

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



COORDINATOR RESOURCE MANUAL

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Welcome to Learning Communities!

We are happy to welcome you as a new Learning Community coordinator. You have an opportunity to contribute to the success of our students, as well as build connections with other coordinators, faculty, and staff. We encourage professional development through participation in our coordinator workshops, various LC conferences, and the annual Learning Community Institute.

Please explore the **Learning Communities website** at <http://www.lc.iastate.edu> and discover the many resources we have provided for you. Contact us if you have any questions.

We look forward to working with you and hope that you enjoy your Learning Community experience.

Contact Information

LC Administration

For general administrative questions, please contact:

Jen Leptien

Director, Learning Communities
515-294-1948
jenl@iastate.edu

Kyle Holtman

Program Coordinator, Learning Communities
515-294-5165
holtman@iastate.edu

Assessment Support

For questions regarding assessment, please contact:

LC Office

English Liaison

For English link questions, please contact:

Brenna Dixon

315 Ross Hall
515-294-9391
bjdixon@iastate.edu

Residence Liaison

For Residential questions, please contact:

Kurt Earnest

1213 Friley Hall
515-294-6264
kearnest@iastate.edu

Office of the Registrar

For retention or other LC-related data, please contact:

Jonathan Compton

214 Enrollment Services
515-294-4168
jcompton@iastate.edu

For questions about course registration or course grids, please contact:

Office of the Registrar

10 Enrollment Services
515-294-2852
reg-lc@iastate.edu

College Administrators

For questions about LCs within your college, please contact:

Ag & Life Sciences	Audrey Kennis	kennis@iastate.edu
Business	Shannon Grundmeier	shannong@iastate.edu
Design	Mindy Cooper	macooper@iastate.edu
Engineering	Clayton Johnson	cjjohn@iastate.edu
Human Sciences	Sarah Wilson	slwilson@iastate.edu
Liberal Arts & Sciences	Stephanie Hamilton	slh@iastate.edu

Peer Mentor Support

For questions about working with peer mentors, please contact:

Kyle Holtman
515-294-5165
holtman@iastate.edu

Service-Learning Projects

For questions about service-learning opportunities, please contact:

Tim Reuter
Memorial Union
515-294-0404
tmreuter@iastate.edu

Supplemental Instruction

For questions about supplemental instruction, please contact:

Academic Success Center
1060 Hixson-Lied Student Success Center
515-294-6624
success@iastate.edu

Canvas Support

For questions about Canvas, please contact:
[The Solution Center](#)

Qualtrics Support

For questions about Qualtrics, please contact:
solution@iastate.edu

Teaching Support

For support with instructional practices, please contact:
[The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching \(CELT\)](#)



Iowa State University Learning Communities Vision

Vision

To support Iowa State University's commitment to student learning, the Learning Community initiative seeks to enhance our undergraduates' experience by providing all interested students dynamic, focused communities in which students, staff, and faculty can learn and grow together.

Intended Outcomes

To reach the intended outcomes of the learning communities the University must monitor its progress and continually improve the learning communities. The following intended outcomes provide a framework for continuous assessment and improvement. Individual learning communities will develop relevant intended outcomes that are consistent with the following University learning community outcomes.

Students in learning communities will:

- develop a sense of belonging in the university community
- experience higher academic achievement
- increase curricular and co-curricular collaborative interactions with other students, faculty, and staff
- more readily achieve the articulated learning outcomes specified by departments or programs
- demonstrate increased awareness of departmental, college, and University resources
- demonstrate improved critical thinking and collaborative problem solving skills
- demonstrate improved knowledge and skills related to career opportunities
- demonstrate a better understanding of differences and similarities among people
- experience a higher level of satisfaction with the University experience
- show a greater rate of persistence as a result of all of the above

Faculty and staff in learning communities will experience:

- increased collaborations with students, faculty, and staff
- increased implementation of active and collaborative teaching and learning strategies
- connections between curricular and co-curricular experiences
- increased knowledge about students and their development
- improved reflective practice
- disciplinary and interdisciplinary collegiality
- increased knowledge about university resources
- increased involvement in professional development activities
- increased connections between their learning community work and their scholarship
- increased recognition and reward

