

# THE ROLE OF LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN GUIDED PATHWAYS

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# GUIDED PATHWAYS

## What is Guided Pathways?

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- **Clarify the Path**

- Mandatory Orientation
- Intrusive Advising
- Educational Plan for All

- **Enter the Path**

- Multiple Measures for Placement
- Organize Around Meta-Majors
- Identify Gateway Courses

- **Stay on the Path**

- Student Success Courses
- Accelerated Options
- Learning Communities
- Early Alert Process

- **Ensure Learning**

- Supplemental Instruction
- Structured Study Groups
- Mandatory Tutoring

# LEARNING COMMUNITIES

What are Learning Communities?

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**Broadly defined,** LC's include the following:

- Integrative Learning
- Focus on Building and Connecting with Community
- Collaboration (between students, faculty, and others)

LC's often involve experiential and/or service learning

# LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN GUIDED PATHWAYS

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At Grossmont College:

- **LCs Paired with “Gateway” Courses in each Meta-Major**
  - Includes English or Math with high enrolled courses
  - Focuses on disproportionate impact
- **College-Wide “One Theme”**
  - Linked and free-standing classes
  - Come together within and across meta-majors for “integrative events”

# LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN GUIDED PATHWAYS

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At Skagit Valley College:

- **First Year**

- First Quarter Experience in Quarter 1
- Inclusion of a learning community in Quarter 2 or Quarter 3
  - Ideally fully-coordinated (team taught) and connected with core themes
  - Can focus on majors courses and/or non-majors distribution options

- **Second Year**

- A second learning community or integrative capstone in Quarter 4, 5, or 6

# LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN GUIDED PATHWAYS

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- Rather than trying to adopt an “off the shelf” approach from another institution, it is generally best to borrow *ideas* from other institutions as you build a learning communities program that both fits the culture of your institution and meets the needs of your students.

# DISCUSSION, PLANNING, AND STRATEGIZING

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- What approaches to including learning communities in guided pathways would potentially work well at your institution?
- Who are the key individuals and groups you will likely need to collaborate with at your institution in order to *systematically* include learning communities in the guided pathways developed for your students?

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

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- Similar to many other programs, sustaining a robust learning communities program requires the development of strong and healthy relationships between those in instruction and student services
  - Focus should be on building and *maintaining trust* over time
  - Important to engage administrators, faculty, and staff in key roles related to learning communities and guided pathways through both *formal and informal* decision-making structures
  - Concerns expressed by staff members in more logistical and/or operational roles are sometimes overlooked, but they are essential to *systematic* implementation.



# LOGISTICS: DOCUMENTS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

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- Develop an approach to degree maps and advising that makes it both *easier* and more *automatic* to include learning communities
- Use *low-cost* and *cost-neutral* approaches to offering LCs as much as possible
- Investigate, select, and implement needed *technological infrastructure*
  - Course building and schedule software/systems
  - Advising software systems
- Examples of challenges and solutions
  - Grossmont College: *FYE Failure* (no inclusion of operational offices)
  - Skagit Valley College: Formation of an *LC Logistics Team*

# LOGISTICS: DOCUMENTS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

- The importance of degree maps as both planning and advising tools

<u>Quarter 1</u>			<u>Quarter 2</u>			<u>Quarter 3</u>		
ENGL& 101	English Composition I	5	CMST& 220	Public Speaking	5	ENGL& 102	Composition II	5
ECON 101	Intro to Economics	5	MATH& 146	Introduction to Stats	5	Distribution	Humanities	5
CSS 103	First Quarter Experience	2	ECON& 201	Intro to Microeconomics	5	Distribution	Natural Sciences	5
PE 100	Wellness for Life	1				PE 1XX	PE Activity	1
		<u>13</u>			<u>15</u>			<u>16</u>
<u>Quarter 4</u>			<u>Quarter 5</u>			<u>Quarter 6</u>		
POLS& 201	Comparative Government (D)	5	ECON& 202	Intro to Macroeconomics	5	Distribution	Natural Science	5
PSYC& 100	General Psychology	5	POLS& 202	American Government	5	IS 200	States and Capitalism	5
Distribution	Humanities	5	EASC 110	Energy and Society (lab)	5	PHIL 215	Introduction to Ethics	5
PE 1XX	PE Activity	1						
		<u>16</u>			<u>15</u>			<u>15</u>

## Economics Major Information and Degree Map for Advisors

At the heart of economics is the tension created by the existence of limited resources and relatively unlimited human wants. This scarcity of resources forces us to make decisions individually and collectively about how to best use our time and available resources in pursuit of happiness and satisfaction. Developing an understanding of economics provides another perspective to analyze life situations, and can also help strengthen your problem solving abilities. While courses in economics are generally required for business majors and those pursuing a number of other majors, they are beneficial for any student who would like to develop a better understanding of economics, economic policy, and the overall economy.

### Sample/Recommended Schedule

<u>Quarter 1</u>			<u>Quarter 2</u>			<u>Quarter 3</u>		
ENGL& 101	English Composition I	5	CMST& 220	Public Speaking	5	ENGL& 102	Composition II	5
ECON 101	Intro to Economics	5	MATH& 146	Introduction to Stats	5	Distribution	Humanities	5
CSS 103	First Quarter Experience	2	ECON& 201	Intro to Microeconomics	5	Distribution	Natural Sciences	5
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### Recommended Distribution Options

(these courses can be inserted into the open distribution spaces or can be taken in place of distribution courses in the sample schedule)

#### Natural Science Distribution Options

EASC 120	Earth's Climate & Climate Change	5
ENVC 165	Sustainability Fundamentals	5
ENVS& 101	Intro to Environmental Science	5
GEOL& 100	Survey of Earth Science	5
NUTR& 101	Nutrition	5
OCEA& 101	Intro to Oceanography	5

#### Social Science Distribution Options

BUS& 101	Intro to Business	5
ETHNC 100	American Minorities (D)	5
HIST 270	History of Modern Asia	5
IS 201	The International System	5
POLS 203	International Relations (D)	5
SOC& 201	Social Problems	5

#### Humanities Distribution Options

ART 141	Introduction to Art (D)	5
CMST& 102	Intro to Mass Media	5
DRMA& 101	Intro to Theatre (D)	5
ENGL& 254	World Literature (D)	5
MUSC 127	History of Rock & Roll	5
	World Language Course	5

# CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

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- Resistance from administrators and staff who might view LCs as adding to their *workload* (especially if they already feel overwhelmed)
- Resistance from faculty and administrators who might see LCs as a threat to *other initiative(s)* they are more passionate about
- Lower levels of commitment from faculty, staff, and administrators who see learning communities as positive if/when they work out, but also as being ultimately *nonessential* to student success

# DISCUSSION, PLANNING, AND STRATEGIZING

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- Which of the *challenges* discussed (or other challenges) will you likely face related to building a robust learning communities program in the context of guided pathways at your institution?
- What *strategies/courses of action* could help you to overcome these challenges?