2019-2020 Learning Communities Annual Report

Quick Facts

Overview

- 88% of First-Year Students of Color
- 80% of New Direct from High School International Students
- 47% of Transfer Students

Total students in a fall 2019 LC: 6,293
Total students participating in LCs since 1995: 87,056

Benefits

- Learning Community students have the opportunity to take classes together, interact with faculty, staff, and peer mentors, engage in out of class activities, explore careers, participate in community service, make new friends, and in some cases, live together
- The average one-year retention rate for LC students is 7% higher than non-LC students
- The average 6-year graduation rate for LC students is 11% higher than non-LC students
- Return on investment: Students retained through the LC program contribute an estimated $3 million in additional annual tuition revenue

Metrics

- 600+ Peer Mentors
  - Provide leadership within Learning Communities across campus
- 91 Learning Communities
  - Including two new learning communities just this year: FOCUS and HOME!
- 100+ Faculty and Staff Coordinators
  - With a combined average of 7+ years of coordinating experience

Peer Mentor Survey Results

- 3,500+ RESPONSES
- 89.1% of respondents agree they are satisfied with their learning community experience
- Over three-quarters of respondents would recommend Learning Communities to new students
- 75.1% of respondents reported LCs helped with their adjustment to Iowa State

Percentage of first-year, full-time LC participants has steadily grown since 2015

24.8% INCREASE
Opportunities for Coordinators

- 80 LC coordinators participated in 29 professional development offerings over the course of the year
- 120 registrants for the Mid-Year Institute in January 2020
- 127 registrants for the May Institute in May 2020
- Early Career Professional Development Series
  - 25 unique participants and 7 sessions
  - Topics included curriculum, peer mentors, administration and reports, assessment and evaluation, collaboration, and more

Opportunities for Peer Mentors

- 200+ registrants for university-wide training in August 2019
- 3 supplemental training sessions offered in fall 2019
- Peer Mentor Appreciation Week
  - 83 breakfast attendees and 54 thank-you messages sent from coordinators
- 4 Doug Gruenewald Peer Mentor Scholarships were awarded for spring 2020

$2,000 awarded in scholarships this year

Fall Semester Activities

Within the first 8 weeks of the fall semester, learning communities reported facilitating:

- 242 Study groups or exam preparation sessions
- 199 Social activities
- 147 In-class faculty engagement activities
  - 48 Out-of-class faculty engagement activities
  - 31 On-campus tours or field trips
  - 25 Service-learning projects
  - 21 Off-campus field trips
  - 18 Off-campus industry tours

Learning Community Committees

ASSESSMENT
- Developed mid-semester check-in assessment tool
- Revised the LC RFP and annual report documents
- Revised general survey for fall 2020 administration
- Drafted tuition revenue manuscript
- Proposed a research article

Committee Members: Patrick Determan, Kurt Earnest, Dave Flory, Kyle Holtman, Clayton Johnson, Jen Leptien, Ben McCarty, Tony Moore, Matt Pistilli, Tina Prouty, Rachel Smith, and Sarah Wehner

PEER MENTOR
- Sponsored Peer Mentor Appreciation Week
- Hosted Mid-Year Institute and Peer Mentor Breakfast
- Collected 150+ responses to Peer Mentor Leadership Survey

Committee Members: Nicole Bartolozzi, Jenessa Boley, Autumn Cartagena, Mindy Cooper, Nate Dobbels, Alicia Edwards, Michale Hanson, Kyle Holtman, Clayton Johnson, Wonjae Kim, Aliza MacKenzie, Ben McCarty, Heather Robinson, Katie Shields, Kathy Weaver, and Emily Wilcox

40+ Individuals dedicated time to enhance the Learning Community experience through committee work in the 2019-2020 academic year

LC Advisory Committee

Special thanks to the members of the Learning Community Advisory Committee for their hard work:

Janessa Boley, Mindy Cooper, Brenna Dixon, Kurt Earnest, Shannon Grundmeier, Stephanie Hamilton, Kyle Holtman, Clayton Johnson, Audrey Kennis, Amber Kargol, Jen Leptien, Allie Parrott, Shawna Saad, Allison Severson, Kenyatta Shamburger, and Emily Wilcox