships		

The Bonner Program: Reflections

	Signs of Success
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What gets done? Is the work high quality? On time? • Community partnerships: do we meet their expectations? Are we helping build their capacity? • Student learning and development: are students learning and growing as leaders? New skills and knowledge? • Campus-wide: what are we achieving?
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the processes clear, open? How about logical and efficient? Are the processes appropriate to the tasks? • Placements and community relationships: student to partner, student to staff, staff to partner? • Student learning and development: what processes engage students as leaders? What processes respect staff as leaders? • Campus-wide: what's our reputation on campus?
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do individuals feel supported? Do individuals feel trust? Do individuals feel valued? • Consider all involved and their roles.

Are we balanced? What needs to change?

The Bonner Program: Reflections

Desired outcome Thinking about these same dimensions of success for your Bonner Program and the Leadership Team, discuss what's working and what can be improved.

Process

- All will contribute. First, individuals can make notes on their own.
- Then, the group will share some of their thoughts, with facilitators' help.
- The goal is to move from this reflection to some ideas for change.

	+	Δ
	What is working?	What can we change?
Results		
Process		
Relationships		

Suggestions for Change: Concrete Actions, Processes, or Efforts:

The Bonner Program: What's Our Vision

Desired outcome As a leadership team, we will let go of the past and move beyond the current situation. We will share a collective vision for what we want to be.

Process

- All will contribute. First, individuals can make notes on their own for a few minutes.
- Then, the group will share some of their thoughts, with small groups.
- Each group will report and hear comments from others.
- Lastly, we'll turn to the issue of community.

	Our statement of vision: Where we want to be?	Our roles in the Leadership Team
Student Development (leadership)		
Community Partnerships & Placements (site teams)		
Campus-wide (culture, center)		
Who we are as a community		

When and How to Share Vision

Sharing a vision can have a powerful impact on a group, team, or program.
Facilitative Leaders make conscious choices about when and how to communicate a vision.

Common Scenarios or Reasons:

	What are the issues we are thinking about? What are the ideas? What do we need to be careful or considerate of?	What does this imply about the processes that are needed?
The team is embarking on a new project and leaders want to reinforce unity.		
People are feeling disconnected from the program, task, or from each other. Leaders want to instill new meaning into the work or recreate a sense of teamwork.		
Changes have taken place in the organization/program and the leaders want to refocus people's commitment and energy on the mission and larger goals.		
Anything else?		

Ways to Build a Vision

Building a vision, as in all important decision-making processes, challenges the leader to seek maximum appropriate involvement.

What is maximum appropriate involvement?

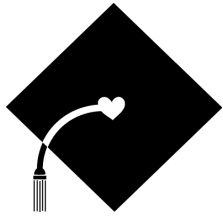
			Fallback to lower level	Delegate with constraints
		Fallback to lower level	Consensus	
		Gather input from team and decide		
	Gather input from individuals and decide		Factors to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time available • Importance of decision • Information needed • Need for Buy-In • Capability • Building Teamwork • Sensitivity of issues • Protocol (larger context rules) 	
Decide and announce				

- In this case, if we want to build a shared vision for the whole Bonner Program, what would be some of the things that could involve input from broader groups (delegate with constraints level)?

Components of an Inspiring Vision

A vision is an image of the mission accomplished,
the ideal state made concrete through words and pictures.

Components of an Inspiring Vision	Examples
Reflects a high standard of excellence	Community partners' report in their annual surveys that they definitely want students back the coming year and that they are highly satisfied with what has happened.
Describe a unique characteristic	Bonnors at our school are known as the most dedicated and responsible group on campus. Even faculty talk about how great it is to have us in class.
Represent future accomplishments	By 2010, we have established site-based teams at 10 of our committed sites, with student project coordinators at all of them.
Conjures up an image or picture	Our office looks different; people are psyched to be around, working in their teams. People are constantly sharing the good news about what's happening in service, in class, in meetings.
Presents a unifying theme	We feel like our program represents the best of student leadership, collaborative leadership, and a vision for what our college can contribute to the community.
Appeals to shared values	The Bonner Program also makes it possible for first generation college bound, low-income, and other under-represented students to be at our college. It changes what we think of as diversity.



Turning Vision Into Strategy: Unifying Goals

The Bonner Community Engagement Curriculum

Overview: This is the second part of a longer series of activities designed to lead staff and student leaders through a visioning process for their program, one that is informed by a thoughtful analysis of leadership and management.

