

The Learning Log

LINDENWOOD

U N I V E R S I T Y

LEARNING ACADEMY

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Pictured from left, Student, Kim Ulrich, Josh Elliott, Cheryl Delaporta, Dr. Tammy Moore, and Student.

Q2 Champions: Real Experience

The Learning Academy believes there are many ways that employees participate in professional development. While traditional workshops and training sessions are both good ways for transferring knowledge and building initial experience, there are other opportunities for furthering professional growth while on the job. One of those great opportunities can be found here at Lindenwood University serving as a Q2 Champion. The Q2 Champions exercise leadership, communication, collaboration, and team-building skills as they work on one of the six unique Q2 Task Forces that focus on enhancing the university people, places, and processes.

The Q2 Real Experience. Real Success. Task Force partnered with the Center for Experiential Learning this month to help students 'Practice their Pitch' prior to walking into the career fair. Q2 Champions were available to ask the students questions that they would likely hear from employers, and students were able to get some of the nerves out before they met with what could be their first employer after graduation!

Faculty Feature



Dr. Barbara Hosto-Marti, assistant professor of political science, recently realized that her policy memo assignment was not working for her students or for her. Students in her general education American Government: The Nation course had little interest in politics, which meant they didn't know where to start. They would wait until the last minute to get going and seek help. They needed significant coaching to hone their focus, but also to complete a research paper that was on target and free from academic dishonesty. Dr. Hosto-Marti decided to try something different that might alleviate these issues. She set out to revise the assignment such that the process would be as important as the product. The objectives remained the same, but a few key things changed.

First, Hosto-Marti devised a realistic scenario by assuming the role of a female, moderate-to-left-leaning senator and having students assume the role of her legislative staff. Second, she grouped students based on policy interest area and assigned each "taskforce" a bill to work on. Third, she translated the individual research paper assignment into four work products each team would submit. Fourth, she required regular taskforce check-ins. Finally, she made the assignment transparent, outlining its purposes, the skills students would develop that would translate across professions, and criteria for success (see the Transparency in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Project at UNLV).

These changes have several benefits. Students have the chance to learn together and from one another. Hosto-Marti can make better use of time with students because she's coaching five teams rather than 25 individuals. Requiring multiple products and check-ins discourages procrastination and allows her the chance to offer corrective guidance early on. Creating an "authentic", project-based assignment enhances active learning and facilitates critical thinking, teamwork, communication, and reflection (see <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/authentic-project-based-learning-john-larmer>). Finally, transparency enables student success. Dr. Hosto-Marti's students are midway through their projects and she's seeing signs of improvement. "Students are already grasping the big concepts about policy, which they missed before. They seem more inclined to grapple with the complexities of public policy in team conversations than they did in individual writing," Hosto-Marti said.

We celebrate Dr. Hosto-Marti for experimenting with her pedagogical approach. In seeking consultation from the Learning Academy to redesign her assignment, she engaged in on-the-job development that directly impacts student learning.

Staff Spotlight

The Learning Academy hosted a leadership series for university leaders in 2018. Out of that series the staff administrators began meeting on a regular basis with the intention of building relationships and furthering professional growth.

Staff administrators are responsible for a range of activities across campus, and it can be easy to develop tunnel vision and forget how your work impacts other divisions across campus. In order to develop strong relationships and build upon each individual's own leadership philosophy, staff administrators meet monthly to learn from each other's experience, communicate changes, and discuss possible solutions to obstacles that arise. This month, **Chanda Jackson, AVP for procurement and operations**, led the Staff Administrator 1s (AVPs) in a thoughtful reflection of her own leadership experience and how it has evolved over time. She discussed how the way we lead tomorrow will look different than it does today; leadership is evolutionary. Diversity in leadership and having professional courage were also points of discussion. Chanda also listed some books by her favorite authors, John Maxwell, Jon Gordon, and Malcolm Gladwell.



[Click here to check out the presentations](#)



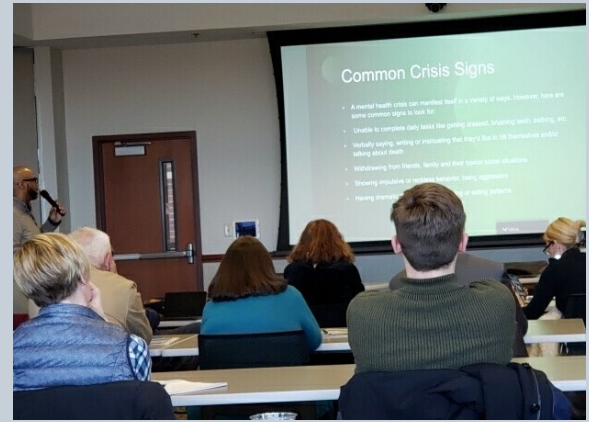
Amanda Schaller, director for admissions and services for international enrollment management, and **Shannon Wright, assistant director for career development**,

facilitated a discussion for directors of staff departments. The focus of the session was largely on cultural awareness and sensitivity. They challenged the staff administrators to take initiative in learning more about a student's culture before an initial meeting with an international student. Just this simple act of gaining knowledge about where the student grew up will show that you care about them as a person, first. In addition to becoming more culturally aware and sensitive, Amanda and Shannon reminded the group that most international students' work experience is on campus, and we as staff administrators should take every opportunity to engage student employees in on-the-job training, mentoring, and a way to build their confidence. Thank you for this learning opportunity!



Retention Retreat

The SASS Office recently hosted a Retention Retreat with professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness shared some retention data and introduced the Gateway Course Initiative Pilot. The retention-focused breakouts focused on creating a Faculty Mentorship Model for Lindenwood, addressing student mental health needs, and cultivating academic identity for undergraduate majors and minors.



[To access materials from these presentations, click here](#)

Looking to promote your learning opportunity, recommend someone to be featured, or partner in some other way with us?
Email LearningAcademy@lindenwood.edu.

Learning Academy Highlights

- Leadership & Supervision Fellow Casey Finell has led **ONE HUNDRED & SIXTY TWO** employees through the **DiSC Assessment**.
- There are currently **ONE HUNDRED** participants (55 staff, 23 faculty, and 22 students) in the **LindenAlly Challenge**, created by DEI Employee Fellow Jen Spellazza.
- Over **ONE HUNDRED** students participated in **Q2 focus groups** with Service Excellence Fellow Betsy Feutz.
- Communications Fellow Elizabeth Snell has created a **Meditation Extension**, just dial extension **4111** on your campus phone for a 2-3 min. guided meditation.
- Communications Fellow, Michael Leary developed **10 Tips for Research & Scholarship Communication** at LU.