PLASMA October Meeting
Tuesday, October 17th, 2017
508 Chemistry; 4 – 5 PM

In attendance: Jill Beyette, College of Engineering; Craig Wiegert, Physics and Astronomy; Brad Barnes, Computer Science; Malcolm Adams, Mathematics; Naomi Norman, OVPI; Norris Armstrong, Kris Miller, Biological Sciences; Chuck Kutal, Chemistry; Tim Burg, Cole Causey, OSE

4:00 – 4:20	Content And Pedagogy • An overview and discussion of how PLAs are prepared to support students, including topics covered in the two pedagogy courses as well as strategies for briefing PLAs on current content and learning materials	Kris Miller / Chuck Kutal / Group

The meeting began with acknowledgement that previous discussions had largely focused on the 'practice' element in the various departments, and that we have a pretty good idea of how faculty are using PLAs in their various learning environments. (If you have not yet completed the brief survey designed to capture an inventory of current efforts, please do so at your earliest convenience: https://ugeorgia.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6hhymiCsvSy9VbL)

An objective of the October meeting was to devote more attention to the 'pedagogy' and 'content' pillars of the model, especially in consideration of scalabitlity, as the programs pedagogy training needs may soon outgrow seats available in the two current courses: BIOL3910 and FCID3100. Kris Miller and Chuck Kutal were asked to provide an overview of the development of these two courses.

BIOL3910 – This course was developed by Kris Miller and Julie Luft. They drew materials from the course based on the LA model literature as well as literature and methods for training pre-service teachers. This course serves PLAs from Biological Sciences. Learning Objective from Norris Armstrong's BIOL1107 course also influenced the curriculum, as the initial offering provided training for PLAs in only that course. BIOL 3910 currently operates on a hybrid face-to-face and online delivery, meeting f2f every other week. Kris charts the course in 4-week blocks which allows for adaptability based on needs and requests from PLAs.

FCID 3100 – This course evolved out of training for Student Learning Assistants (SLAs) which Chuck has used for many years. Training was initially offered out of the College of Education, but moved into a Chemistry Special Topics course a few years ago. FCID 3100 now serves PLAs from various disciplines, including Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics. The course meets weekly in a face-to-face delivery. A particularly well-received element added to the course this semester was a 'Veteran PLA Panel' early in the semester.

A weekly overview of topics for each pedagogy course is included below in this document.

Both courses recently administered mid-semester evaluations for the PLA experience as a whole as well as the pedagogy courses. Common feedback from students in the BIOL3910 course was a need for more help on questioning strategies and how to initiate support with reluctant students. This feedback also appeared on the FCID evaluations, commonly from PLAs who work in large lecture courses. The large lecture environments continue to be the most difficult for effective PLA support.

Content – Some PLAs expressed frustration via the mid semester evaluations that while they are generally familiar with upcoming content, they do not always have access to particular problems or worksheets that will appear in class. A brief discussion on the content element acknowledged that this is an important aspect of the model, and that it can be satisfied in a number of ways (brief meetings after class, weekly meetings at a regular time, via email, etc.)

Additional discussion on pedagogy training included the question of whether or not it could be delivered as a workshop in advance of the semester, similar to how DAE trains its tutors. This is of particular interest to the College of Engineering, whose potential PLAs likely would not want to enroll in a 1-hour course.

Another considerable objective of this learning community will be to assist in efforts to provide development for new PLA adopters. Naomi will pursue the option to have CTL devote one of its active learning workshops to include training on implementing the PLA model. Members of this group will be encouraged to articulate lessons learned in terms of strategies for the effective use of PLAs and the accompanying instructional redesign that is demanded prior to employing PLAs in the classroom. This group will be important in influencing any future training for new adopters.

4:20 – 4:40	Planning Logistics for Spring Semester • Looking forward to needs for spring • Plans for advertising, recruiting, hiring/selecting	Cole Causey / Departmental Coordinators

We are approaching the time during the semester during which we need to start making recruitment plans for spring. Cole will coordinate with departmental coordinators to revise the Qualtrics application surveys for next semester. The main element that will require revision is simply the meeting times of courses that need PLA support.

Brad inquired about potentially expanding in Computer Science with another interested faculty member. Budget needs will need to be defined to determine if the pilot project can support this.

Malcolm noted that fewer sections in Mathematics will be supported by PLAs during spring semester due to funding constraints.

