

Antiracist Activities and Policies for Student-Led Study Groups

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<https://doi.org/10.36896/5.1sc1>

ABSTRACT

Issues of race and marginalization do not often intersect with publications related to developmental education and learning assistance. Too often, these issues have been ignored. This guide to antiracism policies and practices for student-led study groups is based on a careful review of scholarly articles, books, existing guides, practical experiences by the authors, and feedback from the study group administrators in the field. While much has been written about culturally-sensitive pedagogies for K-16 classroom instruction, little has emerged for guiding postsecondary peer study groups regarding antiracism practices. This guide helps address this gap in the literature and recommended practices. In addition to its application for academic study groups, this guide has value for faculty members to incorporate antiracism learning activities and pedagogies into their courses. Effective learning practices are identified in this article that can be adapted and adopted for supporting higher student achievement, closing the achievement gap, increasing persistence to graduation, and meeting the needs of culturally-diverse and historically-underrepresented students. This is an excerpt from a much-longer and detailed guide that will be published in the near future.

Keywords: peer assisted learning, antiracism, study groups, curriculum, course-based learning assistance

For too long, the field of learning assistance and developmental education has been silent regarding the impact of student demographics on the effectiveness and attractiveness of their programs and services. This article is narrowly focused on the role of race/ethnicity. Antiracist activities and policies are applied to student-led

study groups to make them more inclusive and effective. This guide is designed to be added to existing training programs for student-led study groups. It is not intended to be inclusive of all the practices and policies to guide those programs to best serve students. A comprehensive guide that includes the policies and practices from this article has been submitted for publication (Arendale, 2022). This article is an excerpt of this longer publication.

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Course-Based Learning Assistance (CLA) is defined as peer cooperative learning assistance that accompanies and supplements a specific, targeted course. While many CLA activities often operate outside of the course meeting times, CLA can be integrated into the course sessions by some instructors. Other CLA programs are hybrid or totally online. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many CLA programs have operated virtually. A few CLA programs award academic credit for student participation. Inspiration for this guide comes from five national and international models of CLA (Arendale, 2004) that have been implemented widely: Emerging Scholars Program (ESP) (Asera, 2001; Deshler et al., 2016; Treisman, 1986), Peer-led Team Learning (PLTL) (Roth et al., 2001; Winterton, 2018), Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) (Diehl, 2017; Giraldo-Garcia & Magiste, 2018), Supplemental Instruction-PASS (SI-PASS) (Paabo et al., 2019; Stone & Jacobs, 2006), and Video-based Supplemental Instruction (VSI) (Armstrong et al., 2011; Martin & Blanc, 2001).

Some of these programs operate under different names. The ESP program is sometimes known as *Excel*, *Gateway Science Workshop*, *Math Excel*, *Mathematics Workshop*, *Merit*, *Professional Development Program Mathematics Workshop*, and the *Treisman Model*. SI is sometimes named *Peer Assisted Learning (PAL)*, *Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)*, *Peer Assisted Study Schemes (PASS)*, or *Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS)*. At times, SI is named *Academic Mentoring*, *Peer Mentoring in Praxis (PMIP)*, *Academic Peer Mentoring Scheme (APM)*, or simply *Peer Mentoring*. Other than the use of the capitalized SI name, some of these other names may be used to describe approaches that are different than SI. Many other colleges and tertiary institutions have developed their own unique CLA programs that are unaffiliated with any of the previously mentioned national or international models. CLA can also be less formal and take the form of study cluster groups and group problem-solving sessions.

Relationship with Specific Protocols of International Peer Programs

This antiracism CLA guide is not intended to substitute for the specific procedures that national or international CLA models encourage others to follow. Instead, this guide establishes a baseline for the successful implementation of a CLA program that implements antiracism policies and practices. Examples are included, but they are not exhaustive. While the CLA principles remain fairly stable, the expression of CLA continues to grow in nuance, sophistication, and with new activities. Consider the examples as samples of

possible activities. The review team for these guides generated many of these examples from the day-to-day operation of their peer programs.

Organization of the Antiracism CLA Guide

This antiracism guide follows a 12-section pattern. The sections are not standardized in size because each section contains a different number of antiracism activities and policies, with the largest being Section Four: Program Design and Activities. Since this article is only focused on antiracism, many other essential practices for study group programs are not included. The comprehensive guide to CLA programs, which includes these antiracism practices and policies, will be published in the near future (Arendale, 2022). The sections are titled as follows:

- Section One: Mission and Goals
- Section Two: Assessment and Evaluation
- Section Three: Learning Environment
- Section Four: Program Design and Activities
- Section Five: Professional Development for CLA Facilitators
- Section Six: Institutional Governance and Policy
- Section Seven: Program Leadership
- Section Eight: Human Resources
- Section Nine: Financial Resources
- Section Ten: Technology
- Section Eleven: Ethics, Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Section Twelve: Collaboration and Communication

Guidance for this Antiracism Guide

Several major publications guided the development of this antiracism guide for study groups. First, a glossary of antiracism definitions for education and life identified many of the major terms that have negatively impacted the learning environment and harmed people of color (Pokhrel et al., 2021). Another influential publication was a research study conducted on a student peer study program (Frye et al., 2021).

Key Definitions for Understanding the CLA Guide

CLA participants – The students enrolled in the target course where CLA is offered who participate in the CLA sessions.

