CURA VALUES MEETING ACTIVITIES
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ABOUT CURA

Cura is a grassroots effort created in response to input from SLU’s faculty and staff members. It is here to empower and support all members of the SLU community as we build and sustain a positive workplace culture that helps us to be the University our mission calls us to be.

CURA STANDARDS

- Treat each other with dignity, compassion and respect
- Treat all colleagues as equally important team members, regardless of job, role or title
- Appreciate and understand the culture, humanity and differences of others
- Build trust through honest, open communication, reliability and integrity

Additional information about the Cura program can be found on the Cura website: [www.slu.edu/cura](http://www.slu.edu/cura)
MEETING STARTER

SYNOPSIS
One of the simplest and most effective ways to integrate the Cura standards into your meetings is to begin each meeting with a simple statement of the Cura values. This is a means of encouraging open, honest, and respectful communication.

Estimated Time: 1 Minute

Materials: NA

INSTRUCTIONS
When you begin your meeting welcome everyone and state the following:

Welcome, we will begin in shortly, but before we engage in the task before us, let us take a moment to recall the values that we hold in common as members of the SLU community as stated in our Cura program:

As members of the Saint Louis University community, we commit to acting with integrity through open and honest communication, appreciating and understanding the differences of others and treating everyone equally and with respect.

Let’s hold each other accountable to these values as we work together to make SLU a better community in our work today.
**ACTIVITIES**

There are a variety of simple activities that you and your colleagues can use to build a better understanding of how the Cura standards can be integrated into our daily work. Please consider one of the following activities (or create your own) if you are interested in providing additional opportunities for your colleagues to practice, reflect, share and plan how the Cura standards can be applied in our daily interactions with one another.

**“LIVING CURA LOOKS LIKE...” REFLECTION**

**SYNOPSIS**

The Cura standards can take on many different forms based on our context within the University as well as individual differences in how we would like to be treated by our colleagues. This activity allows participants to reflect on what a culture of respect means and how the Cura standards can be demonstrated in their daily interactions. Also, participants are encouraged to list an action they can take to create and build our desired culture. This activity is best used when first introducing Cura meeting starters to group.

Estimated Time: 4+ Minutes

**Materials:**

- Paper for each participant OR a “What Living Cura Looks Like to me” reflection sheet and a “Cura Card” for each participant (both on next page)
- Writing utensil for each participant

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Ask each person to write down their thoughts about the following questions (3 mins):

- To me, a culture of understanding, respect, and appreciation means...
- I feel respected when...
- I can create a respectful workplace by...

If desired, ask for each person to share (Optional, 30 seconds per participant).

Conclude with each person writing down one thing that can do to support a respectful workplace on the Cura card (1 min). Cura cards can be placed in SLU ID pouch.
MATERIALS EXAMPLES

What Living Cura Looks Like to me Reflection Sheet

Cura
Fostering a Culture of Understanding, Respect and Appreciation

To me, a culture of cooperation, understanding, respect and appreciation means...

______________________________

I feel respected when...

______________________________

I can create a respectful workplace by...

______________________________

Support
Please reach out if you need immediate assistance:
- Phone: 314-977-CURA (2872)
- Email: slucura@slu.edu
- Request for Assistance Form
- Contact your HR Consultant directly

www.slu.edu/cura

Cura Card

I will create a culture of respect by:

______________________________

______________________________

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Updated 5/2017
SLU SPARKS RECOGNITION ACTIVITY

SYNOPSIS

One of the elements of the Cura program is recognition for those who exhibit the Cura standards. While everyone wants to be recognized for something they find personally meaningful, many of us find it difficult to make recognition a habit in our daily lives. This activity will allow for participants to reflect on someone who has made a positive impact in their life/work and write a SLU Spark to that person. Then, participants are asked to set a goal for themselves to recognize their colleagues on a regular basis (e.g., once a month) to help make recognition a habit in their daily lives. Consider repeating this activity intermittently throughout the year.

