President’s Committee on Undergraduate Retention

FALL 2015 REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Submitted to Dr. Katherine Conway-Turner, President

January 26, 2016
# Contents

Contents ........................................................................................................................................... 1
Charge: President’s Committee on Undergraduate Retention ......................................................... 2
Members of the Committee on Undergraduate Retention ............................................................... 2
Preamble ............................................................................................................................................ 3
Update on Spring 2015 Report and Recommendations ................................................................. 4
  Mapworks ....................................................................................................................................... 4
  Gather Data on Success Correlated with First & Second Year High Impact Practices 4
  First Year Student Block Course Scheduling .............................................................................. 4
  Update on Holds .......................................................................................................................... 4
Retention at Buffalo State College: The Current Picture ............................................................... 5
Retention Projection, Observations and Goals ............................................................................. 5
  Safety on Campus ......................................................................................................................... 6
  Retention Goals .......................................................................................................................... 6
Enhancing the Student Experience ................................................................................................. 7
Summary and Recommendations ................................................................................................. 8
  Academic Advising ..................................................................................................................... 8
  Academic Support Services ........................................................................................................ 9
Mid-Semester Grades .................................................................................................................... 9
Attendance & Mandatory Attendance ......................................................................................... 10
Learning Communities ................................................................................................................ 11
High Fail Gateway Courses and Supplemental Instruction ....................................................... 11
Information and Awareness ......................................................................................................... 12
References ..................................................................................................................................... 14
Appendices .................................................................................................................................... 15
On February 2, 2015, Dr. Katherine Conway Turner, President of Buffalo State College, established the first—ever Committee on Undergraduate Retention (hereafter CUR) to provide recommendations that will increase the persistence, retention, and graduation rates of undergraduate students. The CUR will:

- Review, gather, and interpret information from other institutions or external programs that can illuminate these concerns.
- Investigate and review best practices that currently exist on the BSC campus.
- Review Buffalo State current information and quantitative data available related to this issue.
- Gather any new information or survey portions of the campus community to provide insight into this issue.
- Develop recommendations that are relevant to all or selected portions of our campus student community.
- Make recommendations on short-term and long-term goals related to higher persistence, retention, and graduation rates.
- Submit proposals that address retention needs to the Cabinet.
- Report at the end of each semester (verbal and written report) on the state of undergraduate persistence, retention, and graduate rates and the impact of current or new programs to address these issues.
- Advise the cabinet on the continuation, development, and/or elimination of programs that impact persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

**Members of the Committee on Undergraduate Retention**

Mark W. Severson, Dean, School of Natural and Social Sciences, Co-Chair
Daniel C. Vélez, Associate Vice President, Student Success, Co-Chair
Daniel M. Blum, Lecturer, History and Social Studies Education
Lynn M. Boorady, Chair and Associate Professor, Fashion and Textile Technology
Jerry S. Boyes, Director and Head Football Coach, Intercollegiate Athletics
Connie F. Cooke, Director, Financial Aid
Leslie K. Day, Lecturer, Elementary Education and Reading
Brian D. Dubenion, Assistant Director of Residence Life for Student Success, Residence Life
Dwight Hennessey, Associate Professor, Psychology
Yanick H. Jenkins, Director, Educational Opportunity Program
James Mayrose, Dean, School of the Professions
Lisa A. Rafferty, Associate Professor, Exceptional Education
Deborah A. Silverman, Associate Professor, Communication
Susan F. Wright, Director, Student Accounts
Hal D. Payne, Vice President for Student Affairs, Ex Officio
Melanie Perreault, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Ex Officio
PREAMBLE
At the 2015 Fall Forum, President Conway Turner dared Buffalo State College to be distinct, to be bold, and to be great! She dared us to lead our peers in developing curricula that prepares students for the complexity of the world they inhabit and the flexibility they will need for our ever-changing world; dared us to universally guide, mentor, and cajole our students toward success in the tradition of great colleges; dared us to embrace what it means to be an anchor institution within the city of Buffalo; dared us to understand that because we have diverse thinkers from diverse backgrounds, we will allow this diversity to inform our deliberations; and she dared us to exalt diversity as a strength and continue to rise to leadership among our peers.

The Fall 2015 Report and Recommendations takes these challenges into consideration. We encourage bold action for institutional greatness and distinctiveness.
UPDATE ON SPRING 2015 REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mapworks
The CUR continues its work to better understand data emanating from Mapworks. It also continues its work to understand how the campus community is utilizing the platform to improve retention efforts. This report relies on Mapworks 2014 and 2015 survey data in making some observations.

Gather Data on Success Correlated with First & Second Year High Impact Practices
This report (below) discusses what has been done in this area.

First Year Student Block Course Scheduling
The CUR invited Dr. Amitra Wall, Assistant Dean of Intellectual Foundations to further understand first-year student block scheduling. The committee learned that there are a number of courses assigned in the block that have high failure rates. The committee has not completed its review of this initiative.

Update on Holds
The change in HOLDS (e.g., Bursar hold for $500 or less will not stop registration) was effective for Fall 2015 as noted below.

- New - Bursar hold for $500 or less will not stop registration but it will prevent the student “from receiving a transcript or diploma” from Buffalo State. Bursar hold for more than $500.00 revokes all services: student will be blocked from registration and prohibited from receiving a transcript or diploma” from Buffalo State.

According to the Financial Aid Office’s metrics, 163 students may have benefited from this change in practice for the Fall 2015 semester. Most likely, the number is much higher if you factor in all students with $500 or less balance on their student account.

By these accounts, the implementation of this practice has helped retain students.
RETENTION AT BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE: THE CURRENT PICTURE

First-year retention for the Fall 2014 cohort was 70.9%, the lowest value in the last 10 years. Because the entering class in Fall 2014 was significantly larger than in the past few years, this represents a significant loss in enrollment of 540 students. Retention was lower for all categories of students classified by high school GPA, not just those with the lower GPAs. Because of this higher than usual attrition after the first year, graduation rates for this cohort are likely to be significantly lower than for those of the last few years (Appendix A). Note that in Fall 2015 new freshman enrollment was nearly twice as large as new transfer enrollment, compared to 2012 when new freshman and new transfer enrollments were about the same. Because of this, reduced success rates for the entering freshman class will have a much larger effect on overall completion rates in future years.

RETENTION PROJECTION, OBSERVATIONS AND GOALS

The 2014 and 2015 first-year cohorts are significantly larger and have a significantly different qualifications profile than those in the recent years prior to 2014. In light of these differences and the reduced retention rates for all categories of students observed for the Fall 2014 cohort, we believe that it will be more accurate to use those rates to project first-year retention for the 2015 cohort rather than using averages from the past few years. Doing so predicts a further decline in first-year retention, to 70% for the Fall 2015 cohort. Since this entering class of 1992 is the largest in the last 35 years, if this projection holds true there will be an attrition of nearly 600 students.

Although we have had record numbers of applications, admissions have shifted dramatically toward the “less selective.” In 2012, we had 24.0% of full-time first time in the “less selective” category, while in Fall 2015 that category has shifted to 55.2%. This shift is due to a decrease in acceptances, not from a decrease in applications from students in these categories. In 2012, Buffalo State completed a self-study in preparation for its Middle States accreditation review. In that self-study the campus was informed that organizational changes made in response to prior review, which were designed to enhance academic support initiatives showed “no clear improvement in first-year retention rates,” and “no clear impact on graduation rates.” The CUR is unaware of enhancements to our academic (or student support) services, since 2012, to address with what amounts to a tripling of students needing these services (from 319 in 2012 to 1013 in 2015).

This factor of three increase is a result of record increases in first-year student enrollment during this period – 1331 in 2012 vs. 1835 in 2015 (full-time first-time students). As noted earlier, our retention rates have precipitously declined during this period. Not only have the numbers of students in the “less selective” category increased, the absolute numbers of those in the “very selective” and “selective” categories, not just their percentages, have declined, by 88 and 91, respectively, since 2012. This is of particular concern because students in these categories are generally retained at higher rates. With the increase in enrollment, there has been an increase in the number of students in Mapworks 2015 who are disinterested in being here upon entering Buffalo State College (59.7% or 213/1298). This is up by 128 students.

1 https://middlestates.buffalostate.edu/MSCHE_Self-Study_1_29_13.pdf
or 60% over Fall 2014. It is important to note that this number represents only those students who took the Mapworks surveys, not the entire entering first-year cohort, and therefore could be higher.

Based on these problematics, we are very likely to experience a decline in one-year retention for the class entering in 2015, and corresponding decline in graduation rates.