This section is preceded by “Envisioning your team as facilitative leaders” and followed by a third section that turns to issues of implementation.

Category: Visioning, management, leadership, facilitation

Level: Advanced

Type: Structured activity designed for 1 hour 20 minutes (1/3 of 4 hour session)

Learning Outcomes:

- Provide a Bonner (or other) leadership team with the opportunity to take a vision for their maximum potential and turn it into a set of strategies to accomplish in a given timeframe
- Analyze and brainstorm formative activities and innovative experiences that will define each individual year in the Bonner Program
- Strategize around the cornerstone activities

Materials:

- Handouts

- Something to write with and on
- Flip charts (prepared)

How to Prepare:

Read the activity. Become familiar with how to present the exercise. Plan handouts. Adjust any scenarios.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

This outline has been created for a 65-minute segment:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Round Robin-Year Experience | suggested time 15 minutes |
| 2. Working in Teams: Your Challenge | suggested time 30 minutes |
| 3. Presentations and Feedback (5 min each) | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 4. Break | suggested time 10 minutes |

Part 1) Round Robin

Suggested time: 30 minutes

The context of this section is: **Turning from our big vision to what are we going to do, now this semester and preparing for next year.**

We're going to do a round robin to allow participants to brainstorm and share their best ideas about how each year in the Bonner Program can have a great experience.

Each person should brainstorm their thoughts on post-its. One thought per post-it. Facilitators will introduce the years and the charts.

Flip charts around the room:

First year experience

The first year in Bonner is supposed to be about exploration, understanding self and others, understanding the community, having intense immersion experiences to discover one's passions and developing new skills.

At this point in the year, you still need to have a powerful First-Year Trip. Also, you may be wanting to move freshmen into being part of site-based teams this coming year.

Post ideas for roles, trainings/skill development, the trip.

Second year experience

The second year in Bonner is supposed to be about experience, where students take their passions and begin to apply them in their service sites, developing more complex leadership and planning skills, understanding civic engagement more broadly.

At this point in the year, you still need to have a powerful Second-Year Exchange, one that not only connects you with another school but provides powerful learning opportunities about a larger, national context. Also, you may be wanting to prepare sophomores as next year's rising juniors for roles in site leadership.

Post ideas for roles, trainings/skill development, the exchange.

Third year experience

The third year in Bonner is supposed to be about example, where students demonstrate compassionate and effective leadership in various environments, including in the community and on campus, developing and applying advanced leadership skills, contributing positively to community. Juniors may also make more intentional connections on the academic side.

At this point in the year, you still need to make sure that juniors are developed as leaders, and this may play out at sites, for the Bonner Program as a whole, or on campus.

Post ideas for roles, trainings/skill development, leadership projects.

Fourth year experience

The fourth year in Bonner is supposed to be about expertise or excellence, where students have a culminating and capstone level experience, including in the community and on campus, perhaps linked to their academic study. Seniors may assume specialized leadership, research, or other roles, or continue as site leaders.

At this point in the year, you still need to make sure that seniors have a great final semester, also turning their attention toward life after graduation, as well as sharing the positive aspects of their experience with the Bonners and community.

After allowing for 15 minutes of brainstorming, members should reflect and discuss for 15 minutes the ideas that have been posted. What should be the goals for each year's experience by the end of the year? What ideas are up there? Which ones do you think are doable and transformative. Ex. Have one great meeting per month for the rest of the year.

Part 2) Working on Class Years: Team Challenge

Suggested time: 30 minutes

Divide the group into four teams.

Each team will receive a handout titled, "Your challenge."

The next 25 minutes should be spent developing a plan for their experiences that they feel will define or maximize the class year.

At the end of this time, we'll hear from each team (5 minutes max)

Part 3) Presentations

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Groups (12 people: 4 groups of 3) will present their designed experiences by year for five minutes each.

In between and at the end, facilitators will make or invite feedback, keeping notes on things to come back to (how this affects teams' roles).

YOUR CHALLENGE - FIRST YEAR

Scenario: The First Year Experience

The first year in Bonner is supposed to be about exploration, understanding self and others, understanding the community, having intense immersion experiences to discover one's passions and developing new skills.

At this point in the year, you still need to have a powerful First-Year Trip. Also, you may want to move freshmen into being part of site-based teams this coming year.

