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**Making Connections:**

**Bradley University Interdisciplinary Living Learning Community Program**

**Introduction. A Living Learning Community (LLC)** is a cohort of students who share a residential area based on their common interest in a distinctive theme. The theme should involve students with ‘big questions’ that are studied across disciplines.

Successful LLCs bridge students’ academic and social experiences. By design, learning occurs in and out of the classroom. Participation in Living Learning Communities facilitates students’ academic and social transition to college. LLCs are aligned with best practices when

* Students in the community enroll in one or more academic courses together.
* Co-curricular activities are coordinated with coursework and the residential experience.

**Bradley University Interdisciplinary LLCs** are designed for first-year students. Each LLC features an academic theme of sufficient breadth and depth to (a) warrant an interdisciplinary approach for studying it and (b) stimulate interest among students from *any* major. The theme will often relate to an interdisciplinary major and/or minor at Bradley.

Features:

* Residents will enroll in a first-semester Multidisciplinary Integration (MI) Bradley Core Curriculum (BCC) course tied to the LLC theme.
* Throughout the academic year, a dedicated faculty coordinator will put together featured co-curricular programming (e.g., speakers, discussions, workshops, alumni, community events, etc.) and will be available for academic advising in the context of the LLC. A particular focus for the advising will be directing students to LLC-related Spring BCC coursework and experiential learning opportunities.
* Resident Advisors (RAs) will work collaboratively with the faculty coordinator.
* There is an anticipated enrollment of approximately 25 students in each LLC.

If you are interested in proposing a new academic, interdisciplinary-themed LLC for a Fall 2023 launch, please complete the proposal form (see below) and send to:

Julie Howe, Director, Residential Living and Student Conduct jehowe@fsmail.bradley.edu

Dr. Timothy Koeltzow, Executive Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning tkoeltzow@fsmail.bradley.edu

Inquiries and further information, please contact Derek Montgomery, montg@fsmail.bradley.edu

**Deadline: April 20, 2022**

**Proposal Features**

**1. Support**

In support of Bradley’s *Strategic Action Item 2* to support interdisciplinary studies, funds are available from the Division of Strategy and Innovation for:

* Course modification ($2,000) or the development of a new course ($4,000) linked to the LLC.
* A faculty coordinator would receive a $2,000 stipend for the academic year (co-coordinators would each receive a $1,500 stipend) and a budget of $1,000 to create co-curricular opportunities throughout the academic year (2023-’24).
* Two Assistant Resident Advisors/Resident Advisors (A/RAs) as selected by the Office of Residential Living ($2,000; $500 per A/RA for both semesters of the academic year).

**2. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:**

(a) The Interdisciplinary LLC encourages exposure to a diversity of disciplinary perspectives and welcomes students from a wide range of backgrounds and interests. Evidence for its broad appeal could include one or more of the following:

* Current enrollment (number of students and representation across colleges) in a related interdisciplinary major or minor.
* Enrollment numbers in other closely associated majors or minors.
* Evidence of student input or student interest, such as the engagement with campus student organizations or student initiatives that are related to the theme. (<https://bradley.presence.io/organizations>)

(b) The LLC will link to a BCC course. We are particularly interested in courses that have an interdisciplinary focus and could satisfy the MI requirement. This criterion does not advantage courses that are already created over those that need to be modified or developed. We encourage the revision and development of courses with an interdisciplinary focus.

(c) The LLC has a clearly articulated rationale.

(d) The LLC has clearly articulated curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes that can be assessed.

(e) The theme of the LLC lends itself to co-curricular opportunities that would foster learning and student engagement. This criterion includes the identification of a faculty coordinator who will develop and champion those opportunities.

(f) The LLC is complemented and supported by departments/offices, initiatives, or resources on campus.

**3. Context.** Before completing the proposal form, please read the following overview of LLC structure and goals at Bradley University.