**Safety on Campus**

Campus safety is one of several items most predictive of students returning for their sophomore year (Schreiner, p.5, 2012). The campus Mapworks survey\(^2\) was administered from September 30, 2015 through November 18, 2015 to over 1200 first-year students. This occurred immediately following a period when the campus experienced an unprecedented number of violent incidents. This is evident, as “Safety” was one of three top concerns highlighted by first-year students as reported on Mapworks 2015 along with major and homesickness.

Residence Life resident assistants host 1:1 conversations with residential first-year and upper class students called Micro-Interactions. The Fall 2015 Micro-Interaction, which was conducted with over 1700 first-year and upper-class students overlapped the Mapworks survey (ended 11/08/15). Micro-Interactions saw a call for “better safety on campus”, in agreement with the first-year student concerns seen in the Mapworks survey.

In response to campus safety concerns, the President announced on October 20, 2015 the reconvening of the Campus Safety Forum to review current campus security policies and procedures and make recommendations for their improvement. On November 12, 2015, the appointment of a sub-committee of the Campus Safety Forum to review and advise the campus on some specific campus safety issues was also announced. Thus, the CUR defers to the Campus Safety Forum to work towards making recommendations that strive to improve perceptions of safety and security on campus, which may minimize the impact this issue may have on retention.

**Retention Goals**

The Buffalo State College SUNY EXCELS 2015 Performance Improvement Plan, which was recently approved, states, “Buffalo State will raise the first-year retention rate to 79% by 2020.” The CUR applauds such a long-term retention goal and recommends the following short-term retention goals:

Buffalo State will raise the first-year retention rate to:

- 72% by fall 2017
- 75% by fall 2018
- 77% by fall 2019, and
- 79% by fall 2020

\(^2\) MAP-Works surveys first-year students to identify who may be at risk for departure.
ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

With the growth in first-year enrollment there must also be a focus on enhancing the student out-of-class experience. With the growth in first-year enrollment noted earlier, the demand for housing has also grown. This demand is most evident in the growth and tripling of every first-year residential student room. We are aware that tripling has led students to report decreased satisfaction with their experience.

Buffalo State has responded to the growing housing demand with the completion of a Housing Master Plan. Part of that plan includes the renovation of Bishop Hall for first-year student housing. The plan also includes renovation of Twin Rise and North Wing Halls in addition to other existing residence halls throughout the next decade. We are hopeful that these enhancements will greatly minimize our dependency on tripling as a method for housing first-year students.

As stated earlier, while the number of students in the less selective admissions category has grown, the numbers in the more selective categories have decreased. The CUR is aware of a recommendation to enhance scholarship offerings to entice a larger pool of more selective students to enroll at Buffalo State College. While such a move is important, the CUR also recommends exploring the growth of the Muriel A. Howard Honors Program. We are aware that an Honors College model is currently in an exploratory state, and are encouraged by such a move. We appreciate the desire to enhance scholarship offerings in an effort to increase the enrollment of students in the more selective admissions categories, and we recommend the College explore the use of additional incentives. These may include earlier registration, reduced parking tags, use of reserved technology, and early move-in to the residence halls, to name a few.
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We must make bold, major efforts to help students succeed, and to prevent student departure. We also cannot risk seeing Buffalo State become a less desirable institution, and we cannot risk further declines in success rates.

It is important to recognize that increasing first-year retention by reasonable numbers requires retaining a relatively small number of additional students. For example, to increase from the 70% predicted for the Fall 2015 cohort, to the 73% we had for the Fall 2013 cohort, we need to retain only 49 additional students. To hit 75%, the average for the 10 years prior to 2014, requires retaining an additional 86 students. Even getting to 78%, which would be higher than for any entering cohort from the last 10 years, will require retaining only 141 students beyond the number needed to get to 70%.

There are a number of measures we can take that should be possible to implement by Fall 2016. A very important step will be to implement the recommendation of the CUR regarding mandatory academic advising. We understand this is being explored by the College Advising Committee and continue to recommend its implementation. We are aware that expansion and improvements in residential housing are forthcoming, which should minimize our dependence on tripling of every first-year student room. This is underway, with the completion of the Housing Master Plan, but will be a longer-term effort.

Academic Advising

The CUR, in its Spring 2015 report recommended immediate implementation of an empirically supported retention strategy—mandatory academic advising.

According to Tinto, “advising is particularly important to the success of many students who either begin college undecided about their major and/or change their major during college. The inability to obtain needed advice during the first year or at the point of changing majors can undermine motivation, increase the likelihood of departure, and for those who continue, result in increased time to degree completion” (2012, p. 255-256).

Buffalo State College is at an urgent time that requires bold, quick action—we must take immediate steps; especially when the impacts of mandatory advising on student retention are overwhelmingly clear. The CUR recommends The President’s Cabinet:

1. Conduct an immediate institutional review of fiscal resources to determine how we might hire new professional staff to enhance advising to achieve a mandatory advising model of at least all first-year and ideally including sophomore students. Faculty, alone, cannot be expected to perform mandatory advising with caseloads in some schools that are overwhelming. Assistance can be provided through the use of professional advisors who can supplement these efforts.

2. Move the advisement initiative into the Academic Student Success Center (see below) once opened in the E. H. Butler Library; however, in the meantime, ensure all advisors are housed together.

3. Enforcement of the “Buffalo State Student Advisement Policy” that was approved by the College Senate on March 12, 2004.

---

3 See Buffalo State College Handbook for Faculty and Librarians, August 2015 pages 9.3-9.4 for the complete policy.
If the College can only afford one enhancement at this time, the CUR strongly recommends mandatory advisement be that one.

**Academic Support Services**

As we said earlier, we are unaware of enhancements to our academic support services, since our Middle-States self-study in 2012, to deal with what amounts to a tripling of students needing these services. Therefore, at the start of the Fall 2015, we requested metrics for current academic support services. Tutoring and writing services are among these services. We have received some of this information and we expect the rest soon. Once we receive all of the information and have analyzed it we will be in a better position to comment on specifically what might be done in this area that would enhance student retention. The CUR has been informed by the Provost that her office will be conducting a comprehensive review of University College to commence at the start of the spring 2016. It is expected that more information regarding the impact of existing academic support services as well as the need for additional academic support services will be forthcoming as a result of this review.

It is reasonable with the increase in less-selective students, demand for tutoring and writing services would also increase. We anticipate academic support services being the continued subject of the CUR’s review in the spring 2016.

We are aware, however, of current efforts at Buffalo State College to develop an Academic Student Success Center in the E.H. Butler Library. We are aware that such efforts have been successful elsewhere. For example,

> The comprehensive Student Success Center at the University of South Carolina includes Academic Coaching and Engagement (ACE) coaching, tutoring, transfer student support services, academic recovery programs, cross-college advising, supplemental instruction, financial literacy programs, and early intervention initiatives.

Furthermore, that University found, “Students who went to the Student Success Center for help had a three percent attrition rate from Fall 2012 to Spring 2013, while students who did not take advantage of early intervention had a seven percent attrition rate.” The CUR supports the idea of such a center and looks forward to learning more about the specific academic support services that may occupy the space.

**Mid-Semester Grades**

A practice which has been shown to have a significant impact on student success is providing students with information on their performance early in the semester, enabling them to adjust their approach to the course as appropriate. Therefore, the CUR recommends the College implement mandatory mid-term grading at all class levels. This strategy has long been empirically shown to increase the likelihood of student academic success (Robinson, 1990). In a more recent study, “It was shown

---

that there is a strong positive correlation between midterm grades and end of-semester grades, whereby nearly half of all grades improve" (Acker, Hughes, Fendley, Jr., p. 36, 2002).

At Buffalo State College, “All instructors are strongly encouraged to consider giving midterm grades, especially for students who have a C- or lower at midterm” (Buffalo State College Handbook for Faculty and Librarians, p. 2.7, 2015). The CUR recommends adoption of the following policy:

1) All instructors must assign midterm grades for all undergraduate students. Mid-term grading must be implemented at least two weeks earlier than its current schedule in order to provide sufficient time for faculty and student support personnel to provide support, feedback and appropriate intervention to assist in adjusting academic behaviors.

The CUR recommends that the Chief Information Officer investigate using technology to minimize the impact of entering mid-semester grades.

