



# Washington Center

## NEWS

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Number Two

### Meanwhile, in the Rest of the Country: Learning Communities beyond Washington

While learning communities have become more numerous in Washington state, these curriculum restructuring efforts have also been emerging on an array of campuses in the United States and at several Canadian institutions as well. Some programs have been influenced by the learning community programs in Washington, but many have sprung up entirely on their own, or from the wisdom and practice of the pioneer learning community projects on the eastern seaboard. All these programs share intentions that parallel those of the learning community effort in Washington: to rearrange the curricular time and space of both students and faculty to foster community, coherence and connections among courses and more sustained intellectual interaction between students, between students and teachers, and among teachers.

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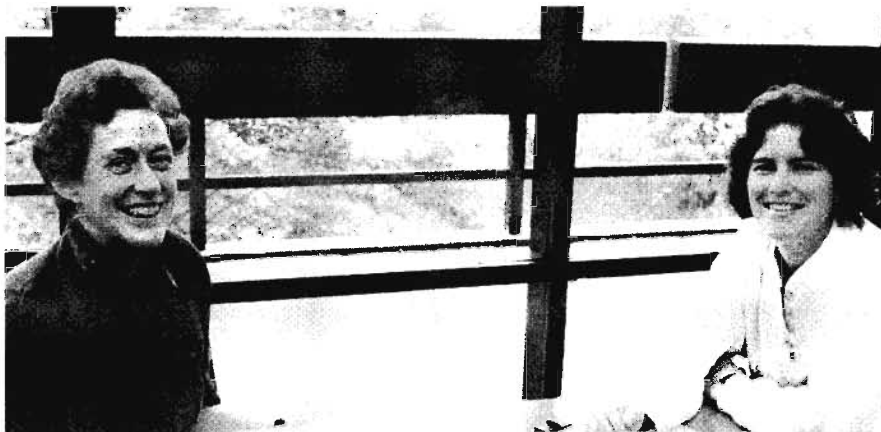
**Participating Institutions:** Antioch University, Bellevue Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Big Bend Community College, Central Washington University, Centralia College, City University, Clark College, Columbia Basin College, Eastern Washington University, Edmonds Community College, Everett Community College, Gonzaga University, Grays Harbor College, Green River Community College, Heritage College, Highline Community College, Lower Columbia College, North Seattle Community College, Northwest Indian College, Olympic College, Pacific Lutheran University, Peninsula College, Pierce College, Renton Technical College, Saint Martin's College, Seattle Central Community College, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University, Shoreline Community College, Skagit Valley College, South Puget Sound Community College, South Seattle Community College, Spokane Community College, Spokane Falls Community College, Tacoma Community College, The Evergreen State College, University of Puget Sound, University of Washington, Walla Walla Community College, Washington State University, Wenatchee Valley College, Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Whitworth College, Yakima Valley Community College.

## Meanwhile...

Continued from front page

Last year, as we were beginning to drown in telephone inquiries about learning community start-up and administration, we decided a directory of learning community projects might link learning community leaders and help novice campuses draw on what is becoming a substantial community of practitioners across the continent. Right at that time, Tim McLaughlin joined us as a visiting fellow in the Center, with interests in learning about general education reform and learning community projects, particularly on baccalaureate campuses. What has resulted, thanks to Tim's fine efforts, is the first edition of the directory (see page 6 for further information) and profiles, in this issue of the NEWS, of six learning community projects that represent promising models.

It's exciting to see how learning community programs are indeed moving into new territory: new approaches are emerging on different types of campuses, and in different curricular venues. Not only that, several campuses have moved to strengthen regional and national practice by convening learning community conferences to bring together practitioners to share their ideas and discuss common problems. In March, Central Arizona College held a regional gathering and University of Michigan hosted a national living/learning communities conference. In November, Delta College (in Michigan) will host a second national learning communities conference, and the Hutchins School of Liberal Studies at Sonoma State University will gather learning community practitioners in California. Additionally, an exciting development for us at the Washington Center is a project funded by the Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) to link emerging learning community projects in a national effort working on sustaining these innovative programs. The vitality of learning communities across the country bodes well for the next decade of undergraduate education.



## We Look Forward Together: Sharing Our Thoughts With Colleagues in the Washington Center Network

Jeanine Elliott and Emily Decker

What follows is our first rendering of an ongoing conversation about what we understand the Washington Center's work to be as it enters into its second decade. We welcome readers' responses to our ideas. Please tell us what you think, and share your visions of the Washington Center with us. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Jeanine:** Emily, welcome to the Washington Center network, which is unique in American higher education. As we think about providing support, facilitation and leadership for this unusual network, you and I have been talking a lot about *making student learning the center of our individual and institutional work*. Conversations with colleagues across the state are adding to our awareness. The basic questions for us to address seem to be these: "How do we continue the work that has been at the core of the Washington Center? How do we help more faculty and administrators learn about these key areas (learning communities, collaborative learning, academic success of students of color, reform math and science, and cultural pluralism)? And what new areas of work need to be explored?"

**Emily:** I agree, Jeanine. People in this network have done an amazing amount in the past ten years. Before we jump into new work, though, I think we need to organize retreats where people can take stock of the work that's already been done. As we come together to reflect and assess, we can begin to set priorities and goals for the next decade of Washington Center work. Launching into new work, however, needs to be punctuated with breathing spaces. In keeping with this notion, there seems to be a lot of wisdom to share across current projects about how to sustain organizational change. I think the Washington Center should be involved in helping to find ways for projects to become more deeply embedded in institutional structures, and in facilitating cross-fertilization among projects.

**Jeanine:** Great idea, Emily. I'm going to hazard some generalizations about what I have seen of the work of the Center. Learning is a process of making connections among people, ideas and the material world. In the parlance of the trade, we have focused on synthesis, inductive reasoning and connected knowing as our primary learning tools. We believe that these ways of knowing may have been given short shrift for much of this century and that the complexity of our societies requires that these skills be more highly developed among all of us. We also believe that much of this kind of learning best takes place when students and teachers are working together, in collaborative learning modes. We believe that collaborative work can and should result in the solving of real problems that require ethical, group decision-making. And, as you have pointed out, self-reflection and learning from our own experience is an essential part of every activity.

If these are our working assumptions, then we might look at areas within our institutions where our commitment to "connections" needs work. I've been pleased to see the words "tacit knowledge" begin to appear in the educational literature. Tacit knowledge is the knowledge or skills that we assume everyone has. My years of work in experiential learning has reinforced for me that we should never take such knowledge for granted. Learning how to make connections among things (people, problems, cultures, materials, ideas) is rarely tacit. We could make these connections explicit by looking carefully at transition points for students: starting college, returning to college from the work world, completing developmental work and transitioning to the next level, changing majors, changing vocational programs, transferring from one institution to another. Faculty, staff, and administrators take care of their own piece of the educational process and assume that the transitions will occur naturally. Many of these transitions do not occur smoothly.

For the student, the academic advisor becomes the person who most often assists with this kind of learning about connections. Some very good advising goes on, but because this kind of learning usually does not generate credit, we may fail to adequately assess the structures surrounding these transition points. The Center's work in learning communities and in collaborative learning has addressed this issue, but I know there are ways to carry the work further. I want to explore some of those ways.

**Emily:** I like the idea of looking at points of transition in all the variety of places they occur, because that's one thing a network of schools can do. Two other issues that concern me a great deal are the link between education and opportunity (or lack thereof), and the emerging reality that there are no quick, technological fixes for deep social and ecological issues. I would love to be able to say in ten years that Washington state has the highest literacy and numeracy rates in the country, and that the higher ed system has taken a leadership role in making that happen. If we want to build a more just society, then we need to apply our collective will to increasing adult literacy rates—not just reading and writing, but also math and science. I don't think we can afford to assume that developmental education programs and adult basic education programs "own" this problem. It belongs to all of us, and I would love for people across institutions and roles to think imaginatively about how we might respond.

As you and I have talked about the next decade for higher education, we have also talked about the concept of stewardship. Stewardship evokes an ethic of care and good management. It's a way of thinking about things or places or people that assumes responsibility for making sure that they will not only survive, but also thrive. I think higher education needs to exercise active leadership here too, both in the way institutions conduct their internal business and in the way they answer to the needs of and have an impact on local communities. Lots of grassroots organizations are developing first-rate community action plans to address social and environmental issues at a local level, but in higher education we really need a profound epistemological shift in how we understand ourselves as members of communities that transcend traditional institutional boundaries. Our thinking about this issue of stewardship, which crosses disciplinary and institutional boundaries, will have to emerge from lots of collaborative discussions about how to frame the conversation!

**Jeanine:** I don't want to forget that you and I have talked about play. We both know that reformers are a serious lot and that we need to remind ourselves that joy, spontaneity and even frivolity need to be part of our learning. I think the Washington Center has provided that in our events and conferences by creating spaces for informal communication, for hikes, for the creation of art work and for dancing. Let's keep physical learning as part of our agenda, and let us never sit still too long!

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# Preview of the Washington Center's Annual Conference for 1996-97

## “Technology on a Human Scale: Teaching and Learning in the Information Age”

**February 14-15, 1997,  
8a.m.-7p.m. Friday  
8a.m.-1p.m. Saturday  
(Pre-conference  
workshops Thursday,  
February 13)**

**Marriott Hotel, SeaTac,  
Washington**

The aim of this conference is to create discussion around the growing presence of technology in our own and in our students' lives. Within the context of conversations about teaching and learning, we will explore the ways technology can, and can't, promote the educational values and practices which the Washington Center has always embraced. Conference-goers are likely to be alternately delighted, provoked, reassured and excited by the mix of sessions at this conference.

The keynote speaker Friday morning will be Lester Faigley, who earned his Ph.D. at the University of Washington in 1976 and is now professor of English and director of the Division of Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Texas at Austin. The Division of Rhetoric and Composition was created in 1993 to establish an outstanding undergraduate writing program. One of the division's goals is to teach about 80 percent of its courses in computer classrooms linked to the Internet by 1998. The Division is a national leader in teaching writing using networked computers. It is now encouraging students to use the resources of the Internet, and many students in first-year classes publish their work on the World Wide Web. However, as student use of technology increases, so too do demands for faculty training and for new assessment strategies. Faigley is the chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and in his latest book, *Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition*, he examines the impact on the teaching of writing brought by changes in American culture over the last thirty years, especially the introduction into classrooms of electronic technologies for writing.

