

## Clark College Learning Community Information Sheet

### Overview

Learning communities include two or more classes that students take together as a part of a cohort. Faculty members plan and teach these courses around common themes while also achieving the course outcomes for each course in the learning community. It is a fully integrated learning and community building experience for all parties involved.

Under the Title III “Strengthening Institutions” grant that Clark College received from the US Department of Education, new learning communities are being developed to focus on raising retention and completion rates amongst students. The newly formed Learning Communities Task Force is overseeing the direction to move towards an integrated model of learning communities at Clark College. Three pilot learning communities have been formed for Fall 2013. Faculty generated learning communities are being sought for Winter 2014 and beyond.

### Learning Community Structure

The two or more courses in a learning community can be from the same or different disciplines. Learning communities planned for the academic year 2013-14 and beyond will be fully integrated courses with all instructors present for all class times. Instructors will have the total number of contact hours / week of course load, with both instructors teaching equally, and attending both sections of class. (Example: If both courses in the learning community are 5 credit courses, both instructors will be present for the total 10 hours of class time.) Grading will also be shared. The Team Teaching model that is expected to be used is Collaborative Teaching in which the instructors work together to design and teach course material collaboratively. (Source: Washington State Board for Community College & Technical Colleges [SBCTC Team Teaching Models](#)). The intent is that this model supports student learning and retention while also focusing on community building. The other models of team teaching can also be used from time to time depending on the class activity and objective.

### Training & Professional Development

Faculty selected to teach in a learning community will be compensated for 30 hours of curriculum development time in the quarter prior to the launch of their learning community. Part of this curriculum development will also include a workshop with either an outside learning communities consultant or a member of the Learning Communities Task Force.

Furthermore, faculty of newly formed learning communities will be compensated for one (1) hour weekly meeting time (10 hours total / per instructor) during their initial quarter in a new learning community.

### **Forming a Learning Community**

All faculty are encouraged to apply. Collaborate with colleagues within your department or across disciplines. The following requirements must be met:

- Faculty have previously taught the courses in the proposed learning community
- Official course outcomes for each course are identified and submitted with proposal

If a faculty member has an idea for a learning community, but does not personally know a faculty member with whom to teach, he / she is encouraged to talk to his / her Division Chair for suggestions on co-faculty.

### **Proposal Process**

The proposal process includes submitting the Clark College Learning Community Proposal Form, signed by Division Chairs and Deans.

Once received, members of the Learning Communities Task Force will review all applications, and notify faculty of acceptance or denial. The anticipated date of notification for Winter 2014 learning communities is early June.

### **Deadline**

The deadline to submit a proposal for a Winter or Spring 2014 learning community is **Monday, May 20 at 5:00 p.m.** Please email the proposal to [jclay@clark.edu](mailto:jclay@clark.edu) or mail / deliver to Janette Clay, Career Services, GHL 108.

### **More Information:**

Attend one of the upcoming voluntary learning communities information sessions: (sessions last an hour)

- Tuesday, April 16 1:00 p.m. in AA4 108
- Wednesday, April 17, 10:00 a.m. in GHL 207
- Monday, May 6, 11:00 a.m. in GHL 207
- Friday, May 10, 1:00 p.m. in GHL 207

OR contact: Janette Clay, Student Success Specialist, at x 2618 or [jclay@clark.edu](mailto:jclay@clark.edu) .