Vision for WSU Learning Communities

To support Wayne State University’s commitment to student learning and retention, the Learning Community Initiative seeks to enhance our undergraduates’ experience by providing all interested students dynamic, focused communities in which students, staff, and faculty learn and grow together.

Learning Communities (LCs) are communities of learners, with clearly delineated common learning goals. Learning Communities provide academic support and social/community building activities that are tied to a course, major, or interest area. Well-conceived and well-executed LCs garner positive results because they focus on creating an environment for students that eases the transition to college and lays a foundation for success. LCs balance academic and social development through activities and events outside of class (planned by involved faculty and staff) that connect students to each other, demonstrate how academic concepts and theories have practical application, and introduce students to campus and community resources and networking opportunities. Known benefits to students include making friends more quickly, pursuing and finding academic assistance more readily, connecting to resources more easily, and experiencing a large university as though it were much smaller.

Funding Criteria. In keeping with national best practices in Learning Communities and in support of the WSU 2016-2021 “Distinctively Wayne” Strategic Plan, the main criteria for funding will be:

- The WSU Learning Community program will create opportunities where academically and culturally diverse students have a strong sense of membership in a unique community, whose purpose they understand and value, and with whom they engage.
- The WSU Learning Community Program will offer pathways to graduation by providing support to students as they follow a curricular sequence. In particular, we seek Learning Communities that support student progress at points of transition or at critical junctures in their curriculum.
- The Wayne State Learning Community program will implement targeted and assessable learning outcomes that are focused on successful academic progress and encouraging connection through a variety of educational experiences.
- The WSU Learning Community program will work toward closing the achievement gaps for underrepresented students at WSU, through interventions and services provided by the LCs.
- Faculty Involvement: A faculty member is significantly involved in the delivery of the Learning Community.
- Support from the school or college through: (1) matching funding, (2) administrative support, (3) recruiting, (4) promotion and visibility, and (5) support for faculty involvement.
- The incorporation of Peer Mentors: defining their job description, having a plan for on-going training and support, including compensation
- An assessment plan that addresses LC implementation, learning outcomes, and program goals

Proposals for Fall 2017 Learning Communities are reviewed by an LC committee based on the criteria above, using the LC assessment rubric, which is found on the LC website: www.lc.wayne.edu

Deadline: Completed and signed paper proposals are due on or before Friday, December 23, 2016 to Dr. Monica Brockmeyer, Associate Provost for Student Success, 4009 Faculty Administration Building (F/AB). An electronic copy must also be submitted to Amy Cooper (acooper@wayne.edu) by the deadline. Please Note: Your Deans Office may have an earlier deadline for proposal review. Contact Amy at 313-577-2254 or visit lc.wayne.edu for additional information.
PART ONE: General Information

1. Name of Learning Community______________________________________________
2. Anticipated number of students__________________________________________
3. Departments involved____________________________________________________
4. Schools/colleges involved________________________________________________
5. Primary coordinator (this is the person who represents your LC to us and who serves as the communication person).
   a. Name______________________________________________
   b. Address___________________________________________
   c. Phone____________________________________________
   d. WSU Access ID Email____________________________________

6. Please list other faculty and staff who are directly involved with LC. (Add rows as needed.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Who will handle accounting, fund transfer, purchases, hiring of peer mentors, and reimbursements?
   a. Name______________________________________________
   b. Title____________________________________________
   c. Department________________________________________
   d. WSU Access ID Email____________________________________
   e. Phone______________________________________________
8. Is this a NEW Learning Community? ______________________________

9. Is this a RETURNING Learning Community? ______________________
   a. How many years? ____________________________________________

10. Returning LCs will be evaluated by additional criteria:
    a. Provided LC Cohort information for Fall Semester and/or for Winter semester
    b. Participated in LC Peer Mentor Training
    c. Assessed/met goals from previous year
    d. Completed assessment from the previous year
PART TWO: APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL

My signature indicates that I have read and approve the Learning Community as proposed:

Signature of Coordinator(s):
__________________________________________________________________________ Date: ___/___/____
__________________________________________________________________________ Date: ___/___/____