CLA facilitator – The person who manages and directs the CLA session. Depending upon the CLA program and expectations for the role, this person may be a student, non-student paraprofessional, professional staff member, or instructor. In Supplemental Instruction, they are called SI Leaders. In Peer-Led Team Learning, they are called Team Leaders.

CLA professional staff – Personnel, including the CLA program administrator, who coach, manage, and/or supervise the CLA program.

CLA program administrator – The lead person who is responsible for overall leadership and management of the CLA program.

CLA sponsoring instructor – Instructor that hosts the CLA program within their course. Instructors' level of involvement is dependent upon the particular CLA type.

Target course – The course that is targeted for CLA program support.

Section One: Mission and Goals

The establishment of the program's mission and goals is necessary to provide guidance and benchmarks to evaluate. However, some mission and goal statements may be more appropriate than others for some specific CLA programs and academic content areas. The difference between learning goals and outcome goals is sometimes difficult to differentiate. For the purposes of this guide section, please use the following definitions.

Academic and Personal Development Outcome Goals are associated with student behaviors that are achieved as a result of CLA participation. Examples of academic and personal behaviors of CLA participants to contrast with non-CLA participants would be when students (a) achieve higher final course grades and lower rates of D, F, incomplete, and course withdrawal; (b) have a better adjustment to college; (c) employ a wider range of learning strategies; (d) display enhanced individual and small group communication skills; (e) increase in cultural competence; (f) are better able to navigate ambiguity; and (g) display higher resilience to challenges academically and personally.

Learning Outcome Goals are associated with student cognition, e.g., knowledge that is achieved as a result of CLA participation. Examples of this knowledge include a deeper understanding of the course subject matter, new strategies for solving academic problems, higher motivation, increased confidence, higher self-esteem, and higher self-efficacy.

In the past decade, increased attention has focused on what the CLA experience does to and for the CLA facilitators. This is a new area for the CLA guides. These guide statements only appear in the recommended areas in each guide since the primary focus of most peer learning programs is on the CLA participants.

A. CLA Mission

1. In order to monitor its mission, the CLA program establishes an advisory group that is diverse regarding gender identity, race, and other demographics.

- a. The group includes faculty and student services such as respected faculty members, academic advisors, counselors, tutor program coordinators, CLA facilitators, students, and others. Students should always be represented in decision-making that affects students.
- b. The group holds periodic meetings that include topics such as feedback on CLA program reports; review of CLA program mission, goals, and objectives; ensuring the enactment of antiracist and equitable policies and procedures; review of the cultural diversity of staff, student paraprofessionals, and students served; support of CLA program with campus policymakers to increase budget; and provision of guidance and direction to improve the CLA program. If a formal board is not feasible, the CLA administrator periodically meets with institutional employees.
- c. The group ensures that the CLA program operates in a proactively antiracist manner regarding hiring practices, policies, procedures, CLA session activities, resource allocation, and program mission.

B. CLA Program Goals

1. The CLA program provides a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for all students, and the CLA staff and facilitators are held accountable for this goal.
2. The diversity of the students served and the CLA staff and student paraprofessionals equals or exceeds the diversity of the institution's student body.
3. The CLA program staff seek to serve on candidate selection panels for positions located throughout the institution at the staff, faculty, mid-management, and top-management levels to advocate for diversity that equals or exceeds the diversity of the institution's student body.

C. CLA Staff and Facilitator Personal Development Outcome Goals

1. CLA staff and facilitators have an active professional development program throughout their working careers. Discussions include issues regarding race issues, gender identity, sexual identity, first-generation college students, recent immigrants, and others important to the CLA staff and the students served.
2. The CLA staff meet periodically with students of various racial backgrounds to listen to their issues, concerns, ideas, and solutions.

3. CLA staff and facilitators participate in annual workshops, read publications, and watch videos on topics on privilege, race relations, interpersonal communications, microaggressions, and other interpersonal issues. CLA staff incorporate the same topics into an ongoing training curriculum for CLA facilitators throughout the academic year.

Section Two: Assessment and Evaluation

Quality CLA programs use assessment and evaluation to examine how well they are meeting their mission and goals. For effective assessment and evaluation to occur, CLA programs collect data for two distinct purposes: (a) to assess the extent to which they are meeting their mission and goals, and (b) to use program evaluation results to guide the revision of goals and activities along with program revision.

The type of CLA program has an impact on the type of assessment and evaluation studies conducted. Some programs have voluntary attendance, while others are mandatory. Some programs are loosely connected to a particular target course, while others have integrated the CLA program within the target course to appear as a seamless learning experience. Some programs require more self-evaluation and reporting than others.

This section provides specific assessment and evaluation procedures that can be used to determine the degree to which the mission and goals of the CLA program have been achieved.

A. Data Collection and Analysis Process

1. The institution collects course baseline and other data before CLA implementation for comparison before CLA is offered in the same course. This data is then compared after CLA is offered for students in the same course (e.g., grade distribution, rates of successful or unsuccessful final course grades, rates of course withdrawal, gender identity, race, and an average number of times that students enroll in the target course before completing it successfully). Preferably, the data is taken from course sections taught by the same instructors as those who will have the CLA program as a part of their course. This data aids in the analysis of the CLA program's effectiveness.

B. Program Evaluation

1. Level one evaluation: The CLA program engages in evaluation to quantify the activities that occurred during the academic term in which the CLA program operated. The number of students served is broken

down into different categories, including gender identity and race. The CLA facilitators' demographics regarding gender identity and race are also included. The evaluation is conducted every academic term that the CLA program is offered. This level of evaluation addresses a fundamental question: To what extent does the CLA program serve students? Below are examples of level one program evaluation.