Core characteristics

The Learning Community Advisory Committee recommends that in order to be defined as a learning community at Iowa State, each learning community should possess certain characteristics:

- clearly defined intended learning outcomes that reflect the University Learning Community intended outcomes and the academic program's intended outcomes
- clearly defined assessment and evaluation procedures that provide useful data for enhancing student learning
- integrated and connected curricular learning experiences
- co-curricular activities that extend learning beyond the classroom
- collaborative, active learning experiences for students, faculty, and staff
- effective connections between academic and student affairs programs
- clearly identified program administration and faculty/staff support structure

Learning Communities Calendar of Events

June

- Annual Reports due

July

- Work on assessment plans for fall semester
- Have peer mentors complete the HR onboarding process and forms prior to start date
- Peer mentors should complete FERPA training via LEARN@ISU

August

- Update LC web directory information for fall as needed
- Check Work-Study option for peer mentors
- New peer mentors should attend university-wide training the Monday and Tuesday before classes begin

September

- Submit spring course request form to Office of the Registrar
- Fall budget allocations adjusted (if needed) after enrollment counts are confirmed

October

- RFP forms are released
- Perform peer mentor survey week 6
- Give student evaluation feedback to peer mentors

November

- Begin work on RFP form

December

- Submit current fall spending summary and anticipated spring funding needs
- Submit English link request form to the English LC Liaison

January

- Submit fall course request form to Office of the Registrar
- Review LC web information for updates
- Publicize mentor position openings for next fall
- Attend Mid-year Institute
- RFP due in late January

February

- Spring budget transfers made
- Begin interviewing/hiring process for next year's peer mentors
- Central administration indicates funding of next year's RFPs
- Develop end-of-year planning retreat

March

- Register for the LC Institute
- Central administration sends return of funds memo
- Hire mentors for next year
- Have new peer mentors complete payroll sign-up process, including I-9 form
- Submit fall peer mentor information to LC central office

April

- Submit current spring spending summary and anticipated fund spending for remainder of semester
- Annual report memos sent
- Invitations for August mentor training sent
- Provide initial training for new mentor hires

May

- Attend the Learning Communities Institute
- Submit promotional materials for Freshmen Orientation to LC central office

RFP Budget Timeline

Refer budget questions to Jen Leptien (jenl@iastate.edu)

Budget procedures

1. **Mid-September** – LC office will adjust fall allocations, if needed, after enrollment counts have been confirmed by Registrar.
2. **Early October** – RFP forms sent out.
3. **Early December** – Return LC office form of fall spending summary and anticipated spring funding needs.
4. **Late January – Early February** – Submit RFP (for following academic year)
5. **Late February** – LC office indicates funding for next academic year RFPs
6. **Early April** – Submit current spring spending summary and anticipated fund spending for remainder of semester. (Be sure mentors are up to date with time sheets).
7. **Early April** – LC office sends out annual report forms.
8. **Early June** – Submit your annual report to LC office – include itemized list of how funds were spent.

LC Fund Guidelines

LC funds are provided by the state and must be spent appropriately. When planning activities review what your **educational outcomes** are and how they will be achieved by the activity. While it is impossible to list every possible circumstance for spending LC funds, please keep in mind **the spirit of this policy is to spend the funds for the direct educational benefit of our students.**

