

Faculty Learning Community: Sample Activity



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This activity is designed for a community of part- and full-time faculty learners interested in teaching and learning within a guided pathways framework. The learning community should be composed of faculty members teaching in the same discipline.

This is a multi-step activity that will take place over three weeks. There will be two in-person group meetings, along with individual work in between the two face-to-face meetings. For the face-to-face meetings, there should be a moderator present who is familiar with the work of guided pathways and the Center for Community College Student Engagement's *Ensure Students Are Learning* website.

All time frames are suggestions. Actual times are up to the moderator's discretion based on the size of the faculty learning community. The moderator should also build in appropriate break times for the face-to-face sessions.

The goals of the activity are for the members of the learning community to

- gain a better understanding of teaching and learning within a guided pathways framework,
- review and use the Narratives Search tool on the *Ensure Students Are Learning* website,
- develop a teaching practice to use in one of their courses based on one of the practices described in the narratives, and
- share their insights and ideas with fellow members of the learning community.

Week One, Group Session (one day)

Step One:

The moderator should lead the members of the learning community through a review of the *Ensure Students Are Learning* website and facilitate a discussion about what guided pathways is and what teaching and learning means within a guided pathways framework.

The [framework page](#) of the *Ensure Students Are Learning* website includes a comprehensive overview of guided pathways and how instruction fits within it. A visual “placemat” of the guided pathways implementation process is also available on this page and can be downloaded, printed, and distributed to the learning community members.

[30 minutes]

Step Two:

The moderator should lead the members of the learning community through a review of the [definitions](#) of the *Ensure Students Are Learning* practices that can be used to enrich and assess student learning:

- a. Applied Learning Experiences
- b. Assessment of Student Learning
- c. Equity-Minded, Asset-Based Teaching
- d. High-Impact Teaching Practices
 - Alert and intervention
 - Tutoring
 - Supplemental instruction
 - Writing intensity
 - Collaborative assignments and projects
 - Research experience
 - ePortfolios
 - Service learning
 - Internships
 - Capstone projects
- e. Student Engagement

[30 minutes]

Step Three:

The members of the learning community should break into pairs. The moderator should provide each pair with the following questions to discuss with one another:

- Based on your teaching experience, what would you add to these definitions?
- How do you assess student learning in the ways described in the *assessment of student learning* definition?
- How do you incorporate applied learning experiences into your classroom? Is this challenging for your discipline?
- How do you teach from an equity-minded, asset-based approach?
- Which of the high-impact teaching practices do you most often employ in the classroom? Why?
- In your discipline, which of the high-impact practices do you think are the most challenging to employ? Why?
- Which of the high-impact teaching practices do you find the most effective in increasing student success?
- How do you actively work to engage students?

[45 minutes]

Step Four:

After the discussions in pairs, the moderator should lead a report-out about the discussion questions with the larger group.

[60 minutes]

Step Five:

In preparation for the homework activity to be completed the following week, the moderator should walk the learning community members through [this page](#) of the *Ensure Students Are Learning* website.

[15 minutes]

Week Two, Individual Homework

[The moderator should provide a specific deadline during this week for the members of the group to select two narratives and send them to their colleagues.]

Step One:

Members of the learning community should individually sort the Narratives on this [page](#) by the *Ensure Students Are Learning* practices in which they are most interested. They should select two narratives that they think they could adapt and use in their courses. It does not matter if the narratives they pick are based on practices in other disciplines.

Step Two:

Members should electronically share the narratives they have selected with one another. It is fine if some members select the same narratives. All members of the learning community should read the narratives their colleagues have sent them.

Week Three, Group Session (one day)

Step One:

The members of the learning community should return to their pairs from Week One. Each person should explain to their partner why they chose the two narratives they did and how they would adapt the described teaching practices to their discipline (if the narratives are from a different discipline) and, specifically, to

one of their courses. The pairs should have a discussion about which of the practices they think would work best.

[45 minutes]

Step Two:

The moderator should lead a report-out with the larger group. Based on the partner discussions, each person should describe one narrative-based teaching practice they would adapt to one of their courses and describe how they would do so.

[60 minutes]

Note: Ideally, after the members of the learning community have had the opportunity to use the adapted teaching practices in their own classrooms, they will share with the group how successful doing so was.