

Learning Communities Monthly



LC Program Updates

Happy November LC Family! October was a busy month, with LC activities, WSU Homecoming Tailgate, and the National Learning Community Conference. Thank you to those of you who were able to attend. Additional information on the NLCC sessions presented by WSU can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

We are three-quarters of the way through the fall semester, and taking the time to check in. We have been hearing from some LCs that “all is well”, and we have been hearing from some LCs that peer mentors and students are stressed and feeling overwhelmed. The LC Program will continue to reach out to LC peer mentors and coordinators to offer support. Additionally, we have added a form to the Peer Mentor Canvas home page, where peer mentors can let us know about issues they (or their students) are facing that we can address. The form can also be accessed using the following link: [LC Request Support Form](#)

We hope you are having a great semester and enjoy the cooler fall weather.

Wishing you happy days ahead,

Amy Cooper
Manager of the Learning Community Program

Picture: PwC MPREP students completed a service project together this month!



November 2021

Save the Date!

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Important Dates:

WSU Peer Mentor Check-In:

11/5 from 10 am to 12 noon

Additional information (including agenda) has been emailed to all peer mentors and coordinators

[Zoom Link](#) (Zoom Password: ASC)

November LC Coordinator Meetings:

11/15 at 2 pm [Zoom Link](#) or

11/18 at 11 am [Zoom Link](#)

(Zoom Password: LCCoord21)

11/25- Thanksgiving, WSU Closed

11/26- Day After Thanksgiving, WSU Closed

Other Resources

Check out the upcoming Student Success Workshops from the Academic Success Center [here](#).

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) Let's Talk drop-in session schedule can be found [here](#).

November is National Career Development Month, tips from Career Services can be found [here](#).

National Learning Community Conference Wrap-Up

The 2021 National Learning Community Conference was held virtually on Thursday, October 21st and Friday, October 22nd. Four Wayne State Learning Communities presented and below are the abstracts from their sessions.

Addressing Health Disparities: A Pre-Med Learning Community Focused on Training Future Leaders in Medicine **Dulmini Barupala, Wayne Med-Direct LC**

Disadvantaged populations in the U.S. persistently face inequality in healthcare access and quality and one way to address this issue is by training medical students to become physician leaders who are sensitive to such inequities. We have created a learning community that focuses on leadership training and health disparities education. Via exposure to role models, students who participated in our learning community have shown to learn about leadership traits/skills such as having a vision, personal integrity, selflessness, passion for serving people, communications skills, listening skills, etc. Students have also exemplified that they apply the learned leadership traits/skills in their academic journey and that those traits/skills have helped shape their personal leadership goals. We educate our students in health disparities via community engagement efforts, research projects and group presentations and they have shown to develop passion in helping people, selflessness, and empathy and have shown to improve listening, communication, and teamwork skills. The success of this learning community suggests that similar programming can help create physician leaders who are sensitive to healthcare issues in their communities.

How to be a RAFT: A Model for Relationship-Building & Leadership Culture **Jame Fortune & Olivia Kimes, Theatre & Dance LC**

As leaders of the Theatre and Dance Learning Community at Wayne State University, we provide academic support to a diverse student body. In establishing a sense of community within our department, we empower students to create a unique path in their education. By participating in this interactive lecture, our audience will take away the approach used for our Learning Community, and how it can be tailored to any program. In this presentation, we will show that the approach we use with our Learning Community members impacts their academic career positively, allows them to feel a sense of belonging, and effectively connects them with their fellow peers and faculty. We approach every interaction in our work with the following guidelines: build a RAFT for our students by developing Rapport, Approachability, Familiarity, and Trust, and to create a leadership culture that sets high expectations for our Community. Peer mentors demonstrate RAFT through academic outreach, tutoring, assisting with scheduling, providing campus resources, giving academic advising presentations, and by establishing an early integration into the community. We also coordinate numerous events including Friendsgiving, cultural field trips, and the 10 Minute Play & Dance Festival; all of which enhance learning within the classroom and building relationships with peers. We frequently seek constructive feedback from our students to make sure the Learning Community is effectively supporting their needs. Student surveys show that 95% of our students agree that the Learning Community has impacted their academic career positively, and 87% of students say they feel a sense of belonging because of Learning Community. It is because of this feedback that we know our approach is successful in providing our students with a rewarding college experience

Learning Communities: Improving Imposter Syndrome and Loneliness Among Medical Students **Sahar Elmenini, Nicole White, LaToya Sherman, & Eric Ayers, School of Medicine: Physicians in Training LC**

Past research has linked imposter syndrome, isolation, and locus of control together. The creation of learning communities (LCs) is to directly and effectively combat loneliness, feelings of isolation, and IS, to better promote student's wellbeing and success. It was hypothesized that those who attend more LC events will score lower on imposter syndrome scale and lower on social loneliness scale. It was also hypothesized that those who scored higher on imposter syndrome and social loneliness will have an external locus of control. To test our hypothesis, a survey was sent out to the Classes of 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 at Wayne State University School of Medicine, resulting in a sample size of 144 participants. The students' responses were recorded via Qualtrics and analyzed. The survey included questions from the following topics: gender, age, class, number of LC events attended, number of non-LC events attended, imposter syndrome, loneliness, and locus of control. Surprisingly, it was found that there was not a significant correlation between the number of LC events attended and imposter syndrome, loneliness, and locus of control. There was a slight positive correlation between loneliness scores and the number of non-LC social events attended. Furthermore, there were correlations between imposter syndrome, loneliness, and locus of control. In summary, this study coincides with past research with the connection between gender and imposter syndrome, loneliness, and external locus of control. Furthermore, our study contradicts past research on the connection between imposter syndrome and loneliness. However, the study fails to affirm that LCs decrease feelings of loneliness and imposter syndrome. Further studies on the different types of LCs and how they contribute to the student body may shed some light on the gaps between LCs, imposter syndrome, and loneliness.

Impacting Students of Color Through Multicultural-Focused Learning Communities **Lynita Taylor, PwC MPREP LC**

In higher education, initiatives focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion have continued to increase across the nation (Patton, Sanchez, Mac, & Stewart, 2019). As programs face limited support or protection from institutional administration, restrictive bans through state legislations, and other institutionalized forms of exclusion, it is crucial for colleges/universities to use learning communities in different ways to combat these discrepancies. Join us for an informative presentation discussing the importance of multicultural-focused learning communities at predominantly White institutions and how they impact underrepresented minority students. By focusing on four pillars of support- community, mentorship, academic accountability, and industry exposure- and partnering with socially responsible companies/organizations, we are helping to change the collegiate experience for these students.