

Learning Community Development Workshop: Vision & Goals, Integrating, Classroom Techniques, and Assessmentⁱ

Juan Carlos Huerta & Susan Wolff Murphy

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1. Student Learning Outcomes.

- a. What are you passionate about when it comes to what you want your students to have learned from your course? What are your priorities? Write each of these *outcomes* down on a separate sticky note.
- b. What additional learning outcomes do you hope the *learning community* will help the students achieve? Write each of these down on a separate sticky note.
- c. What are Texas Wesleyan's or your learning community program's goals for student learning? Write each of these outcomes down on a separate sticky note.

2. Sharing Your Priorities For Student Learning.

- a. Either divide up into groups of 3 or 4, or into your LC teams (if you know those).
- b. Share what you wrote with the folks in your group.

3. Build Connections.

A key element of learning communities is that the courses are linked and that professors are able to build connections across the courses and integrate the course material. To do this, the LC teams need to make connections based on the learning outcomes that are most important to the LC team (the priorities).

- a. After sharing your stickies with your group, begin looking for connections among your priorities for student learning. Do this by grouping common stickies and then defining the student learning outcomes. Be sure to also consider your institutional and program learning outcomes.
- b. Now, try to identify some provocative questions or theme(s) that may engage the interest of the students and provide direction for the learning community.
- c. Write the provocative questions or themes on sticky sheets and share with whole room.

4. Develop an Integrative Learning Community Experience

Working in your groups/teams, devise an integrative learning community experience that allows students to demonstrate the learning outcome priorities agreed upon by the group/team. You can use your theme or provocative questions to guide the experience. The key is to consider how the learning community will help achieve the learning outcome priorities. These types of experiences typically include a written component.

What do you consider to be the criteria for students to demonstrate they have met your expectations for the learning outcomes?

5. Activities For Demonstrating Priorities For Student Learning.

Think about what other kinds of classroom activities you can develop that will allow your students to demonstrate they understand the learning priorities. These do not have to be big written assignments.

6. Assessment Cycle.

The material you collect can also be incorporated into assessing your learning communities. You have identified your student learning outcomes and have connected them to the institutional/program learning outcomes.

- Learning goal
- Learning experience
- Evidence of learning
- Use of results (provide some examples)

The assignments and activities you design can be used as your evidence. How well is your LC or LC program achieving the learning goal outcomes? If they are not being met, what can be changed to meet the goals?

¹This heuristic is based on the work of Smith, B. L., MacGregor, J., Matthews, R. S., & Gabelnick, F. (2004). *Learning Communities: Reforming Undergraduate Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, and Malnarich, G., & Lardner, E. D. (2003). *Designing Integrated Learning For Students: A Heuristic For Teaching, Assessment And Curriculum Design* (Occasional Paper No. 1). Olympia, WA: Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education, The Evergreen State College.