



Research Brief

Spring 2013 Learning Communities Student Evaluation Results from Students in Developmental Courses

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Purpose of Brief:

This brief examines the data from the Spring 2013 Learning Communities (LC) Student Evaluation completed by 31 students in Developmental Courses.

Summary of findings:

- 90% or more of the respondents "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed" with the following evaluation statements:
 - I would recommend joining a learning community to other students.
 - I am satisfied with my learning community experience.
 - Participating in a learning community helped me develop connections with other students.
 - Being part of a learning community made me feel more supported in my coursework.
 - I felt comfortable asking questions and making contributions in class discussions.
 - I worked with other students in my learning community outside of class.
- 55% of the respondents were Hispanic and 32% were Caucasian.
- 65% of the respondents were female and 58% were 19 years-old or younger.

Overview

In Spring 2013, Crafton Hills College offered Learning Communities (LC) to students in Developmental Courses. Students in Developmental Courses who participated in a LC were provided the opportunity to evaluate their LC at the closing of the semester.

Methodology

Figure 1 and Tables 1 and 3-6 illustrate the results from the **Spring 2013 Learning Communities (LC) Student Evaluation from students in Developmental Courses**. Table 2 illustrates student demographics disaggregated by ethnicity, gender and age. Responses to the evaluation were submitted by students in Developmental Courses who participated in the following LCs:

- **HEALTH 102/CHC-099X4/ENGL 914**
- **ENGL 101/MATH 090**

Respondents were provided an evaluation where they were asked what LC they were enrolled in and to rate ten statements about their experience in their LC. Respondents rated their level of agreement with the statements on a Likert five-point scale, 5=Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Disagree; 2=Strongly Disagree; 1=Not Applicable (see Table 1). "Not Applicable" or "missing" responses were removed in Tables 1 and 2. In Tables 3-6, respondents were also prompted to provide open-ended comments about their definition of a LC, what they liked best about participating in a LC, what they would change about their LC, and to add any additional comments. The names have been removed in the open-ended comment tables and replaced with "[Name]" to protect identities.

Table 1. Responses to statements about the Spring 2013 Learning Communities at Crafton.

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
I would recommend joining a learning community to other students.	21	67.7	8	25.8	2	6.5	0	-	31
I am satisfied with my learning community experience.	20	64.5	10	32.3	1	3.2	0	-	31
Participating in a learning community helped me develop connections with faculty and staff.	15	50.0	11	36.7	4	13.3	0	-	30
Participating in a learning community helped me develop connections with other students.	17	54.8	12	38.7	2	6.5	0	-	31
Being part of a learning community made me feel more supported in my coursework.	17	54.8	13	41.9	1	3.2	0	-	31
Being part of a learning community made me feel more supported in my choice to go to college.	21	67.7	6	19.4	4	12.9	0	-	31
Being in a learning community has helped me see connections among my classes (for example, learning in one class supported or expanded on what I learned in another class).	14	45.2	10	32.3	7	22.6	0	-	31
I felt comfortable asking questions and making contributions in class discussions.	20	64.5	11	35.5	0	-	0	-	31
I worked with other students in my learning community outside of class.	13	41.9	18	58.1	0	-	0	-	31
The instructors in my learning community planned assignments together.	15	48.4	8	25.8	4	12.9	2	6.5	31

Note: Some respondents did not answer all the questions.

Student demographic information in Table 2 includes a side-by-side comparison of students in Developmental Courses who participated in Learning Communities and the general student population for the Spring 2013. **For both LCs and the general student population, Hispanic and Caucasian students were the largest ethnicities, and students were predominantly female. The general student population on campus was 20-24 years-old, and 19 years-old or younger in the LCs.**

Table 2. Learning Community Student Demographic Information.

Ethnicity	Developmental Courses LCs		Spring 2013	
	#	%	#	%
Asian	1	3.2	298	5.5
African American	3	9.7	409	7.5
Hispanic	17	54.8	2197	40.5
Native American/Alaskan Native	0	-	105	1.9
Caucasian	10	32.3	2415	44.5
Total	31	100	5424	100

Gender	#	%	#	%
Female	20	64.5	2832	52.0
Male	11	35.5	2609	48.0
Total	31	100	5441	100
Age	#	%	#	%
19 or younger	18	58.1	1408	25.8
20-24	7	22.6	2454	45.0
25-29	4	12.9	725	13.3
30-34	2	6.5	313	5.7
35-39	0	-	173	3.2
40-49	0	-	241	4.4
50 and above	0	-	136	2.5
Total	31	100	5450	100

Note: Any "missing" data was omitted on this table.

Tables 3-6 illustrate open-ended comments provided by students in response to four prompts about their experiences with Learning Communities. **When prompted to define what they thought was a Learning Community in Table 3, students generally responded that Learning Communities were a group a classes that were linked or joined.**

Table 3. Open-ended comments about respondents' definition of a Learning Community.