**Attendance & Mandatory Attendance**

The literature notes a strong relationship between class attendance, grades and GPA, and mandatory attendance policies have been shown to significantly reduce failure rates (Credé, Roch, and Kieszczynka, 2010; Davadoss, and Foltz, 1996; Dobkin, Gil, and Marion, 2010). According to the Buffalo State Handbook for Faculty and Librarians,

At Buffalo State College, class attendance policy is established by the individual instructor. Syllabi should indicate whether regular attendance is required, requested, optional, etc., and indicate the specific consequences of unexcused absences from class, e.g., lower grade, request for explanation, expectation that the work will be made up, or action consistent with the total course performance, etc. The instructor is required to distribute copies of his or her attendance policy to each student within the first week of class. Copies must be filed with the department chair and dean. See DOPS for more information. (2015, pp. 5.8-5.9)

The CUR recommends that all faculty consider taking attendance and either making it mandatory, or implementing innovative methods of encouraging attendance, especially for students at risk of failure. These easily-implemented measures can have a significant effect on success rates, and thereby increase retention. We also recommend that the institution explore new technological methods of monitoring attendance for faculty who wish to use these methods. The CUR understands class attendance does not necessarily correlate with content engagement, and thus, further recommends faculty consider implementing a system that acknowledges both attendance and participation in class.
Learning Communities

The CUR spent some time this Fall 2015 semester reviewing High Impact Practices. We will report on other high impact practices in the spring; however, we are prepared to comment on the Learning Communities program. At Buffalo State College, we have seen a decline in the number of Learning Communities offered since the program’s initial launch. An evaluation by Learning Communities personnel notes changes in the design of the program must be made to align with best practice and result in increased Learning Communities offerings. The CUR is aware that there is a planned increase to the learning communities program and supports this increase. Learning Communities is a sound retention strategy. As such, we recommend:

1) Reviewing the impact of an increase to the learning communities program.
2) Consider additional increases to the Learning Communities program beyond fall 2016.
3) Encouraging, incentivizing and supporting faculty participation in Learning Communities to increase offerings
4) Exploring Learning Communities with special populations (i.e., COMPASS)

High Fail Gateway Courses and Supplemental Instruction

In January 2015, the Student Success Office worked with the Registrar to identify gateway courses with high fail rates in hopes of working with those faculty to pilot a Supplemental Instruction model.

Overview of Supplemental Instruction: Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program that utilizes peer-assisted study sessions. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal review sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together.

The sessions are facilitated by SI Leaders, students who have previously done well in the course and who attend all class lectures, take notes, and act as model students. The use of high achieving students as SI Leaders will further engage our high achievers, which may lead to increased retention.

The Registrar identified courses with failure rates greater than 30%. Buffalo Noel-Levitz recommends that for courses which have >30% with grades of D, F, or W, supplemental instruction/assistance be made available to those students, and that students be advised that this assistance is available to them at no charge. Grades of D+, D, E, F, U, and W were used to apply the Buffalo Noel-Levitz guidance. The information was extracted by CTS in May 30, 2014. The CUR recommends a new list of courses be highlighted through this process to update the information that was gathered; however, a complete list of the courses that were identified at the time of the data-pull is provided to the President along with this report and recommendations.

See Learning Communities report
The CUR **recommends** implementing a pilot Supplemental Instruction program in the Fall 2016 semester with those faculty who are interested in participating. The CUR urges that the model be implemented according to best practice.\(^6\) Additionally, existing funds should be realigned/reassigned to support the pilot initiative.

The CUR **recommends** that the Provost determine who will coordinate this initiative; however and of greater importance, this initiative will require faculty buy-in in order to be successful. We implore faculty who teach gateway courses to consider adding this empirically proven strategy to improve student success.

**Student Engagement and IF**

Academic engagement of students is known to be highly important for retaining students and for student success. One of the most important aspects of engagement, especially for first-year students, is the content and structure of the general education program. Although many individual courses and faculty engage students very successfully, many believe that there is little that is bold, distinctive, or engaging in our Intellectual Foundations program. The CUR **recommends** that Buffalo State consider revising IF with an emphasis on increasing engagement of students, particularly in the first year.

**Information and Awareness**

The CUR **recommends** increased focus on information and awareness to faculty and staff on our progress in student retention and graduation.

1. The Institutional Research Office should develop a campus-wide retention dashboard that is internal and provides department-specific information on retention and graduation rates.
2. College Relations should work with the President on the development of communication to the campus community that highlights the important role faculty play in the lives of students. Messages highlighting how Buffalo State is a community of faculty and staff who care about students and are genuinely interested in their success.
3. College Relation should create a series in The Daily Bulletin (or other appropriate medium) on the impact/correlation of students’ financial aid eligibility on retention and graduation. College Relations is encouraged to work with Financial Aid.

In closing, the CUR recognizes that many measures come at significant cost, but this is an investment well worth making; for example, an increase in first-year retention to 75% results in a revenue increase of more than $500,000 for the second year of that cohort, with corresponding additional revenue increases as higher numbers of students continue in years after that. On the other hand, continued declines in

---

retention represent a serious threat to the financial health of the institution. According to Ruffalo Noel-Levitz,

Institutional features are not always fully under the control of an institution, particularly in the short term. Thus, for institutions that cannot afford to be highly selective, a conscious decision to provide better support for the students enrolled is likely to result not only in greater satisfaction, but also a higher likelihood of such students returning for another year. (Schreiner, 2009, p.4, emphasis added)

We are hopeful that the recommendations made in this report will assist Buffalo State in accomplishing our retention goals.
REFERENCES


Striving for excellence in a time of transition: Buffalo State College Middle States Commission of Higher Education Self-Study Report. Retrieved from the Buffalo State College Middle States Accreditation website at https://middlestates.buffalostate.edu/

APPENDICES

A. Learning Communities Report 2014*
B. Learning Communities Report 2013*
C. Learning Communities Retention Fall 2012-2015*

*As provided by University College
Contents

Learning Community Program: 2014 ........................................................................................................ 1
Year in Review ......................................................................................................................................... 1
LC Oversight Committee Meetings .......................................................................................................... 2
Fall 2014 Learning Communities .......................................................................................................... 2
Retention Statistics ................................................................................................................................. 3

Community of Student Investigators: Evaluation and Assessment Report ............................................. 4
Description of Community of Student Investigators ............................................................................... 4
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation .............................................................................................................. 4
Assessment Results ................................................................................................................................ 4

Creative Expressions: Evaluation and Assessment Report ..................................................................... 7
Description of Designing Leadership ....................................................................................................... 7
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation .............................................................................................................. 7
Assessment Results ................................................................................................................................ 9

Explore Your World, Know Thyself: Evaluation and Assessment Report ............................................... 10
Description of Explore Your World, Know Thyself .............................................................................. 10
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation ............................................................................................................ 10
Assessment Results .............................................................................................................................. 12

PROLOGUE: Evaluation and Assessment Report .................................................................................. 13
Description of PROLOGUE .................................................................................................................. 13
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation ............................................................................................................ 13
Assessment Results .............................................................................................................................. 15

Overall Recommendations ................................................................................................................... 16
End-of-the-Year Evaluation .................................................................................................................... 16
Assessment ............................................................................................................................................. 17
Next Steps .............................................................................................................................................. 18
Learning Community Program
2014

Year in Review

Feb.  Shared Assessment and Evaluation Report to UCLT
Mar.  Assessed current LC faculty and staff interest Learning Community offerings remained the same: four in fall 2013 and four in 2014. LC oversight and assessment committee viewed the small number of offerings as great potential for success and rebuilding.  
March  All-Learning Community Event: Putnam County Spelling Bee. Past LC students, faculty, and staff attended the Andy Anselmo musical, directed by Jennifer Toohey (PROLOGUE) and choreographed by Carlos Jones (PROLOGUE). Sponsored by Residence Life for Student Success.
April  Revised Learning Community website. Updated biographies and themes.
May  Difficult but Necessary Conversations about the Learning Community Program: Reflecting on Our Past and Planning for Our Future. This roundtable discussion was designed for returning learning community faculty, student development liaisons, and librarians. New faculty and staff and those who are returning after significant time away will find this conversation valuable. Participants dissected the programmatic goals of the Learning Community and identified elements of a successful Learning Community experience. Information about first-year students and student development resources was be shared. The goal of this session was to consider how the Learning Community program fits in with the First-Year Program. Facilitators: Ann Emo and Brian Dubenion. Evaluations were excellent and positive. Faculty remarked that the information and presentation were informative and that the focus on learning outcomes improved the ability to write objectives for the course.
May  LCs received the UNC 101 proposal and sample Integrated Hour syllabi.
May  Making the Most of Teaching Opportunities: Team Teaching and Integrated Learning Strategies. Participants were asked: Are you going through the motions when teaching the same courses semester after semester? Can you proclaim that you can do your courses in your sleep? If your responses are yes, then spice up your teaching routine by attending this workshop. This workshop session sought to shake participants out of their teaching doldrums. This workshop was geared specifically to Learning Community participants. Facilitator Carlos Jones and Lori Woods led the discussion and shared team teaching strategies. All participants dialogued about failures and successes when attempting strategies in Integrated Hour.
July  Contacted various groups of students (e.g., undeclared) via email and shared LC Information.
July  Welcomed LC students to the program via individual LC letters and a letter from ADIF
August  LC Orientation: Encourage LC students to remain in the learning community. Feedback from LC faculty and staff suggested that the Orientation needs to incorporate a large group component and small group time during Integrated Hour. The Orientation was five hours in length. During the large group hour, LC faculty/staff representatives spoke about general expectations. Students heard about the Anne Frank Project, service learning & volunteer activities, and study abroad opportunities. During lunch, students interacted with faculty and staff in an Integrated Hour setting. The orientation concluded with a tour of the classrooms.
Sept. All-Learning Community Event: The National Day of Service 2014. On Thursday, September 11 over half of the LC students joined the Volunteer and Service-Learning Center and served local non-profit organizations. Multiple on-campus service projects, such as making waterproof mats, building birdhouses, and creating birthday cards, were available for students.