The keynote speaker on Saturday will be Luversa Sullivan, founder of the Institute for Electronic Design. Sullivan, a multimedia specialist and network analyst for the Seattle Public Schools, has started a program teaching hard-to-reach youth and adults how to use multi-media as tool for expressing themselves. Working with video, sound, animation and text, Sullivan has helped students create interactive CDs. For example, a group designed and created an English as a Second Language tutorial on a CD which is now used in Seattle high schools. Another group produced an interactive guide to Franklin High School which is available to middle school students. Her presentation on Saturday will be a tantalizing look at the tremendous power of using multi-media with youth and adults in creative and life-affirming ways.

**The conference sessions on Friday and Saturday are organized into four broad categories. Within each strand, you will find a mix of meeting modes ranging from the presentation of evocative cases followed by discussion to seminars based on short readings.**

## **Pre-Conference Workshop on Thursday:**

### **Diversity Resources on the World Wide Web**

This workshop will be offered for half a day on Thursday, and will give participants a chance to surf, to share information about Web sites, and to learn about developing their own Web sites. Conference registration materials will provide more information.

A conference brochure and registration information is forthcoming. If you have questions, please contact the Washington Center (360) 866-6000, ext. 6611. We hope to see you in February!

■ **Computers in the Classroom:** Like an elephant standing quietly in the corner of a room, computers have a big presence. In this strand, teachers and students will share stories about their experiences weaving technology into learning environments. Underlying all the stories are questions about the fit between a teaching culture and a culture of technology, about what students need to know or be able to do, about the characteristics of a quality educational experience, about the roles of teachers in classrooms and about the nature of collaboration.

■ **Connecting Across Time and Place:** Electronic networks can be used to create exciting connections among people separated by time and distance and to bring diverse voices into our classrooms. The sessions in this strand will focus on educational situations that purposefully draw upon E-mail or the Internet to make new kinds of connections. Along with questions about access to technology and to higher education, these sessions will raise issues about differences and similarities between virtual and embodied communities and the need to allocate resources for both.

■ **Harnessing the Power of Data:** The consequences for students, teachers, and administrators of being able to gather, organize and share quantitative data will be explored in this strand of sessions, which will explore effective and interesting uses of data. Some sessions will describe student projects. Other sessions will explore faculty and administrative uses of data to accomplish educational goals, i.e. using data to identify barrier courses for students of color, to engage in long-term assessment of learning community effectiveness, and to understand transfer and retention issues. These sessions will foreground issues about who owns information, and who has access to information as well as the difference between information and knowledge and strategies for transforming one into the other.

■ **Changing Roles, Changing Institutions:** The presence of technology on our campuses is having an impact on many institutional roles, particularly those of teachers as experts and librarians as keepers of information. Additionally, the introduction of technology into educational environments can act as a catalyst for new collaborations across institutional roles. Sessions in this strand will look at institutional change issues. Some stories will focus on cases where technology has served as a vehicle for introducing collaborations that result in high quality educational opportunities for students. Other stories will highlight the difficulties and the opportunities for individuals and for organizations when traditional roles are in flux.

On Friday evening, as you visit with colleagues at the reception, you will also be able to chat with people at tables who are willing to share the wisdom they have gleaned and/or demonstrate applications they have tried.

If you are interested in sharing your work at the Friday evening informal poster session, please contact [deckere@elwha.evergreen.edu](mailto:deckere@elwha.evergreen.edu).

# Taking a Look at Learning Communities Nationally

by Tim McLaughlin, Visiting Fellow in the Washington Center, January-June, 1995

How did a faculty member from Cazenovia College, a small private institution near Syracuse, New York, become involved in the Washington Center's efforts to track learning communities around the nation? Cazenovia itself has undergone extensive curriculum restructuring as we have completed our 10-year transition from two-year to four-year status. During this transformation, we created thematically linked interdisciplinary courses designed to foster students' critical thinking abilities. Early on in this process, at one of Alverno College's assessment institutes, I met Jean MacGregor. Our conversations netted me a place on the mailing list for the then fledgling Washington Center NEWS which kept alive my interest in learning communities.

After nine years of dealing with the teething pains of Cazenovia's new curriculum, I was more than ready for a sabbatical. Such reform adventures generate a strong desire to pause and reflect on one's work as well as consider what might have been missed. My desire to gain a fresh perspective on national trends in undergraduate education and to learn more about learning communities coincided with the Center's desire to learn what was going on nationally in the learning community movement. The six months I spent as a visiting fellow at the Center in 1995 gave me the chance to learn about general education reform work in Washington and elsewhere. Conducting a national survey of learning communities enabled me to create the first edition of a learning communities directory that I hope will help pull together those working with learning communities. In addition I learned in depth about several learning community programs, whose work is profiled in this issue of the NEWS.

## Surveying Learning Community Programs

The first national learning communities list is now in print: the paper version is available from the Washington Center for \$4 (checks payable to The Evergreen State College); the electronic version can be accessed via The Evergreen State College's Web site (<http://www.evergreen.edu>). The list emerged from a learning communities survey in the spring of 1995 requesting basic information about each involved institution's learning community initiative. The Center, by the way, is still interested in hearing from those missed during the first go-around. The 70 survey returns provided encouraging news about the expanding numbers of these programs and interesting information about curricular and co-curricular variations. The responses also provided clues about common challenges facing the learning communities effort during this turbulent time for higher education.

## Trends in learning community foci

Initial survey responses indicate that the scale and complexity of learning communities have gone well beyond the institutions and initial models described in *Learning Communities*, the 1990 Jossey-Bass New Directions Series book by Faith Gabelnick, Jean MacGregor, Roberta Matthews and Barbara Leigh Smith. Many survey respondents reported either launching learning communities in 1994-95 or preparing for implementation of ambitious programs in the fall of 1995 or 1996. Some of the newcomers include a systemwide effort in the Maricopa Community College District in Arizona emphasizing developmental and general education; a FIPSE-funded initiative at the University of South Florida (Tampa); and a Hewlett Foundation-funded project at Miami University in Florida. Meanwhile, George Mason University's New Century College begins its second year



Tim McLaughlin (center), Visiting Fellow at the Washington Center in 1995, is now back at Cazenovia College near Syracuse, New York, teaching history and interdisciplinary studies, and serving as chair of the Natural and Social Science Center. (Photo: Cazenovia College)

as an entirely new college built around team-teaching and interdisciplinary themes.

While most learning community programs embrace the freshman year or general education coursework for students, some exciting initiatives have expanded into new curricular territory. Science and engineering learning communities are being established at the University of New England and Drexel University (see features on the following pages); similarly, Diablo Valley College in California has launched a math/physics learning community as part of its Special Intensive Program for Scientists and Engineers (SIPSE). Taking another direction, a growing number of institutions integrate developmental coursework, e.g., the University of Northern Colorado's Advantage Program; the Program for Adult Student Success (PASS) at the Leeward Community College in Pearl City, Hawaii; and the well-established New Student House at LaGuardia Community College in New York City. Teacher education is another site for emerging learning community work, with State University of New York (SUNY)-Potsdam offering several clusters of educational methods classes at the 300 and 400 level.

At many colleges, learning community structures go beyond the classroom walls, with residence life components, E-mail discussion groups and community service and community-based research projects. Regional and environmental studies with intensive field work have been a feature of the Integrated Learning Program at Fort Lewis College in Colorado, the Freshman Year Program at St. Lawrence University in New York State, and the Adirondacks/Environmental Studies Program at SUNY-Potsdam.

Still, the prevailing motive for creating learning communities is to create coherence in the typically fragmented hodgepodge of general

education course offerings and provide lower division—particularly first-year students—with an academically and socially engaging experience early in their college career. Many programs intersect the college's core curricula. Increasing numbers of institutions embed a Freshman Seminar or University 101 course in the constellation of courses. Situating writing in the disciplines continues as a popular learning community feature: writing teachers often play key roles not only as learning community organizers but as creators of connective tissue between courses.

Because Cazenovia is a residential college, I was particularly interested in learning communities that integrate students' academic and residential experiences. Of course, this isn't a new concept: its origins go back to Meiklejohn's Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin in the 1920s, and any number of cluster colleges established in the 1960s and 1970s. But there is new conversation now, and a growing number of new initiatives, about living/learning communities. Some of these new programs are entirely situated in revitalized residence life programs, while others involve exciting partnerships between residence life leaders and faculty members who do advising and/or teach portions or all of their courses in the residence halls. The living/learning community effort is beginning to emerge as a related movement, with national conferences (most recently in March 1996 at the University of Michigan) and a dedicated list-serv established by John Ryder at the University of Vermont.

### **Continuing Challenges**

Not unexpectedly, both my telephone interviews and the survey results exposed many difficulties that continue to challenge the learning community effort. Without attempting to rank their relative significance, these were the problems most frequently mentioned:

Recruiting students is a challenge when the learning community program is a small, elective option and when it's geared to first-term students. Students accustomed to choosing their coursework in small bites see the learning community as too big a bite, or a choice that might foreclose other options. Time after time, learning communities run into enrollment trouble when students don't get early explanations of learning community offerings or any sense of the advantages of this type of educational experience. Even established programs find they can't rest on their laurels, since each generation of incoming students is unfamiliar with this approach. Community colleges that have moved to telephone registration systems, thereby bypassing face-to-face advising contact with many students, have had a particularly hard time filling learning community programs.

Learning communities are costly—in time and money. They represent a special investment in student success, in faculty development and in curricular reform. Because there is so much variability in enrollment configurations and faculty and staff support arrangements, different models vary greatly in cost. Some learning communities reflect a redeployment of existing internal resources and are almost financially invisible within the institution, while other models have required major investment and new budget lines to sustain. Still, learning communities remain one good idea competing with dozens of other good ideas to improve educational quality. Some of the most challenging situations involve learning community programs in transition from grant-supported start-up funding to ongoing institutional support. Obviously, the keys to ongoing learning community health are a clear budgetary and administrative home for the effort, and agreed-upon staffing and enrollment plans that are sustainable over time.

Faculty recruitment and involvement presents another challenge.

Many programs have been launched by small groups of curricular experimenters. If the program is to grow or be sustained over time, a larger group of interested faculty need to be brought aboard. However, faculty recruitment strategies aren't always clear or simple to establish. There appears to be a point in time when a learning community program chooses to cast out the net to bring in new faculty, or continues along with its original pioneers. Problems with faculty involvement are particularly acute in research institutions, and even small liberal arts colleges that expect research of its tenure track faculty. Many faculty drawn to learning community teaching aren't clear whether such commitment counts for anything in the rank and tenure process, and all too often the rank and tenure policies offer little clarity either. While many colleges, and increasingly many universities, are recommitting to the primacy of teaching, teaching in interdisciplinary settings still presents new, unresolved questions about roles and rewards.

