

Public Abstract

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Title:A Comparative Study of Faculty Principles of Practice in Curricular Learning Communities and Non-Curricular Learning Communities Environments

This study investigated faculty principles of practice in curricular learning communities (CLC) compared to faculty in non-curricular learning community environments. A sample of CLC faculty and non-CLC faculty who teach comparable courses at three, large, four-year, public universities in the Midwest were assessed for their implementation of the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).

Data analysis revealed CLC faculty had higher implementation levels of all seven principles. Only the implementation of encourages active learning and communicates high expectations, however, was significantly different. The factors of hours of professional development completed and years of teaching experience did not have a significant bearing on the implementation of the seven principles. Pearson correlations (r) indicated only the principle of encourages student-faculty contact demonstrated a direct relationship with years of teaching experience. Furthermore, multiple regression revealed the factor of CLC faculty or non-CLC faculty status was the strongest predictor of the use of the seven principles.

The findings have implications for both CLC and non-CLC classrooms. The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987) can be applied to a wide variety of academic disciplines thus allowing the principles to be easily transferred to the traditional classroom setting. Additionally, the approach used in CLC professional development activities and the impact of the CLC structure should be examined to better understand how these factors could be transferred to a non-CLC environment.