There was a brief discussion reiterating the importance of considerations for long term sustainability in terms of PLA compensation. Physics currently uses a model wherein only veteran PLAs are paid, with first-time PLAs volunteering/receiving credit via the pedagogy course. Malcolm noted a potential difficulty with paying veterans in that we will need to be careful to be clear that return acceptance is not always guaranteed.

4:40 – 4:50	Update on Peer Supported Learning Model in College of Engineering	Jill Bayette

Jill provided an overview of nascent plans for implanting PLAs in the College of Engineering. She has submitted a proposal to the College of Engineering Leadership. That is included below in this document. Jill would like to administer a focus group to students in ENGR 2120 statics to determine their needs, and how PLAs might best support that course. Initial plans are to start with 15 PLAs in fall of 2018. There appears to be support from Dean Leo, who suggested starting with 30. Jill will be attending the LA

Alliance Conference in Boulder. Craig noted that CU-Boulder emphasizes the importance of planning for success, that it important to identify courses *and* faculty that will likely show early benefits from adding PLAs to the instruction.

4:50 – 5:00 General Discussion Group

- Comments, Questions, Concerns
- Suggestions for next PLASMA meeting

A poll will be shared in coming weeks to identify a suitable time for the next meeting of this Learning Community.

5:00 Adjourn

FCID 3100 Topics

Week	**Topic**	**Prior reading**
1	Introductions and orientation to the LA experience	Posted on eLC
2	Question types and questioning strategies	Posted on eLC
3	Veteran PLA Panel: Things We Learned	-
4	Preconceptions and their influence on science learners	Pgs. 10–39
5	Understanding cognition of science learners	Pgs. 40–65
6	Exploring and enhancing student motivation	Pgs. 66–90
7	Factors affecting classroom climate and challenging classroom scenarios - *Mid-term course evaluation*	Pgs. 153–187
8	Current PLA disciplinary panels: what is working with my students and what needs improvement	-
9	How do students develop mastery	Pgs. 91–120
10	How does feedback improve learning	Pgs. 121–152
11	Promoting self-directed learning in students	Pgs. 188–216
12	Capstone presentations - *Capstone essays due*	Pgs. 217–224
13	Capstone presentations (contd.)	-
14	Capstone presentations (contd.) – *PLA program evaluation*	-

BIOL 3910 Topics

Week	Topic	Materials
Before Week 1	What have been my experiences in undergraduate courses? How are undergraduate courses taught?	Hurtado (2012).
Session 1	What is the state of STEM faculty instruction (including biology!)? – Hurtado summary statements What is expected of me in my PLA role?	*Vision and Change* (2009)
Session 2	What does it mean to know? – Content vs concepts in Science - Concept-based teaching and learning	Private Universe - Photosynthesis
Session 3	Questioning to get at knowing (importance of discourse)	Starter Phrases
Session 4	Transition from knowing to learning • The changing role of undergraduate instruction. • How can I support the learning of undergraduates? • What is happening in BIOL 1107, BIOL 1108, BCMB 3100?	Ted Talk: "Freeman Hrabowski: 4 pillars of college success in science."
Online Module	Discussion forum in eLC titled "Questioning Sequence."	"Questioning Sequence."
Session 5	What can I do to support undergraduate learning in biology? Barriers to student learning and ways to probe student learning.	*Making Friends with your Mindset* Activity
Online Module	Equity in the classroom: equality vs equity	Independent Research Tanner (2013)
Session 6	Equity in the classroom: equality vs equity Mid-term feedback on 1) PLA use in BIOL 1107, BIOL 1108, BCMB 3100 and 2) 3910 topics	Independent Research
Online Module	Considering equity in education (continued)	
Session 7	Equity in your discourse	"Assessment of Discourse for Equity Assignment"
Online Module	Considering equity in education (continued) Equity in your discourse (continued)	"Equity in Education" Assignment "Assessment of Discourse for Equity Assignment"
Session 8	Building a Professional Plan	
	Considering equity in education (continued) Equity in your discourse (continued) Building a Professional Plan (continued)	
Session 9	TBD	

2) Conduct seminars for faculty on the use and benefits of PLAs and active learning.
3) Determine how/if PLAs will be compensated.
4) Based on data and instructor interest, select courses for PLA program.
5) Recruit PLAs.
6) Develop pedagogy course or pre-semester pedagogy workshop, if FCID 3100 is not appropriate.
7) Develop assessment plan. Collect preliminary data (Fall 2017 and Spring 2018).

I look forward to receiving feedback on this proposal.

Sincerely,

Jill Beyette

Jill Beyette, PhD