Signature of Department Chair(s):
__________________________________________________________________________ Date: ___/___/____
__________________________________________________________________________ Date: ___/___/____

Signature of Dean(s) of relevant College(s)/School(s):
(or Director of those Programs not housed in Schools or Colleges)
__________________________________________________________________________ Date: ___/___/____
__________________________________________________________________________ Date: ___/___/____

Please provide the General Fund account number you intend to use for receiving funding for 2017-18:
(Please include INDEX, FUND AND ORG CODES)

INDEX

FUND

ORG
PART THREE: Students

Please provide detail about the students you hope will participate. Are members of the learning community:

Entering first year students in 2017-2018?  __Yes, __No, __Doesn’t matter.
Transfer students new to the university in 2017-2018?  __Yes, __No, __Doesn’t matter.
Transfer students, regardless of when they joined WSU?  __Yes, __No, __Doesn’t matter.
New graduate students?  __Yes, __No, __Doesn’t matter.
All in the same class or classes in Fall 2017?  __Yes, __No
If yes, which course?”________________
All in the same class or classes in Winter 2018?  __Yes, __No
If yes, which course?”________________
All in the same school, program, or major?  __Yes, __No

Does your learning community target the needs of under-represented groups?  __Yes, __No
(Please note: the University's Non-Discrimination / Affirmative Action policies, procedures and practices to ensure that no person is discriminated against in employment, educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or veteran status. However, programs may promote the success of such individuals.)

If yes, please describe________________________________________________________
PART FOUR: Peer Mentors

Peer Mentors are high-achieving current students who provide guidance to Learning Community students. Each mentor will serve as an academic role model and will help his or her assigned students in making the transition to college life and/or achieving academic success.

What are your expectations of your Peer Mentors? Describe the ROLE of your Peer Mentors. (What will your PMs provide? How will they interact with students?):

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Guidelines

- Peer Mentors must be hired as “Student Assistants” within the department and entered into the WSU Payroll system in time to attend training at the end of August 2017. Peer Mentors must complete timesheets every two weeks to enable tracking of hours worked.
- Peer Mentor funds are to be used to pay peer mentors. If additional programming funds are needed they should be requested separately as “program budget” items (see budget section of this form, page 15).
- Request only funds you need so that mentor support can be offered as broadly as possible. The maximum funding for peer mentors is $1400 per 15 learning community students, per semester. This is intended to be a general guideline rather than a formula. It is not a guarantee.
- All funds must be used during the fiscal year.

Funding request: Complete the following table. Please be specific. Add rows as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017-18 Peer Mentor Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number and type of mentors</strong> (How many PMs each semester, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours/Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PEER MENTOR BUDGET</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6 |
PART FIVE: Program Budget and Funding

Funding is available to help support the program budget for each Learning Community. The department/school/college contributions will be a consideration in awarding support from the Learning Community Initiative funds.

- Types of requests that may be funded include: food and other costs for social events, admissions to museums, special events, curriculum and materials costs, etc.
- Types of requests that will not be funded include: computers, furniture, travel, web upkeep, gifts/awards, staff salaries, graduate assistants to teach a course and faculty buy-out during the academic year.
- Partial funding may be available for assessment and summer curriculum development.
- All funds must be used during the fiscal year.
- In-kind staffing contributions are not considered department matching funds.

**Funding request:** Complete the following table. Please be specific. Add rows as necessary.

### 2017-18 LC Program Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (be specific):</th>
<th>Total $ Requested from Learning Community Initiative Funds</th>
<th>Dept./College $ Contribution</th>
<th>Amount funded (office use only)</th>
<th>Dean’s Approval of S/C/D contribution as indicated by Initial of each line item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET</strong> (NOT including Peer Mentors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2017-18 LC Budget Summary (Transfer totals from above)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total $ Requested from Learning Community Initiative Funds</th>
<th>Dept./College $ Contribution</th>
<th>Amount funded (Office use only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total <strong>Peer Mentor</strong> Budget (from page 5 of this RFP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total <strong>Program</strong> Budget (NOT including peer mentors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART SIX: Learning.