**Features of LLC Structure**

* LLCs have a triadic structure in which classroom learning, co-curricular activities, and the residential experience are interrelated in a complementary fashion. Consequently, students have multiple sources of valuable support from the instructor, the coordinator, and the A/RAs.
* Funds to stimulate the development of a new LLC are available from the Division of Strategy and Innovation. A sustainable structure ultimately ties LLCs to academic units (departments, colleges, offices) that provide necessary support. Champions of a new LLC should consider whether academic units are positioned to provide resources in support of an LLC after it is developed. When accounting for those relatively modest costs (e.g., resources for supporting a faculty coordinator), do gaps exist and are avenues available for cost-sharing?
* Each LLC should have a faculty coordinator designated by the proposing department or office that works with Residential Living to support the student experience. A collaborative relationship between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs is a defining characteristic of high quality LLCs.
* The learning goals and objectives of LLCs are determined collaboratively and assessed.
* At least one BCC course for LLC participants is offered annually. Co-curricular experiences should augment classroom learning.
* A mechanism exists to take into account student voice in evaluating, modifying, and/or creating the goals, design, and operations of an LLC.
* The Division of Student Affairs will have the principal responsibility for handling logistical issues associated with (a) assigning space within a Residence Hall for the LLC, including placement of students, (b) enforcing Residence Hall policies, rules, and regulations, (c) assigning and training A/RA staff, (d) working collaboratively with enrollment management to ensure student awareness of the LLC, and (e) facilitation and collection of student applicant information.
* For each LLC, resources support A/RAs in their efforts to initiate community-building programs and activities in the Residence Hall and work collaboratively with the LLC faculty coordinator.
* Residential Facilities should be considered in planning a new LLC. Residential floors are traditionally single gender and 40 person occupancy. Community space and availability varies among buildings.

**LLC Goals**

* Consistent with Bradley’s *Strategic Imperative 1: Welcoming, Caring, Diverse, and Inclusive*, LLCs
	+ Nurture a sense of belonging among students.
	+ Foster respect for individuals from all backgrounds and support equity, diversity, and inclusion.
* Consistent with Bradley’s *Strategic Imperative 4: Boundary-Breaking Innovations*, LLCs foster student engagement in co-curricular activities outside of the classroom.
* LLCs facilitate students’ academic and social transition to college.
* LLCs provide opportunities for faculty mentorship. A faculty coordinator creates and implements co-curricular programming and publishes office hours so that residents may meet to discuss LLC-related academic questions, careers, professional and graduate school options, and experiential learning opportunities.
* In support of Bradley’s *Strategic Imperative 4: Boundary-Breaking Innovations* and *Strategic Action Item 2*, LLCs have an interdisciplinary focus.
* LLCs have specific curricular and co-curricular learning goals and objectives.
* LLC themes are academic and have sufficient depth and breadth to be relevant for any student (regardless of major).



**Making Connections:**

**Bradley University Interdisciplinary Living Learning Community Program Proposal Form**

**Instructions**: Please type your responses to the following questions. Please use 12 point font size. Completed proposals should total no more than 5 single-spaced pages. The boxes below are expandable. **Eligibility**: Bradley faculty and staff. **Deadline:** April 20, 2022.

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| Name(s) | Department/Unit |   | e-mail  |
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| **Proposed interdisciplinary theme (a title and brief description)** |
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| **Rationale: Explain the opportunity and/or need met by the proposed LLC. Please include an explanation for how the residential component contributes to the opportunity and/or need.** |
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| **Learning Outcomes: Concisely define what students will learn as a result of living in the LLC. How will these outcomes be assessed? Please note that outcomes should be both curricular and co-curricular in nature.** |
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| **An LLC needs to have support for both academic and co-curricular learning. A faculty coordinator creates and implements co-curricular programming (e.g., speakers, workshops, alumni panelists, community events, or conversations in the residence hall common area).** **List the faculty coordinator (or co-coordinators) and representative co-curricular opportunities related to the LLC theme.**  |
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| **LLC Common Academic Class: The course should satisfy BCC MI requirements and should not have a prerequisite.** |
| **Please list either one course that all students take as a cohort or a common course they all take but in different sections:****If the course needs to be created please note (or n/a)**:**If there are other courses that could potentially connect to the theme, please list them (or n/a):**  |

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| **How would the LLC build community by enhancing connections among students and faculty/staff**? |
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| **Are there any other departments/offices, LLCs, initiatives or resources on campus or in the community that would complement and/or compete with this LLC? Please note sources of potential collaboration**. |
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| **Because this is a seed initiative, we welcome your input on how to craft a sustainable LLC. If this seeded pilot project proves successful (e.g., advances enrollment, retention, and/or creates a welcoming environment), to what extent do you anticipate support from academic units for sustaining the LLC? When accounting for those relatively modest resource needs, do gaps exist?** |
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| **Please provide evidence for student input and/or student interest in the proposed theme (e.g., student organizations, enrollment data, etc.).** |
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| **Signatures (typed or an uploaded image) and date** |
| A. Submitter(s) of proposal: |

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| --- |
| B. Department Chair/Unit Director:C. Dean or Vice President: |

Email the completed proposal by April 20, 2022 to:

Julie Howe, Director, Residential Living and Student Conduct jehowe@fsmail.bradley.edu

Dr. Timothy Koeltzow, Executive Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning tkoeltzow@fsmail.bradley.edu