Estimated Time: 2 Minutes

Materials:

- 1 post-it from SLU Sparks notepad for each participant (SLU Sparks materials ordered here)
- Writing utensil for each participant

INSTRUCTIONS

Distribute SLU Sparks post-it notes to all attendees. Ask each attendee to write short note to colleague using SLU Sparks post-it. The colleague could be in attendance at the meeting or not. Invite attendees to give the SLU Spark note to their colleague after the meeting. Finally, ask each participant to set a goal for how often they will recognize a colleague.
**BRIEF EXAMEN**

**SYNOPSIS**

The Examen is a spiritual exercise from Saint Ignatius that helps us to see how God is present in our lives and how to live with intentionality. While there are many forms of the Examen, the general structure helps us to clarify our strengths, barriers to success and how we can overcome our barriers to share our strengths with the community. The version that follows is intended to help participants reflect prior to entering a meeting. This version may be especially helpful if the group will be discussing difficult topics or if the group has challenges with collaboration.

Estimated Time: 7 Minutes

**Materials:**
- Timer or stopwatch (optional)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Facilitate these prompts slowly. Allow 1 minute in between questions to let participants reflect and think. Use a timer or stopwatch to help you keep a slow pace, if needed.

- Take a minute to close your eyes and take a deep breath or two.
- Become aware of the presence of God around you and in the people you are with today.
- What are you most thankful for as you enter into this meeting?
  - The opportunity to share your gifts?
  - The relationships with colleagues around the table?
  - The ability to make a positive impact on those we serve?
- As we enter into our meeting, let us ask ourselves “how can I see myself and others as God sees me?” In order to prepare myself, let me consider...
  - What is troubling me today?
  - What fears may cloud my judgment?
    - What opportunities am I hopeful for in today’s conversation?
- In light of my troubles, fears, and hopes, how am I called to act in this meeting?
- With what spirit do I want to enter into our conversation?
WHAT’S IN A NAME ACTIVITY

SYNOPSIS

This activity will allow participants to disclose some personal information about their heritage in order to build closer relationships with colleagues. The activity focuses on names and what they mean to individuals. This also encourages participants to ask meaningful questions and find out more information about their peers. This activity works well with new or established groups and can be repeated whenever you have new people join your group to help form relationships between new and existing members.

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Materials:
- Paper for all participants
- Writing utensil for all participants

INSTRUCTIONS

One of the first things we are given after we are born is a name. Knowing a name can mean knowing a person.

Have all participants take a sheet of paper, and write their full name on the top - this can include middle names, hyphenated names, given names, nicknames (usually in parenthesis), religiously assigned names, cultural adaptations of our names, etc.

Instruct participants to pair off with someone they do not know well (in a small group, the entire group can share right away).

Ask the following questions, allowing pairs to share their answers with one another after each:

- Does your name have any special meaning? What is it?
- Where does your name come from?
- What does your name mean to you?
- Do you have any nicknames? What do they mean to you?

Allow participants to switch partners. (Repeat steps 2-4.)

Allow 2-4 participants to share their own responses to the questions with the group if they’d like.

Suggested Debriefing Questions

- What are 1-2 words that describe what this activity was like for you?
- How did it feel to answer questions you may never have been asked?
- Was there information that you left out? Why?
- Did any of your peers’ responses surprise you? Why?
- Did you have any preconceived notions or assumptions about anyone’s names before the activity?
**Hidden Treasures**

**Synopsis**

The purpose of this activity is to allow team members to become acquainted with one another, or get to know each other better. This activity is meant to allow members of a team to find similarities and/or differences with their colleagues, so they can appreciate and understand the differences of others and build stronger relationships. This activity works well with new or established groups and can be repeated whenever you have new people join your group to help form relationships between new and existing members.

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes (dependent on group size)

Materials:

- A copy of the Treasure Hunt Worksheet for each person (see next page)
- Pens or pencils

**Instructions**

1. At the beginning of the meeting, explain the importance of teamwork and camaraderie, as well as the importance of being acquainted with their new team, or forming stronger relationships with their current team.
2. Hand out a copy of Treasure Hunt to each person.
3. Ask everyone to circulate around the room; finding one trait you have in common (e.g. "grew up in Phoenix"), and one dissimilar trait (e.g. "sports fan" vs. "dislike sports") for each person on the team, or as time permits.

