

## **Learning Communities Proposal**

Retention Plan Objective 2b: Ensure that students participate in a cohesive and inclusive first-year academic experience through 1) a living learning community, learning community, or first-year experience course.

Recommended action items:

### ***1. Consider one of three options:***

- 1) Identify one course to enroll all first-time, full-time freshmen.
- 2) Each school/college identifies their own course(s) for first-time, full-time freshmen, based on centralized standards (curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes, class sizes, assessment standards, peer mentoring).
- 3) Hybrid of above.

***2. Provide a summer appointment and support (\$5000) to an assistant, associate or full professor to partner with the Executive Director of the Student Success Center to coordinate the development of the proposal to implement Retention Plan Objective 2b. Appointment timeline is flexible based on ideal candidate.***

### **Faculty Coordinator of Learning Communities Position Description:**

#### *Responsibilities:*

In conjunction with the Executive Director of the Student Success Center, the Faculty Coordinator of Learning Communities will achieve the following:

- Lead the development of a proposal for a first year learning community requirement for all first-year students during the Summer of 2015, to be presented to CEMAT in August 2015 for approval.
- Engage the Schools and Colleges, along with other key stakeholders (Academic Advising units, Registrar, University Housing) in the development and implementation of the proposal.
- Develop the common understanding/expectations of what the first year learning community requirement should include (e.g. curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes; class size; credit amount; peer mentor and/or Academic Advisor involvement; assessment).

*If extended past the summer appointment, possible future responsibilities of this position could include:*

- Implement the accepted proposal during the 2015-16 Academic Year, including any faculty governance or curricular committees.
- Lead a faculty and staff committee that oversees the implementation of the first year learning community requirement.
- Lead the recruitment and development of first year learning community courses.
- Assist in the development and marketing of the first year learning communities for incoming students and families.
- Coordinate training, professional development and follow-up for faculty about Learning Community initiatives.
- Teach at least one LC in the Fall semesters.
- Coordinate assessment of the first year learning communities.

*Preferred skills/qualifications:*

- a. Ability to navigate curricular approvals process/governance process
- b. Willingness and desire to teach first year students
- c. Ability to work across disciplines with multiple stakeholders
- d. Experience with high impact practices
- e. Examples of successful previous student affairs and academic affairs collaborations

*Appointment:* Summer 2015 appointment

*Salary:* \$5500

*Proposed timeframe:*

- Initial proposal and position description for Faculty Coordinator for implementation delivered to CEMAT by end of February.
- Faculty Coordinator search process begins in March 2015 with Summer 2015 start.
- Full proposal developed through Summer 2015 with Retention Steering Committee, Learning Community Council and other key stakeholders. Presented to CEMAT by August 2015.
- Course development and needed curricular processes occur during 2015-16 academic.
- Implementation for Fall 2016