

Basic Skills Learning Communities: Guidelines & Expectations

1. Faculty who teach in a basic skills learning community are expected to abide by the Guidelines listed below. In some cases, faculty who teach in programmatic learning communities (i.e., Puente or ACE) may be expected to adhere to some, but not all, of these Guidelines and/or may be expected to follow additional guidelines and expectations as requested by their specific programs.
2. At least one semester in advance, the Learning Communities coordinator will distribute the Guidelines to all faculty scheduled to teach in a basic skills learning community. Regular updates and reminders will be sent via e-mail during the semester in which the learning community is taking place.
3. Faculty 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.
4. The extent of collaborative, integrative assignments should be decided between faculty members and may depend on the type of learning community. However, at least 1 major assignment should be integrated.
5. Faculty will meet the week prior to the beginning of classes during FLEX week (or before) to finalize assignments, review syllabi drafts, discuss course policies, establish regular semester meeting times/place, etc.
6. Faculty members will meet/communicate in person, through e-mail, or by phone approximately once a week 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. It is expected that the majority of the meetings will be conducted in person with all cohort faculty members present. Faculty will document their attendance at cohort meetings via sign-up sheets; Cohort Leads will collect the documentation and submit monthly attendance reports (three per semester) to the Learning Communities coordinator.

7. With the purpose of strengthening our basic skills learning communities, faculty are strongly encouraged to request written feedback from students by conducting mid-semester course evaluations or CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques). The Learning Communities coordinator will send out an e-mail reminder, which will include a sample template. The purpose is for faculty members to actively utilize the student feedback received, coordinate with their cohort members, and alter/make amends to the course if necessary.
8. Should any changes to the planned learning community structure or scheduling occur, faculty will immediately notify the Learning Communities coordinator and their respective department Chairs.
9. When offered, faculty 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. In accordance with the CCFT contract, faculty who teach a course in a learning community may be assigned 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*).ⁱ Attendance verification of weekly meetings will be required of all faculty receiving coordination units.

ⁱ 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.