- a. How many students were served by the program? Provide a breakdown by gender identity and racial group for comparison purposes. Additional demographic groups for comparison could be age category, veteran, cultural heritage, STEM major, commuter, first-generation college, and historically underrepresented. Imbalances that emerge from this analysis could lead to a deeper study regarding why.
- b. How often did students participate in the program? Provide a breakdown by gender identity and racial group for comparison purposes. Additional demographic groups for comparison could be age category, veteran, cultural heritage, STEM major, commuter, first-generation college, and historically underrepresented. Imbalances that emerge from this analysis could lead to a deeper study regarding why, as explored in Levels Three and Four Program Evaluation described later in this section of the CLA Guide.
- c. Calculate the profile of CLA participating students (e.g., student class, college grade point average, race, gender identity, academic probation status). Break down each of the groups by the percentage who attended one or more times, the average number of sessions attended, D/F/W/I rate, and final course grade.
- d. Observations of CLA sessions by CLA administrator or other staff (this is a new category for the assessment section of the guidelines).
 - i. Were there gender identity or racial patterns of the students called upon by the CLA facilitator during sessions?
 - ii. Were there gender identity or racial patterns of the students who talked during the large group or small group CLA sessions?
 - iii. Which students talked during these

- sessions, and how often?
- iv. Do students sit in small groups of similar gender identity and race?
 - v. What actions did the CLA facilitator attempt to encourage participation by all students in the session?
2. Level two evaluation: The CLA program engages in evaluation to quantify the immediate student outcomes by descriptive methods. This level of analysis examines student outcomes that are associated with the CLA program. While level one evaluation focuses on how many students participated, level two examines whether program participation made a difference in students' final grades within the target course. This analysis includes not only participants and nonparticipants but also a breakdown by gender identity and race. The evaluation is conducted every academic term that the CLA program is offered. This level of evaluation addresses the fundamental question: To what extent does the CLA program have an immediate impact on the students?

Section Three: Learning Environment

This section focuses on creating a safe psychological/social environment in both physical and virtual classrooms. The right kind of environment for the CLA sessions sets the stage for productive interactions between the facilitator and the students (see Sections Nine: Financial Resources and Section Ten: Technology since they overlap with this section).

- A. CLA facilitators create a positive, respectful, and supportive learning environment.
 1. For writing-intensive courses, CLA program participants write and have a peer review of their work to strengthen their writing skills throughout the academic term. The peer and facilitator review focus on the overall meaning and do not attempt to identify all grammar or sentence construction errors which could be demoralizing to English Language Learners and others.
 2. During observations of CLA sessions by the program director or other assigned staff, the facilitator's interpersonal behavior is proactive for all students' involvement. Measures of involvement could include the following:
 - a. Are there identifiable gender identity or racial patterns of the students called upon by the CLA facilitator during sessions?
 - b. Are there identifiable gender identity or racial patterns of the students who talk during the large group and small group CLA sessions?
- B. CLA professional staff and facilitators are trained in providing professional and friendly service to those who enter the CLA facility.
- C. CLA facilitators and staff provide a welcoming learning environment.
 1. CLA facilitators include an icebreaker/community-building activity at the beginning of the CLA session so students can interact with one another and learn their classmates' names.
 2. Staff and facilitators wear name badges for easy identification with the CLA program. During CLA sessions early in the academic term, students wear self-made nametags or create table tents with their names to help learn the other participants' names and aid the facilitator in memorizing their names. Encourage everyone to include their personal pronouns if they like.
 3. Facilitators avoid words and behaviors that seek to demonstrate their own academic prowess and social capital. It is unnecessary since the other students already know that the facilitators must have qualifications; otherwise, they would not have been hired to serve as the study group leader. Students who did not have the opportunity to participate in those experiences may communicate negative feelings in themselves. Facilitators should avoid talking about their own experiences of academic achievements, such as those listed below:
 - a. Earned a high grade in the content course
 - b. Attended a reputable secondary school and completed a college-bound curriculum
 - c. Earned high scores on the ACT, SAT, and other standardized admission exams or other institutional entry exams
 - d. Enrolled in advanced placement courses while in high school
 - e. Was a member of high school or college honor society
 - f. Participated in standardized test score courses and workshops
 - g. Has a family history of college attendance and completion (Frye et al., 2021)

