*Guidelines for Composing a Learning Community*

*Theme and Description*

A Learning Community (LC) *theme* is a single, unifying topic which links the classes in an LC together. The Learning Community *description* expands on that theme, providing prospective LC students with a general understanding of the community’s content. Therefore, the creation of a theme and description is an integral part in the formation of a learning community. The guidelines listed below will assist faculty in the development of their LC theme and description.

Composing a Theme

* First, consider your target population. For what group of students are you creating this learning community? (entry-level? first-year? transfer? career and technical education? etc.)

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* Next, determine whether you wish to focus on a specific career area, social issue, or concept.

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Once you have identified your target population and specific focus, you are ready to compose your theme. The theme should:

* Capture students’ interest in the learning community
* Imply or state the focus of the learning community

In addition, the theme may:

* State the disciplines participating in the learning community
* Identify the program coordinating the learning community
* Include a pun (play on words)

Representative Themes:

* “Moving Forward in Early Childhood Education”
(career-focused LC for CTE students)
* “Tools of the Trade: Communication Skills for Today’s Workplace”
(concept-focused LC for transfer students)
* “Think Green: Environmental Politics and Communication
(social issue-focused LC for transfer students)
* “AFFIRM: Unity, Integrity, and Personal Growth”
 (program-focused LC for transfer students)

Your Learning Community Theme:

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Composing a Description

All members of each learning community should participate in the composition of its description, as the description is the backbone of the LC. Prior to registration, learning community themes/descriptions and their corresponding schedules are emailed to students, faculty, and counselors. The description should:

* Use engaging language appropriate for student readers
* Briefly state or explain the content of the learning community
* Mention the target population for whom the LC is designed or will best serve
* Keep the length of the description between 100 and 250 words

The description may:

* Include one of the LC faculty members’ names and contact information
* Identify skills that will be addressed in the learning community

Representative Descriptions:

* “Moving Forward in Early Childhood Education”: Are you interested in teaching or working with young children?  Being able to communicate effectively with children, their parents, your coworkers, and your supervisors is essential for the best opportunities in this career area. Enroll in this innovative learning community to streamline your pathway. You will complete one course in the major as well as Preparatory English using content directly from the child development course and the workplace. By doing some work in the classroom and some work outside of the classroom (hybrid course), you will complete 8 units while being on campus just two days a week. Contact Professor Angela Beyer, CDEV Instructor, at abeyer@deltacollege.edu for more information.
* “Tools of the Trade: Communication Skills for Today’s Workplace”: Want to better prepare for today’s competitive job market? Prospective employees need a range of abilities, including writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills. This learning community emphasizes how communication and critical thinking are vital tools for success in the workplace. Written assignments and presentations will address careers, current events, and the work environment. Feel more confident on your next job presentation or service report! For more information or to add your name to an unofficial wait list, contact Professor Ginger Holden at gholden@deltcollege.edu.
* “Think Green: Environmental Politics and Communication”: GLOBAL WARMING. ACID RAIN. SOLAR ENERGY. FOSSIL FUEL DEPENDENCE. PERIPHERAL CANAL. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE. We read these phrases in the headlines and hear them in political debates. In this learning community, you will learn about environmental issues and the political process. You will also research different viewpoints on environmental

issues and communicate your own ideas. If you want to save the environment—or save the economy from environmentalism—this learning community will give you the opportunity to learn more about some of the most

urgent issues of our times while developing your writing skills. For more information, contact Sheli Ayers at sayers@deltacollege.edu or Joel Blank at jblank@deltacollege.edu.

* “AFFIRM: Unity, Integrity, and Personal Growth”: Would you like to be a part of a learning community that focuses on unity, cultural and academic integrity, and personal growth? If so, the AFFIRM learning community is the place to be! This learning community is designed to support the retention and transfer of African American students. However, this learning community is open to ALL students who believe they can benefit from, and be enriched by, a learning experience focused on African American history, utilizing the power of the written word and cultural empowerment. Contact Marvin Jackson, Resource Specialist AFFIRM, at 954-5188 or mjackson@deltacollege.edu.

Your Learning Community Description:

To view additional Learning Community themes and descriptions, please visit the Learning Communities website. For further assistance with the creation of your LC theme or description, contact Gina Frost, Learning Communities Coordinator, at gfrost@deltacollege.edu.