Basic Skills/ACES Learning Communities:
Guidelines & Expectations

1. Instructors who teach a course in a learning community will be assigned 0.5 coordinating units in addition to their regular teaching units (see CCFT Articles 11.2.2.15.1.3, 11.2.2.15.2, and 11.2.2.15.2.1).¹

2. Instructors interested in teaching in a basic skills learning community are required to meet with the ACES coordinator prior to the scheduling of classes. At this meeting: guidelines will be distributed and discussed; the instructors’ consent will be requested regarding whether or not they agree to collaborate with other members of the learning community; the group will discuss preferred days/times and sequencing of courses, etc. When applicable, counselors will also meet with the ACES coordinator prior to the scheduling of classes to assure counselor availability to learning communities.

3. Once the learning community has been decided and scheduled, instructors and counselors will meet 1 semester in advance to coordinate and plan the linked courses—i.e., discuss curriculum ideas, class assignments, and course expectations, select books, decide whether or not to include extracurricular activities or social events, etc. Counselor participation and responsibilities will also be discussed at this meeting.

4. The extent of collaborative, integrative assignments should be decided between the instructors and may depend on the type of learning community. However, at least 1 major assignment should be integrated.

5. Instructors and counselors will meet no later than Monday or Tuesday of FLEX week to finalize assignments, review syllabi drafts, discuss course policies, establish regular semester meeting times/place, etc.

6. Instructors and counselors will meet/communicate in person, through e-mail, or by phone at least once every 2 weeks (minimum) during the semester in which the learning community is being offered. The main focus of the meetings is to discuss student progress and conduct early interventions. In addition, faculty will align courses, discuss challenges and successes, problem solve, plan upcoming class activities, integrate assignments, etc.

7. With the purpose of strengthening our learning communities, instructors are strongly encouraged to request written feedback from students by conducting mid-semester
course evaluations or CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques). The ACES coordinator will send out an e-mail reminder, which will include a sample template. The purpose is for instructors to actively utilize the student feedback received, coordinate with their faculty team members, and alter/make amends to the course if necessary.

8. Should any changes to the planned learning community structure or scheduling occur, instructors and counselors will immediately notify the ACES coordinator and their respective department Chairs.

9. When offered, instructors and counselors will be expected to participate in a 1 day Learning Community Retreat where they will have the opportunity to meet and collaborate with other Cabrillo learning community practitioners, share ideas, discuss best teaching practices, ways that counselors can better support instruction and students, etc.

10. Instructors or counselors who teach in programmatic learning communities (such as Puente or DBA) may be expected to adhere to some, but not all, of the above and/or may be expected to follow additional guidelines and expectations as requested by their specific programs.

\[^1\] 11.2.2.15.1.3 Coordination: 1 Teaching Unit to be shared between instructors team teaching.

11.2.2.15.2 Linked Courses: Two or more courses with overlapping themes offered in the same semester and students must enroll in each of the courses. Assigned faculty work together outside of class time to coordinate course materials, i.e., syllabi, assignments, and exams.

11.2.2.15.2.1 Each unit member teaching a linked course will receive the same faculty load credit as the faculty would receive if this course was taught in a traditional method. One half (1/2) additional teaching unit per course linked will be given for coordination to be shared among instructors as determined by the instructors.

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