



**FACULTY SUMMER INSTITUTE 2004 PARTICIPANTS:** (back row, l-r) Dr. Richard Baca, Dr. Kerry Webb, Dr. Wayne Davis, Dr. Stewart Tung, Dr. Steve Mullen, Dr. Tim Trammell, Dr. Dale Sims, Dr. Phil Williams, John McCuin; (front row, l-r) Sandee Smith, Dr. Rose Johnson, Dr. Bonnie Hinkle, Dr. Consuelo Wallace, Dr. Bobbie Martindale, Dr. Judy Morris, Jean Humphreys, Dr. Gail Linam. Not pictured: Dr. Tom Bush, Melissa Newman, Scott Coleman.

## DBU SUMMER FACULTY INSTITUTE 2004

# DISCOVERING the MEANING: SERVICE-LEARNING

by Kristie Brooks

**A**fter completing an intense, nine-week workshop, DBU's 2004 Summer Faculty Institute fellows are now well-versed in the theories of *service-learning*.

The Summer Faculty Institute, which began in 2001, was developed to strengthen DBU's commitment to Christ-centered, quality higher education and was made possible through a matching grant from the Ruth Ray Hunt Philanthropic Fund. The Institute is a nine-week seminar that focuses on the classic and contemporary texts that have shaped and are currently shaping Christian higher education.

Since 2001, selected DBU professors have been appointed to participate in the Institute. This summer's group met weekly to discuss the topic of service-learning. Led by Dr. Gail Linam, DBU provost, Sandee Smith, research analyst and hybrid coordinator in the provost's office, and Scott Coleman from the Dallas Baptist Association, they met for nine weeks of concentrated study.

Service-learning is an idea that is very close to Dr. Linam's heart. For some time she felt a desire to study this topic as a part of the Institute's readings and discussions. DBU has long had a mission to provide Christ-centered, quality higher education that produces servant leaders who can integrate faith and learning into their careers, but discovering new ways to make this mission statement a tangible reality was what intrigued Dr. Linam.

Another confirmation that she was on the right path came from a letter that was delivered by the Texas State Legislature to Dr. Gary Cook, DBU president. This official letter included a resolution that urged public and private institutions of higher education in Texas to adopt service-learning as an important pedagogical tool and a central form of engagement, civil outreach and citizenship education.

"In order for us to help our students become servant leaders in their communities, we need to successfully integrate the idea of service into the curriculum in a way that enhances academic learning," said Dr. Linam.

To accomplish this mission, the Institute combined intellectual and spiritual principles through their readings and discussions, challenging the professors on a personal and professional level. This year's readings included *Service-Learning in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices*, by Barbara Jacoby and Associates; *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?*, by Janet Eyler and Dwight E. Giles, Jr.; and *Fundamentals of Service-Learning Course Construction*, by Kerrissa Heffernan.

During the first weeks, the fellows delved into the principles of service-learning and thought through some of the practices that best exemplify this idea. For their remaining weeks, the Institute sought to actually develop concrete plans to weave together a service-learning methodology that could be implemented within a key course of each of DBU's degree plans.

"This bridge between the classroom and society is important to solid service-learning pedagogy," explained Sandee Smith. "Students are educated both in the classroom and in their service-learning placements. Real learning occurs as students reflect on the knowledge and experience gained as a result of serving alongside a community partner."

"It takes rigorous academic learning to cultivate and maintain a high standard of quality education," said Dr. Linam. "Our desire is to impart the knowledge we have to our students and solidify their faith in Christ, while encouraging them to pursue academic and Christian scholarship. We want them to have developed a strong Christian worldview when they graduate from DBU, and we hope that they will leave here equipped with leadership skills they can use to serve the communities in which they live and work." 🏛️