

10-06-07  
01N-90-NT0  
**Learning  
Communities  
Initiative**

*Learning From Experience: Developing  
Portraits of Practice  
Part I*

**A. Learning Community (LC) Title**

Nursing Career-Ladder Access Through Innovation

**B. Community Curator(s).** Who has prepared Part I of this Portrait on behalf of your LC? What date was it completed?

Ellen Wiseman 2/7/08

**C. Abstract (75 Words or less) *if it has changed***

The Hocking College School of Health and Nursing is seeking grant funding to facilitate a Course ReVisioning project to increase access for licensed practical nurses who wish to enter Hocking College to complete an Associate Degree in Nursing and become registered nurses. With the use of technology and creative curriculum development, the faculty would like to engage in Course ReVisioning for three courses in a curricular sequence within the LPN to RN bridge program in an effort to: a) increase student access with decreased demands for on-campus presence, b) increase student success, c) increase faculty competence and capacity for development and facilitation of on-line learning, and d) increase retention. These face to face, technology-enhanced courses will be significantly revised to allow for a blended online or hybrid model.

**D. Learning Community Members, units, roles.** List your community members, their units or disciplines and roles, *if they have changed*. Who has been added, deleted?

Core members	Unit/Discipline	Contributions
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No change		

Associate Members	Unit/Discipline	Contributions

**E. Background & Context.** Briefly describe your Learning Community Project and the context within which you undertake it. What do you intend to achieve? What technologies are you using and how? What desired ending(s) would you like for the story of your LC and its project? What types of institutional support do you have? What types of support would you like?

We plan to redesign three courses within the Enrichment curricular sequence for licensed practical nurses completing their Associate Degree in Nursing to become RNs. We want to increase student success, increase student retention, and increase faculty competence and capacity for development and facilitation of online learning. We are using WebCT 4.1 and Course Compass. We have strong institutional support from the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of the School of Health and Nursing, and technical support from the Hocking College Online Learning Office. We would like to have support in the form of release time for our faculty to develop and implement the online components of hybrid courses.

**F. Description of your early work, planning and preparations.** Describe the preliminary work of the learning community as you prepare for your community project and for attending your Region’s Learning Institute. What were the key components in your planning and preparation for your LC (Roles? Methods? Timelines? Coordinating schedules?)? What were key issues and concerns, and, how did you sort them out? What were the key successes and what impacts have they had? Are there any vignettes that illustrate these?

Preparation: Our faculty prepared for our community learning project by reading and sharing many journal articles. Faculty traveled to other nearby campuses and spoke with experienced online faculty. Molly Weiland attended the annual Redesign Alliance Conference and gathered information there. Faculty also collaborated and consulted with FITNE in Athens, Ohio.

Timeline: Our timeline called for us to have three enrichment courses converted to the

hybrid format by fall quarter of 2007 with additional hybrid courses added each quarter throughout year two of the nursing program.

Key concerns: One of the most difficult issues was coordinating nursing faculty schedules for the whole group to be able to meet. Having large enough blocks of time to work on the project was also a concern. To address these issues, we did receive some release time that was paid for through the OLN grant. Since we could not meet as a large group very often, members have met frequently in small groups.

Key successes: We have four nursing enrichment courses at this point in the hybrid format. We have increased interest among faculty in converting their courses to the hybrid format. Nursing faculty members have expressed increased comfort and capability in using technology and online formats. Students come to the hybrid class better prepared and are more accountable for and active in their own learning. Student surveys after the first quarter of hybrid courses were overwhelmingly positive in favor of hybrid learning.

**G. Community building and project development.** Describe early phases of building your community and developing your collaborative project. What key challenges and problems do you face and how do you handle them? What did they - or will they - lead to? What successes have you enjoyed to date? Are there any vignettes of potential consequence or impacts that you can share? What resources are you using to support community building and how are they making a difference?

Our earliest phase was a dissemination of articles about hybrid courses. We spent a great deal of time looking at how other institutions developed and implemented the hybrid format. We have faced some faculty resistance to adopting technological approaches, but the overall acceptance is increasing. Faculty worry about test security and designing the online format so that academic honesty is maintained. There is some concern about determining which learning activities are best suited for online and which are best suited for a face-to-face learning environment. With regard to resources that we are using for community building, we are using our faculty development day each quarter to schedule a brown-bag lunch to discuss progress and share ideas.

**H. Planning Your Assessment Strategies.** How will you evaluate your work/successes? How will you assess member learning, including technology? your community's growth over the year? student learning or change connected with your project? Both formative (this Case Study is part of this) and summative methods should be used.

We will assess student success and retention by comparing the numbers of students completing courses satisfactorily with past quarters. We will also collect end-of-course student surveys each quarter. Community member learning will be measured both by the number of additional nursing courses available to students in hybrid format and also through a learning community survey where members will describe what they have learned.