Sept. Drugs and Consequences: A Friday-Evening Chat with DEA Senior Agent Jonathan Sullivan: The BSC community heard DEA senior special agent Sullivan discuss the myths and realities of drug use. Sponsored by CSI LC.

Nov. All-Learning Community Event: Footloose: Current Learning Community students, faculty, and staff attended the Andy Anselmo musical, directed by Carlos Jones. The musical featured PROLOGUE’S past and present LC students and faculty. Sponsored by Residence Life for Student Success.

Dec. Fall 2014 Learning Community Symposium. The program included four student representatives who related highlights of the semester to the Learning Community Student Learning Outcomes and forty-one students who presented research and creative works. Sponsored and supported by Dr. Scott Johnson, Dean & Associate Vice President for Undergraduate and International Education, Dr. Daniel Velez, Associate Vice President for Student Success.

**LC Oversight Assessment Committee Meetings**

The Learning Community Oversight Committee:
Josie Adamo, Explore Your World
Brian Dubenion, Assistant Director of Residence Life for Student Success
Ann Emo, PROLOGUE
Abdi Hajikandi, Community of Student Investigators
Lori Ann Woods, Creative Expressions

The committee met every three weeks during the spring 2014 and fall 2014 semesters. Topics included:
- Integration of Anne Frank activities
- Integration of Service Learning and Volunteer Opportunities
- LC Budget and Extra-Curricular Activities
- Utilization of Residence Halls
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Current State and Future of the LC Program
- LC Student Success and Progress
- LC Symposium

**Fall 2014 Learning Communities**

Four first-year learning communities were offered fall 2014. Three were interdisciplinary; one was a major-based community. Three learning communities included UNC 100: Mastering the Academic Environment. Seventy-two students participated in the learning community program. It is important to
note that not all learning community students were placed in the same College Writing Course. CWP 099: Developmental College Writing sections were utilized. Each learning community had at least one student in CWP 099.

The creation of a 6-credit developmental learning community was offered for thirty-one students. Linked courses included SOC 100 and UNC 100. Many of the students were also placed in CIS 101, CWP 099 or CWP 101, and MAT 097. Instructors of SOC 100 and UNC 100 met biweekly to discuss progress of students. Student-centered pedagogy was utilized.

**Retention Statistics**

Four sections of first-year learning communities were offered fall 2013 (N=64). Instructors met weekly to discuss student progress. Fall 2013 to fall 2014 retention is 89.1 percent.

For fall 2014 first-year learning communities, retention to spring 2015 is 86 percent, or 62 of 72, as of December 10, 2014. Seven of the ten students, or 70 percent, did not have spring 2015 schedules because they had holds: bursar, library, and/or orientation.

For fall 2014 developmental learning community, retention to spring 2015 is 74 percent, or 23 of 31, as of January 19, 2015. Seven of the eight students, or 88 percent, did not have spring 2015 schedules because they had a bursar hold.
Community of Student Investigators
Evaluation and Assessment Report

Description of Community of Student Investigators (CSI)

Students in the “CSI: Community of Student Investigators” Learning Community will analyze the inherent patterns found in society by applying concepts used in the disciplines of mathematics, sociology and communication. Additionally, skills and competencies, like critical thinking, will be introduced and honed in UNC 100 and in College Writing 101. The framework of the community will be tied to the reader Baggage Claims: Attitudes and Skills to Pack for College edited by four of the CSI Learning Community faculty. Students will evaluate and synthesize the research presented in this textbook, in addition to conducting research on various themes presented both in the reader and throughout the CSI Learning Community courses. As such, students will dig deeper and look closer at key players in their field of study and explore elements of basic questions such as, “Who is this person? How does/did the social context shape the person?” The mission of this learning community is to scrutinize every clue and reject the obvious. Critical questions are asked and research is conducted so that an in-depth case study can be written and analyzed. Join the cadre of intellectual sleuths who not only ask the questions “Why?” and “Why not?” in the quest for intellectual honesty but who also seek ways to become engaged and connected to the community by asking, “How can I make my mark in society?”

Courses:
COM 100 - Media Literacy
Prof. Joseph Marren, Communication Department

MAT 103 - Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics
Prof. Abdi Hajikandi, Mathematics Department

SOC 100 - Introduction to Sociology
Dr. Amitra Wall, University College

UNC 100 - Mastering the Academic Environment
Dr. Susan Mary Paige, University College

CWP 101 - College Writing I
Prof. Jane Sullivan, College Writing Program

UNC 101 - Integrated Hour
Team taught by all faculty members including Amy Rockwell, Librarian
Assisted by: Jude Jayatilleke, Student Development Liaison

End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation

Twenty students completed the fall 2014 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.
Faculty’s Ability as a Team

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1  |  Below Average = 2  |  Average = 3  |  Good = 4  |  Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.

Table 1: CSI Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 4.59. The fall 2013 evaluation of faculty average was 4.15.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

Poor = 1  |  Below Average = 2  |  Average = 3  |  Good = 4  |  Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.
The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.70. The fall 2013 student self-evaluation average was 3.70.

Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom

At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

1. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
2. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
3. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. The following table displays the averages for fall 2014. For comparative purposes, fall 2013 averages are displayed as well.

Table 3: CSI Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Fall 2013 Average</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creative Expressions (CEX)

Leaders, like artists, must be able to imagine, to invent, to create, and to communicate vision. This learning community connects the visual arts, design, and theater with writing and creative and critical thinking skills. Students learn to problem solve, to use their imaginations, to explore new environments, to examine social, economic, and ethical issues, and to make applications to real world experiences.

This learning community is a reconfiguration of the Designing Leadership Learning Community. Two faculty, who were familiar with the LC program, joined the existing team.

Courses:
AED 100 - Essentials of Visual Arts  
Dr. Phyllis Thompson, Art Education

THA 106- Introduction to Theater Arts  
Prof. Donn Youngstrom, Theater

CRS 205 – Introduction to Creative Studies  
Prof. Jo Yudess, International Center for Studies in Creativity

CWP 101 - College Writing I  
Prof. Lori Woods, College Writing Program

UNC 101 - Integrated Hour  
Team taught by all instructors  
Assisted by: Maria Brickhouse, Student Development Liaison

End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation

Fifteen students completed the fall 2014 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

Faculty’s Ability as a Team

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1 | Below Average = 2 | Average = 3 | Good = 4 | Excellent = 5 |

The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.

Table 4: CEX Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 14.3</td>
<td>1 7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 7.1</td>
<td>4 28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>5 35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 14.3</td>
<td>2 14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 13.3</td>
<td>2 13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>2 14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 7.1</td>
<td>4 28.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 3.10. The fall 2013 evaluation of faculty average was 3.94.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

Table 5: CEX Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 20.0</td>
<td>2 13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 6.7</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 6.7</td>
<td>2 13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.31. The fall 2013 student self-evaluation average was 4.15.
Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom

At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

4. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
5. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
6. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. The following table displays the averages for fall 2014. For comparative purposes, fall 2013 averages are displayed as well.

Table 6: CEX Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>DL Fall 2013 Average</th>
<th>CEX Fall 2014 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explore Your World, Know Thyself
Evaluation and Assessment Report

Description of Explore Your World, Know Thyself (EYW)

The “Explore Your World, Know Thyself” learning community faculty and staff were excited to guide students on their journey of academic learning at Buffalo State. Students explored the arts to discover their creative selves, explored exciting personalities, and explored the creation of the earth to understand the world and our global community. By integrating writing and critical thinking into Explore Your World, the learning community accomplished what Socrates so properly sanctioned: Know Thyself. The goal of the community was to enlighten students about personal style, to aid in the development of hidden interests and talents, and to help uncover what students do best. “Explore Your World, Know Thyself” will provide an integrated framework to explore ideas, challenge assumptions and, as T. S. Eliot noted in Four Quartets, to know the place for the first time. The “Explore Your World, Know Thyself” Learning Community is open to undeclared or undecided majors.