Everyone post their best ideas!

The Service Trip (what is it, how are first-years involved in planning or education)	
Trainings/skill development (topics for meetings)	
Moving towards site-based team and better service	
Roles for Leadership Team or other Bonners	
What else needs to happen to finish this semester strong?	

THE STRATEGY

Scenario: The First Year Experience

The first year in Bonner is supposed to be about exploration, understanding self and others, understanding the community, having intense immersion experiences to discover one's passions and developing new skills.

At this point in the year, you still need to have a powerful First-Year Trip. Also, you may be wanting to move freshmen into being part of site-based teams this coming year.

Given the ideas that have been generated, your team needs to create elements of a strategy. Think about:

What	Leadership Roles (this team and others)	What processes (buy-in, input) are needed	What are the outcomes you want
The trip			
Class Meetings (at least 1 per month)			
Site Team Organizing Meetings (at least 1 per month)			

YOUR CHALLENGE - SECOND YEAR

Scenario: The Second Year Experience

The second year in Bonner is supposed to be about experience, where students take their passions and begin to apply them in their service sites, developing more complex leadership and planning skills, understanding civic engagement more broadly.

At this point in the year, you still need to have a powerful Second-Year Exchange, one that not only connects you with another school but provides powerful learning opportunities about a larger, national context. Also, you may want to prepare sophomores as next year's rising juniors for roles in site leadership.

Everyone post their best ideas!

The Second Year Exchange (what is it, how are second-years involved in planning or education)	
Trainings/skill development (topics for meetings)	
Moving towards site-based team and better service	
Roles for Leadership Team or other Bonners	

What else needs to happen to finish this semester strong?	
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THE STRATEGY

Scenario: The Second Year Experience

The second year in Bonner is supposed to be about experience, where students take their passions and begin to apply them in their service sites, developing more complex leadership and planning skills, understanding civic engagement more broadly.

At this point in the year, you still need to have a powerful Second-Year Exchange, one that not only connects you with another school but provides powerful learning opportunities about a larger, national context. Also, you may want to prepare sophomores as next year's rising juniors for roles in site leadership.

Given the ideas that have been generated, your team needs to create elements of a strategy. Think about:

What	Leadership Roles (this team and others)	What processes (buy-in, input) are needed	What are the outcomes you want
The Exchange			
Class Meetings (at least 1 per month)			
Site Team Organizing Meetings (at least 1 per month)			

YOUR CHALLENGE - THIRD YEAR

Scenario: The Third Year Experience

The third year in Bonner is supposed to be about example, where students demonstrate compassionate and effective leadership in various environments, including in the community and on campus, developing and applying advanced leadership skills, contributing positively to community. Juniors may also make more intentional connections on the academic side.

At this point in the year, you still need to make sure that juniors are developed as leaders, and this may play out at sites, for the Bonner Program as a whole, or on campus.

Everyone post their best ideas!

Third Year Leadership Projects	
Trainings/skill development (topics for meetings)	
Moving towards site-based team and better service	
Roles for Leadership Team or other Bonners	
What else needs to happen to finish this semester strong?	

THE STRATEGY

Scenario: The Third Year Experience

The third year in Bonner is supposed to be about example, where students demonstrate compassionate and effective leadership in various environments, including in the community and on campus, developing and applying advanced leadership skills, contributing positively to community. Juniors may also make more intentional connections on the academic side.

At this point in the year, you still need to make sure that juniors are developed as leaders, and this may play out at sites, for the Bonner Program as a whole, or on campus.

Given the ideas that have been generated, your team needs to create elements of a strategy. Think about:

What	Leadership Roles (this team and others)	What processes (buy-in, input) are needed	What are the outcomes you want
Junior Class Projects			
Class Meetings (at least 1 per month)			
Site Team Organizing Meetings (at least 1 per month)			

YOUR CHALLENGE - FOURTH YEAR

Scenario: The Fourth Year Experience

The fourth year in Bonner is supposed to be about expertise or excellence, where students have a culminating and capstone level experience, including in the community and on campus, perhaps linked to their academic study. Seniors may assume specialized leadership, research, or other roles, or continue as site leaders.

At this point in the year, you still need to make sure that seniors have a great final semester, also turning their attention toward life after graduation, as well as sharing the positive aspects of their experience with the Bonners and community.

