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Questions about Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs)

What is the purpose of an FLC?

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) are designed to give small groups of professionals (typically 8-10) the opportunity to engage in sustained, meaningful conversations about teaching and learning with supportive colleagues from across campus. Members meet regularly throughout the length of the program as they explore areas of interest, leading to changes in their teaching practice.

What is my role as a Chancellor's Learning Scholar (CLS)?

Your first task is to recruit members to your FLC. Once you have about 8-10 members committed to your FLC, your task is to be the facilitator. The facilitator helps to build community within the group, organizes meetings and activities, and secures resources (usually, books) for the members of the FLC. You will also check in with members who are not participating and promote an open and inclusive community space to share successes and failures.

How do I recruit members to be in my Faculty Learning Community (FLC)?

Each institution will have their own avenues for advertising their Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs). For example, some may have daily email announcements or faculty newsletters. Your teaching and learning center may also have methods to reach out to faculty to notify them of programming. If your FLC is specific to your department or college, flyers in high-traffic areas can also be useful. In addition to advertising, it may be beneficial to do some targeted recruitment of faculty whom the facilitators know may be interested in their topic. You can also invite newly recruited members of your FLC to invite others.

What should we do during our meetings?

The first meeting should be devoted to getting to know each other and to group goal-setting, with an emphasis on what the participants would like to learn and discuss, and what topic or goals they will focus on during the academic year.

Future meetings could focus on discussing a relevant article or chapter from a chosen book, with the facilitator or alternating members leading those conversations (determined ahead of time). FLC members could bring redesigned assignments, activities, or course materials to the group for feedback.

Am I expected to be the expert?

No! The facilitator of the FLC (in this case, the CLS) is not expected to be the expert. The idea is that everyone in the group is learning together. Certainly, there will be some members with more topical experience than others, but each member brings their own experiences and expertise to the group and all of these experiences are valuable and add to the conversation. At the end, we hope that each member will grow as a result of being a member of the community.

How often should we meet?

The literature suggests that FLCs should meet for at least 90 minutes every three weeks. We ask that you set this as a goal, realizing that each FLC will vary according to needs and availability.

Are we supposed to meet in person or can we meet online?

A year ago, we would have encouraged you to meet face to face. As it is, most of you will probably choose to meet online through Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, or whatever meeting platform your institution uses. We highly suggest, if bandwidth and hardware allows, that you use cameras to help build that all-important sense of community.

What should I do if I have questions about running an FLC?

A great place to start is the OneHE community. Here, you will have access to both new and returning CLSs, who will be able to share their experiences with you. If your questions are more about the logistics of being a CLS (for example, questions about stipends), contact Jeff Galle (Jeffery.galle@usg.edu) or Denise Domizi (denise.domizi@usg.edu).

How can I share a great idea, great resource, or great success with other CLSs?

The OneHE community is a wonderful place to share ideas, resources, and successes with other CLSs.

What do we need to turn in at the end of the year?

At the end of the academic year:

1. Each CLS will be asked to complete a survey, and
2. Each CLS and FLC participant will submit a critical reflection that includes:
 - A description of a change or innovation you have made to an assignment, activity, or course material
 - What you hoped to accomplish with this change or innovation (i.e. your goal)
 - Did this change or innovation meet your expectations?
 - What was the outcome for your students?
 - What will you do differently next time?
 - What effect did your participation in this FLC have on your teaching?

Questions About Money

What can I spend my \$500 dollar resource budget on?

Each FLC has a \$500 budget. The facilitator can use some of these funds to order relevant books and other supplies for each member, and for food at face-to-face meetings. We realize that food is typically not allowed to be purchased from state money, however because this money is from a sponsored fund, it is allowed and has been approved by the USG business office. If you have questions about the resource budget and what is allowed to be purchased with this money, contact Jeff Galle at Jeffery.Galle@usg.edu. Please note that reimbursements will happen at the end of the academic year.

Because of COVID, we plan to meet online. Can I send food gift cards to my participants so they can order food to enjoy during our meeting?

Unfortunately, regulations do not permit gift cards to be sent out to purchase food.

How do I get reimbursed for expenses?

You will receive your stipend from your institution upon conclusion of your FLC. Your institution will be reimbursed by the USG for each \$1000 stipend and for your expenses, up to \$500 for your learning community. We will be communicating with your financial office to set up the process whereby you will receive the stipend and any expense reimbursement in May or June 2021 upon conclusion of your learning community.

If you or your business office have questions about reimbursements, contact Jeff Galle at Jeffery.galle@usg.edu.

When will I get my stipend?

Stipends will be paid at the end of the academic year upon successful completion of the responsibilities of the CLS. That is, you have facilitated meetings throughout the academic year, participated in queries and surveys from the USG, and completed the end-of-year survey and reflective summary.