Deliberative Forums in Academic Libraries

An Innovative Approach to Reaching Your Audience

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
Previous Outreach Efforts

• Website
• Web Exhibits
• Direct contact with faculty and students
• Tours
Kettering Foundation Initiative

• Previous collaborations with ALA
• Work with presidential libraries
• Collaboration with Association of Centers for the Study of Congress
• Two phases:
  – Convening and deliberating 3 public issues forums
  – Creating an issue book through the naming and framing process that highlights our collection strengths
Training Process

• Two-day workshop in Kettering’s Dayton office
  – Nature of public issues forums
  – Steps in convening forums
  – Selecting participants
  – Forum structure and protocol
  – Serving as moderators
  – Mock forums
  – Issue books and starter videos
  – Evaluation and follow-up
Creating a Steering Committee

• Structure
  – 3 faculty from FSU Political Science Dept.
  – 4 faculty from FSU Economics Dept.
  – FSU Center for Leadership and Civic Education (student activities group)
  – FSU Center for Demography and Population Health
  – FSU Libraries Undergraduate Services coordinator
  – Director of “Village Square”
Steering Committee Benefits

• Helped identify individual students
• Campus groups
• Community organizations
• Great brainstorming tool for logistics
Selecting Topics

• National Debt as “mandated” forum
• Influence of Money in Politics
• Health Care
Recruiting

• Word of Mouth
• Faculty offering extra credit
• Social networking
• Identifying appropriate departments
• Contacting student organizations
• Creating an application
Benefits of a Skilled Moderator

• Lays out the ground rules
• Learn how to manage the deliberation so everyone can be heard, recorded
• Effective discussion “transitioner”
• Effective in summation
• Engaging audience in sustaining future forums (e.g., “invite a friend”)
Outcomes

• Long and short-term solutions
• Feedback from Kettering evaluations
• Good PR for our organization through creation of a resource guide, wide library representation
• Outreach: Created a guide to health care resources in the Claude Pepper Papers