- A community where students and staff interact more.
- A group of students learning how to be organized.
- A learning community for me is a class that helps students learn about the different resources that are offered in college.
- A learning community helps you connect with other students and helps with your classwork.
- A learning community is a group of classes that are linked to help you work together with students and teachers.
- A learning community is a group of students who interact with each other to give us a better understanding to learn.
- A learning community is a system where students can learn and explore new things and learn more about themselves and each other.
- A learning community is a way students can see connections among their classes in a community learning environment.
- A learning community is courses designed to help you stay connected with your peers and get a better feel for college.
- A learning community is what you learn from college life.
- A learning community is where the same group of students attend the same classes together to help ensure a successful college experience and to help motivate each other to continue their education.
- A learning community is where your courses are linked and you have the same peers in the same courses.
- A learning community would be more than a school, but a place to learn about others and yourself.
- A series of classes that are joined together and cooperate so the students are able to feel more connected, like a family.
- Classes are together
- Classes that are joined and used to interpret the class from other perspectives.
- Classes that are linked together to be more successful.
- Classes that are linked together to help students be more successful and understand their course load.
- Connected classes with the same students
- Grouping students together to build a friendship more generally.
- Having two subjects being linked together to learn.
- Is a course that prepares you on you higher studies
- Joined classes
- Learning community is a community built of a couple classes and all these teachers work together.
- Learning community is the learning that is supporting our body and mind.

- More than one class working together.
- When three classes join together, two of them become requirements and the other being a support system.
- When two classes are joined together.
- Where two classes combine and find a connection within a subject.
- Where you take classes together as a group.

In Table 4, students were prompted to provide feedback about what they liked best about participating in Learning Communities. **Students provided various comments, but students frequently stated that they liked the connections they made to peers and instructors in response to this prompt.**

Table 4. Open-ended comments about what respondents liked best about participating in a Learning Community.

- English was taught in a conditional rather than absolute manner which was nice.
- Everything.
- Getting to know all the students.
- Getting to know my classmates.
- Having the same classmates and consistency.
- Having the teachers help me out.
- I enjoyed obtaining more information about what I need in order to pursue my career.
- I enjoyed working in groups with other students. It make the learning community a much more enjoyable experience.
- I got to know my classmates better.
- I liked how it's chill, and the teachers are very helpful.
- I liked that all the classes were linked together. It made everything easier.
- I liked that we learned how to be more organized.
- If I missed a day or a class I was able to call a classmate and get the missing information.
- It was a good experience and a fun class.
- It was nice having the same people in class, but my two classes did not correlate with each other at all.
- Just the fact that I got to be with the same classmates doing both classes.
- Really working together on work.
- Same peers (students) in each class.
- Talking to my peers about things we had learned or been learning, study groups
- That I was able to talk to the teachers.
- That my teachers helped me to grow stronger.
- The connections you make with the teachers and other students.
- The fact you can definitely connect with others about the same classes
- The many resources and learning about myself and giving me the opportunity to learn and ask questions about my success in college.
- The smaller classes
- The support from the teacher
- What I like best in learning community, it makes understand how we use our time.
- What I liked best about my learning community was being able to see connections among my classes and being able to understand more.
- Working together with students, also getting the attention I needed from my professors.
- Working with the same classmates.
- You have multiple classes with the same students.

Respondents also provided diverse suggestions about what they would change about learning communities in Table 5. **Students most frequently stated revising the combination of the math and English courses.**

Table 5. Open-ended comments about what respondents' would change about their learning community.

- English and math don't relate to me.
- For now everything look good. I would not change anything.
- Honestly, nothing at all. Everything was great and I learned so much from it.
- I don't think I have anything to change because I gained a lot due to my study plan
- I really don't feel math and English mesh well together, so I would put classes that are at least a bit similar.
- I think everything was fine. I wouldn't change a thing.
- I think it is fine the way it is.
- I wouldn't change anything about this learning community.
- I would change having more people coming and participating in class.
- I would change nothing in this learning community.
- I would only change and increase the number of classes available.
- I wouldn't change a thing! Learning community is very helpful.
- I wouldn't pair math and English. I don't feel like things related, so it's hard to make connections with the subjects.
- It went pretty well.
- Linked schedule.
- Math and English don't go together; do not put them in a learning community together.
- Math was very absolute; it would've been nice to have been more conditional teaching
- Not put a freshman English class with an elementary algebra class.
- Nothing
- Nothing, I loved it!
- Nothing, it helped a lot
- Nothing, it's great the way it is.
- Nothing.
- Perhaps add another course that could tie the bridge between the math and English better.
- The English 101 and the MATH 090 did not really connect, so maybe pairing English and Math together is not a good match.
- The time is too early.
- The time.
- To have different courses.

Respondents provided few comments in the additional open-ended section in Table 6. **Students stated they would like to see improvements made in LC scheduling and better coordination with the connection of LC courses, and others commended instructors and the encouragement they received.**

Table 6. Additional open-ended comments provided by respondents about learning communities.

- English and math don't connect in an academic sense, but the LC helped a lot.
- Great support and encouragement to continue working hard.
- How to find them next semester.
- [Name] is a wonderful professor. I learned so much in her class. It's had a huge impact on my college life.
- N/A
- Offer more times if you're going to link the classes
- Thank you!
- Thank you.
- Try to make the classes more relatable with each other.
- Why are the times so spread apart? Make the classes back to back instead of three hours apart!
PS- the English instructor is a very good professor!