

Guidelines for Completing the Learning Communities Proposal Form

The Learning Communities Committee has prepared this guide to help faculty complete and for administrators to evaluate the LC Proposal Form. We hope you find it useful in answering any questions you may have about the process. If you still have questions or concerns, contact Jim Allen, LC Committee Chair, at 942-3421 or allenj@cod.edu.

Before Starting the Form:

Before you begin completing the form, each faculty member should meet to discuss the concept/theme you'll develop the LC around. You'll also want to inform your dean that you will be submitting a proposal.

If you're proposing a new LC, you'll need to complete **all** parts of the form as discussed below.

If you're proposing an LC that you've previously had approved and offered, you *still* need to submit **the first page** of the form; this helps ensure that we don't overlook any LCs when doing scheduling or marketing.

Completing the Form:

New/Revision/Existing LC: You need to indicate if your LC is new, a major revision, or an existing LC. We need to know whether you and your colleague may be eligible for a Developmental stipend.

Semester Proposed: Indicate which semester and year you plan to offer the LC. When choosing which semester to offer your LC, you may want to check with the LC chair or your Associate Dean regarding deadlines for submitting the proposal. Keep in mind that the LC Committee needs to review your proposal for approval *before* sending it on to your Associate Dean for approval and scheduling.

1 & 2) LC Title and Description: Marketing is a key component of any successful LC. The information provided in these sections will be what students see on flyers and posters and what counselors or advisors who may recommend your LC to students will use. The LC Committee can offer suggestions, if necessary. If you're repeating an LC and are fine with the previous description, you can copy/paste that language here.

3.) Faculty Proposers: List all faculty involved in offering the LC.

4.) LC Type: The type of LC you offer is up to you, depending on the degree of integration you want to achieve. For your reference:

Team-Taught/Integrated: This type of LC typically involves a higher degree of integration between the faculty members for a dedicated cohort of students (the same

students would sign up for each class in the LC). We schedule the classes in these LCs back-to-back in the same classroom to allow the LC faculty members to team teach or at least be present in each course. In addition, the LC would include shared assignments, readings, assessments, and/or other activities that would comprise all or part of the students' grade in each course.

Linked Courses: These types of LCs usually have a common cohort of students, but the degree of integration is lower. The courses involved should share a common theme as well as some shared assignments and/or activities. We do not expect faculty to team-teach or even be present in each other's courses (though you may, if possible/desired), but we expect faculty to coordinate some level of integration between the courses.

Other: While the two options listed above are the two most common types of LCs offered at COD and elsewhere, you may choose to construct other potential models. If you and your partner(s) develop an approach other than one of the two listed above, please provide an explanation for the LC Committee to consider. **Please Note:** Our committee is always open to innovations in integrated/interdisciplinary curriculum, provided the faculty can offer a sound rationale for their approach to their LC that still reflects best practices.

Honors Seminar? Indicate if you intend this LC to be an Honors Learning Community Seminar. Remember that you'll also need to submit a proposal form to the Honors Faculty Advisory Committee for approval as an Honors offering.

5.) Courses Involved in the LC: State the discipline, course number, course title, credit hours, and seat caps for the LC. Faculty are free to choose the courses they want to include in the LC; however, we've found that LCs are more likely to make if they contain **at least one gen ed course** and/or contain courses that fulfill program/pathways requirements. You may also want to reach out to discipline chairs in case you need to coordinate with their long-term course planning. **Please note:** LCs always have their seat caps set according to the course with the lowest seat cap. Thus, if combining a SPEECH 1100 or ENGLI 1101 course with a course that is typically capped at 35, the cap for the LC will be 22, the seat cap for the Speech and English Composition course.

