

## 1988-89 Update of Programs in Volunteer Management in Colleges and Universities

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### *Background*

In September of 1988, with major assistance from the Professional Development Chair, Winifred Brown, CVA, and from Sarah Jane Rehnborg, Ph.D., designer of the AVA Performance-Based Certification Program (and Chair-Designate of Task Force II), the Association for Volunteer Administration's Task Force on Higher Education prepared a somewhat revised version of the 1987-88 survey on Higher Education for Managers of Volunteers. The initial survey had been prepared and administered by Mary Kay Shernock of Norwich Studies and Analysis Institute, Norwich University (VT). Her full report will be found in the Winter 1987-88 issue of *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*. Our revisions were designed to elicit more specific and separated information on the degree-related and noncredit courses and programs currently offered.

### *Survey Procedures*

The update survey (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey) first was mailed to the 62 colleges and universities which had been identified in the initial research as having active programs relating to volunteer management. It also was sent to other institutions which had contacted AVA independently during the past year, asking to be included in future mailings. A report of interim returns was briefed to a seminar of the Task Force and other interested

AVA members at the 1988 AVA National Conference on Volunteer Administration in October.

Following the conference, a second mailing was sent to all academic institutions which had returned the 1987-88 survey, but had reported "No programs." At the same time, members of the Task Force on Higher Education began making personal contact soliciting nonrespondents.

### *Survey Responses*

As a result of the "teamwork" approach, the return rate quickly improved. As Shernock had discovered a year earlier, personal contacts did make a difference. Fifty-one responses were received for tabulation, including seven institutions which had not been previously listed. The 51 represented 53 separate institutions including three from Arkansas, administered and reporting as a single consortium.

Of the 51 respondents, 32 declared they did have programs dedicated to volunteer administration or focused on volunteer administrators. These included 21 publicly-funded institutions, nine community colleges, (two of which were also publicly funded) and four independent colleges. Nineteen respondents said they had "no program offerings," although three added modifiers:

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Valencia Community College of Orlando, Florida, wrote, "We assist the Volunteer Center of Central Florida in presenting some training seminars."

University of Akron's (Ohio) Continuing Education Public Service and Outreach Department has "only one program related to volunteers and that is a course on fundraising for nonprofit organizations which is related to the fundraising process with volunteer involvement as a smaller component."

Oakland University of Rochester, MI, reported through a Task Force member that "we use volunteer group leaders in some of our programs, and offer one noncredit course in group leadership. In no sense of the word do we train volunteer administrators."

We determined that these institutions should not be listed as having programs, but would be helpful as an "extension network" for future Task Force projects.

#### *Deleted Programs*

Five institutions informed us that programs formerly in effect had been dropped. Two took time to explain the reasons:

Central Michigan University reported through a Task Force member that "the University is deleting the program from their curriculum because of low enrollment (less than 30 students enrolled in 6 years) and lack of employer tuition reimbursement for students."

University of Delaware also reported the cancellation of a program which had been in effect for "about six years." The respondent wrote, "It was a good series and well received; unfortunately, when we were forced to raise the price on each seminar, participation was significantly reduced and we were forced to phase it out."

Although the current survey basically reinforced the findings made by Ms. Shernock in the previous year, this year's review has produced a number of interesting changes, indicating both positive and negative trends.

#### *Departmental Responsibility*

While most of the programs represented are located within their institu-

tions under Continuing Education departments, there were proliferations of other odd "hiding places" this year, from "Conference Services" to "Recreation and Leisure" to "Public Affairs."

The lack of uniformity of sponsorship may be discouraging to potential students who must engage in real detective work to find these special programs. Even university admissions and registration offices sometimes are not immediately aware of them. It is almost impossible to search for the programs with any confidence that institutions will clearly advertise them. We hope that separate marketing brochures or attention-getting placement in registration materials may be employed for the sake of the would-be students of volunteer administration.

