



League
FOR INNOVATION
IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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The Learning College Project

Introduction

In the early 1990s, community colleges, building on their student-centered and teaching-centered values, began to add learning-centered values to their mission and program statements. Many community colleges embraced the concept of the Learning College which "places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners anyway, anyplace, anytime." Almost all the respondents (97 percent) to a 1997 survey of over 500 presidents of the League's Alliance for Community College Innovation indicated that their institutions will move toward becoming more learning centered in the next three to five years. Many community colleges have made a commitment to become more learning centered, a commitment that represents a significant dedication to changing the traditional architecture of education.

The *real voyage of discovery*
consists not in seeing new landscapes,
but in having **new eyes**. - Marcel Proust



In January 2000, the League received a major grant to fund the Learning College Project, a project designed to provide opportunities for intercollege collaboration to help community colleges fulfill their commitment to learning-centered education. The League received 94 applications in response to its invitation to all community colleges in the U.S. and Canada to apply. An international team of community college scholars and practitioners well-versed in Learning College concepts evaluated the applications, and 12 colleges were selected as Vanguard Learning Colleges. Ultimately, the 12 colleges will become incubators and catalysts for the Learning College concept for other educational institutions around the world. The project is funded for the first three years, and the League is committed to working with the 12 colleges over a five-year period to achieve the purpose of the project.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the Learning College Project is to assist community colleges in the United States and Canada to become more learning centered by creating a network of 12 Vanguard Colleges strongly committed to the Learning College concept, whose efforts can serve as a basis for model programs and best practices.

Project Objectives

- Organizational Culture. Each of the 12 colleges will cultivate an organizational culture where policies, programs, practices, and

personnel support learning as the major priority.

- Staff Recruitment & Development. Each of the 12 colleges will create or expand (a) recruitment and hiring programs to ensure that new staff and faculty are learning centered and (b) professional development programs that prepare all staff and faculty to become more effective facilitators of learning.
- Technology. Each of the 12 colleges will use information technology primarily to improve and expand student learning.
- Learning Outcomes. Each of the 12 colleges will agree on competencies for a core program of the college's choice, on strategies to improve learning outcomes, on assessment processes to measure the acquisition of the learning outcomes, and on means for documenting achievement of outcomes.
- Underprepared Students. Each of the 12 colleges will create or expand learning-centered programs and strategies to ensure the success of underprepared students.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2002

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