# Directions for Designing a Learning Community in an Hour

## Getting focused
Time: 5 minutes

Review these instructions and do some thinking and freewriting in response to the following:

>List some themes or concepts that are of particular interest to you.
>
>Ways to get started: what larger interdisciplinary questions, issues, ideas or problems might be intriguing for you and your students to explore?

## Introductions
Time: 10 minutes

Your group's time keeper needs to start keeping time with this task.

Take no more than 3-5 minutes to introduce yourself, name your discipline/role, what courses you teach. Then briefly describe the interests that grow out of your expertise and passions—interests that are intriguing to you and might also be intriguing to students.

## Choose a theme
 Time 5-10 minutes

Once your team has generated ideas for possible learning community themes, see if you can come to consensus on any common theme, question, or topic that could conceivably be the organizing idea for a learning community. If members of your group have widely divergent interests, take a leap of faith and select one of the themes with which everyone feels relatively comfortable working on for this exercise.

## Flesh out the theme and activities
Time: 25 minutes

If your team was teaching collaboratively around this theme, what might your students do? Brainstorm to generate sub-themes, concepts, authors or titles of texts, films, field experiences, dramatic performances or research projects that support the theme. Generate as many ideas as you can during this period. Do not rank your ideas.

## Make a summary sheet of your work
Time: 10-15 minutes

Summarize some of the key ideas or activities in your learning community design that can underpin a program. Your poster should include:
- A title that supports the theme
- Major concepts and learning activities
- Key learning concepts for students
- Possible embedded disciplines or courses

## Going Further
Time 25-30 minutes

Now that you have a general focus for your learning community, move towards specific planning. Each team member needs to select a concept/outcome/idea that is most critical to him or her of all the possible outcomes that come along with each course. Identify the one that is most important to you and write it down. Taken together, these are the most crucial outcomes for your learning community. Consider each outcome. Pick one outcome. Discuss it enough so that everyone shares an understanding of what it means. The person who named the outcome should write down the kind of support needed from colleagues in designing experiences so that students learn this. The other team members should write down how they think they can help the lead teacher (the person's whose outcome was chosen) help students learn this concept. Share your writing with each other, and be sure someone is taking notes. Move on to the next outcome until all of the outcomes have been discussed.