Mohawk Valley Community College
Recommendations, Actions, and Responses
Learning Communities Design Team

1. College Policies about Learning Communities

a) A dedicated professional to manage the process of learning community development and implementation

Actions – As the program grows, the academic team will evaluate the need for additional support for the CLLD Dean & Asst. Dean. Evaluation: 2013-14

b) Tangible faculty incentives that are clearly articulated up front (stipend, load reduction)

Actions – Incentive negotiated. Standard agreement of expectations developed and distributed to all LC faculty

c) A commitment to continually educating other members of the college staff and faculty about learning communities by including learning community content in New Faculty Institute and presenting workshops at all staff and faculty institutes throughout the year

Actions – Completed and on-going since January 2010

d) Develop a webpage to explain, sell, and educate the MVCC community about learning communities

Actions-Webpage built in CLLD site

e) A commitment to budgetary adjustments to support the expansion of learning communities which includes training, planning costs, and ongoing faculty collaboration

Actions-Complete and on-going with development funding for national speakers, 25 faculty sent to Kingsborough and four sent to Washington Center for LC training

f) Celebrate LC success at MVCC with articles in Communitas and Panorama

Actions-Communitas article Fall 2010. Ongoing.

g) Include participation in a learning community on the co-curricular transcript as an incentive for students to participate

Actions-Fall 2011 project

h) The college needs to be committed to supporting opportunities for faculty planning prior to the start of each semester and for ongoing faculty collaboration for the duration of the learning community

Actions-Pre-Semester planning sessions established for both Spring and Fall 2011 Semesters. Fall 2011 Breakfast meeting prior to start of August Institute featured 'veteran' LC faculty sharing experience with new LC faculty

i) In addition to providing opportunities for staff to travel to regional and national trainings, staff should also be encouraged to present at conferences on our learning community process of development and successes

Actions-In the 2011-12 Academic Plan for consideration

j) The college will have a two-pronged approach in developing new learning communities: developing learning communities based on interdisciplinary connections to enrich learning experiences and, creating learning communities to target specifically identified student needs

Actions-Nine of the 14 LCs running in Fall 2011address specifically identified student needs (underprepared students); remainder based on interdisciplinary goals

k) Careful collection of data to assess learning community effectiveness, including retention as compared stand-alone classes; grade achievement and comparison; and student survey feedback

Actions-all currently complete and ongoing

2. Faculty/Professional Development

a) Consistent approach to training of faculty and staff involved in learning community development: commitment to sending staff for external training, and development of regular internal training specific to learning community instruction and development

Actions-See 1.e.

b) Build supports for participating faculty, through a mentoring program and regular training/meetings

Actions-Complete and on-going. Also see 1.h.

c)Send faculty and staff to attend The Atlantic Center for Learning Communities Best Practices Conference every fall.

Actions-This and other options are considered on an on-going basis. Spring 2011 included faculty training at the League of Innovation in addition to previously mentioned training

3. Proposal of New Learning Communities

a) A proposal form that is available online for faculty to use in proposing new learning communities

Actions-Form created by the LC Advisory Council Spring 2011

b) A standing committee at the college that will approve faculty learning community proposals

Actions-The LC design team is serving in this capacity

c) The standing committee, which should include representation from all academic centers and student services, may also propose future learning communities

Actions-On-going

4. Learning Community Design

a) Scheduling LCs in blocks at ideal times to aid in student learning and participation in the learning community courses

Actions-Center has developed schedule that incentivizes LCs

b) Always attach ED100 to learning communities designed for first semester students

Actions-Most LCs include ED100. On-going

c) Include student affairs and non-teaching academic affairs staff in every LC, through as ED100 faculty or as assigned advisor to each LC

Actions-Most sections are staffed this way. On-going

d) Have fun and catchy names for LCs to assist with marketing and to help students feel excitement and attachment to their learning community

Actions-Not yet addressed. Part of 2011-12 Academic Plan

e)Close enroll in learning communities after the first day of classes, as building an integrated community is incredibly important to success

Actions-Policy adopted and in practice

f) Students are only able to drop and add LC courses as a whole block

Actions-Policy adopted and in practice

g) LC instructors should focus on activities and experiential learning strategies; hands-on, project-based learning is integral to fostering a feeling of shared purpose and teamwork

Actions-Concept is introduced at each planning session and is reflected in integrated assignments