

Planning Questions for Developing Learning Community Initiatives¹

1. **TARGET STUDENT AUDIENCE and RECRUITMENT:** Who is the student audience we want to involve in our LC effort first? How will we identify these students? Who else on the campus can help us with this?
2. **LC MODELS/STRUCTURES:** Given the different types of LC models, which ones seem most doable for us? (Remember that some campuses run a variety of LC models simultaneously, and it's perfectly okay to pilot more than one type.)
3. **THEMES:** What themes, if any, will provide the focus for the learning community?
4. **COMMUNICATION:** Which faculty members will be involved? How will broad involvement be encouraged? Do those who are involved represent leadership on campus? Who will coordinate the effort in the short and long term?
5. **INITIATIVES ON CAMPUS:** What are the current initiatives on campus? How might learning communities fit with initiatives already under way, such as general education reform, student affairs/academic affairs partnerships, diversity, writing across the curriculum, critical thinking, or others? Are any of the members of the learning community effort connected with these initiatives? Will the learning community be seen as furthering these initiatives?
6. **IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING COMMUNITY:** Who needs to be involved with implementing the learning community? Which administrative and support service people should be brought together to discuss implementing the learning community? How can key administrators support this effort? Where are the obstacles?
7. **RESOURCES:** What resources are available to support the project? What is a reasonable time frame if outside funding is needed?
8. **MARKETING:** How will learning community be promoted and marketed? How will the students be recruited? What are the appropriate media to use in recruitment? Who needs to be involved now on our planning team, to assist in this effort?
9. **INSTITUTIONALIZATION:** How will the learning community effort be institutionalized? Who will lead the long-term effort in the faculty and in the administration? How will future programs and teams be selected? How will the learning community be evaluated?
10. **FEEDBACK:** What kind of feedback loops can be put in place so that the work is evaluated and improved? What kinds of mechanisms are there for disseminating efforts within the institution?

[z-Pew:Major Docs: Planning Qs for LC Development]

¹ by Jean MacGregor, Co-Director, National Learning Communities Project and Roberta Matthews, Academic Vice President, Brooklyn College (CUNY).