

**Learning Communities Advisory Board  
Minutes for the Nov. 9, 2011 Meeting  
Noon-1:00 p.m. LH 132**

Present: Kim Byrd, Holly Wendt, Ebba Stedillie

Excused: Sarah Colvert, Joseph Campbell, Chris Henrichsen, Jill Hughes, Valerie Innella, Kendall Jacobs, Suzanna Morrison, Laurie Lye, Pete Van Houten, Cara Rodriguez, Georgia Wheatley, Tom Shellberg, Kathleen Thatcher, Barb Meryhew, Paul Marquard

**Minutes:**

**NLCC in Chicago, Nov. 3-5 2011:** Casper College representatives attending the conference: Chris Henrichsen, Sarah Colvert, Cara Rodriguez, Kathleen Thatcher, & Ebba Stedillie.

Ebba reported on the National Learning Communities Conference, the theme of which was *Shared Learning on a Shared Earth*. Two pieces of information the CC attendees found especially intriguing were

- 1). Student retention and academic success improved when students were involved in courses--typically core or general education courses-- that were linked with one-credit "First Year Seminars", and
- 2.) research suggests that the most significant learning occurred when these linked courses used integrated assignments.

This concept of creating a learning community comprised of linked courses with a common theme, focus, or central question and that employs an integrated assignment had great appeal for the Casper College representatives attending the conference. They are very interested in collaborating with Kim Byrd and other College Success instructors to discuss the possibility of developing learning communities that link a College Success course to a Gen Ed class such as a ENGL 1010 class, or to a POLS 1000 U.S. & WY Govt. class, or to a Communication course such as Interpersonal Communication or Public speaking. Linking a College Success course with a DVST Basic Writing course will also be discussed. Several interested parties (including but not limited to Kim Byrd, Tanis Lovercheck-Saunders, Lance Jones, Dale Anderson, and Ebba Stedillie) are planning to meet **next Thurs. Nov. 17 at 2:00 p.m. in LH 132** to explore this idea. ALL are welcome to attend, and are encouraged to participate. (Others interested in this idea are Jessica Hurless, Cara Rodriguez, Chris Henrichsen, Sarah Colvert and Holly Wendt.) Ebba and Kim will also be discussing this idea with our V.P. of Academic Affairs, Dave Cherry Nov. 21.

Ebba also distributed three NLCC handouts: "A Statement on Integrative Learning"; "Designing and Integrative Assignment" and "Juggling and the Art of the Integrative Assignment". Those resources will be available on the Learning Communities web page shortly.

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual NLCC "Creative Communities: Inspire, Innovate, and Invigorate" will be Nov. 8-12, 2012 at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). For more information about the conference as well as details for proposals, visit <http://nlcc.uc.iupui.edu/nlcc2012>  
Contact Ebba if you're interested in going to this conference.

**Learning Communities Program Mission Statement:** to promote excellence in student learning as well as opportunities for professional development through the creation and growth of multi-disciplinary, innovative learning communities.

Committee members are asked to offer suggestions for revision or modification of this LC Mission statement, as we need to submit our **final version** to our Dean, Trevor Mahlum, by **November 18, 2011** .

We also are asked to submit the answer to the question: “What do we do?” by that same date. The following goals might be a starting place for that description:

1. To inform all members of the Casper College campus community about learning community opportunities;
2. To disseminate information about learning communities types, as well as strategies for developing a specific type of learning community;
3. To promote the development of multi-disciplinary learning communities at all course levels;
4. To promote active, applied, deep learning in a collaborative situation;
5. To improve student retention and successful completion rates;
6. To offer regular opportunities for faculty and staff to discuss learning communities, as well as occasions to share strategies that improve the students’ academic experience.

**PLEASE review** the above and let me know if there is anything we should add, modify, delete, etc. as far as our response to “What do we (learning community) do?” is concerned.

Those present at this meeting also noted that the “outcomes” listed for learning community courses in the original team’s document (sent to you last month) might be better described as “Characteristics or Traits of Learning Community Courses”

1. Active, self-directed learning
2. Sense of purpose and of belonging to a community
3. Interdisciplinary connections
4. Sense of relationship to the world
5. Understanding revealed through application
6. Effective communication
7. Ongoing evaluation of learning by students and faculty through reflective activities.

**Social Sessions:** The LC Social Sessions have been valuable to those attending, however, attendance at sessions has not been consistent. It was suggested that we offer ONE social session per month next semester, say a Sunrise Session in January, a lunch session in Feb. and so forth. WE may move to that schedule. What do YOU think?

Finally, a reminder about the LC Social Sessions for NEXT week. We need **volunteers** to serve as LC Committee hosts for each session:

**Sunrise Session: Tues. Nov. 15 7:00-8:00 a.m. BU 126**

**Afternoon Break Session: Wed. Nov. 16, 3:00-4:00 p.m.**

**Lunch Break Session: Thurs. Nov. 17, 11:30-1:00 p.m.**

**Student Representatives on LC Advisory Board:** The only feedback on this issue has been positive, so I assume that all agree that student participation is a good idea. A student representative may be recruited from the Student Senate, from the RAs, and/or from student participants in current or past Learning Community courses.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Ebba Stedillie 11/9/11