1. Review your allocations and what you asked for in the RFP.
2. How does spending relate to achieving your educational outcomes?
3. Remember the “Des Moines Register test” (can you defend a front-page story?)
4. **“Front load” spending....use it to build community early.**
5. Don't save for end of semester or end of year celebrations-that doesn't achieve outcomes. Ask your department/college to fund those activities.
6. **Use the least expensive food vendor as often as possible.**
7. **Do not go out to restaurants.**
8. **Mentor funds are only for salaries. Don't charge mentor hours to the programming account.**
9. Funds should **typically** be spent on things directly related to assessment, recruitment, faculty-student interactions, cultural activities, educational field trips, and community/team building.
10. Purely social events (i.e. bowling) should be limited and in balance with other specifically educational activities. **Events should generally take place in Ames** (i.e. cultural events at CY Stephens rather than in Des Moines).
11. The following are **some** examples of expenditures that are **NOT permitted**: **computers, furniture, t-shirts, tutoring, web upkeep, gifts/awards/prizes, organizational dues, staff salaries.** If in doubt on what's appropriate please contact Jen Leptien at jenl@iastate.edu.
12. **REVIEW ACCOUNT BALANCE MONTHLY.** Look at your balance at end of first semester and only ask for additional funds based on need. **Please don't “pad” your requests. If you run out of funds you can request more.**
13. At **spring break** determine final projects and mentor hours... report total funding spent **by the time school is out.**

Learning Communities Documents

Request for Proposal (RFP)

The Request for Proposal is an annual process during which learning communities assess their objectives and goals, and request funds for their programs.

RFP forms are:

- Due in late January
- Available for download on the LC website under the “Faculty and Staff” heading: <http://www.lc.iastate.edu/>

Registrar and English Linked Course Request Form

The Office of the Registrar sends out a course request form around the time that the Learning Communities RFP goes out. In addition to the course request forms that must be filed with the Office of the Registrar, English linked course requests must be submitted to Brenna Dixon.

- English link request forms are due in the Fall, before finals week
- Fall semester course request forms are to be submitted to the Office of the Registrar by the second week of classes of the Spring semester
- Spring semester course requests are due to the Office of the Registrar by mid-September of the Fall semester
- More information about this process can be found on the Registrar’s website: <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/lcforms>

Annual Report

The annual report form is used as an evaluative tool, in which coordinators and LC staff can review the programs objectives and goals outlined in the RFP, and assess how the learning community met this set criterion.

Annual report forms are:

- Due at the end of May
- Distributed via email as a Word document, and made available in survey form through the LC website, approximately 1 month before their due date
- A sample of the Annual Report form can be found on the LC website under the “Faculty and Staff” heading: <http://www.lc.iastate.edu/>

Office of the Registrar Deadlines

Fall Course Grid Sample Timeline

List of deadlines for current semester is available at: <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/lcforms>

January

- Receive Course Request Form via email
- Schedule of Classes (tentative) available online
- Course requests and English links are due to college administrators

February

- College administrators' request due to Office of the Registrar
- Grids become available for proofing; changes must be submitted
- Registration Access Numbers (RANs) are made available
- Final changes to grids are due to Office of the Registrar

March

- Finalized schedule grids are posted to the LC website
- Registration for the fall semester begins

June

- All remaining spaces in courses reserved for potential LC students will be released after new student orientation sessions are complete

Getting Registered for a Course-Based Learning Community using AccessPlus Registration on the Web:

Follow these steps to register

1. Meet with your adviser and obtain your:
 - 4-digit Registration Access Number (RAN), if required by your college.
 - Learning Community reference number.
2. Obtain your Iowa State University Identification Card (ISUCard) from [0530 Beardshear Hall](#). You will set your password when you get your ISUCard. You'll need your password to register.
3. Locate [AccessPlus](#) on the Web.
 - Go to Iowa State University's homepage at www.iastate.edu/.
 - From the **Sign Ons** drop-down menu at the top right of the screen, choose *AccessPlus*.
4. When the AccessPlus screen appears, sign onto AccessPlus using your University ID number AND your password. Click *Login*.
5. Click on the Student tab at the top of the page, and then select *Class Registration* from the left menu bar.