**THIS IS THE END OF**  
***Learning From Experience: Developing Portraits of Practice***  
**Part I**

[Submit Part I to [eburns@shawnee.edu](mailto:eburns@shawnee.edu) as a MS Word attachment by **April 13.**]

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***Learning From Experience: Developing Portraits of Practice***  
**Part II**

**To be worked on after your Learning Institute  
and finalized before the June 15<sup>th</sup> EXPO.)**

I. **Community Curator(s).** Who has prepared Part II of this Portrait on behalf of your LC? What date was it completed?

Ellen Wiseman 5/1/08
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J. **Key Resources.** Who and what are the beneficial people, organizations, materials, websites, and other resources you have utilized? What help/support did you get from instructional designers, IT staff and other tech support personnel? *What types of support did you receive from departments, colleges, administration? Of all resources, which were essential and why were they essential?*

We found many resources that were helpful throughout this grant. We began by searching the literature. The University of Wisconsin's web site on hybrid education, Carol Twigg's new models for online learning, Ron Bleed's A Hybrid Campus for the New Millennium and the National Center for Academic Transformation all provided helpful information. FITNE was also used as an initial resource to give us ideas regarding online course development. The online learning department at Hocking College was foundational in providing guidance and support in course construction. Departmental support was provided by our dean through release time to work on course design and attend conferences. Our dean, Dr. Molly Weiland, also provided meeting times and places and keen enthusiasm about the project. All of these resources were valuable to us. The project would not have been possible without the support of the Hocking College online learning department.
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**K. Your Assessment Strategies.** How did you evaluate your work/successes? How did you assess member learning, including technology? your community's growth over the year? student learning or change connected with your project?

What have you observed or concluded at this point with respect to member learning, your community's growth, and student learning?

Assessment is ongoing in the areas of student satisfaction, student retention, faculty satisfaction, and faculty learning. We have assessed student outcomes through end of course surveys and by tracking retention rates. Students overall indicated a preference for the hybrid format over both traditional classroom and a total online format. Student course completion rates were compared and the success rate was found to be about the same as when the courses were taught in the traditional format.

We also surveyed learning community members and found they felt they had learned more than they had anticipated and have become resources for the rest of the department. We also evaluated community member learning by noting if additional nursing courses would be offered in a hybrid format in the future. Presently we have 2 more courses available with several faculty in the development process and several more expressing interest. The community has expanded to incorporate more faculty interested in hybrid course development.

**L. What others know about what you've done.** Beyond your community members, who else is vested in what you're doing? How did you communicate and update these stakeholders on your efforts and successes? What questions do your colleagues have? What have you told your students about your learning community?

The School of Nursing is committed to providing a high-quality program that is highly accessible. Our college is also committed to increasing access to courses. Our colleagues and administrators are regularly notified about the learning community activities and are invited to join all meetings. Quarterly luncheons are held to provide information regarding online learning and to offer assistance to interested faculty. Students have been made aware of our activities and are invited to provide feedback at any time regarding ways to enhance their learning.

**M. Dissemination.** What visible bridgework -- structural elements, findings, lessons, ideas, beauties, legacies, processes, relationships, etc -- is your learning community leaving, that inspires others to *build their own bridges as they walk on them*? What digital resources have you developed that you will place into the E-Learning Athenaeum of Ohio? What might members offer, such as informal "brown bag" lunches, research, write articles, give presentations about your work? What is important to tell others "not to do"?

Our redesigned courses are made available to any interested faculty member. Many use our initial work and lessons learned as they begin their own hybrid courses. We provide support, offer suggestions, have brown bag lunches, answer questions and share

information that we have gleaned from our experiences. We have developed a close working relationship with our online learning department. We have made a podcast for posting on the OLN EXPO website and plan to show our accomplishments at the EXPO on May 19.

**N. 20/20 Hindsight.** If you were to start over again, what would you do differently and why? What key challenges, problems, solutions, struggles, and failures, would you handle differently? To what degree would you change your goals? What additional successes would you enjoy? *What worked - or didn't work -- and why?*

We believe we have been very successful in meeting our goals. It has been exhausting, but at the same time exhilarating! We did underestimate the amount of time we would need to educate ourselves and create the courses we developed. It was difficult to find times when the entire community could meet. We had many meetings of a few members and communicated frequently through e-mail. We were all able to meet as a group during brown-bag lunches at least once a quarter. We underestimated the amount of computer help some of the students would need, so we have addressed that with an increase in orientation time and individual instruction.

**O. What's next?** Will your community continue? Formally? Informally? What could be next in another cycle of reflective practice? The next steps may not be totally predictable and yet, they would take you in another fruitful direction that builds upon your community's growth and knowledge.

Our community will continue to meet informally and in planned meetings during our faculty development days. Because several of us are in the same department, we communicate with each other daily. Many people are in the planning stages and we will continue to meet with them. We will continue to collect student data through end of course surveys.

**This is the end of Part II**  
***Learning from Experience: Developing Portraits of Practice***

**Please bring a Final Copy of PORTRAIT OF PRACTICE - Parts I and II to the Ohio Learning Network's June 15, 2007 EXPO at the Reese Center, Central Ohio Technical College/OSU-Newark, and send a copy to your Southeast Regional Center.**

**Thank You!**