Administrative support goes beyond simply obtaining financial support. Faculty members leading some of the smaller programs reported that their academic administrators were hesitant to provide needed administrative support to what they deemed the special interests of a few of the faculty. Often faculty leaders sacrifice their teaching in learning communities to take up such administrative tasks as coordinating schedules with the room-scheduler and registrar, creating recruiting materials and launching recruiting drives, and negotiating for faculty colleagues to join the program. It probably goes without saying: the most successfully sustaining learning community programs result from solid partnerships of faculty and administrative staff in multiple offices.

The short program descriptions that follow in this issue of the NEWS illustrate some of the variety that are emerging in learning communities in baccalaureate settings around the country, in terms of both scale and emphasis. I'm grateful to those learning community leaders who took the time to tell me in detail about their programs, and to contribute to what is becoming a growing body of practice in restructuring undergraduate curricula.

## Washington Center Launches National FIPSE Project on Sustaining Learning Communities



**Jean MacGregor moves this fall from her leadership role in the Washington Center to director of the FIPSE-funded National Learning Communities Project.**

We're delighted to announce that the Washington Center is the recipient of a \$208,000 grant from the Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) for a three-year national learning communities dissemination project. The grant will support the creation of a national partnership of 20 campuses outside of Washington state involved with learning communities. Drawing on the experience, resources and leadership of learning community programs within Washington as well as on one another's expertise, the 20 "adopting colleges" will work on issues of curriculum restructuring, pedagogical strategies and administrative and evaluation components of their learning community programs. The intent of the project is to examine and share strategies for sustaining complex and innovative curriculum reform efforts. Jean MacGregor, most recently the Washington Center's co-director, will direct the project. The participating two- and four-year campuses will be identified

early in winter 1997 through a competitive application process. The project will culminate in a national learning communities conference slated for June 1999, to be held at The Evergreen State College. Campuses outside of Washington interested in applying to participate in this project should get in touch with the Washington Center by phone (360) 866-6000, ext. 6611 or by electronic mail: [macgjean@elwha.evergreen.edu](mailto:macgjean@elwha.evergreen.edu).

The deadline for applications is December 30, 1996.



# Fostering Student Connections and Student Success: the Cluster and Academic Advantage Programs at the University of Northern Colorado

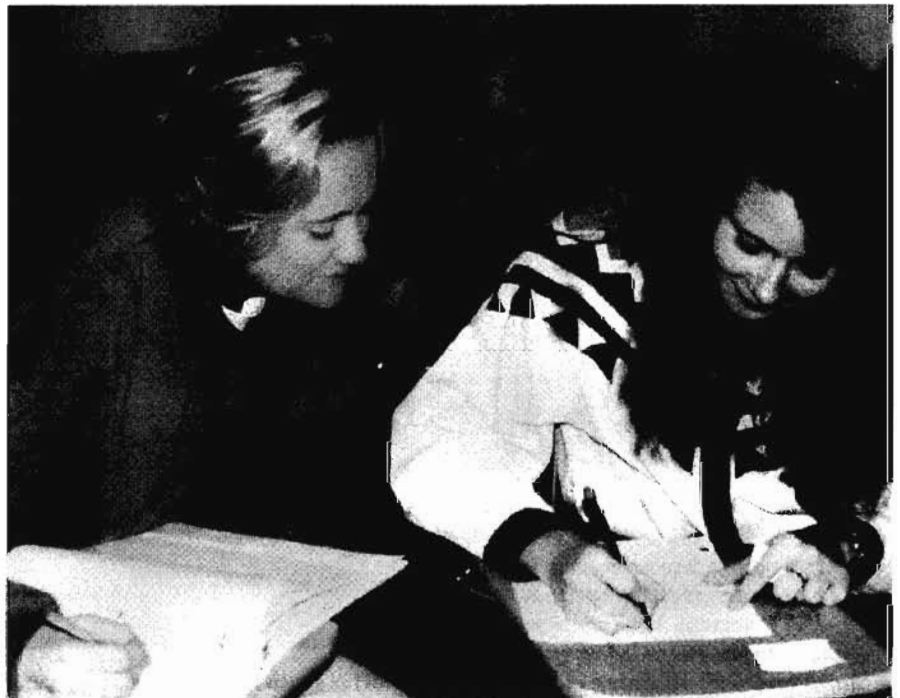
In the past decade, the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley has established several successful programs for entering students, two of them learning communities. Both learning communities ease the transition to college and provide an engaging and integrative experience in college writing, while at the same time strengthening connections between faculty members and freshman-level students as well as among faculty members themselves. Nearly 500 students—about 30 percent of the freshman class—are enrolled this fall in either the UNC Cluster Program or the Academic Advantage Program.

In the Cluster Program, a group of 26 students take a cluster of general education classes (9-13 semester credits of coursework) connected by a common theme together, e.g., American Studies (courses in history, political science and geography), Hispanics in the United States (Hispanic studies, psychology), The Business World (microeconomics, college algebra and political science) or Women and Men in Society (women's studies, sociology and art). Each of the ten cluster offerings includes a centerpiece introductory writing course in which readings and writing projects explore the cluster themes. Students build their group identity in this course, but can create connections with a larger peer group in the larger-enrollment clustered classes. Faculty teams meet together briefly to share syllabi and brainstorm possible topical or conceptual connections.

“Our goal for the clusters is to create positive academic and social connections,” reports Becky Edgerton, an English instructor and the Cluster Program coordinator. “Students get to know each other and their teachers well; every month (four times during the semester) the cluster gathers here at the college or at a faculty member’s home for a cluster meeting with snacks or pizza. All four cluster faculty meet with the students to have some informal social time together, and also to draw connections between their courses through discussions, a film or a role-play simulation. In addition, the final English composition assignment

of the term asks the student to link themes from all their courses in an integrative paper.” The Cluster Program’s framework provides freshman students with a sense of direction about their first-year coursework, opens the way toward academic and social interaction with their peers, encourages the formation of study groups and fosters closer contact with their professors.

The Academic Advantage Program is directed towards new students who may need developmental assistance or simply want some extra help with advising in their first term in school. Academic Advantage links an English



University of Northern Colorado Cluster Program students discuss writing assignments in the composition portion of their program.

composition class to one of three general education classes (history, sociology or psychology), and also includes a new student orientation seminar, extra English tutoring and an extensive multi-tiered advising component. The English faculty members are the key figures in this model, in that they teach the freshman orientation seminar as well as the writing class, and take on a large portion of the advising. Additional advising is provided by the Arts and Sciences Advising Center, which operates the Advantage Program, and peer advisors. The program's coordinator, Phyllis Endicott, reports that while the program is open to any entering student, "We typically enroll a population which is about half-and-half minority and high risk. The program provides association with dedicated faculty members who enjoy teaching and mentoring freshmen, and a stable home base for students who want or need a little more support as they get started here at UNC."

Phyllis Endicott and Becky Edgerton report that the decision to create these learning communities sprang from several motivations. Phyllis Endicott remembers that students were complaining about the need for more focused academic advising while, from a different perspective, the state was calling for students to graduate within four years. Better advisement, more programmatic coherence in initial academic experiences and more successful adaptation to college during the first year might answer the challenges from both directions. A very supportive administration helped as well, with associate dean Maria Lopez's strong interest in creating an academic community for students and president Herman Lujan's familiarity with Freshman Interest Groups during his previous tenure as vice provost at the University of Washington.

Evaluation data for students in both the Cluster and Academic Advantage Programs indicate that these programs do a better job of retaining students into both spring semester and sophomore year. Advantage students, on average, enter UNC with lower scores on the admissions index than their non-Advantage peers. Yet their mean GPAs both fall and spring semesters are as good or better than their peers. Both Cluster and Advantage students return for spring semester and persist into sophomore year at rates significantly higher than the general UNC student population. These numbers bear out for students of color and academically at-risk students in the Advantage program as well. Additionally, an unexpected but satisfying consequence of the programs occurred last year. During budget reduction discussions on campus, Cluster and Advantage alumni argued the value of these programs to the UNC faculty senate, deans, president and board.

For more information about the UNC Cluster Program, contact Becky R. Edgerton, (970) 351-2978; [bjedger@bentley.univnorthco.edu](mailto:bjedger@bentley.univnorthco.edu).

For more information about Academic Advantage Program, contact Phyllis Endicott, (970) 351-2751, [psendic@bentley.univnorthco.edu](mailto:psendic@bentley.univnorthco.edu).



University of Northern Colorado Cluster Program students meet with their faculty members four times a semester for both academic and social conversation.

# Living/Learning Communities: The First Year Program at St. Lawrence University

This fall, St. Lawrence (in Canton, New York) begins the tenth year of its First Year Program, an ambitious initiative involving multidisciplinary studies, intensive work in communications and academic advising linked to a progressive residential life program. The entire entering class (about 550-600 students) is enrolled in one of 12 Freshman Year Program offerings, each organized around an interdisciplinary theme and carrying about a third of the students' credit for their freshman year. Students participating in each FYP (about 45-50 students) live as a discrete college or in a dedicated section of a residence hall. Teaching and facilitating each program are three faculty members, an academic mentor, a residential coordinator and three upperclass "college assistants."

According to Grant Cornwell, associate dean of the First Year Program, the creation of the FYP had seeds in faculty recognition of "our inadequacies in dealing with first-year students. A student's general education experience was too fragmented. The advising system was awkward and shallow. The freshman composition courses were isolating skill development from content inquiry. Above all, faculty objected to the schizophrenic divisions between students' academic learning and their social experiences." In creating the First Year Program, says Cornwell, "we wanted to break down the barriers between classroom and residence hall and bring critical thinking out of the classroom and into the students' lived experience. [We sought] to promote trafficking between ideas and experience that traditional higher education is set up to make sure doesn't happen."

Three faculty members from different disciplines collaboratively plan and teach the academic component of each FYP. The programs meet twice a week for team-taught plenary sessions, and twice a week in seminars of about 15 students. Students' seminar teachers are also their academic advisors—a strategy for creating closer and deeper advising relationships. While First Year Programs each address a multidisciplinary theme (health and wellness; American studies; popular culture; gender issues; environmental studies; the origins of language; and citizenship and service, to name a few), communication is a critical feature of every one. Sustained practice in writing and speaking is supported by the faculty team, an academic mentor (an alum of the program trained as a writing tutor and attached to the program to provide academic support) and the university's Writing Center.

