**Prof. Beth Ann Bates**

**Spring 2012**

**Lesson Plan and Suggested Assignment for Student Audience Members at University Research and Scholarship Day**

[Note: This is a general plan and assignment that can be tailored to any discipline.]

Materials: University Research and Scholarship Day 2012 program (booklet containing schedule of presentations/posters and abstracts.) This can be obtained at the welcome table outside rooms 171A-B in University Commons. This is near the stairs leading up to the Ballrooms, in the hallway near poster displays. Related information is posted at <http://www.wpunj.edu/osp/OSP-programs-and-projects.dot>?

Objectives: To give students an overview and appreciation of the role of research and/or creative scholarship in your academic area and their potential career fields. To further develop students’ critical thinking skills by helping them examine research findings as presented by WP faculty and other students. To help students develop an appreciation of the work faculty members do outside the classroom.

Evaluation Item: Suggested written assignment below.

Presentation and Participation Activities: In a class prior to April 5th, you can give a brief lecture and/or lead a discussion on the role of research and scholarship activities in the academic area of your course, tailoring the presentation to the type of scholarship commonly practiced in your discipline (i.e. laboratory or field research in biology, the writing of a novel or literary criticism by an English professor, human subject research conducted in the social sciences, etc.) Some questions that could be addressed include:

* What makes someone an “expert” in their field? How does a person get to be an expert?
* What do University professors do with their lives other than teach? How are they evaluated for tenure or promotion?
* What’s the point of doing research in this field? How can one person’s work help others?
* Do professors have a role is society outside of campus?
* If you could do any research you wanted, what topics or questions might you like to find answers to?

Suggested Writing Assignment: Attend 1 or more presentations at University Research and Scholarship Day. If you have the opportunity, ask the presenter a question about their work. [For instance, you might ask how he or she became interested in their area of study. You can ask for clarification of concepts that you do not understand, or why other possible areas of research were not discussed.] Write a 1 to 2 page response paper in which you answer the following questions:

* Who gave the presentation? Include name, department and status (faculty, staff or student?)
* What was the format of the presentation? i.e. lecture, reading, or visual art work? Poster?
* What was the subject matter? How much do you feel you understood from the presentation or poster?
* What did you ask the presenter and how did you feel about the answer?
* Describe the nature of this presenter’s work. What are they doing or studying? Why does this presenter have an interest in that subject? Can you extrapolate the role this work might have in the presenter’s current and future professional life?
* What implications could this work have in that presenter’s field?
* What relevance could this work have to the world at large? (i.e. could it solve a problem in medicine, agriculture or some other area?)

Post R&S Day Presentation and Participation Activities: After students have attended presentations and/or handed in written assignments, you can follow-up with a discussion on what they learned, and perhaps share your own professional development efforts with your students. You may tie this discussion into a lesson on how and why literature reviews are the first step in most research plans, how a hypothesis is developed and how research plans or instruments are designed. This can be a jumping off point for assigning research and scholarship projects or papers to be completed in April or May.