



Community College of Allegheny County
Achieving the Dream Newsletter
Focusing on Student Success

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OCS Supports the Learning Commons

Many people who work in the Office of College Services once worked on a campus, and they often lament the fact that they don't see students on a daily basis. So when an opportunity to support students arises, they are eager to help.

Such was the case in October when the Office of College Services was asked to contribute to the Learning Commons. The OCS staff generously donated snacks and candy to support the Learning Commons' Meet & Greet and Study Party events. Boxes full of goodies were delivered to the campuses the week before Halloween. Thanks to everyone who contributed!

In this issue:

Achieving the Dream

OCS Supports the Learning Commons

CCAC's Student Engagement Transcript

Open Educational Resources

Assessment

CAT Best Practices

A Special Note of Thanks

CCAC's Student Engagement Transcript

Aaron Hoffman, Associate Professor of History, Boyce Campus and The Democracy Commitment Coordinator

As you start to think about assignments or extra credit for your syllabi for next semester, consider including the Student Engagement Transcript. Over the past year, CCAC has revised and updated the engagement transcript. Students can log in using their CCAC username and password and record their co-curricular and student engagement activities they participated in during their semesters at CCAC. These can include membership in student life clubs and organizations, internships, service learning experiences and workshop/conference attendance. There is an additional text box for students to document leadership skills or specific accomplishments. For instance, they can note their involvement in a school theatre production, contributions to the campus newspaper or leadership role in their student life club's such as the Scouting for Food Drive or Annual Scarf Drive.

Students can request to have their activities verified by a student life representative and receive an official

transcript on college letterhead with an embossed seal. This official document can complement a student's resume and academic transcript when they apply for scholarships, colleges/universities or employment.

If this seems like an activity you might be interested in assigning to your students as a self-reflective essay or as extra credit, the student engagement transcript can be found on the college's website by clicking "Student Life" and then "Civic Engagement." It will then be listed on the left under "Student Engagement Transcript." See: <https://www.ccac.edu/Academics/Civic-Engagement/Civic-Engagement-and-Volunteerism/>



Roadmaps are Available for Spring!

Roadmap is designed to engage students at entrance and teach them how to become active partners in their educational success. It has the potential to change students' lives by providing the framework for academic and career planning conversations that will help students maintain focus and achieve their goals.

Contact Mary Kate Quinlan (mquinlan@ccac.edu) to get copies for your classes or events.

Open Educational Resources

A quick search on the internet reveals more than 100 million results for open educational resources. So what are they and why is everyone talking about them?

Open educational resources (OER) are freely accessible, openly licensed course materials (documents and media) that are useful for teaching. Many community colleges like [Maricopa](#) in Arizona see OER as a way to radically decrease costs by offering low cost or no cost options for course materials. Since the content is open, instructors are able to reuse, revise and redistribute the materials.

If you are interested in using OER materials in your classroom, check out the following resources for more information.

<http://openstaxcollege.org/> - OpenStax College offers students free textbooks that meet the scope and sequence requirements for most courses. These are peer-reviewed texts written by professional content developers.

<http://lumenlearning.com/> - Lumen Learning contains open educational resources to eliminate textbook costs and broaden access to educational materials.

<http://oerconsortium.org/> - Community College for Open Educational Resources contains more than 750 open textbooks, search by subject.

Math Specific

<https://www.myopenmath.com/> - free interactive math homework

<http://mathispower4u.yolasite.com/> - video lectures, good resource for flipping a lesson

CAT Best Practices

The ATD newsletter periodically features a CAT Summary to highlight the best practices in classroom assessment at CCAC. Three things really stand out about this assessment. First is the use of real-world applications of what students are learning. This technique requires students to connect new information to prior knowledge in order to apply it to a situation, which improves learning and also increases motivation to learn. Second, this summary touches on an often overlooked aspect of assessment which is attitude development. Learning goals fall into three categories: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Attitudes and beliefs play an important role in learning, and helping students develop awareness of attitudes can be a very powerful tool. Finally, this technique and topic engaged students on a deeper level as evidenced by the fact that they were still talking about it weeks later.

Faculty Name	Deborah G Conway, PhD
Campus	South
Date	11-3-14
Discipline/Program	Psychology/Social and Behavioral Sciences
Course	PSY208 Abnormal Psychology
What learning outcome are you assessing?	The impact of mental illness in every day functioning
Describe the learning opportunity you provided to students to help them achieve the learning outcome.	Incorporated the "Hearing Voices" program into the Abnormal Psychology class.

Classroom Assessment Technique Used	Application Cards
What did the assessment data reveal about student learning?	Students felt this type of learning to be profound and expressed a desire to be more compassionate with those they might encounter in the future.
How did you use the results to improve learning?	I will continue to use real life applications as it is important for students to be able to apply their classroom learning to the outside world.
Evidence of Improved Learning	Many students continued to talk about this experience and ask questions about it in the classes for weeks afterward.

A Special Note of Thanks

I would like to acknowledge and thank the contributors to the ATD newsletter for their willingness to share what they've learned about student engagement and student learning.

- *Debbie Conway*
- *Julie Fennell*
- *Aaron Hoffman*
- *Nancy Persinger*
- *Clyde Pickett*
- *Laurie Sprankle*
- *Student Success Coaches*
- *Kalina White*

*Sincerely,
Mary Kate*



*Season's Greetings &
Best Wishes for a
Happy New Year!*