Both theory and content and the collaborative pedagogy of the program are closely integrated with the residence life component and with out-of-class experiences such as field trips and service learning activities. The three upperclass students who serve as college assistants are trained "not in the old RA role as policemen or rule enforcers but rather as community organizers," says Cornwell. It's their job to help the college develop into a community. Several programs link the theory-building in class to the practicalities of residence life. One college examining how to create a democratic community read both historical and contemporary literature on social contract theory, then set about developing and testing their own social compact to govern their lives in the residence hall. Another FYP studying global environmental issues decided to scrutinize their own living and consumption patterns in the dorms.



St. Lawrence University geologist John Bursnall, lecturing on representations of nature in 19th century art in the first-year program.

There are unavoidable obstacles associated with such a radical living/learning experience. The program goals are complex, sophisticated and demanding; many first-year students are “pretty confused in the middle of it,” says Cornwell. Yet, the program receives consistently high student evaluations. “The First Year Program in fact forms student identity at St. Lawrence, not to say that they love it when they are in it. Seniors are most deeply committed to it, and say how formative it was for them. There is actually a kind of ‘bootcamp nostalgia’ for many upper-division students, and it’s not unusual for FYP reunions to come together during senior week just before graduation.”

“The Freshman Year Program has been transformative for the faculty,” Cornwell observes. “It’s dramatically changed our conversations. Pedagogy is something we talk about all the time. You can’t team-teach without critically examining how you teach. Faculty members who teach in the FYP are at the same time teaching in their home departments. Their pedagogical experiences on the team, the focus on writing and speaking—it becomes part of the way you work. Over the course of 10 years, 100 different St. Lawrence faculty members have taught in the First Year Program.”

“On the other hand,” he continues, “team-teaching like this is very intense: it’s very draining. We recognize the increased contact hours for planning and teaching as an overload. St. Lawrence faculty teach six courses a year. If you teach in the FYP and teach two other courses every term for three years, then you have banked a sabbatical for a semester. This leave policy is vital to faculty regeneration. Yes, it’s expensive. But it’s worth it—vital to faculty health, and therefore the health of the program.”

For more information, contact Grant Cornwell, (325) 379-5709, gcor@music.stlawu.edu. The Web Page for the First Year Program, which includes course descriptions and full syllabi for all twelve colleges, as well as a brief essay on the history and rationale for the program is at: <http://www.stawu.edu/fyp:http/fyp.htm>.

St. Lawrence University’s Freshman Year Program is further described in: Cornwell, G. and R. Guracsi. 1993. “Student Life as Text: Discovering Connections, Creating Community.” In *Gateways: Residential Colleges and the Freshman Year Experience*, Ed. T. B. Smith, Columbia: University of South Carolina.

## Some Examples of St. Lawrence University’s First Year Programs:

### Knowing Nature: Culture, Gender & Identity

This is an interdisciplinary course on the relationship between human identity and nature. The course will explore the importance of place for human identity, how we exist in the natural world as and through bodies, and the socio-historical changes in both European and Native American relations with the natural world.

#### Readings include:

Anne Cameron, *Daughters of Copper Woman*  
Christopher Columbus, *Journals Genesis*  
Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science*  
Maurice Kenny, *Tekonwatonti*  
Scott Momaday, *House Made of Dawn*  
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*  
Dorothy Wordsworth, *Grasmere Journals*  
William Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*  
Paul Zolbrod, *Dine Bahane: The Navajo Creation Story*

### Citizenship & Service: Community & The Democratic Ideal

This college will concern itself with the intertwined themes of community and community service. We will examine issues of wealth, power, gender, and race as we explore a variety of perspectives on the concept of community, both past and present, and the challenges that threaten communities, local, national and international. Students will work with community efforts like Habitat for Humanity and Literacy Volunteers, and be asked to reflect on their experience as it informs and is informed by the course reading.

#### Readings include:

Aristotle, *The Politics*  
Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*  
Minnie Bruce Pratt, *Identity: Blood, Skin, Heart*  
Rousseau, *The Social Contract*  
Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Trinh Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other*

# Linked Classes in a Large Urban University: The Learning Community Effort at Temple

At Temple University in downtown Philadelphia, it's a challenge to build community when 90 percent of the 17,000 undergraduates are commuters. The learning communities program at Temple targets entering freshmen during their fall semester, offering more than 40 programs that link introductory offerings in the University Core Curriculum. Quite frequently, English composition or math classes are part of these links. Twenty-five departments and six schools and colleges are participating, with more than 1,000 of the 2,500 entering freshmen in learning communities this fall.

Small, knowable groups of 20-40 students are established through the math and writing classes or through discussion sections within larger introductory classes. Out-of-class work is nearly impossible to arrange in this commuter setting, but small study groups do get established and many learning community members converse on electronic "list-servs" established for the learning community. Faculty whose classes are linked receive small stipends for the extra planning

involved. Series of faculty workshops create settings where faculty teams can develop strategies for linking class material and share teaching approaches in such areas as classroom assessment, small group learning and the use of technology.

Jodi Levine is the administrative coordinator of the learning communities and Daniel Tompkins, a professor of classics, serves as the faculty fellow. They collaboratively manage the program, which now intersects most of Temple's colleges and departments. "Together, we cover the waterfront," Tompkins says. "My work has evolved largely into organizing faculty workshops during the year, and keeping things organized from the faculty perspective, while Jodi focuses on admissions, registration, and other academic support structures necessary for a large-scale learning community operation." Levine and Tompkins research course-taking patterns and consult with academic advisors, faculty and administrators prior to suggesting course pairings; more recently, several schools and colleges have proposed

their own learning community sequences for the entire freshman year. By January, Tompkins and Levine are working on the fall schedule for the next year. Because Temple's learning communities are team-planned but usually not team-taught, Tompkins and Levine arrange summer planning sessions and faculty development workshops. In addition to the national learning communities list-serv they've established (see box on page 14), Tompkins and Levine have set up an in-house electronic discussion group where Temple Learning Communities faculty can discuss problems and communicate quickly with each other.

"Because Temple is such a large institution," says Jodi Levine, "we wanted the learning communities to serve as a bonding mechanism in the classroom. But we also hoped these classes would encourage students to learn how to learn, become more involved in classes, and participate in the life of the university as a whole." Those goals apparently are being borne out, as learning communities students receive fewer withdrawals or incompletes, and on average get higher grades than students in non-learning community sections.

Student feedback points to simple social connections that make important differences for students. One student commented, "There's always somebody somewhere you can get together to study with. It's especially good if you're in one of the large classes with 300 people." Another mentioned an important way the learning community simplified her life: "At the beginning of the year, I was in a situation where I had to take public transportation to get to Temple. Through the learning communities, I met someone I became friendly with and he offered to drive me to school. This saved me money."

Other students speak to the value of the learning community in their adjustment to Temple: "Learning communities made my transition from



Students at Temple University, a predominantly commuting campus, enjoy the connections they make in learning community classes.

“We wanted the learning communities to serve as a bonding mechanism in the classroom. But we also hoped these classes would encourage students to learn how to learn, become more involved in classes, and participate in the life of the university as a whole.”

high school to college a whole lot easier,” and, “It helped me because there were people in my class that would push me through the course....Seeing a lot of familiar faces in the class pushes you to go do your work.” Another said, “I am doing so much better than I expected to. My last years in high school weren’t so great, but now I am getting really good grades because my learning community connects me with all my teachers.”

Initial success brings with it a need to address the challenges of expansion while strengthening the offerings now in place. Tompkins and Levine currently rely on a core group of about 10 to 15 percent of the full-time faculty to teach in the learning community program, and have been particularly gratified by the opportunity to link tenured faculty members with graduate students. The coordinators continue to work to choose classes that will engage beginning students and to support faculty in their new roles with freshmen.

A related initiative just being launched, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, will link Temple with three other urban universities (Houston, Portland, and Indiana University — Purdue University at Indianapolis) that are also involved in substantial curriculum restructuring efforts. The four institutions will share strategies for collecting data “to learn more about students and discover more about how our models are working for our students.”

For more information, contact Jodi Levine (215) 204-1937, [jodih@vm.temple.edu](mailto:jodih@vm.temple.edu), or Dan Tompkins (215) 204-4900, [dtompkin@thunder.ocis.temple.edu](mailto:dtompkin@thunder.ocis.temple.edu).

The Learning Community Effort at Temple is further described in: Levine, J. and D. Tompkins. 1996. “Making Learning Communities Work: Seven Lessons from Temple.” AAHE Bulletin, Volume 48, Number 10.

## Learning Communities List-Serv

If you’d like to join the national E-mail discussion group on learning communities established by Temple University, send a message to [listserv@vm.temple.edu](mailto:listserv@vm.temple.edu). Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message simply type:

subscribe learncom [your name]

Replace [your name] with your actual name.

# Engaging first year students with college learning:

## The Integrated Learning Program, Fort Lewis College

The integrative learning program for freshmen at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado grew out of a collaboration between chemistry teacher Doreen Mehs and her colleague in English and linguistics, Shaila Van Sickle. Team-teaching a sophomore composition seminar, they found particular success in creating a setting in which students could raise questions and pursue their own curiosities. This led to the idea of a larger program for beginning freshmen. Fort Lewis approached FIPSE for support to put it in place and received a three-year grant in 1991.

Now enrolling its fifth class, the Integrated Learning Program draws on issues in anthropology, science, economics and literature to explore how we humans relate to our planet, our societies and ourselves. The program enrolls 50 students full-time for 17 semester credits that satisfy five

general education distribution requirements: English composition and one course each from language and the arts; quantitative and natural sciences; foundations of culture; social structure and behavior. Two coordinating faculty, Mehs and Van Sickle, teach in the program for one-third of their teaching load, and three support faculty teach between one-fourth and one-third time. The students experience the entire program together with the teachers moving in and out.

According to its founders, the Integrated Learning Program "doesn't equate to a particular beginning course. What holds it together is the way of learning: each faculty member introducing how learning takes place in their discipline. We agreed at the outset that we wanted issues rather than the clock to determine the class activities. Also, we wanted texts to be used as they are in the real world, as

valuable references rather than as daily, detailed lesson plans. Laboratory and field work are not separated from other course work. And we wanted to create an atmosphere where students could get started on academic conversation and expectations, talking seriously with one another right off the bat."