6. View the Important Announcements section and click *Continue*.
7. On the Term Selection page:
 - Read the Enrollment Conditions.
 - Select your registration term.
 - If required by your college, enter your confidential 4-digit Registration Access Number (RAN). Your Registration Access Number is available from your adviser.
 - Click *Agree/Continue*.
8. A screen will appear to confirm you are approved to register. Click *Continue*.
9. On the Add/Drop courses screen, register for your learning community by entering your 7-digit learning community reference number. (Use the **Reference Number box** in the middle of the page.) Click *Add*. Do this **FIRST**, before adding any classes to your schedule.
10. Read the message at the top of the page and view your schedule at the bottom of the screen to confirm your learning community has been added.
11. Add your learning community courses. You may add courses using the “Search” mechanism; by entering department, course number, and section; or by entering reference number. Continue to confirm course adds by checking the message box at the top of the page and your schedule at the bottom of the page.
12. Next add any additional courses, and verify adds are complete.
13. Once you’ve added/dropped courses to build your schedule, click on *Class Schedule* on the left menu bar. Review your schedule for conflicts and accuracy. Review schedule detail.
14. To exit, click on *Logout* located in the top left corner.

Registration Tips

- Click on *Help* in the upper right corner for assistance in using the registration system.
- Your Learning Community courses have a special reference number. Be sure you enter your Learning Community reference number **first** —before adding any other courses to your schedule.
- If you forget to enter the learning community reference number, simply drop all the courses on your schedule, and begin again.
- You may add additional courses once your learning community reference number has been added.

If you decide to drop your learning community reference number, you must first drop all courses associated with your learning community.

Learning Community Marketing

Admissions marketing procedures:

Two Learning Community mailings are sent out as part of Admissions yield communication flow.

The mailings are sent out on a continuous basis.

The first mailing is directed toward parents of the student:

- Includes the learning community brochure and cover letter
- This is the second letter of the admissions yield letter flow
- Sent out approx. 4 weeks after student has been offered admission

Within the offer letter and acceptance packet:

- Students are encouraged to go online to accept admission and submit a housing contract
- The housing contract options page discusses residential learning communities
- University housing contracts ask students to indicate LC preferences

Around the first week of July, Admissions begins admitting for summer and fall of next academic year.



Other ways Learning Communities are marketed:

Daily Admissions visits

- Included during Preview of Iowa State presentations

Experience Iowa State (EIS) visit days

- Mentioned during Preview of Iowa State presentations
- Slide show
- Display booth staffed by the Learning Communities central office

Admissions website (<https://www.admissions.iastate.edu/>)

- Learning Communities informational page linked under *Academics*
- Link to the informational page from the *Future Students* for Freshmen and Transfer; International Students page under *Academics*
- Link to the Learning Communities website from informational page

Admissions introductory brochure

- Distributed to high school students on prospective student database in spring of their junior year
- Handed out at college fairs and high school visits

LC brochure

- LC-branded 8.5"x11" template paper is available through central office for individualized marketing

LC posters

- Posters (16"x24") with general university LC facts available through central LC office

Orientation

- Discussed during colleges meetings at both Freshman and Transfer student programs

Department of Residence website (<http://housing.iastate.edu/>)

- Information about residential learning communities (<http://housing.iastate.edu/places/rlc-th>)
- Link to Learning Communities website for non-residential LCs

Suggestions for your Learning Community

STUDENT AFFAIRS COLLABORATIONS

Dean of Students Office (<https://www.dso.iastate.edu/>)

- Academic Success Center (<https://www.asc.dso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Supplemental Instruction course connections
 - Presentations on time management and other academic success strategies
 - PSYCH 131 connections (fall or spring)
- Student Accessibility Services (<https://sas.dso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Accommodations and resources
- Office of Student Conduct (<https://www.studentconduct.dso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Academic dishonesty and ethics presentations and resources
- The Center for LGBTQIA+ Student Success (<https://center.dso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Speakers Bureau panels and Pride Week events
 - Trainings and other resources
- Margaret Sloss Center for Women and Gender Equity (<https://sloss.dso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Events and presentations related to gender and gender issues
 - Conference room reservation
- Multicultural Student Affairs (<https://www.multicultural.dso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Diversity and inclusion issues and ideas
 - Multicultural awareness events
 - Presentations from Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs)
- International Student and Scholars Office (<https://www.isso.iastate.edu/>)
 - Help international students get involved with LCs
 - Communication classes
 - Developing an international learning community