Courses:
UNC 100 – Mastering the Academic Environment
Prof. Josie Adamo, University College

GES 101 – Introduction to Geology
Dr. Kevin Williams, Earth Science Department

DAN 224 – Dance Appreciation (No Dance Background Necessary)
Prof. Joy Guarino, Theatre Department

HIS 116 - Europe since 1500
Prof. Dan Blum, History Dept. and University College

CWP 101 – College Writing I
Prof. Tony DiRienzo, College Writing Program

UNC 101 – Integrated Hour
Team taught by all instructors

End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation

Six students completed the fall 2014 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

Faculty’s Ability as a Team

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1  |  Below Average = 2  |  Average = 3  |  Good = 4  |  Excellent = 5  |
The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.

Table 7: EYW Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 4.38. The fall 2013 evaluation of faculty average was 4.17.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  |Good = 4  | Excellent = 5 |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

Table 8: EYW Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.93. The fall 2013 student self-evaluation average was 3.34.
Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom

At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

1. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
2. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
3. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. The following table displays the averages for fall 2014. For comparative purposes, fall 2013 averages are displayed as well.

Table 9: EYW Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Fall 2013 Average</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of PROLOGUE (PRO)

PROLOGUE welcomed Buffalo State theater majors to the Learning Community Program. The learning community enhanced the educational experience by providing hands-on participation on and off stage through production, performance, study and work in and out of the classroom.

The PROLOGUE Learning Community was open to theater majors only. The first semester courses were designed to expose students to a variety of theater options while supporting their academic goals. Faculty and staff strived to create a supportive environment in which students can develop their craft, experience community connections, and explore learning through theater.

Courses:
THA 216 - Theater Fundamentals
Prof. Aaron Moss, Theater

THA 200 – Introduction to Acting: The Actor’s Instrument
Prof. Jennifer Toohey, Theater

DAN 214 – Introduction to Dance Techniques
Prof. Joy Guarino, Theater

THA 234 - Theater Design and Technology
Prof. Ann Emo, Theater

CWP 101 - College Writing I
Prof. Christine McDonald, College Writing Program

UNC 101 - Integrated Hour
Team taught - Prof. Ann Emo, Theater, as lead instructor
Assisted by Ken Fujiuchi, Emerging Technology Librarian

End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation

Fourteen students completed the fall 2014 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

Faculty’s Ability as a Team

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1 | Below Average = 2 | Average = 3 | Good = 4 | Excellent = 5 |
The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of-classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 3.81. The fall 2013 evaluation of faculty average was 4.15.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.25. The fall 2013 student self-evaluation average was 3.65.
Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom

At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

1. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
2. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
3. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. The following table displays the averages for fall 2014. For comparative purposes, fall 2013 averages are displayed as well.

Table 12: PRO Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Fall 2013 Average</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall Recommendations

End-of-the-Year Evaluation

A. Faculty’s Ability to Work as a Team

Seven items were used to rate learning community faculty’s ability to operate as a team. The scale was from 1 – 5 (Poor = 1; Below Average = 2; Average = 3; Good = 4; Excellent = 5).

The following table represents the overall averages of the four learning communities.

Table 13: LC Student Evaluation of LC Faculty Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Fall 2013 Average</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Motivate you to do your best work</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communicate the subject matter effectively</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Address student comments and questions</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Set high performance standards that are achievable</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Be accessible outside of class time</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Create engaging in- and out-of-classroom experiences</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rating of learning community</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall average rating of faculty ability to work as a team for fall 2014 is 3.87 or good; the overall average rating of faculty ability to work as a team for fall 2013 was 4.12 or good. It is important to note the decrease in averages for six of the seven items. During spring 2014, the oversight and assessment committee will focus on the three items with the lowest averages: 1) Communicate the subject matter effectively; 2) address student comments and questions; and 3) be accessible outside of class time.

During the January 20, 2015 Learning Community Meeting, faculty and staff will address ways in which individual learning communities can improve averages for all items.

Table 14: Recommendations from Learning Community Faculty and Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Student Behavior

LC students used three items to rate themselves. Three items were used. The scale was from 1 – 5 (Poor = 1; Below Average = 2; Average = 3; Good = 4; Excellent = 5).

The following table represents the overall averages of the four learning communities.

Table 15: LC Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Fall 2013 Average</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prepared for integrated hour</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Participated in class discussions</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Now able to communicate course material to others</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall fall 2014 average rating of student self-evaluation is 3.55 or good; the overall fall 2013 average rating of student self-evaluation was 3.49 or average. There is a positive 1.72 percent change. During the spring 2014, the LC oversight and assessment committee will address ways to increase the percentage. During the January 20, 2015 Learning Community Meeting, faculty and staff will address ways in which individual learning communities can improve averages for all items:

Table 16: Recommendations from Learning Community Faculty and Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment

UNC 101: Integrated Hour is recognized as being an integral aspect of each learning community. The description reads:

One important goal of the learning communities is to provide students the framework to see connections among seemingly disparate courses and to make connections across disciplines. In the learning community integrated hour, faculty and students explore the theme of the learning community and integrate the course material within the theme and to their lives outside of the classroom.

The purpose of the course is to provide intentional opportunities for students to see connections and integrate information from many disciplines and to recognize how the course content, when taken as an integrated whole, are relevant to the world outside the classroom. Hence, it is appropriate to assess the learning community program via Integrated Hour.
Three prompts were used to assess the learning community program. Students responded to the prompts at the end of fall 201. Four raters used a five-point scale (1=no evidence; 2=weak evidence; 3=some evidence; 4=good evidence; 5=superior evidence). The following table represents the overall assessment ratings.

Table 17: Assessment of Learning Community Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students are able to</th>
<th>Fall 2013 Rating</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the theme that motivates the LC</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate how course content of LC courses are integrated</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify how LC content is relevant outside of the classroom</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ratings indicate that students provided some evidence when describing the theme, articulating how the courses are integrated, and identifying how LC content is relevant outside of the classroom. While many student-focused reasons (i.e., students responding to the prompts at the end of the semester; student responding to the prompts before an exam; and students not doing their best when responding to the prompts) can be given for the low rating; the recommendations need not be solely student driven. Learning community faculty need to reconsider the intent of Integrated Hour. Further the value of Integrated Hour needs to be made clear. During the January 20, 2015 Learning Community Meeting, faculty and staff will address ways in which learning community program assessment ratings can be improved for all items:

Table 18: Recommendation from Learning Community Faculty and Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the theme that motivates the LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate how course content of LC courses are integrated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify how LC content is relevant outside of the classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Next Steps**

The Learning Community Oversight and Assessment Committee will continue to pay attention to the recruitment of students and the training of faculty and staff. During spring 2015, the committee will explore 6- or 9- credit learning community models. The goals and target number of communities need to be realistic. LC planning needs to occur one academic year in advance.
## Contents

**Learning Community Program: 2013** ................................................................. 1  
Year in Review ........................................................................................................... 1  
Spring 2013 Strategic Planning .............................................................................. 2  
LC Oversight Committee Meetings ....................................................................... 4  
Fall 2013 Learning Communities .......................................................................... 4  

**Community of Student Investigators: Evaluation and Assessment Report** ....... 5  
Description of Community of Student Investigators ............................................. 5  
Mid-Semester Evaluation ....................................................................................... 5  
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation ............................................................................. 6  
Assessment Results ............................................................................................... 7  

**Designing Leadership: Evaluation and Assessment Report** .............................. 9  
Description of Designing Leadership .................................................................. 9  
Mid-Semester Evaluation ....................................................................................... 9  
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation ............................................................................. 10  
Assessment Results ............................................................................................ 11  

**Explore Your World, Know Thyself: Evaluation and Assessment Report** ....... 13  
Description of Explore Your World, Know Thyself .......................................... 13  
Mid-Semester Evaluation ...................................................................................... 13  
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation ............................................................................ 14  
Assessment Results ............................................................................................. 15  

**PROLOGUE: Evaluation and Assessment Report** ............................................ 17  
Description of PROLOGUE .................................................................................. 17  
Mid-Semester Evaluation ...................................................................................... 17  
End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation ............................................................................ 18  
Assessment Results ............................................................................................. 19  

**Overall Recommendations** ............................................................................... 21  
End-of-the-Year Evaluation .................................................................................. 21  
Assessment ........................................................................................................ 23  
Next Steps ........................................................................................................ 24
Learning Community Program
2013