The multidisciplinary and interactive nature of the program leads to a more active and critical approach to learning. According to Mehs, "Because the students are enrolled only in this program, we have great flexibility with their schedule. A high point of the fall is a five-day field trip to the Grand Canyon, which involves camping and field explorations dealing with geology, human history and present-day environmental issues. For the science area, I do some lecturing to establish the background and context for an exploratory lab or field activity, such as building molecular models, collecting water



Integrated Learning Program studying pottery



Dr. James Judge demonstrates how to make a fire at a Grand Canyon lecture on early inhabitants.

samples, extracting materials from plants that have medicinal qualities or using computer software to generate the appearance of skies over the earth in the last few thousand years. We do a great deal with software to analyze data and answer questions. We want to students to make connections between big ideas and what happens in laboratory.”

Van Sickle adds that once students catch on in this environment, they drive themselves rather than simply relying on the text and instructor for direction. A high point of the semester comes at the end when students, in small teams, give oral presentations to the whole program on research questions they have been pursuing throughout the term. Students give the program high marks. When they become upper-division students, they particularly appreciate what it did for them as beginning students.

Despite a very supportive administrative environment, the Integrated Learning Program has bumped into some limits. Coordinating the curricular activities for the entire semester is highly time-intensive for faculty with numerous other teaching commitments. The faculty team has decided to cut back on some of the additional co-curricular activities they incorporated at first. Recruiting students takes time every year; high school counselors in Colorado are still unfamiliar with the program’s intentions and many incoming freshmen are uncertain about committing all their time in the first term of college to one program. Still, for one cohort of each Fort Lewis freshman class, the ILP is an engaging and provocative immersion in questions and community.

For more information: contact Doreen Mehs, Chemistry Department, (970) 247-7264, mehs\_d@fortlewis.edu, or Shaila Van Sickle, English Department, (970) 247-7339, vansickle\_s@fortlewis.edu.



Integrated Learning Community hikers at the Grand Canyon, 1995



# Hands-on Engineering:

Enhanced Educational Experience for Engineers (E<sup>4</sup>), Drexel University



Valarie Arms, associate professor of humanities and communications, and Robert Quinn, professor of electrical and computer engineering, early pioneers of the E<sup>4</sup> program. (Photo: Drexel University)

Humanities teacher Valarie Arms and her engineering colleagues at Drexel didn't set out to create a learning community. They were exploring the question, "What is a professional engineer?" as a cornerstone theme of a new, revitalized curriculum for beginning students. Like many engineering schools, Drexel was frustrated by high attrition rates in lower-division courses. The demanding introductory math and science sequence wasn't engaging students and often didn't give them an opportunity to meet other engineering-bound peers. Before starting engineering coursework, they were heading in droves for other majors. Not only that, Drexel was heeding the complaints from the engineering profession: too many graduate engineers have abysmal communication skills; they can't work well in teams; they need to see relationships between disparate ideas and to place their work in the larger context of societal issues and needs.

"Our experience with E<sup>4</sup> has taught us that students need information on writing repeatedly throughout the curriculum and that they respond better to such instruction when it is supported by the engineering faculty and tied to their interests.

One anecdote illustrates the point well: sophomores who failed to write their research papers as they had been instructed in their freshman year were forthright in explaining why they had 'forgotten'

all they had admittedly been taught: 'It wasn't Humanities faculty who gave the assignment, it was engineering faculty and they don't care about that English stuff.'

Indeed engineering faculty do care, but that has to be conveyed to students and it must be a continual process.

By having humanities faculty and engineering faculty work together in upper-level courses to devise assignments and to teach the appropriate skills as needed we would better meet the needs of our students than is possible in one isolated course."

— Valarie Arms, Drexel University

Responding to these issues, the National Science Foundation in the late 1980s and early 1990s began funding major engineering curriculum reform work and supporting university consortia to cross-fertilize promising approaches. In 1988, Eli Fromm (head of development for the electrical engineering department at the time) and Robert Quinn (a professor of electrical and computer engineering) secured an NSF grant to support the creation of both first- and second-year curricula that would introduce "the actual practice of engineers in industry" through experiential encounters with design work. It would center the program in teamwork right from the beginning and use writing to extend and deepen the course content of the sciences. The faculty design team used a collaborative approach in its planning process, identifying the basic tenets of the new curriculum and seeking student advice as the program took shape.

What emerged was E<sup>4</sup>: Enhanced Educational Experience for Engineers. E<sup>4</sup> offers the usual beginning coursework in math, physics and chemistry, but it also includes a full year of humanities and engineering design taught in a hands-on lab setting, "getting students building bridges the first week." The model for the pilot class enrolled 100 students, who took these classes as a cohort and broke into sub-groups of 25 for labs and discussion sections. "These teams of 25 students stay together for the whole year," Arms explains. "At the beginning of the year, we do intensive workshops in team-building, respect for diversity and peer review. If you don't get students working well in groups, you can forget about the engineering design work."

Faculty teams teaching the clustered classes work to build connections between the content, and the humanities faculty member ties in reading and writing assignments to extend and support the math, science and design courses, and to reinforce an articulated view of the engineer living and working in a social context. E<sup>4</sup>'s progress has been measured through four years of qualitative and quantitative data, including student journals, surveys of students and employers and interviews with faculty and students. Through E-mail, students transmit their comments directly to the program's evaluator. Preliminary results indicate students now possess a much more positive image of themselves and the engineering profession. In a review of cooperative education sites, employers report that the new curriculum enables students to learn tasks in professional settings quickly. During the pilot years, the grade point averages, graduation and retention rates all improved substantially.

These results were so positive that the Drexel administration decided to expand the E<sup>4</sup> program to all entering freshman and to encompass two years, gradually phasing out the previous engineering curriculum. Not surprisingly, this ambitious move to serve 500 new students each year has not been without growing pains. The rise in student GPA and retention rate are not as great as in the past, when E<sup>4</sup> included only self-selecting students and faculty members. Faculty members are particularly feeling the tensions between the demands of interdisciplinary team-teaching and their research agendas. Departmental logistics, faculty assignments, continuous assessment and promotion and tenure issues all need further work. "Our challenge now," says Arms, "is to sustain our momentum as we transition from an experimental scale to an institutional one."

For more information, contact Robert Quinn (215) 895-6631, [quinnrg@duvm.ocs.drexel.edu](mailto:quinnrg@duvm.ocs.drexel.edu) or Valarie Meliotes Arms, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (215) 895-2444, [armsvm@dunx1.ocs.drexel.edu](mailto:armsvm@dunx1.ocs.drexel.edu).

The E<sup>4</sup> program is further described in: Arms, V. 1994. "Personal and Professional Enrichment: Humanities in the Engineering Curriculum." *Journal of Engineering Education*, April 1994.

Cage, M.C. 1995. "Re-engineering: Drexel University revamps its curriculum to create a 'technical liberal-arts degree.'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 7, 1995.

# Engaging the Processes of Science: The Life Sciences Learning Community at University of New England

What should science majors understand about the nature of science itself? And how can we best engage beginning students in the processes of doing science early in their undergraduate careers? Science teachers everywhere grapple with these questions. At the University of New England nine years ago, the life sciences faculty began to conceive of a learning community approach to immerse beginning students in the nature of doing science; it was right at the time the larger university was engaged in general education curriculum reform work. "We were discussing active learning and community-building, as well as more content-specific goals," recalls biologist John Lemons, who was life sciences chair at the time. "We wanted our learning community to serve our beginning science majors and to meet general education outcomes for students as well."

The year-long learning community offering that resulted began as a cluster of courses in Introductory Biology, Introduction to Environmental Issues, and a literature and writing class, Literature, Nature and Biology, with an additional one-credit integrating seminar. Three years ago, Introduction to College Chemistry was added. Now, in small groups of 22 students, the 60-70 aspiring life sciences majors at UNE enroll in this constellation of courses for 23 of their 30 first-year semester credits. Faculty members chose "Change, Constancy and Interdependence" as the overarching theme for the learning community, and created four modules (described in sidebar, page 20) whose themes intersect the courses. While the students experience their classes in small groups, at the close of each module they come together in a plenary conference to discuss themes and questions and tie their learning together. Required concepts and

content and student projects change slightly from year to year but the teaching and learning approach remains active and analytical. "Each year," Lemons comments, "we faculty ask ourselves the question: What is important to know and why? Through dialogue with each other and the students, we develop what it is we want to do. The faculty team meets regularly to discuss what's working well and whether we need to try something else instead."

Recommendations in the 1990 national reports of AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) and Sigma Xi subsequently validated and helped to further refine the Life Sciences Learning Community's objectives and pedagogical approach. These groups are calling for science learning to be done as science itself is, using readily accessible strategies that are active, experiential and investigative, analytical, interdisciplinary and problem-centered. They also advocate learning experiences that enable students to build an understanding of the context of science and its relationship to ethical, social, economic and political dimensions.

"Initially, students used to more passive educational experiences didn't know what to make of the new learning environment," observes Pam Morgan, a faculty member in biology who both teaches in and coordinates the program. "But, after gaining familiarity with each other and the faculty—we work hard on establishing trust and creating a supportive environment—the students get very engaged. They see how the courses connect with common themes. As upper-division students, they come to appreciate different ways of learning and value classes with discussion and hands-on approaches. They prefer engaging in dialogue that challenges them intellectually to the classes centered more in lecture and memorization. And, they like having some say in terms of course content or ways they might be graded."



Students in the Life Science Learning Community at the University of New England gather data about invertebrates and algae in the intertidal zone along the Maine coast. (Photo: Pam Morgan)

Lemons credits the Life Sciences Learning Community with revitalizing the university's science program. From a historical low in enrollment and faculty in the mid-1980s, the department is now the largest on campus. The collaborative teaching environment has also been revitalizing for individual faculty because of better student interactions, and deeper collegial conversations. "In all my years in teaching," he observes, "my colleagues in the learning community effort and the department have been the best group of people I've ever had the pleasure of working with. This kind of collaboration gets people working and talking in ways we otherwise wouldn't do so much."

As part of the University's general education plan, the UNE faculty have taken on an even more ambitious science literacy enterprise. They are launching a learning community this fall that will be a core requirement for all the university's non-science majors. The embedded courses (biology, environmental issues and an integrating seminar) will serve a much larger undergraduate student population, but the pedagogical and curricular goals will parallel those of their original creation, the Life Sciences Learning Community.