4. Facilitators permit only anonymous competitive activities (either among individuals or small groups) during the study group. Otherwise, these activities can provoke anxiety among students who need more time to complete the activity and can generate a false perception of winners and losers (Frye et al., 2021). Competitive activities can be hosted through smartphone apps that permit anonymous competitions (e.g., Jamboard).
 5. Facilitators avoid fast-paced activities during the study group. These activities can provoke anxiety among students who need more time to complete the activity and generate a false perception of inadequacy by students who work more slowly. It is best to have a flexible plan to skip some activities due to the pacing to help all students advance (Frye et al., 2021).
 6. While involvement by all participants in discussions is encouraged, facilitators do not require students to speak individually. Speaking in a group is often anxiety-provoking for many students, and, especially when a group is newly formed, students may fear making an incorrect response.
 7. Facilitators observe nonverbal cues and are flexible with activities and content until they feel sure that everyone understands (Frye et al., 2021).
 8. Facilitators are careful not to send the message that the issues, readings, or materials are easy and disrupt that message if it is expressed by others (peers, faculty, or staff) (Frye et al., 2021).
 9. Facilitators share specific challenges they faced as students, such as their struggles with course material, messy processes they use to solve problems, and, if they feel comfortable doing so, their ability issues and how they deal with them. Authentically admitting that particular concepts in the course and the study group activities are demanding is a powerful way to connect with students who struggle with course material. Shared experiences and struggles are a more powerful way to bond with students than impressing them with one's own academic prowess with the challenging course content (Frye et al., 2021).
 10. Facilitators develop and foster strong emotional intelligence (EI) as well as necessary content-specific ability. EI is the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically. According to Goleman (2006), there are five key elements: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Leaders who develop strong EI relieve their internal frustration, have better interpersonal communication, and are able to sympathize with other people's emotions, overcome challenges, and resolve conflicts (Goleman, 2006). Examples could include:
 - a. Before responding, be sure to understand what is being said. Pay attention to nonverbal details of the conversation.
 - b. Display an approachable attitude through positive nonverbal and verbal messages.
 - c. Make empathetic statements when students share personal events or comments about local/national issues.
 - d. Display active listening skills, such as asking for more information from the student to understand before clearly responding to them through empathetic statements.
 - e. Display friendly, engaged body language, eye contact if they feel comfortable doing so, nodding to affirm active listening, body turned towards the student, and not having arms crossed (Frye et al., 2021).
 11. Facilitators avoid expressing surprise or providing inauthentic statements toward underrepresented students when they demonstrate success in group activities and disrupt other students if they do so. Facilitators provide authentic validation and encouragement for all students in the same manner (Frye et al., 2021).
- D. Cultivation of Personal Relationships.
1. Facilitators learn and use the preferred names and pronouns of the students in the group. Facilitators learn to pronounce student names correctly. The facilitator does not give students nicknames. Attendance sheets are circulated at the beginning of group sessions both for evaluation purposes of the program and as a prompt for the facilitator to reinforce the participant names (Frye et al., 2021).
 2. Students learn and use each other's names in the group. A sample procedure useful for the facilitator and the students is for everyone, including the facilitator, to have a table tent with their first name placed in front of themselves (Frye et al., 2021).
 3. Facilitators take the time to get to know

the students personally and build a relaxed learning environment. Several examples for developing more knowledge about the students can include:

- a. Spending necessary and significant time during the first two to three sessions of the academic term with icebreakers and community-building activities.
 - b. Beginning each group session with a short icebreaker activity where students share something about themselves.
 - c. In the first session for the week, asking students what they did the previous weekend and sharing what the facilitator did as well.
 - d. Facilitators are encouraged to have informal conversations among everyone about the culture shock of attending college, during which participants and facilitators share specific things that were challenging or surprising for them (Frye et al., 2021).
4. Facilitators arrive 10 to 15 minutes before the group session and stay for the same amount of time after the session's official end. The facilitators receive regular pay for this additional time. This informal time has several purposes:
- a. It permits casual conversation with students as they arrive.
 - b. It allows the facilitator to use this time to learn names, develop relationships with the students, learn more about their students' personal lives, and share their own personal lives with their students.
 - c. It provides time for students to interact with each other informally.
 - d. It allows the facilitator to work with students after the class who had difficulty with particular aspects of the session's activities (Frye et al., 2021).
 - e. Facilitators facilitate some off-topic conversations (Frye et al., 2021). This is when relationship-building often begins, and collaboration can blossom.
 - f. Facilitators are proactive about announcements concerning campus or community events related to different demographic and identity groups and display empathy for the issues of those groups (Frye et al., 2021).
 - g. Facilitators manage attendance rosters and send emails to students who miss sessions to inquire about their well-being and encourage them (e.g., hope to

see you next time) (Frye et al., 2021).

- h. Facilitators develop healthy, respectful friendships with students. When students and facilitators develop friendships among themselves, students are more likely to ask questions, make themselves vulnerable, and engage in activities (Frye et al., 2021).
- i. Facilitators develop and display cultural humility, which is a humble, respectful, and celebratory attitude toward individuals of other cultures that pushes them to challenge their own cultural biases, recognize funds of knowledge, and approach learning about other cultures as a lifelong goal and process (Frye et al., 2021).

Section Four: Program Design and Activities

The purpose of this section identifies what occurs before or during CLA sessions conducted by the facilitators. The "structure and organization" subsection is focused on the CLA session, not the overall administrative structure of the program. More about the overall structure is found in Section Six: Institutional Governance and Policy and in Section Seven: Program Leadership. More about technology is found in Section Nine: Financial Resources and Section 10: Technology. Due to the specific procedures for different CLA programs, some items in this section will be useful, and others will not. This document, in general, and this section, in particular, does not attempt to be inclusive of all essential and recommended practices for a particular CLA program model.