Year in Review

Feb. Assessed current LC faculty and staff interest
Mar. Learning Community offerings decreased from ten in fall 2012 to four in 2014. Despite the decrease in number of offerings, the LC oversight and assessment committee viewed this as great potential for success and rebuilding.
April Revised Learning Community website. Update biographies and themes
May Re-Thinking the Learning Community Experience: Looking beyond the FUN and feel Good Activities Workshop and Strategic Planning Session. Participants re-examined the Learning Community goals and identified elements of a successful Learning Community experience. Topics included integrated hour best practices, first-year students, and student development resources. Evaluations were excellent and positive.
May Making Connections within and across Courses: The workshop addressed the widespread belief among students that certain courses are a “waste of time.” The focus of this workshop was on techniques that encourage students to make purposeful and explicit connections between the essential ideas found within and across their courses. In this workshop, faculty from across the campus explored how these strategies and techniques can be adapted to their courses. Evaluations were excellent and positive. Faculty remarked that they are able to move from the thought that they are taking “random (meaningless) courses” to the thought they can build to a meaningfully integrated educational experience.
May LCs received the UNC 101 proposal and sample Integrated Hour syllabi.
May An Introduction to Learner-Centered Education Workshop. Participants learned about the characteristics of successful students, the characteristics of learner-centered education, and methods for promoting students’ self-responsibility and self-motivation. Evaluations were excellent and positive.
July Contacted various groups of students (e.g., undeclared) via email and shared LC Information
August LC Lunch: Encourage LC students to remain in the learning community. Based on the 5/23 input from LC faculty and staff during the strategic planning session, LC students aren’t really sure as to why they are in the community. Many of the past LC students did not see the value of this program. Many students (as well as faculty) believe that the courses are a waste and will not count towards a student’s degree program. The lunch addressed these issues. Past LC students shared LC experiences and post-LC experiences.
August LC Student Orientation: Integrated Hour. Feedback from LC faculty and staff suggested that the Orientation needs to be focused and shortened. The Orientation was two hours in length. During the large group hour, LC faculty/staff representatives spoke about general expectations. The Individual LC hour was designed to be like an Integrated Hour.
Nov. Invites to LC Symposium went out to targeted groups (i.e., IF faculty, past LC participants)
Dec. LC Symposium: Student representatives shared highlights of the semester. Program closed with a challenge.
Spring 2013 Strategic Planning

Part One: Discussion of the current issues (i.e., characteristics of first-year students, integrated hour, curricular and co-curricular learning environments) facing the implementation, opportunities, and challenges of the Buffalo State’s Learning Communities Initiative.

Key Questions (Action):

- How can professors working with the LC communicate with other professors who have the same LC students? Should syllabi be shared? **UNC 100 proposal and Integrated Hour syllabi were shared.** During lunch and at the end of the strategic session, faculty and staff discussed plans to meet with each other. Weekly LC faculty and staff meeting was shared as a way to communicate regularly.
- How do we address the issue of LC students feeling that LC is like being in the 13th grade of high school? **Learning Community Orientation was designed to give students a glimpse of expectations.** Students experienced Integrated Hour before the start of the semester. It is important to note that 70 percent of the LC students attended orientation.
- How to make for more collaboration amongst LC faculty and students? **Anne Frank Conference and shared extra-curricular activities.**
- How to extend the LC experience? **Activities during the spring semester will need to take place.** The LC oversight committee suggested that each LC take the lead in organizing and activities.
- Are the undeclared students (approx. 300) candidates for LC? **ADIF contacted the undeclared students during the summer of 2013. There was an undeclared LC during fall 2013**
- Must review issue of resources – how to best spend the funding available per student? **During the fall semester, ADIF developed a relationship with the Director of Residence Life and the Assistant Director of Student Success. LCs need to utilize the LC space**
- What is the better strategy: students who choose LC or students who are assigned? **LC oversight committee will explore in Spring 2014**

Part Two: Participants strategized and discussed three main issues. Participants were broken into three groups. Each group considered one of the three issues. Each group then reported out and the entire resource group was asked to make additional suggestions.

Issue One: What are some of the possible benefits of being part of a Buffalo State Learning Community?

- Graduate school experience = small classes and deep discussion
- Faculty collaboration and connections
- Innovate pedagogy
- Stable course schedule
- Quality Instruction
- Promoting intentionality of shared ideas
- Intellectually challenging
- Stable and diverse personal relationships
- Quality advisement
- Opportunity to explore major/minor
- Long-term support for LC students
How can we best communicate those benefits?

- Target Guidance Counselors
- LC faculty become editors of online journal—M. Bayer help
- Faculty conducting and presenting research on LCs
- New faculty orientation
- LC Newsletter and social media: parents, students, faculty, guidance counselors
- LC info in acceptance package
- Target commuters and transfers during orientation
- LC reunion/table in quad/student union
- Purchase tee shirts, hoodies, wristbands – identifying gear
- Data on LC students should be promoted to prospective students, parents, faculty and staff

Issue Two: In what ways might we inform students and parents about Buffalo State’s Learning Communities?

- Presentation for parents at orientation
- BSC website: Have link more visible
- Campus recruiters
- Specific informational videos on each LC
- 1st choice of dorm rooms
- Reduced tuition to join LC
- Ice cream social info meeting
- Model class that students/parents can attend during orientation.
- Have a LC day to highlight each LC for the month.
- LC faculty/staff go to local high schools
- Recruiter phone calls to freshmen/parents
- Financial incentive to recruit
- Email “good to go students” about LC opportunities

Issue Three: In what ways might we better or further engage faculty, staff and the college administration into the Learning Community Program at Buffalo State?

- Provide solid proof LC participation increases grades/retention/graduation
- Recognize participation in LC program as service
- Develop a LC model for other institutions
- Consider non-traditional LC
- Create a syllabus or resource base for incoming faculty wishing to set up LC class
- Presentation at faculty/staff research forum
- Offer workshops: Infuse new energy into “same old” syllabi and creation of themes
- Graduation recognition
- Provide LC research opportunities related to teaching innovations
- Exposure to other academic campuses and faculty
- Provide retention data

Big issues:

- Need to demonstrate the value of the LC program
- Need to market the LC program—guidance counselors, entering students, parents, faculty, staff, and advisors
LC Oversight Assessment Committee Meetings

The committee met every three weeks during the fall semester. Topics included:

- Integration of Anne Frank activities
- Restructuring of Student Affairs
- LC Budget and Extra-Curricular Activities
- Utilization of Residence Halls
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Current State of the LC Program
- LC Student Success and Progress
- LC Symposium

Recommendations:

Restructure the LC program. Use 2014 to work on marketing and call for LC participation. Explore undeclared and 9-credit learning communities options. Establish evaluation and baseline data.

Fall 2013 Learning Communities

Four learning communities were offered fall 2013. Three were interdisciplinary; one was a major-based community. Two learning communities included UNC 100: Mastering the Academic Environment; one included BSC 101: Foundations of Inquiry. Sixty four students participated in the learning community program.
Description of Community of Student Investigators (CSI)

Students in the “CSI: Community of Student Investigators” Learning Community analyzed the inherent patterns found in society by applying concepts used in the disciplines of mathematics, sociology and communication. At the end of fall 2012, faculty and staff discussed the need to do a better job at being intentional in integrating LC core themes so they edited a reader, Baggage Claims: Attitudes and Skills to Pack for College. The mission of the learning community was to evaluate and synthesize the research presented in the text. Students scrutinized every clue and reject the obvious. Critical questions were asked and personal identities were analyzed to see how personal biases and assumptions are embraced or debunked.

Courses:
COM 100 - Media Literacy
Prof. Joseph Marren, Communication Department

MAT 103 - Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics
Prof. Abdi Hajikandi, Mathematics Department

SOC 100 - Introduction to Sociology
Dr. Amitra Wall, University College

BSC 101 - Foundations of Inquiry
Dr. Susan Mary Paige, University College

CWP 101 - College Writing I
Prof. Gloria Cockrell, College Writing Program

UNC 101 - Integrated Hour
Team taught by all faculty members including Amy Rockwell, Librarian
Assisted by: Jude Jayatilleke, Student Development Liaison

Mid-Semester Evaluation

Twenty-two students completed the mid-semester evaluation. Students responded to items related to their overall experience in the learning community program.

Table 1: CSI Most Important Thing Learned in LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Learned</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skill Set</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Connections</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skill Set: Critical Thinking, Working in Groups, Speech/Presentation
Table 2: CSI Aspects of LC Program that Help Students Learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helps Students Learn</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Work/Peers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Hour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/Skill Set</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: CSI Overall Evaluation of the LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eleven of the twenty two respondents reported that they visited their instructor during office hours. Students, who reported that they did not visit, indicated that they had multiple opportunities to speak to their instructor before or after class. Fifty percent (N=11) of community of student investigator students sought support help. Support includes receiving service from EOP. Seventeen or 73 percent of the students spend time, in the residence halls, with their learning community peers outside of regular classes and learning community extra-curricular activities.