6.) Requested Days/Times/Delivery Modes/Location and Session Preferences for LC
Indicate which days/times you wish to offer each course in your LC. While you may choose whichever times and days you wish to offer your LC, we find greater success with LCs that run during the day (ending no later than 3 PM). You also need to work within the college's scheduling templates (you can find these on the Faculty Resources for Learning Communities webpage). Again, we will make every effort to schedule all courses involved in the LC back-to-back in the same room, especially if you're team-teaching. If you have a specific room request (need a lab or computer lab), indicate it here. Be sure to indicate the delivery mode (F2F, Hybrid, VCM, or Online) for *each* course. Also, indicate the session (16, 12, first 8, second 8, or other week session) you wish to offer the LC.

NOTE: If you're proposing an existing course that you're offering again, you only need to complete this first page!

7.) **First Time LC:** For purposes of determining eligibility for a Developmental Stipend, as stipulated in the current Faculty Agreement, please indicate the reason and provide an explanation for your selection.

8.) **Major Revision:** If you indicated that this LC is a Major Revision, indicate how/why and provide an explanation for the revision, as indicated.

9 & 10.) **New LC Faculty:** If any (or all) of the faculty are teaching in an LC for the first time, please let us know. These faculty may want to enroll in an LC Workshop if offered that semester through the Faculty Professional Development program. If this isn't possible or available, new LC faculty may want to seek out the LC Committee Chair or one of the LC Committee for more direct mentoring.

11.) **Description of Integration:** This part is the true “heart” of the proposal. In this section, please try to describe in as much detail as possible how you intend to integrate your courses to create the LC regarding a common theme/focus, shared assignments/activities, and so forth. While we don't require you to submit a formal syllabus to the committee, it's a good idea to provide at least as substantive an outline as you can, showing how each professor will be able to meet the course objectives in each course while providing a rationale for the LC as a whole. The more information you can provide to both the committee (and later, your dean), the easier it can be to understand and evaluate it. If proposing a Major Revision of your LC, explain in detail how you'll be revising the LC.

12.) **Target Audience:** Again, for marketing purposes and for outreach to the counselors, having a decent idea of the target audience of students for the LC will be helpful, especially if there are opportunities for more targeted marketing. Please carefully consider whether the LC will attract at least a dozen students to prevent the LC from being cancelled.

13.) **General Education Learning Outcomes:** To reflect the college's push to promote and assess our General Education Learning Outcomes, please indicate which outcomes you believe your LC can/will address (select as many as you believe are relevant) and provide a brief statement on how you and your partner will assess your success in addressing these outcomes.

14.) **Overall Assessment:** Please provide a brief statement detailing how you and your partner intend to evaluate the overall success of your LC, both in terms of its effectiveness in achieving the learning outcomes for each class involved as well as any other relevant goals or outcomes you have for this LC.

How Will the LC Committee Evaluate Your LC Proposal?

The LC Committee (specifically, the LC chair and the faculty members of the committee) will evaluate your LC proposal based on the following criteria:

Theme/Rationale: What is the interdisciplinary theme or rationale connecting these courses? The faculty should present a clear rationale for connecting/integrating these courses.

Courses Included in LC: What is the rationale for connecting/integrating these courses? Is at least one of the courses a gen ed course? If not, why will these courses appeal to the target audience of the LC?

Target Audience: Who are the intended students for this LC? How broad/focused is the available student pool? The more specific the target audience, the more difficult achieving a sufficient enrollment may be, unless we can offset that issue through targeted marketing.

Level of Integration: How integrated are the courses? While this level can vary, there must be some evidence of shared activities (readings, assignments, or activities) to connect the courses.

Should the LC Committee have any concerns regarding the proposal, they will contact the faculty promptly to discuss these concerns and offer suggestions for revision. The LC Committee's priority is to assist faculty in developing effective LCs; faculty are always welcome to discuss their ideas and concerns with the chair and/or committee members prior to submitting a proposal.

Once the LC Committee has reviewed and accepted your Proposal, you'll need to bring it to your dean for final approval. Each relevant Dean must sign the form. You then need to turn in the signed proposal to the Chair of the LC Committee, who will then send it to the Field and Experiential Learning Office for scheduling.

Again, we hope you find this guide useful; if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jim Allen, the LC Committee Chair, at 630-942-3421 or allenj@cod.edu.