

Resources for First Year Learning Community Pedagogies

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Selected Books

- Discussion as a Way of Teaching*. Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill. Jossey-Bass, 2005.
- Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. John C. Bean. Jossey-Bass, 1996.
- Learning Communities: Reforming Undergraduate Education*. Barbara Leigh Smith, Jean MacGregor, Roberta S. Matthews, Faith Gabelnick. Jossey-Bass, 2004.
- Significant Learning*
The Learning Paradigm College. John Tagg. Anker, 2003.
- Successful Beginnings for College Teaching*. Angela Provitera McGlynn. Atwood, 2001.
- A TA's Guide to Teaching Writing in All Disciplines*. Beth Finch Hedengren. Bedford/St Martin's. 2004.
- Achieving and Sustaining Institutional Excellence in the First Year of College*. Barefoot et al, Jossey-Bass, 2005.
- Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student*. M. Lee Upcraft, John N. Gardner, Betsy O. Barefoot & Associates. Jossey-Bass, 2005.
- Mindset of College Freshmen*. <http://www.beloit.edu/~pubaff/mindset/>

Classes in learning communities can use student-centered activities to make connections between classes and across disciplines. Small classes can serve as opportunities for all sorts of active learning that is difficult to manage in larger classes. Learning communities offer the opportunity for faculty to collaborate when teaching, coordinating activities and content in meaningful ways.

We operate from foundational beliefs/philosophies sometimes referred to as "transactional" or "constructivist." These beliefs lead to certain shared assumptions that guide our pedagogies:

- All students are capable of learning and bring with them a set of knowledge and experiences that must be respected and valued.
- Students, especially millennial students, learn better in an active, collaborative environment
- Teachers are facilitators of student learning
- Students learn in different ways and have different strengths; therefore, learning should be structured in a variety of ways so as to engage different students
- Activities should be meaningful, well-developed, and scaffolded
- Writing and discussing reinforce listening and reading
- Reflection on learning helps the development of metacognition
- Learning should be both formatively and summatively assessed