



## Learning Community (LC): Developmental framework



**C I R T L** *The following framework has been developed as a touchstone for program developers/instructors/facilitators as they develop the learning goals and evaluation plans for their participants in their programs. It is also meant to guide their own practice.*

<b>Guiding Questions</b>	<b>Conceptualization</b>	<b>Well developed understanding, systematic and ongoing action</b>	<b>Some understanding, moderate or irregular action</b>	<b>Cursory knowledge, minimal action</b>
<i>How do I promote shared discovery and learning among my learners?</i>	<b>Shared discovery and learning promotes all participants to share responsibility for achieving the learning goals.</b>	Practitioner understands the value of collaborative learning, has the skills to implement, implements them, and intentionally evaluates these activities to improve his/her approach to enhance learning.	Practitioner understands the value of collaborative learning and other group-learning techniques, and skillfully implements some of them, but in a non-integrated fashion and without an evaluation plan.	Practitioner uses collaborative learning or some other group-learning technique, but it's just "dropped in" with no understanding of the impact on other course or learning activities.
<i>How do I support meaningful interactions among learners necessary to achieve the learning goals?</i>	<b>Interactions throughout LC and among participants are functional and necessary for the learning goals to be accomplished.</b>	Practitioner understands the value of, and knows how to fully integrate functional interactions between learners necessary to achieve the learning goals, implements them, and has built in a plan to evaluate the effectiveness to improve their teaching and participant learning.	Practitioner understands the value of functional interactions among learners to accomplish learning goals and intentionally builds some into the learning activities, but in a non-integrative fashion and without a plan to evaluate the effectiveness.	Practitioner uses sporadic interactions among learners without an understanding of the value and impact of these interactions on their learning and other activities.
<i>How do I connect my materials and activities to other related topics and experiences?</i>	<b>Implicit and explicit connections are made to other learning and life experiences.</b>	Practitioner helps learners feel fully connected with learning opportunities beyond the course, makes explicit the impact on the learning experience, and evaluates the impact of these connections.	Practitioner helps learners connect to a variety of broader teaching and learning assignments/ activities but does not make explicit the impact on the course learning experience; and no plans for evaluation.	Practitioner has "add-on" assignments/activities beyond the primary learning activities that have no other connections to the primary learning goals.
<i>How do I create an inclusive learning environment?</i>	<b>Inclusive learning environment welcomes the learners' diverse backgrounds /experiences and is used to help accomplish the group's collective learning.</b>	Practitioner creates an environment where all learners from a variety of backgrounds rely on each other to achieve the learning goals by recognizing how the diversity of backgrounds enriched their learning. Practitioner evaluates and makes changes based on how diversity enriches learning goals.	Practitioner uses LC techniques to enhance diversity, such as creating a welcoming environment, or intentionally creating small groups based on diverse backgrounds, but connects these techniques in only limited ways to overall learning goals; has no plan to evaluate the impact.	Practitioner "drops in" LC techniques, such as asking learners to talk about their backgrounds, or creating small groups mixing men and women, without using these techniques in any other way, or without any follow-through to connect these techniques to learning objectives.

## Definitions of developmental stages

*The descriptions below define each development stage in the framework.*

### **Developed understanding, committed action**

Practitioner increases his/her knowledge and understanding of the impact of concept on participant's learning. He/she takes action based on this increased understanding, evaluates the actions and improves his/her practice based on these evaluative data.

### **Developed understanding, moderate or irregular action**

Practitioner has some knowledge and understanding of concept based on personal reflection and external sources of information. He/she understands this in the context of his/her own teaching/outreach situation and acts on this knowledge.

### **Cursory knowledge, minimal action**

Practitioner makes elementary changes to teaching/outreach practices based on limited information and with little understanding of why he/she is making the changes.

## Illustrative narrative

### **Shared discovery and learning promotes all participants to share responsibility for achieving the learning goals.**

#### ***Developed understanding, systematic action***

Practitioners at the advanced level understand that shared discovery and learning help promote an individual's responsibility for achieving the learning goals for themselves and others. Advanced understanding enables practitioners to intentionally build in opportunities with explicit structure and direction for learners to individually and collectively learn, rather than simply putting people together in groups without guidance. They evaluate the impact of incorporating the collaborative learning opportunities, and makes informed changes for future iterations.

#### ***Some understanding, moderate or irregular action***

Practitioners at the medium level understand that shared discovery and learning are important aspects to promote and individual's responsibility for achieving the learning goals. They implement some collaborative learning techniques to address this understanding, but do so in a non-integrative way that does not greatly interfere with the basic content or structure of the primary learning activities. They have some interest in the impact these changes are making, but have no plan to systematically evaluate the effect.

#### ***Cursory knowledge, minimal action***

Practitioner at the lowest level understand shared discovery and learning, and collaborative learning techniques as buzzwords, or see them as a transient fad. They have picked up a few "fad-type" ideas and sprinkle them in with no intention of connecting them to what they consider to be the primary content or learning activities. There is no sense of need to evaluate or understand the impact on other course or learning activities.