Seventeen (89.5%) of the nineteen respondents indicated that they plan to return to Buffalo State College for the spring 2014 semester; two (10.5%) indicated that they are unsure. Twelve (70.6%) plan to return for the fall 2014 semester. Reasons given for not returning include lack of funding and major not offered at Buffalo State College. Of the twenty-one respondents, fourteen missed at least one class.

End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation

Twenty students completed the fall 2013 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

Faculty’s Ability as a Team

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.
Table 4: CSI Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 4.15.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

Table 5: CSI Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.50.

Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom
At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

1. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
2. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
3. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. Two raters scored each individual response. Two raters gave an overall score after reading the responses as a whole. The following table displays the averages for the two types of ratings. A final average, or average of the averages, is provided.

Table 6: CSI Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Individual Score</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
<th>Final Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Designing Leadership
Evaluation and Assessment Report

Description of Designing Leadership (DL)

Like artists, leaders must be able to imagine, to invent, to create, and to communicate vision. This learning community connected leadership, the visual arts, and mass media with critical thinking and writing skills. Students learned to problem solve, to use their imaginations, to explore new environments, to examine social, economic, and ethical issues, and to make applications to real world experiences. UNC 100 was included; however, the instructor did not participate in the LC.

Courses:
AED 100 - Essentials of Visual Arts
Dr. Phyllis Thompson, Art Education

COM 100 - Media Literacy
Dr. Bill Raffel, Communication

CRS 201 - Foundations of Leadership
Prof. Eileen Merberg, Campus Life

CWP 101 - College Writing I
Prof. Lori Woods, College Writing Program

UNC 101 - Integrated Hour
Team taught by all instructors

Mid-Semester Evaluation

Thirteen students completed the mid-semester evaluation. Students responded to items related to their overall experience in the learning community program.

Table 7: DL Most Important Thing Learned in LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Learned</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skill Set</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Connections</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skill Set: Critical Thinking, Working in Groups, Speech/Presentation

Table 8: DL Aspects of LC Program that Help Students Learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helps Students Learn</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Work/Peers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Hour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/Skill Set</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9: DL Overall Evaluation of the LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seven out of thirteen respondents reported that they visited their instructor during office hours. Students, who reported that they did not visit, indicated that they had multiple opportunities to speak to their instructor before or after class. Nearly 100 percent (N=12) of designing leadership students sought support help from the writing center. Eleven or 85 percent of the students spend time with their learning community peers, in the residence halls, outside of regular classes and learning community extra-curricular activities.

Thirteen (100%) of the thirteen respondents indicated that they plan to return to Buffalo State College for the spring 2014 semester. Nine (69.2%) plan to return for the fall 2014 semester. Reasons given for not returning include family obligations and major not offered at Buffalo State College. Of the twelve respondents, nine missed at least one class.

**End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation**

Thirteen students completed the fall 2013 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

**Faculty’s Ability as a Team**

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.
Table 10: DL Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 3.94.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

 Poor = 1 | Below Average = 2 | Average = 3 | Good = 4 | Excellent = 5 |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

Table 11: DL Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.47.

Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom
At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

4. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
5. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
6. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. Two raters scored each individual response. Two raters gave an overall score after reading the responses as a whole. The following table displays the averages for the two types of ratings. A final average, or average of the averages, is provided.

Table 12: DL Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Individual Score</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
<th>Final Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of Explore Your World, Know Thyself (EYW)

The “Explore Your World, Know Thyself” learning community faculty and staff were excited to guide students on their journey of academic learning at Buffalo State. Students explored the arts to discover their creative selves, explored exciting personalities, and explored the creation of the earth to understand the world and our global community. By integrating writing and critical thinking into Explore Your World, the learning community accomplished what Socrates so properly sanctioned: Know Thyself. The goal of the community was to enlighten students about personal style, to aid in the development of hidden interests and talents, and to help uncover what students do best. “Explore Your World, Know Thyself” will provide an integrated framework to explore ideas, challenge assumptions and, as T. S. Eliot noted in Four Quartets, to know the place for the first time. The “Explore Your World, Know Thyself” Learning Community is open to undeclared or undecided majors.

Courses:
UNC 100 – Mastering the Academic Environment
Prof. Josie Adamo, University College

GES 101 – Introduction to Geology
Dr. Kevin Williams, Earth Science Department

DAN 224 – Dance Appreciation (No Dance Background Necessary)
Prof. Joy Guarino, Theatre Department

HIS 116 - Europe since 1500
Prof. Dan Blum, History Dept. and University College

CWP 101 – College Writing I
Prof. Tony DiRienzo, College Writing Program

UNC 101 – Integrated Hour
Team taught by all instructors

Mid-Semester Evaluation

Ten students completed the mid-semester evaluation. Students responded to items related to their overall experience in the learning community program.

Table 13: EYW Most Important Thing Learned in LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Learned</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skill Set</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Connections</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skill Set: Critical Thinking, Working in Groups, Speech/Presentation
Table 14: EYW Aspects of LC Program that Help Students Learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helps Students Learn</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Work/Peers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Hour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/Skill Set</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: EYW Overall Evaluation of the LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two of the ten respondents reported that they visited their instructor during office hours. Students, who reported that they did not visit, indicated that they had multiple opportunities to speak to their instructor before or after class. 10 percent (N=1) of community of explore your world students sought support help. Students indicated that they did not seek support because they did not need the support. Nine or 90 percent of the students spend time, in the residence halls, with their learning community peers outside of regular classes and learning community extra-curricular activities.

Nine (90%) of the ten respondents indicated that they plan to return to Buffalo State College for the spring 2014 semester. Nine (90.0%) plan to return for the fall 2014 semester. The reason given for not returning includes family obligations. Of the nine respondents, seven missed at least one class.

End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation

Eleven students completed the fall 2013 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

Faculty’s Ability as a Team

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty's ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5 |

The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.
Table 16: EYW Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 77.8 4.56 .96

The average rating for the seven items is 4.17.

Student Behaviors

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5 |

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

Table 17: EYW Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 3.36 1.30

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.34.

Assessment Results

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom
At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

1. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
2. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
3. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. Two raters scored each individual response. Two raters gave an overall score after reading the responses as a whole. The following table displays the averages for the two types of ratings. A final average, or average of the averages, is provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Individual Score</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
<th>Final Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of PROLOGUE (PRO)

PROLOGUE welcomed Buffalo State theater majors to the Learning Community Program. The learning community enhanced the educational experience by providing hands-on participation on and off stage through production, performance, study and work in and out of the classroom. The PROLOGUE Learning Community was open to theater majors only. The first semester courses were designed to expose students to a variety of theater options while supporting their academic goals. Faculty and staff strived to create a supportive environment in which students can develop their craft, experience community connections, and explore learning through theater.

Courses:
THA 216 - Theater Fundamentals
Prof. Donn Youngstrom, Theater

THA 226 - Acting I
Prof. Jennifer Toohey, Theater

DAN 224 - Dance Appreciation
Prof. Joy Guarino, Theater

THA 234 - Theater Design and Technology
Prof. Ann Emo, Theater

CWP 101 - College Writing I
Prof. Irene Sipos, College Writing Program

UNC 101 - Integrated Hour
Team taught - Prof. Carlos Jones, Theater, as lead instructor

Mid-Semester Evaluation

Nine students completed the mid-semester evaluation. Students responded to items related to their overall experience in the learning community program.

Table 19: PRO Most Important Thing Learned in LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Learned</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skill Set</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Connections</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Resources</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skill Set: Critical Thinking, Working in Groups, Speech/Presentation
Table 20: PRO Aspects of LC Program that Help Students Learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helps Students Learn</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Work/Peers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Hour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/Skill Set</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21: PRO Overall Evaluation of the LC Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine of the nine respondents reported that they visited their instructor during office hours. Students report that they seek advisement and course help. Thirty-three (N=3) of prologue students sought support help. Student reported that they did not have time to seek help. Eight or 89 percent of the students spend time, in the residence halls, with their learning community peers outside of regular classes and learning community extra-curricular activities.

Nine (100%) of the nine respondents indicated that they plan to return to Buffalo State College for the spring 2014 semester. Six (66.7%) plan to return for the fall 2014 semester. Reasons given for not returning include not adjusting to the campus culture, family obligations, and lack of funding. Of the nine respondents, two missed at least one class.

**End-of-the-Year LC Evaluation**

Nine students completed the fall 2013 LC Evaluation and Assessment. As part of the evaluation, students rated the learning community faculty’s ability as a team; and, students reflected on their experiences in the learning community program.

