

# Ensure Students Are Learning: Faculty Descriptions of Innovative Teaching Practices

## Developing Collaborative Skills Through Walk and Talks

### Innovative Teaching Practice Description:

“Walk and Talks” are a series of short exercises that engage students in partner discussions. These discussions often take place outside the classroom in common areas or outdoor spaces around the college. The instructor pairs students and poses a question. Students then walk around discussing the question. Questions range in scope; they may be review questions for an upcoming test or critical thinking questions about a topic covered in class that day. Students discuss the question for approximately two minutes and then change partners. The instructor asks the new pairs to discuss the same question or poses a new question. This process takes at least fifteen minutes. If a student is unable to walk around, the student sits somewhere in the common space and other students rotate sitting with the student. Once each student has had an opportunity to speak to several students, the entire class convenes for a class discussion. During the class discussion, the instructor recaps what she heard during the conversations and explains what she wanted the students to glean from their conversations.

### How to Ensure Participation in This Innovative Teaching Practice:

The instructor visits with each pair during the discussion time and engages each student in the final class discussion by asking them to share what they learned in their pairs.