Department of Residence (<http://housing.iastate.edu/>)

- Residence hall presentations (roommate conflict, etc.), meeting rooms scheduling, providing assistance at Learning Communities events in residence halls
- Maintain contact with residence hall staff through peer mentors and learning community coordinators
- Promote multicultural, cross-cultural, LGBTQIA+ awareness

Financial Aid (<https://www.financialaid.iastate.edu/>)

- Facilitate budget and financial planning workshops through Student Loan Education Office

Memorial Union (<https://www.mu.iastate.edu/>)

- Room reservations for first-year student retreats and other events
- Social activities (bowling, billiards)
- Workspace, Browsing Library

Office of the Registrar (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/>)

- Course connections and registration processes
- Retention statistics
- Forms and policies

Student Health and Wellness (<https://www.cyclonehealth.iastate.edu/>)

- Student Wellness (<http://www.studentwellness.iastate.edu/>)
 - Presentations on health and wellness topics and resources, nutrition, sleep, eating disorder/body image, movement/physical activity, alcohol use, and more
- Recreation Services (<https://www.recservices.iastate.edu/>)
 - Leadership, teambuilding, skill/activity-related programs
- Student Counseling Services (<https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/>)
 - General counseling and biofeedback
 - Career Exploration Services

Career Services (<http://www.career.iastate.edu/>)

- Self-assessment resources (personality tests, Strengths)
- Resume workshops
- Workforce issues discussions
- Career presentations

SERVICE-LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Implement and increase service-learning projects

Collaborate with other LCs on service-learning projects

Consider going outside the University for projects ([Volunteer Center of Story County](#), [Food at First](#), [Habitat for Humanity](#), etc.)

CANVAS USE AND TRAINING

Orient students to [Canvas](#) features early

More connection, utilization of Canvas by learning communities

Include LC activities in Canvas calendar of events

FIELD TRIPS

Facilitate field trips to industries and local companies

Plan field trips for retreat purposes

“Treasure hunt” for incoming LC students

Facilitate field trips for team building purposes

Facilitate on-campus field trips for students to learn about the university



SOCIAL EVENTS

Promote faculty/student interactions by having food or other social events

Utilize the College of Human Science’s [Joan Bice Underwood Tearoom](#) for lunches, tea with faculty

Utilize [Dining Services](#) or other catering services for lunches, dinners with faculty, peer mentors, and students

Invite other LCs to participate in social events

TRANSFER STUDENTS LC

Collaborate with community colleges to build LCs for students transferring to ISU
Build transfer learning communities within ISU colleges
Provide starter kits (freebies), connect LC with transfer student courses, mentoring by former transfer students

BROADEN LC MODEL BEYOND CURRICULUM

Use FIG ([First-Year Interest Group](#)) model
Incorporate visual arts (photography) piece into linked English courses
Look for cross-disciplinary opportunities with different concepts from LCs
Incorporate alumni mentors into programs instead of just peer mentors
Merge diversity awareness with academic and service-learning

PEER MENTORS

Have peer mentors conduct interviews with LC students to learn about them
Use peer mentors as teachers of their peers
Have peer mentors help communicate with specific service-learning projects across LCs
Ongoing peer mentor training/support across learning communities

COURSE LINKS

Continue strong English link
Look for more interdisciplinary connections

COLLABORATION WITHIN LCs

Communicate with other coordinators about LC events
Collaborate on service learning projects, social activities
Share assessment ideas
Work on increasing student/faculty interactions
Include faculty outcomes



Service-Learning Information

The Four Stages of Service-Learning

Preparation

Team members must:

- Identify a need
- Draw upon previously acquired skills and knowledge
- Acquire new information through a variety of means and methods
- Analyze the underlying problem
- Collaborate with community partners
- Develop a plan that encourages responsibility
- Recognize the integration of service and learning
- Become ready to provide meaningful service
- Define realistic parameters for implementation

Action

Through, direct service, indirect service, research, or advocacy, teams must take action that:

- Has value, purpose and meaning
- Uses previously learned and newly acquired academic skills and knowledge
- Offers unique learning experiences
- Has real consequences
- Offers a safe environment to learn, to make mistakes, and to succeed

Reflection

During systematic reflection, the team members with the peer mentor will keep a journal and discuss:

- Describe what happened
- Examine the difference it made
- Discuss thoughts and feelings
- Place experience in a larger context
- Consider project improvements
- Generate ideas
- Identify questions
- Receive feedback

Demonstration

Students demonstrate skills, insights, and outcomes to an outside group. Methods might include:

- Reporting to peers, faculty, parents, and/or community members
- Writing articles or letters to local newspapers regarding issues of public concern
- Creating a publication or web site that helps others to learn from the students' experiences
- Making presentations and performances
- Creating visual art forms, such as materials

Adapted from *The Complete Guide to Service Learning: Proven, Practical Ways to Engage Students in Civic Responsibility, Academic Curriculum, & Social Action* by Cathryn Berger Kaye, M.A., copyright © 2004. Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN.

Service-Learning Resources

Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) – <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/>

- Service-learning as a teaching method
 - <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/teaching-format/service-learning>

Campus Compact – <http://compact.org/>

- In Resources section, syllabi from a variety of disciplines
- Reflection ideas

National Youth Leadership Council – <https://www.nylc.org/page/resources>

- Has a Higher Education section
- Offers a listserv
- Resources on a variety of topics – reflection, risk management, etc.

Coordinator of Leadership & Service

Tim Reuter – tmreuter@iastate.edu

- Can help connect with community partners, organize syllabus, help with reflection activities, speak to students about service-learning

Team Building Activities

Team building activities are a great way to kick-off your learning community at the beginning of the semester or to encourage more student interaction. Here are just a few options available through ISU Recreation Services.

ISU Recreation Services: <http://www.recservices.iastate.edu/>

Contact: recservices@iastate.edu, 515-294-4980

- Lied Recreation Athletic Center
- State Gym
- Beyer Hall
- Forker Building
- Ames/ISU Ice Arena
- Maple-Willow-Larch Recreation Fields
- Southeast Recreation Fields
- Towers Recreation Fields
- Lied Recreation Fields
- Southwest Recreation Complex
- Disc Golf Course

Outdoor Recreation Options: <https://www.recservices.iastate.edu/outdoors/>

Contact: recservices@iastate.edu, 515-294-8200

- Rock Climbing Wall at Lied Recreation Center
- Equipment rental
- Workshops
- Canoeing on Lake LaVerne
- Day or Weekend Trips (hiking, canoeing)

Additional team building activities can be found on the LC website (<https://www.lc.iastate.edu/>) under the *Peer Mentors* heading.



ISU Conference & Dining Facilities

Building	Room Location	Capacity	Reservations
<u>Union Drive Community Center</u>			
UDCC Multipurpose Room	136 UDCC	100-125	515-294-6428
Heritage Room in Union Drive Marketplace	292 UDCC	24	515-294-0082
Clyde's Sports Club	First floor UDCC	125	515-294-8330
<u>Conversations (Oak-Elm)</u>			
Private Dining Room	Enter through Dining Center	54	515-294-5909
<u>Seasons Marketplace</u>			
Harvest Room <i>(can be divided into 2 rooms)</i>	Enter through Dining Center	85-90	515-294-2380
<u>Storms Dining Complex</u>			
Meeting room	Knapp-Storms Commons	250 +	515-294-2103
<u>Hawthorn Market & Café</u>			
Private Dining Room	1001-2	32	515-294-2962
Small conference room	1012	10	515-294-2107
<u>Memorial Union</u>			
Various meeting rooms			515-294-1437

** Food cannot be brought into these facilities.*

Please contact 4-6056 to purchase advance meal tickets that can be billed to University accounts.

Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. Veteran. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to Office of Equal Opportunity, 3410 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, Tel. 515 294-7612, Hotline: 515-294-1222, email eooffice@iastate.edu.