**Faculty’s Ability as a Team**

Students used the following scale to rate their faculty’s ability to work as a team:

Poor = 1  | Below Average = 2  | Average = 3  | Good = 4  | Excellent = 5  |

The evaluation items are as follows:

1. Motivate you to do your best work.
2. Communicate the subject matter effectively.
3. Address student comments and questions.
4. Set high performance standards that are achievable.
5. Be accessible outside of class time.
6. Create engaging in-class and out-of classroom activities and discussions.
7. My overall rating of this learning community.
Table 22: PRO Evaluation of Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating for the seven items is 4.15.

**Student Behaviors**

Students used the following scale to rate themselves as a student in the learning community program:

- Poor = 1
- Below Average = 2
- Average = 3
- Good = 4
- Excellent = 5

The evaluation items are as follows:

8. I was prepared for Integrated Hour.
9. I participated in class discussions.
10. I now feel able to communicate course material to others.

Table 23: PRO Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average rating of the self-evaluation is 3.65.

**Assessment Results**

The UNC 101 Integrated Hour: Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theme that motivates the learning community
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate ways that the course content of learning community courses is integrated
- Demonstrate awareness of ways that learning community content is relevant outside the classroom
At the end of the semester students responded to three prompts:

1. Describe the theme that motivates the learning community
2. Provide an example of the ways in which course content of learning community courses are integrated
3. Identify ways in which learning community content is relevant outside of the classroom

Raters used the following scale to assess the prompts:

No evidence = 1 | weak evidence = 2 | some evidence = 3 | good evidence = 4 | superior evidence = 5 |

Four raters read and scored the responses. Two raters scored each individual response. Two raters gave an overall score after reading the responses as a whole. The following table displays the averages for the two types of ratings. A final average, or average of the averages, is provided.

Table 24: PRO Assessment Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Individual Score</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
<th>Final Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall Recommendations

End-of-the-Year Evaluation

A. Faculty’s Ability to Work as a Team

Seven items were used to rate learning community faculty’s ability to operate as a team. The scale was from 1 – 5 (Poor = 1; Below Average = 2; Average = 3; Good = 4; Excellent = 5).

The following table represents the overall averages of the four learning communities.

Table 25: LC Student Evaluation of LC Faculty Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivate you to do your best work</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate the subject matter effectively</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address student comments and questions</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set high performance standards that are achievable</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be accessible outside of class time</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create engaging in- and out-of-classroom experiences</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating of learning community</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall average rating of faculty ability to work as a team is 4.12 or good. During spring 2014, the oversight and assessment committee will focus on the three lowest ranks.

Be Accessible Outside of Class Time

Results from the mid-semester evaluation suggest that students seek advisement and course help before and after class and during integrated hour. However, the students’ rating of 3.92 indicates that more can be done.

Recommendations:

1. Review LC faculty expectations
   A. Encourage LC faculty to schedule at least one office hour in the residence halls.
   B. Encourage LC faculty to hold atypical office hours (i.e., Friday afternoon, evening, and/or weekend)

2. Increase the presence of LC personnel
   A. Charge LC oversight committee and liaisons to plan a check-in at the beginning, mid-semester, and end of the semester
   B. ADIF offer a “stop-in” office hour for LC students

3. Utilize social media outlets

Goal: Increase the rating to at least 4.00 (e.g. percentage change of 2.07).
Create Engaging In- and Out-of Classroom Experiences

Students want engaging and hands-on experiences.

Recommendations:

1. Require all students to participate in at least one all-LC experience (i.e., solution-oriented, movie, lecture series) hosted by LC oversight committee
2. Identify Pedagogical Institute workshops for spring LC faculty
3. Collaborate with other offices and units (i.e., VSLC, Burchfield-Penney, Women and Gender Studies, African and African American Studies, etc) and identify programs related to individual LC themes

Goal: Increase the rating to at least a 4.10 (e.g. percentage change of 1.49).

Overall Rating of Learning Community

Students rated the learning community as good, 4.07. While good is better than average, good is not excellent. The ADIF and LC oversight and assessment committee desire that the rating increase.

Recommendations:

1. Invite previous LC students to a LC roundtable discussion in the spring. Students can provide feedback about their experiences. LC faculty and staff will consider suggestions.
2. ADIF attend at least one faculty and staff LC planning meetings in the spring and fall semester
3. Resume LC faculty and staff monthly meeting in the fall.
4. Provide opportunity for peer-review and peer-feedback of Integrated Hour
5. Provide opportunity for students to be invested in the learning community program (i.e., peer leaders, take lead on newsletter, attend orientation and open house)

Goal: Increase the rating to a 4.3 (e.g. percentage change of 5.65).

B. Student Behavior

LC students used three items to rate themselves. Three items were used. The scale was from 1 – 5 (Poor = 1; Below Average = 2; Average = 3; Good = 4; Excellent = 5).

The following table represents the overall averages of the four learning communities.

Table 26: LC Student Self-Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepared for integrated hour</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in class discussions</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now able to communicate course material to others</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall average rating of student self-evaluation is 3.49 or average. Much work needs to be done as the Learning Community program does not want LC students to think of themselves as average.
Recommendations:

1. Highlight past and current LC students
   A. ADIF work with Alumni Office
   B. Explore electronic newsletter options
2. Challenge LC students to work amongst all LC
   A. In lieu of one Integrated Hour, have all LC students put to practice content
   B. Mix LC students and charge them to address a common problem or current event
3. Identify Pedagogical Institute workshops for spring LC faculty

Goal: Increase the overall student self-evaluation rating of 3.49 to 4.0 (e.g. percentage change of 14.61).

Assessment

UNC 101: Integrated Hour is recognized as being an integral aspect of each learning community. The description reads:

One important goal of the learning communities is to provide students the framework to see connections among seemingly disparate courses and to make connections across disciplines. In the learning community integrated hour, faculty and students explore the theme of the learning community and integrate the course material within the theme and to their lives outside of the classroom.

The purpose of the course is to provide intentional opportunities for students to see connections and integrate information from many disciplines and to recognize how the course content, when taken as an integrated whole, are relevant to the world outside the classroom. Hence, it is appropriate to assess the learning community program via Integrated Hour.

Three prompts were used to assess the learning community program. Students responded to the prompts at the end of fall 2013. Four raters used a five-point scale (1=no evidence; 2=weak evidence; 3=some evidence; 4=good evidence; 5=superior evidence). The following table represents the overall assessment ratings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students are able to</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the theme that motivates the LC</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate how course content of LC courses are integrated</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify how LC content is relevant outside of the classroom</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ratings indicate that students provided some evidence when describing the theme, articulating how the courses are integrated, and identifying how LC content is relevant outside of the classroom. While many student-focused reasons (i.e., students responding to the prompts at the end of the semester; student responding to the prompts before an exam; and students not doing their best when responding to the prompts) can be given for the low rating; the recommendations need not be solely student
driven. Learning community faculty need to reconsider the intent of Integrated Hour. Further the value of Integrated Hour needs to be made clear.

Recommendations:

1. Combine the student LC lunch and orientation prior to the start of the semester. Carve out a significant amount of time to focus on the intent and purpose of the Integrated Hour.
2. Offer an Integrated Hour Best Practices Pedagogical Workshop mid-spring semester.
3. Encourage faculty to submit individual syllabi prior to the end of the spring semester.
4. Collect Integrated Hour syllabi prior to the start of the semester.

Next Steps

The fall 2013 LC faculty and staff indicated their desire to offer their learning community fall 2014. Attention must be given to the recruitment of students and the training of faculty and staff. During the spring 2014, the LC oversight committee will implement proposed recommendations as well as explore new learning community models and assess new faculty/staff buy-in. The goals and target number of communities need to be realistic. LC planning needs to occur one academic year in advance.

Table 28: LC Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undeclared LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-Credit LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd-Semester LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor-Based LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time freshmen</td>
<td>1355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time EOP freshmen</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time SSSP freshmen</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Honor students</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0900/0901</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0900</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0901</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Learning Communities</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC100</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time freshmen</td>
<td>1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time EOP freshmen</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time SSSP freshmen</td>
<td>65 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Honor students</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0900</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0900</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0901</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Learning Communities</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC100</td>
<td>799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compass</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on what SSSP sent me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Retention to Spring 2013</th>
<th>Retention to Fall 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-time freshmen</td>
<td>1348</td>
<td>1203 89.2%</td>
<td>981 72.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time EOP freshmen</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>155  96.9%</td>
<td>136 85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time SSSP freshmen</td>
<td>32 *</td>
<td>32  100.0%</td>
<td>29  90.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Honor students</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50   96.2%</td>
<td>44  84.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0900</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>280  89.2%</td>
<td>219 69.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0900</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>232  89.6%</td>
<td>178 68.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Freshmen 0901</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>48   87.3%</td>
<td>41  74.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-time Learning Communities</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>58  90.6%</td>
<td>57  89.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC100</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>464  88.2%</td>
<td>373 70.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on what SSSP sent me