A. Structure and Organization

1. Students are divided into smaller groups of three to four to provide the opportunity for more participation. Small groups are critical for students who are not comfortable speaking in large groups for a variety of reasons, including exposure of their self-doubt over content knowledge. Students are not permitted to opt-out of small groups and work by themselves.
2. The focus of problem-solving activities is on critical thinking and not simply correct answers. Often there are multiple ways to solve the problem and the steps to do so. Facilitators encourage and support all the students to figure out solutions instead of giving the solution/answers.
3. Facilitators move the group forward after all members successfully solve the problem. Waiting requires the facilitator to read verbal and nonverbal behaviors by students to avoid the situation in which a student who is having trouble may be

- embarrassed at holding the group up. When in doubt, use additional example problems when these situations arise, emphasizing that the problem being solved is particularly tricky and announcing that another similar problem will be worked on (which will require that facilitators come prepared with additional problems). Failure to do so can result in the student having difficulty with solving the problem, thus making negative personal judgments about themselves. This may result in not returning to the group and perhaps dropping the class altogether due to their perceived incompetence. This situation of deciding when to move the group forward is part of the initial or subsequent training sessions for facilitators (Frye et al., 2021).
4. Facilitators are intentional about the type of small group activities such as “think-pair-share,” “turn to a partner and,” and “jigsaw.” To increase group participation, during each activity, they rotate roles within the groups (e.g., reporter, recorder, observer, etc.). Facilitators also vary these activities among the sessions. After working in the small group, the facilitator reconvenes students into one group to debrief the experience and identify the process for solving the questions or problems (Frye et al., 2021).
 5. The facilitator does not permit one or a small group of students to dominate the conversation or answer questions during the sessions. Students who speak more are often perceived as being more knowledgeable and as having higher intellectual ability; thus, those who do not speak may create self-stigma. Students who do not talk may feel they are the only ones who do not understand or believe that they do not belong in the class.
 - a. One of the best ways to deal with this situation and increase student engagement by all students is to have most classwork occur in small groups. The facilitator then circulates around the room to ensure that one or a few students do not dominate conversations.
 - b. For students who persistently raise hands or blurt out answers, the facilitator privately talks with them before or after a session and asks for their help in allowing others to make contributions. Affirm this student for their desire to share with others.
 - c. Before calling on a student to talk, the facilitator carefully scans the group and notices students’ nonverbal behavior who might want to speak instead of relying only on those who raise their hand or blurt out responses.
 - d. The facilitator slows the pace of activities so that all students have time to think about the question or problem before asking for a response. A complicated or well-constructed question might require thirty to sixty seconds before a response could be offered. Encourage students to review their lecture notes and reading materials during this period to give them time and information needed.
 - e. Students are permitted to “pass” on making a comment or providing a response to a problem or question (Frye et al., 2021).
 6. Leaders choose groups and make sure to mix students up to encourage new student-to-student connections. The facilitator can count students off and then assign them to work with their temporary group in a variety of small group activities they were trained to use during the initial or subsequent facilitator training session. This helps to interrupt the pattern of students sitting in the same groups based on similar demographics, academic majors, or academic ability groups (Frye et al., 2021).
 7. Leader promotes true collaboration by getting students to work together in a friendly manner to solve problems and to experience a sense of belonging to the study group, the course, and the institution (Frye et al., 2021).
 8. Leader treats every question and problem as a challenge. Do not identify anything as “easy” or something that can be quickly discussed (Frye et al., 2021).
 9. Use a procedure to solve problems (i.e., what do they know, what do they need to know, and what was learned), starting with an emphasis on the order of solving problems: terminology, essential concepts needed to solve, and finally the mathematical steps.
 10. The leader is trained to focus more on the problem-solving process rather than rapidly identifying the correct answer, which is within all students’ grasp given enough time and resources. Place less emphasis on the solutions and more on all the detailed steps to solve the problem. To help place the facilitators into the same position as

the students who are solving the problem, they are asked not to have an “answer key” available (Frye et al., 2021).

11. When working with students on a writing assignment, facilitators should focus only on identifying error patterns rather than intensive sentence-by-sentence editing. Focus on the error patterns that impede comprehension of the student paper and perhaps incorporate the technique of minimal marking. Otherwise, it will be demoralizing to the student if every error is identified, and the danger is that they will feel judged inadequate by the tutor and question whether they belong in college. The exception to this principle is if there is only one student in the session and they explicitly request a more detailed review of the paper. Otherwise, it is best to direct the student to a writing tutor or the campus writing/learning center if it exists (Sanford, 2021).
12. When appropriate, students are invited to make short presentations to a small or large group to build their communication skills and increase their confidence in speaking in front of others. The facilitator’s sensitivity is displayed to support students who are reluctant or prefer not to make presentations for personal reasons.

Optional Professional Development Resources

The following topics are recommended as part of an optional professional development program for the CLA staff regarding their program’s operation. Several of the 12 CLA guide sections will include suggested readings if you are interested in taking a deeper dive into the theory and detailed recommended actions. The readings in this section are solely offered as an optional long-term professional development program. From these readings, new practices may emerge that can be included in the campus CLA program. They also may answer some of the questions regarding why some techniques are effective and others are not. A useful resource is an educational psychology textbook to help explain CLA practices’ effectiveness. An example is written by Zakrajsek and Bailey (2019).

Antiracism

Several recently published books and other publications on race and antiracism contain general principles that could be applied with peer learning programs: Diangelo (2018); Frye et al. (2021); Kendi (2019); Oluo (2019); Perkins (2018,); and Pokhrel et al. (2021). These publications could be

used for group conversations among the CLA administrator, CLA staff, and the CLA facilitators as part of the ongoing training sessions.

Culturally Sensitive Pedagogies

Throughout this set of guides are statements about cultural competence, student diversity, and creating a welcoming learning environment. However, a more in-depth analysis of the learning environment within student study groups or the classroom has been underway for many years. These CLA guides primarily focus on actions to be taken by the facilitators, staff, and administrators of CLA programs. Not much is said about learning pedagogies and the impact of equity, race, and class upon student learning. Very little is said about this topic in most professional literature related to peer learning, learning assistance, developmental education, and the like.