For more information,  
contact Pam Morgan,  
Life Sciences Learning Community,  
University of New England  
(207) 283-0171, x2227,  
pmorgan@mailbox.une.edu.

## Life Sciences Learning Community at University of New England

Table 1. General Goals

Based on both research and experience, the faculty have arrived at specific goals for the Learning Community. Our goals as learners (students and teachers) are to:

1. Participate actively in the educational process
2. Develop a sense of community emphasizing cooperation and purpose
3. Share responsibility for success of our attempts at learning
4. Explore how individuals and social groups construct knowledge, and how different persons interpret reality differently
5. Understand how deeply learning and research are related
6. Study each discipline in adequate depth while studying how the disciplines can complement one another
7. Promote shared interests and experiences among students and faculty
8. Develop the trust necessary to grapple with serious, controversial issues
9. Expand each person's repertoire of thinking and learning skills
10. Use reading, writing and thinking as "recursive learning activities" (activities that help each other become more effective)

## Table 2. Life Sciences Learning Community Modules

### Module 1: "Ways of Knowing" ( 5 weeks)

In this introductory module, each course examines its own discipline in order to understand its basic methodologies, its limitations, and how it may be complemented by other disciplines. Biology considers the nature of the scientific process; students study examples from the history of science, distinguish science from pseudoscience, and practice the process themselves in the laboratory. Environmental studies demonstrates its interdisciplinary nature and explores problem-solving through a case study such as global warming. Literature examines the role of imagination in creating texts and in constructing meanings from texts.

### Module 2: "The Genie and the Lamp: Knowledge and Power" (7 weeks)

Classical and molecular genetics provide the context for a look at knowledge and power in science and society. Students learn about cellular biology, classical genetics and genetic technology in biology, while exploring the relationship between environmental pollutants and genetic abnormalities in environmental issues. In literature, they consider the perspectives that shape our decision about the acquisition and application of knowledge. The module concludes with a look at the potential of gene technology and the decisions that must be faced in this complex science-related social issue.

### Module 3: "Form and Function" (5 weeks)

Through this module, students see the interdependence of form and function in vertebrates, in higher plants and in works of art. In biology, after gaining a basic understanding of form and function in higher vertebrates and in vascular plants, students interpret nature's "design" of these structures in the context of natural selection and adaptation to specific environmental conditions. In environmental studies, students explore the effects of environmental pollutants on the function of organ systems of the human body as well as the form and function of ecosystems. In literature, students study literary forms, that is, genre analysis, to understand the relation of form and function in art.

### Module 4: "An Ecological Theater and an Evolutionary Play" (7 weeks) (from Hutchinson 1965)

This capstone module is perhaps the most inherently integrative of the year. The biological component examines the interrelationships and interdependence of organisms and the abiotic environment. Students go on to apply their knowledge to the evaluation of specific, current ecological/environmental problems and their possible solutions. In environmental studies, students study the state of a particular ecosystem (such as the tropical rainforest) and the anthropocentric pressure imposed on it. In literature, students read works that give a systematic philosophy of nature, paying particular attention to biological data and environmental issues in the text.

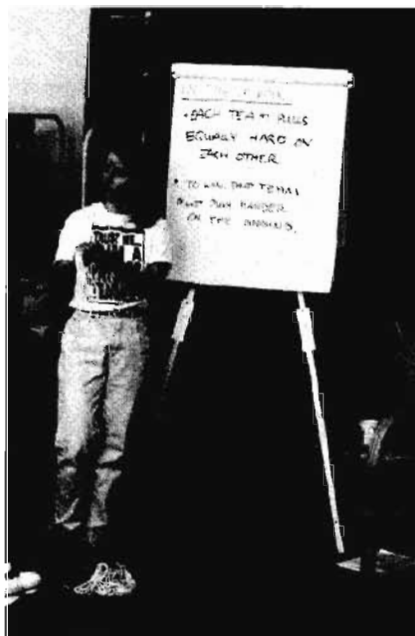
The national reports mentioned are: Sigma Xi. 1990. "Entry-Level Undergraduate Courses in Science, Mathematics and Engineering: An Investment in Human Resources." Research Triangle Park: Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society. American Association for the Advancement of Science. 1990. "The Liberal Art of Science: Agenda for Action." Washington, D.C.: AAAS Inc., publication no. 90-135.

The program is further described in: Morgan, P., J. Carter, J. Lemons, O. Grumbling, and E. Saboski. 1993. "Preliminary Assessment of a Science Learning Community for First-Year Students." *Journal of College Science Teaching*, December 1992/January 1993. Morgan, P., J. Lemons, J. Carter, O. Grumbling, and E. Saboski. 1993. "A Scientific Learning Community at the University of New England." *Journal of College Science Teaching*, November 1995.

# Washington Center News

## Calling Faculty and Administrators Involved with Campus Centers for Teaching and Learning

We are in the early stages of planning a retreat for those who are staffing campus centers that support teaching and learning. While several schools have well-established centers, many others have recently started them, or are in the process of getting one underway. Whether you are associated with a well-established center or are helping start one, please let us know if you would be interested in meeting with others who have center responsibilities.



UFE Reunions—Rebecca Hartzler, Edmonds Community College, presents hands-on physics activities which she uses to introduce concepts to her classes.

## Campus Visits High on Washington Center Agenda

In the early days of the Washington Center, Barbara Leigh Smith and Jean MacGregor spent hours and days on each of the campuses to get to know people and to learn the mission and the curriculum of each of the higher education institutions in the state. As the Washington Center increased the numbers of projects and events that brought faculty and administrators together, less and less time was available to do this kind of grass-roots work. With a turnover in leadership for the Center, the time has come to return to our roots—the places where faculty members and students are engrossed in the work of teaching and learning. Over the next two years, Jeanine Elliott and Emily Decker, director and associate director of the Center, will be on the road with the intention of spending at least a day at each of the 46 colleges and universities that make up the Center network. All of those “road” images that populate the literature and popular media of this century will inspire us. And we do not intend to let the electronic highway serve us fully until we have first covered the blue (William Least Heats Moon) and the red highways of the state and have met Washington Center folk face-to-face.

## Multicultural Efforts Projects at Community Colleges and Technical Colleges Continue

Eight community and technical colleges have been selected to participate in the joint State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Washington Center project during the 1996 fall quarter. Teams from each of the colleges will assess campus work that supports the academic success of students of color, participate in a two-day workshop at the Rainbow Lodge in North Bend, Wash., on November 13-15, and then develop a focused project on their own campus. Results of the work-to-date of these eight colleges, along with the projects of the seven colleges that participated in the project last year will be available in a Gleanings, to be published in January, 1997.

The fifteen colleges include: Bellevue Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Clover Park Technical College, Edmonds Community College, Everett Community College, Grays Harbor College, Lake Washington Technical College, North Seattle Community College, Pierce College, Shoreline Community College, Skagit Valley College, South Puget Sound Community College, South Seattle Community College, Tacoma Community College and Yakima Valley Community College. An additional eight colleges will join the project in Spring 1997.

## Continuing the Work in Cultural Pluralism

The years of 1992-95 were vital ones for cultural pluralism in Washington. With the help of a generous grant from the Ford Foundation, twenty-six colleges and universities mounted significant curricular projects. These projects are described in detail on the new Diversity Connections Web Page at <http://www.inform.umd.edu/Connections/>. They are included as separate listings for each of the participating campuses as well as in the Washington Center report, also on Diversity Connections. While the campus projects were the results of the project, the impetus for the projects came from faculty and administrator participation in one of the three intensive Summer Institutes that were held during those years. Now the challenge before the Center and its member institutions is how to maintain the momentum that was begun with the project. Some of the Center's work is continuing in the Multicultural Efforts Project mentioned briefly elsewhere in this newsletter. However, this project is sponsored jointly by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and is not reaching the four-year colleges.

At a recent Cultural Pluralism Planning Meeting, faculty and administrators strongly supported the idea of a regular offering of a Summer Institute, smaller in scale than the Ford Foundation-funded ones, but directed toward achieving the same goals. The group recommended that each year two or three colleges in a region join together to sponsor and plan an institute. Early conversations are leading toward an institute in the Seattle area next year, followed by an institute on the eastern side of the state. More information will be forthcoming as these plans mature.



Listening to small group reports at Cultural Pluralism Retreat at Rainbow Lodge, June 1996. From left: Rhonda Coats, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Anne Harvey, Antioch University; Sherry Sullivan (back to camera), South Puget Sound Community College; Lois Harris, Antioch University; Barbara Leigh Smith, The Evergreen State College; Yvette O'Neill, Lower Columbia Community College (photo credit: Jean MacGregor)



Washington Center Staff: Front from left: Sandra Abrams, Secretary; Emily Decker, Associate Director; Jeanine Elliott, Director. Back from left: Barbara Determan, Office Assistant; Jean MacGregor, National Learning Communities Project (FIPSE); Laura O'Brady, Program Coordinator.

### Washington Center on the Web

Washington Center now has its own webpage as part of the Evergreen page. While much of it is still under construction, you will find a basic description of the Center and the full Learning Communities Directory, a listing of some 120 colleges and universities across the country that offer learning communities.

Watch for further developments on this page. The Evergreen address is: <http://www.evergreen.edu>. We are listed under the public service centers.

# Campus News and Notes

## Clark College hosts 2nd Annual Washington State Honors Conference

Faculty and administrators at Washington colleges and universities are invited to the 2nd annual Washington State Honors Conference on November 15, 1996. Issues to be discussed include: creating Honors programs, reviving and/or enriching Honors programs, articulation between Honors programs at community and technical colleges and four-year colleges and universities, student experience in Honors programs, and strategies for educating high-ability students. This conference is sponsored by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Clark College, and WSU's University Honors Program. For more information, contact Kimberly Sullivan, Clark College, (360) 992-2822 or Jane Lawrence, WSU, (509) 335-4505.

## Resource Book on Coalition-Building in Sciences and Math Available

*Putting the Pieces Together: A Guide Book for Leaders of Coalitions of Two- and Four-Year Colleges and Universities* is available for the cost of shipping and handling (\$3.00) from the Washington Center. The Guide Book is a result of discussions held at a Faculty Coalition Workshop held in 1993 and funded by the National Science Foundation. Sixty faculty, representing some forty coalitions participated in the workshop. The Guide Book is co-written by Barbara Leigh Smith (The Evergreen State College), Patricia A. Cunniff (Prince George's Community College), and Curtis J. Hiegelke (Joliet Junior College). If you would like to receive a copy, send \$3.00 to Washington Center L2211 The Evergreen State College Olympia, WA 98505.