#### *Credit and Noncredit Courses*

This year we found that more institutions are offering *both* credit and noncredit courses than are offering either type alone. Perhaps, as Shernock noted, this indicates flexibility of options, especially in community colleges which have more latitude for innovation and change. I would like to consider that it also indicates a recognition that there are various entry points at which a member of the volunteer administration field may seek to enter a formal learning process. In line with today's career ladder emphasis, the pursuit of certificates or degrees may be seen by the student/practitioner as bringing both personal growth and professional stature. Alert academic institutions, aware of growing interest in the field but not yet certain of the focus of the trend, may be willing to keep several options open while they test the waters of enrollment numbers. However, as we have seen, if numbers are not favorable, colleges do not delay in cancelling those options.

#### *Course Offerings*

Both the credit and noncredit curricula reported in our survey listed management skills, grantsmanship and fundraising, and communications among the most common current program offerings. A heartening change this year is the appearance of "Volunteer Management" (or "Volunteerism") among the most frequently

presented course and program titles. Last year, Shernock noted that most colleges were not teaching these core subjects in programs for volunteer administrators. This year they are!

Poorly represented among curricular offerings is the general topic of "Cross-Cultural Studies." Its absence is a significant detriment to a field which may clearly benefit by giving active attention to minority issues and specialized recruitment.

Shernock pointed out the preponderance of middle-aged (35-50) women as the student group for her surveyed courses and programs. Current findings indicate that degree-related courses are now being taken by a younger (25-35) age group, most of them *potential*, not current, volunteer administrators. This may signify the growing recognition of volunteer administration as a career field.

#### *Cost Factors*

Course brochures are more readily available for the degree-related courses, and more apt to be free for the asking, than those for the noncredit programs. Financial aid generally is not available for the non-credit student, but is for the student enrolling in credit courses.

#### *Instructors and Trainers*

Based on available information, most instructors are regular university staff, operating on the main campus. There is minimal indication that outside experts (consultants or speakers in the field) are brought in to teach subjects not familiar to core faculty. There is also indication that motivated students are requesting (and getting) courses in boardmanship, leadership and legislative advocacy, topics not cited a year ago. Again, the sponsoring institutions seem to be doing a creditable job of trying to define the field of volunteer administration and its needs, but do not show evidence that the AVA Performance-Based Certification criteria have been employed or explored in designing courses and programs. Task Force II will be addressing this important issue.

#### *Enrollment Flux*

Comments from responding institutions speculating on poor enrollment cite possible marketing failures as well as lack of employer tuition support. The latter seems to call for new initiatives educating employers to the idea of "growing excellence" in their volunteer administrators. The organizations, their volunteers, and the causes they support stand to become the strongest beneficiaries of improved training and education for their key volunteer managers.

#### *Steps Toward Collaboration*

Nearly one-half of the actively sponsoring universities requested information on AVA's Performance-Based Certification Program in their survey responses. One third are seeking information on AVA membership, and 13 respondent institutions indicate interest in being part of the active work of the Task Force on Higher Education. With 23 academic institutions continuing programs over multiple years, we now have a solid partnership base to work with. Representing locations in 15 states (Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia), the District of Columbia, and two Canadian Provinces, this corps of potential collaborators can bring a tremendous influence to bear on volunteer administration and the effectiveness of volunteer service, if our networks can be linked in cooperative standard-setting.

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Further information on this study, including a list of participating institutions, may be obtained by contacting the Association for Volunteer Administration.

APPENDIX A

1988-9 UPDATE

AVA SURVEY ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
FOR MANAGERS OF VOLUNTEERS

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please TYPE or PRINT your response to each item as directed. Do not use abbreviations as this information will be used in a directory of programs, workshops and courses.

INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of college or university

\_\_\_\_\_ Address (incl. P.O. Number)

This institution is:  independent  publicly funded  community college

NAME OF DIVISION/DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator/Director: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title

Contact person, if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title

Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Non-Credit Programs for Volunteer Management/Administration:**

1. Check ALL that apply to current educational opportunities for volunteer management/administration:

- 1a.  Conferences
- 1b.  Workshops
- 1c.  Courses
- 1d.  Certificate program
- 1e.  Other: Specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 1f.  No offerings available (If "no," please skip to II.)

