

HIGH-IMPACT LEARNING COMMUNITIES @UND

The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses, to involve students with “big questions” that matter beyond the classroom and to create a community of scholars. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link “liberal arts” and “professional courses;” others feature service learning or another form of experiential learning.

To qualify as a high-impact Learning Community, **the following five required key elements must be present;** other elements are strongly encouraged.

Key Elements	Required?	Expected Features	Illustrative Examples
Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time	Yes	Students will participate in a learning community for at least one semester (more likely one year).	Live in a living learning community (LLC) community for academic year; professional development sequences.
Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters	Yes	Engagement in learning community; participation in events.	Small group events; dormitory programming; dining opportunities with faculty; International Center nights; field trips.
Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar	Yes	Students live closely to and engage with other students from different backgrounds and have the opportunity to learn more about diversity via programming offered as part of LLC experience.	Participation in intercultural events such as Feast of Nations, the Writers Conference, volunteer programs to assist community members with tasks such as tax preparation.
Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications Or Opportunities to understand and apply discipline specific methodology	Yes	LLCs opportunities and programming tied to academic program (if applicable) or LLC mission and objectives.	Career development and preparation; interview practice; networking with professionals in one’s field; field trips.
Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning	Yes	Reflection and integration can take place as part of coursework, written assignments, or group discussions.	LLC tied to one-credit course that includes reflection component; surveys; focus groups.
Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels	Encouraged	LLCs that are tied to an academic program may have performance expectations. Good citizenship is also expected.	
Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback	Encouraged	For LLCs tied to an academic program, feedback may include different forms of mentoring.	Feedback on interview skills, attire, application materials, etc.
Public demonstration of competence	Encouraged	May be tied to academic program standards.	

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