## Centralia College Agrees on End of Program/Degree Abilities

Don Foran reports college-wide adoption of abilities or themes students will acquire by the end of programs or degrees. Next year divisions will fund mini-grants to integrate these themes with an institutional change process. The project was funded through Outcomes Assessment monies. The themes fall under the following headings: Reasoning; Written, Oral and Visual Communication; Exploration—Self and Others; Resourcefulness; and Responsibility.

## Update on Learning Community News from Eastern Washington University

During spring quarter 1996, Paul Lindholt teamed with Claudia Peck, who was teaching in a learning community for the first time, to offer *What's it Mean to Be Green*, a 10-credit, team-taught combination of an introductory literature and an advanced expository writing class. Heather McKean (biology) and Linda McCollum (geology) taught in the year-long Integrated Science sequence in spring quarter focusing on evolution. Ray Hamel, computer science, and Patricia Bedalov, communication disorders, with assistance from English graduate student Darin Payne, piloted *The Individual and the Natural World*, the third course in the interdisciplinary junior-year liberal arts sequence. The development of the junior-year sequence was partially supported by a Focus Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Planning Committee holds retreat in June at TESC. Front row: Rhonda Coats, SBCTC; Bernie Steckler, Emeritus, Seattle University; Kathi Hiyane-Brown, Tacoma Community College; Jim Harnish, North Seattle Community College; Gary Tollefson, Yakima Valley Community College; Jeanine Elliott, Washington Center; Jean MacGregor, Washington Center. Back row: Dwight Oberholtzer, Emeritus, Pacific Lutheran University; Judith Kaufman, Eastern Washington University; Barbara Leigh Smith, TESC; Rochelle dela Cruz, Seattle Central Community College; Sandra Abrams, Washington Center; Barbara Determan, Washington Center; Kim Johnson-Bogart, University of Washington; Bruce Kochis, University of Washington-Bothell; Emily Decker, Washington Center (photo credit: Jean MacGregor)



## Heritage College receives Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education Grant

Heritage College has received a grant from the Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education to address a national topic: "Faculty Roles, Rewards, and Institutional Priorities." The goal of the project is to identify teaching practices that are successful with the Heritage College student and to encourage use of those practices through faculty incentives and faculty professional development plans. For more information, contact Dr. Michael Keenan, (509) 865-2244.

## North Seattle Community College Plays Host

Visiting groups from five different colleges across the country were at North during spring quarter to learn about learning communities: Ferris State University (Michigan), Denver Community College, St. Louis College, Rancho Santiago College (Orange County, CA), and Linn-Benton College (Oregon).  
(Source: Jim Harnish)

## Renton Technical College Leads Initiative to Create Intercollegiate Technical College Consortium

Dr. Norma Goldstein reports that RTC is taking the lead to initiate an inter-collegiate technical college consortium to provide faculty development for vocational faculty.

## Skagit Valley College-Whidbey Completes Gen Ed Evaluation

SVC-Whidbey is currently completing a 27-point evaluation of its Gen Ed program, including a look at learning communities and links. A report should be forthcoming this fall. For more information, contact Les Stanwood, (206) 679-5337.

## WSU creates New Freshman Seminar Program

In spring 1996, WSU's Faculty Senate approved the creation of a Freshman Seminar program that will replace PAWS and Excel. The WSU model includes: linking the seminar to an existing introductory course; partnering course faculty with undergrad and graduate facilitators; using effective interactive computer technologies for significant parts of instruction; and providing a residential component where appropriate. Special Freshman Seminars are being developed for at-risk students and for Honors students. Contact Al Jamison or Jean Henscheid at WSU's Student Advising and Learning Center for more information, (509) 335-6000.

## WSU Working to Establish Center for Teaching and Learning

A group of WSU faculty spent the past academic year preparing a proposal to establish a Center for Teaching and Learning. Some of the functions of the new Center will be: advocacy, coordination, and dissemination of information on successful learning strategies; continuous assessment; support of professional growth; and assessment of and advising on effective new educational technologies. Funds have been allocated to establish the Center, pending approval by the Faculty Senate. Mary Wack, Gary Brown and Phil Scuderi are WSU faculty associated with the Center.

## Help With Developing a Comprehensive Outcomes Assessment Plan

WSU's General Education Program is working to develop a comprehensive outcomes assessment plan. It is looking for suggestions, examples and models of plans used at other colleges and universities. If you have ideas to share, please contact Dick Law, director of general education, (509) 335-5699.

## Faculty Exchange News

Marie Eaton from the Fairhaven College at Western Washington University reports that J. T. Stewart (Seattle Central Community College) was at Fairhaven during spring 1996 to teach English and creative writing.

Laura Hedges from Everett Community College reports that Paul Marshall (psychology) is going to Japan in fall 1996 to teach conversational English.

# Learning Community Programs in Washington — Spring 1996

Learning communities purposefully restructure the curriculum to link together courses so that students find greater coherence in the courses they take, as well as increased intellectual interaction with faculty and fellow students. The following is a listing of learning communities offered in Spring Quarter 1996.

Unless otherwise indicated, the learning communities at community colleges are being offered in college transfer Associate Degree programs. Please get in touch with the colleges and faculty involved if you would like more information about any of these programs.

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## Bellevue Community College

Spring Quarter  
**Coordinated Studies**  
"Pink Cadillac"  
Roger George/American Studies  
Bonnie Hoffman/Contemporary Theatre  
Julianne Seeman/Written  
Expression/Expository Writing

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## Clark College

Spring Quarter  
**Linked Class**  
"Technical Communications"  
Shoshanna Porter/Professional  
Development for Technicians  
Kimberly Sullivan/English  
Composition/Technical Writing

**Linked Class**  
"Landmarks of World Civilization: French  
Revolution to the Cold War"  
Anita Fisher/World Civilization  
Richard Duval/Research Writing

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## Columbia Basin College

Spring Quarter  
**Linked Class**  
"Everything But the Kitchen Sink"  
Gary Culbert/Materials Science/Welding  
Cliff Wakeman/Developmental/  
Freshman English Composition

**Linked Class**  
"Native American Culture: Oral to Written"  
Dave Abbott/English Literature  
Bruce Carter/Intercultural Studies

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## Eastern Washington University

Spring Quarter  
**Linked Class - Team Taught**  
"What's It Mean To Be Green"  
Paul Lindholdt/English Literature  
Claudia Peck/Expository Writing

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## Edmonds Community College

Spring Quarter  
**Linked Class**  
"The Games of Life"  
Joe Hollinsworth/Cultural Anthropology  
Jim O'Donnell/English Composition  
**Linked Class**  
"Earth in the Balance"  
Deb Dole/Environmental Science  
Holly Hughes/Advanced English Composition

**Linked Class**  
"LOGEBRA: How do Algebra  
and Logic Relate to Each Other?"  
Richard Davis/Intermediate Algebra  
Marcia Horton/Introduction to Logic

**Linked Class**  
"Reimagining Our Lives,  
Our Work, Our Play"  
Melissa Newell/Human Imagination  
Margaret Scarborough/English Composition

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**Everett Community College****Spring Quarter****Cluster**

"Women on the Move Toward  
a Four-Year Degree"

Laura Hedges/Orientation to College/Seminar

Holly Hill/Writing/Seminar

Melanie Knight/Interpersonal  
Communication/Seminar

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

Tom Gaskin/American History

Anne Jackets/American Literature

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**Heritage College****Spring Quarter****Linked Class - Team Taught**

Michael Moran/World Civilization

Sr. Terry Mullen/Art History

Loren Schmidt/World Literature

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**Lower Columbia College****Spring Quarter****Linked Class**

"Sports and Society"

Lisa Kihl/Lifestyles

Jerry Zimmerman/Moral Reasoning in Sports

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**North Seattle  
Community College****Spring Quarter****Coordinated Studies**

"Seeing What's There"

Ellie Cauldwell/Biology

Pete Lotrz/Environmental Issues/Ecology

Marilyn Smith/English Composition

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Plagues and Peoples"

Tom Kerns/Medical Ethics

Linda Peterson/Health & Human

Sexuality/Human Diseases

**Coordinated Studies**

"Women in History, Literature and Film"

Rita Smilkstein/Women's Literature/  
English Composition

Susan Starbuck/Women's Studies/  
Women in American History

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**Peninsula College****Spring Quarter****Linked Class**

"Business of the Writing Connection"

Steven Olson/Business Administration

Merrienne Ann Bieler/English Composition

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Regions of the Olympics and Ourselves II"

Alice Derry/Creative Writing/Seminar

Diane Doss/Botany/Seminar

Kate Reavey/English Composition/Seminar

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**Seattle Central  
Community College****Spring Quarter****Coordinated Studies**

"Speaking for Ourselves:

You Cannot Shut us Out"

Mohammad al-Madani/World Cultures

Tatiana Garmendia/Non-Western

or Modern Art

Audrey Wright/English Composition/  
Modern World Literature/Library Research

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Asian Pacific America:

Whose Values/Who's Valued?"