Everyone post their best ideas!

Capstone or Presentation of Learning Projects	
Trainings/skill development (topics for meetings)	
Moving towards site-based team and better service	

Roles for Leadership Team or other Bonners	
What else needs to happen to finish this semester strong?	

THE STRATEGY

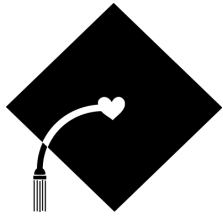
Scenario: The Fourth Year Experience

The fourth year in Bonner is supposed to be about expertise or excellence, where students have a culminating and capstone level experience, including in the community and on campus, perhaps linked to their academic study. Seniors may assume specialized leadership, research, or other roles, or continue as site leaders.

At this point in the year, you still need to make sure that seniors have a great final semester, also turning their attention toward life after graduation, as well as sharing the positive aspects of their experience with the Bonners and community.

Given the ideas that have been generated, your team needs to create elements of a strategy. Think about:

What	Leadership Roles (this team and others)	What processes (buy-in, input) are needed	What are the outcomes you want
Senior Class Projects???			
Class Meetings (at least 1 per month)			
Site Team Organizing Meetings (at least 1 per month)			



So, What Do We Need to Change - and How?

The Bonner Community Engagement Curriculum

Overview: This is the third part of a longer series of activities designed to lead staff and student leaders through a visioning process for their program, now getting into specific strategies for rethinking their leadership roles and expanding the circle to other Bonners

Category: Visioning, management, leadership, facilitation

Level: Advanced

Type: Structured activity designed for 1 hour 20 minutes (1/3 of 4 hour session)

Learning Outcomes:

- Get the leadership team ready to present its roles and ideas back to the broader Bonner Community.

Materials:

- Handouts
- Something to write with and on
- Flip charts (prepared)

How to Prepare:

Read the activity. Become familiar with how to present the exercise. Plan handouts. Adjust any scenarios.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

This outline has been created for a 80-minute segment:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Skit and Vision Preparation | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 2. Stand and Deliver, with Feedback | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 3. Turn attention to community | suggested time 15 minutes |
| 4. Walk through Process, discuss facilitation | suggested time 15 minutes |
| 5. Final thoughts/next steps | suggested time 10 minutes |

Part 1) So, what do we present tonight

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Every team has to generate an inspiring pitch or skit that includes some of the plan just generated in the last session.

Remind people of the qualities of an inspiring vision.

The focus is not on sharing every element of the plan, it's on expanding the circle of leadership and getting input from people

After the skits, we'll divide people into class groups to get feedback.

You also need to come up with 2 questions you'll use to facilitate that feedback.

Part 2) Do skits, group feedback

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Are the skits short, fun, appropriate?

Clear pitch for other leadership?

Good questions?

Discuss being ready to facilitate that portion

Part 3) Let's turn our attention to community!

Brainstorm and get the group to decide how they want to handle issues.

They need to refer to specific partners that the program currently works with, as well as their own service placements (or hopes for them).

The goal here is to get each person to be co-leading an issue for the evening.

Also, they will prepare how they introduce themselves in a good way.

Part 4) Walk through process, discuss facilitation

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Walk through agenda for Bonner meeting. Discuss how group will handle presentations and facilitation

Part 3) Final thoughts/next steps

Suggested time: 10 minutes

All Bonner Meeting: Goal: create a full agenda to roll out the ideas!

Sample:

Part 1: Leadership Team Presentations (15 minutes)

Part 2: Class Feedback Sessions (15 minutes)

Part 3: Reorganizing into Site/Issue Based Teams (20 minutes)

Part 4: Presentations (20 minutes)

Part 5: Other Student Leadership Interests (10 minutes)

TEAM PROCESS

Site/Issue Based Team: _____

Vision Statement:

Design a vision statement that represents your collective issue area and a big vision for what you hope to help impact through your service.

Name the organizations:

Name the organizations that fall (or could fall) into this issue area. Also, if you want, name specific Bonners who are interested in working at that organization. Basically, you are creating an organizational chart for your topic.

Process with Partners:

As a team, design steps in a process that you can help carry out this semester. What information do you need from partners? What roles do you need staff to play? Include a plan for site visits, involving partners in Bonner meetings or events. We want a set of clear steps with a timeline:

Step/Activity	Timeline	Roles/People