What do you expect that students will learn as a result of participation in this learning community?

Please provide learning outcomes specific to your LC, below.

1. ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
PART SEVEN: Student Experiences and Program Activities.

Please describe in a few paragraphs what the program activities are, and how they will support the learning outcomes you described. How will these experiences and activities CREATE A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS that engage together over time to promote student success?
PART EIGHT: High-Impact Practices (HIPs).

Certain kinds of college experiences provide superior learning opportunities for students. These experiences are called “High Impact Practices.” They include Learning Communities, but other forms of learning such as Undergraduate Research, Service Learning, and many more. Success in college is much more than a grade point average or a degree – it is about learning. In fact, success is about achieving the level of preparation—in terms of knowledge, capabilities, and personal qualities—that will enable students to both thrive and contribute in a fast-changing economy and in turbulent, highly demanding global, societal, and often personal contexts.

Learning Communities are especially effective at achieving these goals because we learn more when we learn together. What makes these learning environments so effective? They deepen students’ connection to the subject matter. Because they provide students with both independence and support, they are often deeply motivating for students. And they provide opportunities for students, faculty, and peer mentors to interact together.

Choose three or more of these HIP characteristics you intend to implement that will support learning in your LC.

- Performance expectations are set at appropriately high levels.
  Challenge is good for students – it interests and engages them – as long as the challenge is within reach.
- Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time.
  Perhaps the LC might have a supplemental project that students work together on during the semester.
- Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters.
  How will a peer mentor help your students interact with faculty? Are you open to deeper discussion about the subject matter? About being in college?
- Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar.
  A Learning Community might use icebreakers to help students get to know each other and the rich array of experiences and backgrounds among Learning Community members.
- Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback.
  Elaborate on how you will embed timely and constructive feedback into LC activities.
- Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning.
  Reflecting on your own learning may make it easier to help students do so.
- Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications.
  Field trips, speakers, and many other LC activities can help make learning “real.”
- Public demonstration of competence.
  LC sessions can be a great place for students to practice their class presentations, or to present and share learning even if they aren’t asked to do so in class.
High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

Please describe how these characteristics will be included in your learning community.
PART NINE: Faculty Involvement

Successful Learning Communities include significant faculty involvement. Faculty members can serve as LC coordinators, or they can collaborate to develop curriculum that connects with intended learning outcomes. Please describe how faculty will participate in your LC. What specific plans do you have to further enhance direct faculty involvement with the learning community?

PART TEN: School/College/Department Support

WSU Schools/Colleges/Departments are expected to show growing commitment to Learning Communities through increasing funding allocations. Please provide detail about your progress in developing a sustainable learning community within your S/C/D, and its long-term sustainability.
PART ELEVEN: Courses and Collaborations

Successful Learning Communities are incorporated into either General Education courses or major-required courses.

List all courses that are part of your Learning Community. Please confirm if all students registered for the course will be members of the Learning Community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Winter 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you like your course(s) to be designated as an LC course in the class schedule? __Yes, __No
If yes, please provide course number/CRN/section number assigned for this designation:

________________
________________
________________

Briefly explain the curricular connections that currently exist and how are you working to further develop curricular connections:
Non Academic Collaborations
List the specific partnerships with non-academic units (Housing and Residential Life, Dean of Students Office, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Academic Success Center (ASC), etc.), service-learning partners, professional partners, etc. — with whom you plan to work. Briefly describe each of the collaborations.

PART TWELVE: Assessment
Assessment is an important component for continued improvement of the LC program. Each coordinator must complete the year-end LC outcome survey. In addition, each LC must have an Assessment plan. Starting with the first outcome indicated below, “Create a community of learners”, list your specific learning outcomes, what experiences you have designed to meet the outcomes, and how you will assess the intended outcomes; add additional rows as necessary.

(Note: LC proposals that do not demonstrate a plan to create a community of learners will not be funded.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Create a community of learners *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes specific to YOUR LC</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy the characteristics you selected on page 10 of this RFP.</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List anything else you plan to assess.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ideally, students have a strong sense of membership in a community, whose purpose they understand and value, and with whom they engage.