2. Check ALL that apply to the current scheduling of instruction:

- 2a.  Daytime
- 2b.  Evening
- 2c.  Weekend
- 2d.  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Check ALL that apply to the location of instruction:

- 3a.  Main campus
- 3b.  Adjunct campus
- 3c.  Off-campus sites
- 3d.  Radio, TV, Telephone network
- 3e.  Off-campus independent study

4. Do you award (check ALL that apply):

- 4a.  CEU's
- 4b.  AVA Educational Endorsement
- 4c.  Other: Specify \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is Financial Aid available? 5a.  Yes 5b.  No

6. Is catalog, brochure, and/or pamphlet available upon request? (Please send available samples.):

- 6a.  No pre-printed materials available.
- 6b.  Yes (If "yes," is there a fee?)
- 6c.  Yes
- 6d.  No

7. Check ALL that apply to the number of offerings currently available:

- 7a.  1-2 courses
- 7b.  3-5 courses
- 7c.  6 or more courses
- 7d.  workshops

8. Date of first offering(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Year

9. Estimated number of students served to date: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are MOST students currently volunteer administrators?

- 10a.  Yes
  - 10b.  No
  - 10c.  Yes
  - 10d.  No
- (If "no," are MOST students prospective volunteer administrators?)

11. Are **MOST** students: 11a.  Female?      11b.  Male?
12. The age of **most** students is (Check **ONE** only):  
 12a.  18-25 years      12c.  36-50 years  
 12b.  26-35 years      12d.  over 50 years
13. Check **ALL** the types of **course content** currently available:  
 13a.  Communications Skills      13h.  Accounting/Financial Management  
 13b.  Social Organization/Behavior      13i.  Grantsmanship  
 13c.  Personnel Management      13j.  Cross-Cultural Studies  
 13d.  Social Psychology/Human Relations      13k.  Planning  
 13e.  Volunteerism      13l.  Marketing  
 13f.  Community Organizing      13m.  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 13g.  Management/Administration
14. Check **ALL** that apply to the **faculty** involved in your volunteer management program:  
 14a.  Full-time Faculty      14e.  State University Extension Faculty  
 14b.  Part-time Faculty      14f.  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 14c.  Adjunct Faculty  
 14d.  Community-based Faculty

**II. Credit Programs for Volunteer Management/Administration:**

1. Check **ALL** that apply to current educational opportunities for volunteer management/administration:  
 1a.  Individual courses in volunteer administration  
 1b.  Certificate program  
      Associate level - major/school \_\_\_\_\_  
      Bachelor level - major/school \_\_\_\_\_  
      Graduate level - major/school \_\_\_\_\_  
 1c.  Degree program in volunteer management/administration  
      Associate:      degree awarded \_\_\_\_\_  
      Bachelor:      degree awarded \_\_\_\_\_  
      Graduate:      school & degree awarded \_\_\_\_\_  
 1d.  No offerings available (Please skip to Part III.) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Check **ALL** that apply to the current scheduling of instruction:  
 2a.  Full-time enrollment      2e.  Weekend  
 2b.  Part-time enrollment      2f.  Self-directed study  
 2c.  Daytime      2g.  Self-designed major  
 2d.  Evening      2h.  Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Check **ALL** that apply to the location of instruction:  
 3a.  Main campus      3d.  Radio, TV, Telephone network  
 3b.  Adjunct campus      3e.  Off-campus independent study  
 3c.  Off-campus sites
4. Do you award credit for prior learning?      4a.  Yes      4b.  No  
 Has that been applied to this program to date?      4c.  Yes      4d.  No  
     4e.  Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is Financial Aid available?      5a.  Yes      5b.  No
6. Is catalog, brochure, and/or pamphlet available upon request? (Please send any available samples.):  
 6a.  No pre-printed materials available.  
 6b.  Yes (If "yes," is there a fee?)      6c.  Yes      6e.  No
7. Check **ALL** that apply to the number of offerings currently available:  
 7a.  1-2 courses      7b.  3-5 courses      7c.  6 or more courses
8. Date of first offering(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
     Month      Year
9. Estimated number of students served to date: \_\_\_\_\_