Gusa (2010) identifies the impact of race on learning for students of different racial and identity backgrounds. Tuitt et al. (2016) have written forcefully on the impact of race in education. These books are cited for institutions that may wish to explore how their pedagogies might lead to different CLA session activities, consider professional development training for facilitators and CLA staff, and review techniques to make the CLA learning environment more inclusive for all students. While the following descriptions may seem similar, there are deep nuances among them. Even though the pedagogies’ primary emphasis is on teacher behaviors, their lessons could be applied to facilitators and CLA sessions.

- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy requires the facilitator to learn to operate in a cross-cultural or multicultural setting. Each student makes meaning in their cultural context. A recent book is by Adams et al. (2017).
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy is a student-centered approach to learning in which the students’ unique cultural strengths are identified and nurtured to promote student achievement and a sense of well-being about the student’s cultural place in the world. It has three functional dimensions: institutional, personal, and instructional. Several books about this pedagogy are Gay (2018), Hammond (2015), and Pirbhai-Illich et al. (2017).
- Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy is the most recent pedagogical approach to challenge educators to promote, celebrate, and critique the multiple and shifting ways students engage with culture. Several books on this pedagogy are Coulter and Jimenez-Silva (2017) and Paris et al. (2017).

Section Five: Professional Development for CLA Facilitators

This section identifies general principles that most of the CLA program models share in common. Training-related topics are explored in other sections within these CLA guides: Section Three: Learning Environment; Section Four: Program Design and Activities; Section Ten: Technology; and Section Eleven: Ethics, Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Professional development is a continuous activity for the facilitators throughout their time in their role. Development occurs through training workshops, observation of other facilitators, coaching by the CLA administrator or others, and their own reflection of what they are learning and experiencing. Each national/international CLA program has precise procedures for training and professional development. Though it is most common that facilitators are students, some programs employ non-student paraprofessionals, professional staff members, or instructors. While many campus peer programs conduct their own professional development for facilitators, there are other options for content through webinars, videos, online instruction, and self-study materials.

A. Activities and Content of Professional Development

1. Develop competency to conduct the first CLA session of the academic term. Ongoing professional development could include the following common training elements:
 - a. Obtain a basic understanding of the campus CLA model and theoretical foundations.
 - b. Watch vignettes related to racial interactions and follow them with application to study group sessions.
 - c. Develop necessary skills in group management.
 - d. Understand how to customize the session based on the academic discipline and requirements for the target course.
 - e. Increase antiracism and cultural competence.
 - f. Acquire a collection of learning strategies to model (e.g., different types of notetaking, text reading, and test preparation).
 - g. Learn active learning and collaborative strategies to engage students.
 - h. Learn how to combine the learning strategies with a review of academic content.
 - i. Develop the skill of planning session lessons while retaining flexibility with adapting as needed during the session.
2. In-service programs for instructional staff and other program personnel are provided

regularly to enhance awareness of issues related to student diversity (e.g., race, ethnicity, home language, home educational background, religion, gender identity, sexual identity, socioeconomic group, age, and differing abilities).

- B. Delivery Systems for Professional Development
 1. The facilitator intentionally reflects on their work experience at least every two weeks. Topics for this reflection could be a summary of memorable session events or prompted by the CLA administrator (e.g., leadership skills, communication skills, gender and racial awareness, new behaviors displayed, content knowledge, and career choice). The reflections could be private or available for the CLA administrator to read and respond to. The reflections could be contained in a weekly journal, shared during one of the periodic team meetings, or shared in another way.

Optional Professional Development Resources

The practical strategies for facilitating study sessions, conducting professional development, and program management are based on experienced by successful CLA program administrators and drawn from the relevant professional literature. The following is provided as part of an optional professional development program for those interested in digging deeper into the literature that helped to create these guides.

- YouTube channel with facilitator training videos for SI and PLTL, <http://z.umn.edu/palyoutube>.
- Other tutor and study group facilitator training resources are available at the Learning Support Centers in Higher Education (LSCHE) website, <http://www.lsche.net>.
- David Arendale's webpage on peer learning resources includes facilitator training materials and links to other resources, <http://z.umn.edu/peerlearning>.
- Resources for training facilitators to conduct sessions online can be found in Section Four: Program Design and Activities.
- Angelo and Cross (1993) provide the classic book on many classroom assessment techniques and activities.
- Training manuals include Agee and Hodges (2012) and Lipsky (2011). Others are located at the end of these CLA guides.
- Three new books have updated Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), Gershon (2018), and Krathwohl (2002).

- Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1998) are the most prolific writers on the practical use of peer cooperative learning in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

Section Six: Institutional Governance and Policy

A critical resource for any peer learning program is strong support from administrators from the top of the organization. CLA is part of the institution's strategic plan for student achievement and persistence. The CLA program does not belong to the CLA administrator; it belongs to the college. If the CLA administrator leaves or is promoted to another position, the commitment to the program should be unwavering.

This section is dependent upon Section One: Mission and Goals. Upper-level administrators need to clearly understand how the CLA program is part of the core mission and goals of the institution. If they view it that way, financial resources for it will remain stable if not grow over time as the program is expanded. Also, this section is dependent upon Section Two: Assessment and Evaluation to provide evidence that the program is effective with higher student outcomes.