Suggested Debriefing Questions

- How many of us tend to be reticent on first meeting friends of team members?
- What is challenging about opening up to new people?
- How much do you like to share about yourself with the people you work with?
- What do you like to do to get to know others at work?
- What unexpected things did you find in common?
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**9 WINDOWS**

**SYNOPSIS**
This activity encourages team members to find commonalities between each other that are not immediately visible. This activity is meant to allow members of a team to find similarities and build stronger relationships. This activity works well with new or established groups and can be repeated whenever you have new people join your group to help form relationships between new and existing members.

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes (dependent on group size)

Materials:
- A copy of the 9 Windows handout (on following page) OR a piece of blank paper for each person
- Pens or pencils

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Provide participants a copy of the 9 Windows handout OR a piece of blank paper. (If using a blank piece of paper, instruct participants to fold the paper into thirds, and then into thirds again to create 9 “windows”. See diagram on right.)

2. In each square, write something about yourself that cannot be inferred from looking at you. You will be sharing these statements with others. Think about: I like gardening, I lived in Alaska, My favorite color is red, I am an Excel guru, etc.

3. When your windows are filled in, walk around the room and share your windows with others. As you talk with each other, listen for items you have in common. If your partner has an item in their window that is common with you, initial it on their paper, and vice versa. You do not need to have exact matches in your windows to initial an item. For example, if I have “I like gardening”, and you like gardening, but did not write it in your window, you would still initial my paper.

Suggested Debriefing Questions
- What items did you find multiple people in common with you?
- What items did you not find anyone in common?
- What was surprising to you as you talked with your colleagues?
- What benefits do you perceive in getting to know each other a little better today?
- How can we use this new information in the future?
PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES

SYNOPSIS

We are often distracted from our task at hand by concerns, problems or priorities from other areas of our work and life. This can make it difficult for us to be fully present and engaged when we are working with our colleagues. The purpose of this activity is to help us “let go” of these distractions and focus on the task at hand. This activity can be used repeatedly for meetings. It is especially helpful if the group is experiencing high amounts of personal or professional stress.

Estimated Time: 5 Minutes

Materials:

- Paper
- Pencils
- Empty/clean receptacles or waste baskets

INSTRUCTIONS

This activity can be used at any time during the regular staff or departmental meeting, team meeting, or any other type of meeting.

Introduce the exercise by acknowledging that most of us tend to have “nagging” work problems or concerns, or other distractions that just won’t go away. Tell your team that this is the time to “pack up” those problems and toss them away for a while.

Ask each person to think of such a problem or concern - either on the topic or subject being discussed or on any other general work issue that is bothering them. Caution against items of an interpersonal nature, e.g. frustration with boss, disagreements with a co-worker, etc.

Each person then writes his/her problem on a notepad or sheet of paper. They then “pack up” their troubles, i.e. crumble up the papers and toss them into the wastebasket.
PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES...AND HELP EACH OTHER RESOLVE THEM

SYNOPSIS
The purpose of this activity is to “let go” of continuing distracting concerns and problems, but add the extra element of collaborating with your colleagues to generate solutions to the concerns and problems.

Estimated Time: 15 Minutes

Materials:
- Flip Chart Paper
- Markers

INSTRUCTIONS
Ask participants to share a current work challenge that they are having difficulty with figuring out. For example, “I need to plan a speaker series, but I’m not sure what the theme should be.” “I have to repeat X process each month and I feel it takes me forever. I’d like it to take less time.”

Each person then writes a description of their challenge in a few sentences with enough detail that others would be able to follow it on an individual piece of flipchart paper.

Do a quick check in with the group to ensure that everyone’s problems are understood. (Note: It’s ok if not everyone has an issue to address as long as half or more have an issue for the team to work on.) They then post the flip chart papers around the room.

Participants then walk around in silence and write out ideas for solutions on the flip chart paper.

The owner of the problem summarizes the solutions provided.