Dick Burton/Ethics

Tracy Lai/Asian Pacific American History

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**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"The Human Personality:

Formation and Transformation"

Kathleen McCue-Swift/Psychology/  
Human Personality

M.J. Zimmerman/English Composition

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**Shoreline Community College****Spring Quarter****Linked Class**

"Civilization and Culture"  
Paul Cerda/English Composition and  
Expository Prose/Analytical  
Reading and Writing  
Dale Haefer/Modern World History of  
Civilization and Culture,  
Kathleen Hunt/Humanities

**Linked Class**

"Looking In, Looking Out"  
Laurie Kimpton-Lorence/Developmental  
Reading and Writing

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**Skagit Valley College****Spring Quarter****Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Earthvisions: Expressing Our Planet on Paper"  
Richard Doyle/Global Issues/Earth Science  
Ann Chadwick Reid/Drawing

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Prejudice, Poverty, Population, Pollution"  
Trish Barnes/Introduction to Fiction  
Mike Witmer/Social Psychology/  
Contemporary Social Problems

**Coordinated Studies**

"Inventing the Future"  
Jerome Chandler/Physics  
Lynne Fouquette/Psychology  
Linda Smith/Science, Technology and Society

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Living and Working in the Global Village"  
Ted Maloney/Social Science  
Jean Matthews/Intercultural Communication

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Total Quality Management:  
Business Philosophy of the 90's"  
Kathi Lovelace/Business and Society  
David Ortiz/Science, Technology and Society

**Linked Class**

"Culture, Poverty, and Diet"  
Lisa Moulds/Sociology  
Carolyn Spragg/Nutrition

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Philosophy of the Art of Wondering"  
Lynn Dunlap/English Composition  
Larry Sult/Philosophy

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

"Lighting the Green Fuse"  
Jill Fugate/English Composition  
Skip Pass/Field Botany

**Linked Class**

"Word Play"  
Andy Friedlander/Introduction to Theatre  
Maureen Trainor/English Composition

**Linked Class**

"Researching the Issues in Art History"  
Jovita Lopez/English Composition  
Ann Chadwick Reid/Modern Art History

**Linked Class**

"The Art and Craft of Social Structures"  
Andy Friedlander/Arts in the Humanities  
Lisa Moulds/Sociology

**Linked Class**

"Perceptions of the Earth:  
Geological Influences on Human Behavior"  
Steven Grupp/Earth Science  
Don Smith/Abnormal Psychology

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**Skagit Valley College  
Whidbey Campus****Spring Quarter****Linked Class - Team Taught**

"People, Power and Persuasion:  
American Government and the Media"  
Mike Ceriello/American Government  
Geoff Cole/Mass Communications

**Linked Class**

"What's Love Got to Do With It?"  
Ken Camplese/Biology  
Barbara Moburg/Human Sexuality  
Les Stanwood/Fiction

**Linked Class**

"Drawing from the Sea"  
Ken Camplese/Life in the Sea  
Sharon Hall/Drawing

**Linked Class**

"The American Century"  
Sharon Hall/Art History  
Phil Snider/American Literature

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**South Puget Sound  
Community College**

**Spring Quarter**

**Cluster**

“Wives, Husbands, and Other Loves”

Kitty Carlsen/Intercultural Communication

Diana Larkin/Marriage and Family

Mary Soltman/Writing

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**Spokane Community College**

**Spring Quarter**

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“Experience and Expression:

The Re-Enchantment of Art and Writing”

Marcel Arpin/Art

Sharon Seubert/English Composition

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“The Global Village”

Deborah Kyle/Mass Media

Angela Wizner/Interpersonal/

Intercultural Communication

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**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“Lessons of the Heart”

James Finley/Literature

Jackie McNamara/English Composition

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**Spokane Falls  
Community College**

**Spring Quarter**

**Coordinated Studies**

“The Real West:

Columbus Meets Spokane Garry”

Rudy Alexander/Pacific Northwest History

Patty Haag/Non-Western Art

Nel Hellenberg/Native West Literature/

English Composition

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

Christie Garcia/Literature

Lori Monnastes/English Composition

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

Almut McAuley/English Composition

Wayne Smith/Introduction to Music/

Music History

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**Linked Class - Team Taught**

Dexter Amend/Improved Thinking Skills

Larry Vandervert/Psychology/

Systems Behavior

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“Writers' Worlds”

Alexis Nelson/Short Fiction

Tom Versteeg/English Composition

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**Tacoma Community College**

**Spring Quarter**

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“In Search of Belonging”

Debbie Kinerk/English Composition

Richard Wakefield/Social Issues in

Fiction/Humanities

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“Hollywood's U.S.A.:

History, Society and Culture”

Marlene Bosanko/English Composition

Brian Duchin/Social Issues in Film

Linda Ford/U. S. History/Introduction to Film

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**“Linked Class - Team Taught**

“Overcoming Math Anxiety”

Karen Clark/Elementary Algebra

Diane Nason/Human Development

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**Walla Walla  
Community College**

**Spring Quarter**

**Linked Class - Team Taught**

“Freud: Evolution of a Theory”

Charles Cudney/Literature

Marlene Ramsey/Psychology

Jan Stratton/Philosophy

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## Western Washington University Spring Quarter

### Linked Class

“The Narrative Voice”  
Kathryn Anderson/Oral History  
Pat Fabiano/Health  
Lynne Masland/Literature

### Federated Learning Community

“Law and Diversity”  
Connie Faulkner/Constitutional Law:  
Individual Rights  
Rand Jack/Legal Writing/LSAT Preparation  
Marian Rodriguez/Oral Communication/  
Logic and Problem Solving Skills

### Linked Class

“Reading, Writing, and Researching:  
The Sociology of Deviance”  
Carmen Werder/Expository Writing  
Diane Carmody/Sociology of  
Deviant Behavior

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## Yakima Valley Community College

## Spring Quarter

### Linked Class - Team Taught

“Calculated Chemistry”  
Kathy Ashworth/Chemistry  
Dan Schapiro/Intermediate Algebra

### Linked Class - Team Taught

“Biorhythms: Biology, Evolution  
and Music as Co-Metaphors”  
Eric Mould/Biology for Non-majors  
Scott Peterson/Music Appreciation

### Linked Class - Team Taught

“Passionate Words: The Art and Science  
of Speaking and Writing”  
Mike Campbell/Public Speaking  
Jill Widner/English Composition

### Linked Class - Team Taught

“Vamas a Mexico: Learn Spanish and  
Mexican History and travel to Mexico”  
Ricardo Chama/Spanish  
Jamie Donaldson/History of Mexico

### Linked Class - Team Taught

“Cops and Writers”  
Janet Foster/Police Science  
Mark Fuzie/English Composition

### Linked Class - Team Taught

“Talk about Tut and Tombs:  
Secrets of the Ancient Egyptians Revealed”  
Jim Newbill/Ancient Egyptian History  
Chuck Weedin/Public Speaking

## Other large learning community programs in Washington:

The Evergreen State College’s curriculum is largely organized around 16-credit, team-taught coordinated studies programs. About 30 coordinated studies programs are offered each quarter, each addressing interdisciplinary themes or questions. For information on this year’s programs, write to the Washington Center.

The University of Washington offers a large Freshman Interest Group (FIGs) program to entering students, wherein cohorts of 25 students take a cluster of three classes, with a freshman seminar taught by a student peer advisor. Transfer and Returning Student Interest Groups (TRIGs), modelled on the FIG program, serves transfer and returning students in their first quarter to build a coherent pathway into the major.

# Upcoming Washington Center Workshops and Conferences

## **October 31-November 1, 1996**

**Washington Center Reform Calculus Network Conference**  
Rainbow Lodge, North Bend.

## **November 13-15, 1996**

**Multicultural Efforts Project Conference**  
in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges,  
North Bend.

## **November 22, 1996**

**Washington Center Planning Committee**  
North Seattle Community College.

## **February 14-15, 1997**

**Technology on a Human Scale:  
Teaching and Learning in the Information Age**  
Washington Center Annual Conference,  
Marriott Hotel, SeaTac.

## **April 3-4, 1997**

**Washington Center Evaluation Committee**  
place TBA.

## **April 4-5, 1997**

**Learning Community Coordinators**  
place TBA.

## **April 24-25, 1997**

**7th Annual Eastern Washington Curriculum Planning Retreat**  
Gonzaga University's Bozarth Center, Spokane.

## **April 30-May 2, 1997**

**Multicultural Efforts Project Conference**  
in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges,  
Gonzaga University's Bozarth Center, Spokane.

## **May 15-16, 1997**

**11th Annual Western Washington Curriculum Planning Retreat**  
Rainbow Lodge, North Bend.

## **June 16-17, 1997**

**Washington Center Planning Committee**  
Rainbow Lodge, North Bend.

## **June 24-30, 1997**

**National Learning Communities Dissemination Institute**  
for campuses associated with FIPSE-funded learning communities project,  
The Evergreen State College.

## **July 24-26, 1997**

**Interdisciplinary Approaches to Science**  
Dissemination Conference, for participants in the Washington Center's  
NSF-funded project,  
Pack Forest, Eatonville

## Other Events of Interest

### **October 31-November 3, 1996**

**Diversity Education and the  
Public Good,**  
Ford Foundation Campus Diversity  
Annual Conference,  
the Westin Hotel, Seattle.

### **November 1-2, 1996**

**Faculty and Staff of Color  
in Higher Education,  
Assessing the Climate:  
Strategies for Success,**  
1996 statewide conference focussing  
on professional development  
opportunities,  
Central Washington University,  
Ellensburg.

### **May 7-9, 1997**

Statewide Assessment Conference,  
**Next Century Learning,**  
sponsored by the State Board for  
Community and Technical Colleges,  
Spokane.

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# Mailing List

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The Evergreen State College  
Olympia, WA, 98505  
or call (360) 866-6000, Ext. 6611.

## Washington Center Planning Committee

Bellevue Community College: Michael Righi  
Edmonds Community College: Mary Lou Rozdilsky  
North Seattle Community College: Willard Bill, Jim Harnish, Rita Smilkstein  
Pierce College: April Falkin  
Seattle Central Community College: Valerie Bystrom, Rochelle dela Cruz, Rosetta Hunter  
Seattle University: Arthur Fisher  
Skagit Valley Community College: Brinton Sprague  
Spokane Falls Community College: Ron Johns, Steven Reames  
Tacoma Community College: Marlene Bosanko, Kathi Hiyane-Brown  
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Washington State University: Richard Law  
Whitworth College: Gordon Watanabe  
Yakima Valley Community College: Gary Tollefson

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Rhonda Coats: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

## Washington Center Staff

Jeanine Elliott, Director  
Emily Decker, Associate Director  
Jean MacGregor, Director, National Learning Communities Project (FIPSE)  
Laura O'Brady, Program Coordinator  
Barbara Determan, Office Assistant  
Sandra Abrams, Secretary

## The Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education

■ Established in 1985 at Evergreen as an inter-institutional consortium, the Center focuses on low-cost, high-yield approaches to educational reform, emphasizing better utilization and sharing of existing resources through collaboration among member institutions. Established with funding from the Exxon and Ford Foundations, the Center is now supported by the Washington State Legislature.

■ Includes 46 participating institutions: all of the state's public four-year institutions and community colleges, two technical colleges, one tribal college and ten independent colleges.

■ Supports and coordinates the development of interdisciplinary "learning community" programs, inter-institutional faculty exchanges, curriculum reform initiatives in science, mathematics and cultural pluralism, and offers conferences, seminars and technical assistance on effective approaches to teaching and learning.



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