A. Legal Responsibilities

1. CLA professional staff and facilitators are knowledgeable about and adhere to relevant civil and criminal laws and institutional policies related to their role and function within the institution (e.g., sexual harassment, micro and macroaggressions, mandatory reporting, referral to appropriate institutional student services, treatment of staff and students, student privacy, grant regulations, hiring protocols, and fiscal management).

Section Seven: Program Leadership

An effective CLA program requires careful coordination among several professionals who provide leadership for the program. This section provides more detail about the job descriptions of the CLA administrator, staff, and facilitators. It also includes expectations for the faculty members that host CLA in their course. Section Five: Professional Development for CLA Facilitators identifies best practices for their training. Section Six: Institutional Governance and Policy provides the context for the CLA administrator as that person is connected to the institution's organization chart.

In addition to providing more information about the CLA staff in this section, considerable attention is devoted to the role of the faculty members who sponsor CLA in their courses. It is critical that the roles of the CLA staff, facilitator,

and faculty member are clear before attaching CLA to a course. Each time that a new faculty member or a course becomes involved with the CLA program, the same process of clarifying roles and boundaries for all parties is essential. Failing to identify those boundaries has led to the facilitator of the learning process being turned into a teaching assistant with teaching and grading responsibilities, or worse, the CLA program being canceled.

A. Administration and Supervision

1. CLA program works in collaboration with units across the campus to enhance support to students and support the college curriculum (advising, academic programs, multicultural studies, new student orientation, learning center, health and wellness centers, accessibility services, tutoring services, student services, and enrollment management).

B. Organization

1. CLA is only attached to courses when the faculty member strongly supports the program's mission through their involvement. Therefore, courses with the highest rates of D, F, incompletes, and withdrawals (DFIWs) should not be selected if the faculty members are not supportive of CLA. Since faculty involvement is essential for student effectiveness and participation in the program, it would be a better use of institutional funds to select another course with high rates of DFIWs.

C. Roles & Responsibilities

1. Director (e.g., administrator, coordinator, or other term for the CLA program facilitator)
 - a. Create and communicate a clear vision for the present and future needs of the CLA program (e.g., discussions with campus officials, equity and inclusion expansion, program reports and promotional literature, employment interviews with new staff, and during training workshops) based on collaboration with and input from student leaders, faculty members, student affairs unit administrators, academic unit administrators, and other stakeholders.
 - b. Manage the CLA program budget and ensure stable funding for operations by demonstrating an effective, equitable, and inclusive program with regular reports to administrators to whom the CLA unit reports and to the CLA advisory board. The director also looks for opportunities to build collaborative

relationships with other campus units, community agencies, and grant programs to provide financial and non-monetary support.

- c. Conduct continuous assessment and evaluation of program effectiveness, equity, inclusion, and goal attainment congruent with institutional mission and ongoing planning efforts.
- d. Interview, hire, train, and evaluate CLA staff. Ensure that the staff demographics reflect or exceed the diversity of the campus professional staff. Additional efforts are made to increase the demographic diversity of applicants for staff positions.
- e. Ensure that applicants' requirements are focused more heavily on skills they currently possess relevant to the job and prior paid and unpaid work experiences rather than the attainment of particular academic degrees or certificates.
- f. An annual appraisal is conducted for each CLA professional staff member, including discussing their needs and the administrator's recommendations.

2. Faculty roles and Responsibilities

- a. A faculty member of the target course forwards the names of potential facilitators. These students are added to those already gathered by the CLA administrator through aggressive job posting advertisements and direct contact with multicultural organizations to solicit applicants. The CLA administrator makes the final hiring decision. See Section Eight: Human Resources for desired competencies, skills, and experiences for CLA facilitators.

D. Professional Development and Mentoring

1. CLA administrator attends campus workshops, participates in webinars, and engages with self-paced materials on coaching and management skills, antiracism and cultural competence, and other topics to improve effectiveness, equity, and inclusion with the CLA staff and facilitators.

Optional Professional Development Resources

In addition to the international/national organization that is associated with most CLA programs, there are a variety of additional resources available for the professional development of the CLA staff. Consider checking out one or more of the following.

- Arendale's annotated bibliography lists

over 1600 publications related to postsecondary peer cooperative learning programs (<https://z.umn.edu/peerbib>).

- Arendale's program resource webpage for peer study groups (<http://z.umn.edu/peerlearning>) lists (a) professional CLA centers and organizations, (b) journals directly or indirectly related to CLA, (c) seminal publications about CLA, (d) professional standards for CLA programs, (e) learning technologies that might be used in CLA programs, (f) videos that discuss issues and solutions related to CLA programs, and (g) email listserv information for SI campus directors.
- Arendale's Peer Assisted Learning YouTube (YT) channel (<https://z.umn.edu/palgroupsYouTube>) recent CLA-related presentations by Arendale and playlists of YT awareness and training videos for peer-led team learning and supplemental instruction.
- Arendale's Peer Assisted Learning podcast (<http://palgroups.org>) features short reviews of new CLA publications and interviews with facilitators.

Section Eight: Human Resources

Five key individuals or groups are involved with the CLA program: the program administrator, professional staff, facilitator, sponsoring instructor, and participants. These terms are defined in the introduction to these CLA Guides. This section primarily focuses on the CLA administrator and staff (see Section Five: Professional Development for CLA Facilitators and Section Seven: Program Leadership for related information).

A. Hiring Policies and Procedures

1. CLA program uses written, systematic procedures for personnel recruitment, selection, and promotion consistent with the institutional policies and practices. Routine procedures for personnel recruitment, selection, and promotion are written for the CLA program and follow the institution's written policies and practices.
2. CLA program administrator is selected based on knowledge and training, relevant work experience, oral and written communication skills, organizational skills, planning skills, program evaluation skills, personal skills and competencies, relevant credentials, and experience in promoting learning and development. The previously listed items are balanced by hiring candidates located within the geographic area and encouraging diversity and equity in selecting the CLA staff. In such cases, the

institution hires the leading candidate and provides resources and time for the CLA staff member to develop their skills further, gain certification from an appropriate organization, and other ongoing professional development activities.

3. When the CLA is attached to a specific course, the course instructor can nominate candidates for the CLA facilitator position. The final decision is made by the CLA program administrator, who will increase the applicant pool for the position through advertisements, contact with multicultural organizations, and other means. Depending upon the CLA program, others may be involved with the hiring decision, such as experienced CLA facilitators or other student leaders.
4. While there is no “ideal” CLA facilitator profile, the most effective ones for serving a broad demographic of participants share common characteristics: (a) successfully struggled with the course material to achieve a final course grade of B or an A and can help others to do the same; (b) understands the challenges with the course material and has the patience to help all students to succeed; (c) possesses good organization and communication skills; (d) possesses a teachable-attitude to learn how to be an effective facilitator of the group and not emulate teacher behaviors; (e) displays cultural competence to work with a diverse group of participants; and (f) joins a team of facilitators that reflect or exceed the demographics of the student body. In reality, at the beginning of their work career as a facilitator, they will be located at various points along a continuum line between novice and expert for these characteristics. The key is for them to be teachable and for the CLA program administrator to use initial and subsequent training. This facilitator’s profile may not be shared by course instructors who may recommend candidates who easily earned an A or A+ in their course; sat on the front row in the classroom; frequently talked with the instructor before, during, after, outside class, and during instructor office hours; or have demographics similar to their instructor.
5. Include the above CLA facilitator profile on a handout describing the program for the classroom instructor, department chair, academic dean, student affairs administrators, and others. The profile could also be used for advertisement and promotion of the program and for attracting CLA facilitator applicants. This handout is especially important when new CLA programs are being developed, and new faculty members will have CLA attached to their courses.
6. The CLA facilitators’ selection process requires firmness and diplomacy by the CLA program administrator to help instructors, department chairs, student affairs personnel, and other administrators understand the process for facilitator selection and their job responsibilities. Providing a written copy of the requirements and expectations is essential. Some instructors (and some administrators who are former classroom instructors) may not understand the difference between a facilitator of the learning process (CLA facilitator) and a teaching assistant (with teaching and grading responsibilities). Facilitators focus on the problem-solving process and coach students through the steps until they all achieve mastery.
7. Improve staff and facilitator recruiting and hiring practices so that the CLA team more closely reflects the student body’s diversity. For example, recruit from the campus African American or other ethnically-focused organizations, including sororities and fraternities (which typically have academic excellence committees). Work with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion departments to help ensure hiring practices reduce implicit biases and become more inclusive. Ensure hiring focuses more on “screening in” rather than “screening out” potential hires. As described in previous essential practices regarding recruitment of diverse CLA facilitators, deemphasize selection as solely a function of grades or faculty recommendations (McGuire, 2020).
8. Professional staff demonstrate knowledge about antiracism, learning theory, and strategies appropriate for the CLA program.
9. The CLA facilitators’ staffing pattern reflects or exceeds the student population’s cultural heritage and diversity (e.g., disability, gender and sexual identity, English language learner, race, ethnicity, age, and gender).
10. While eligibility for federal, state, or institutional financial aid may play a part in the selection process, CLA facilitators are primarily selected based on their merit and potential for their assigned role. Facilitators are selected according to written job

descriptions of the CLA program. The CLA program administrator makes the final decision on hiring facilitators.

B. Work Environment Culture

1. CLA professional staff and facilitators demonstrate good interpersonal skills with students, faculty, and colleagues, which is supported by student and faculty oral feedback, evaluations, and surveys.
2. CLA personnel demonstrate and engage in behaviors that promote a supportive, collaborative working environment (e.g., antiracist actions, active listening, and teamwork).

C. Orientation, Supervision, and Training

1. In-service programs for instructional staff and other program personnel are provided regularly to enhance student diversity (e.g., race, ethnicity, home language, home educational background, religion, gender identity, sexual identity, socioeconomic group, age, and differing abilities).

Section Nine: Financial Resources

This section focuses on maintaining a sufficient budget to support all CLA program activities and personnel. This section is related to numerous other parts of the guide, including Section Three: Learning Environment, Section Four: Program Design and Activities, Section Five: Professional Development of CLA Facilitators, Section Six: Institutional Governance and Policy, and Section Eight: Human Resources.

A. General Budget Funding

1. CLA program administrator takes the initiative in building coalitions with other campus or community units to provide financial support to stabilize or expand the CLA program in serving new student populations (e.g., academic departments, enrollment management, campus learning center, multicultural studies, campus tutoring program, community agencies, and businesses).

Section Ten: Technology

Peer learning programs must use technology to effectively manage participant data, embed instruction technology within peer sessions, and offer online peer sessions. While online peer learning and academic support has been a part of distance learning programs for decades, it is now growing quickly with campus learning services. This requires institutions to make more investments in their campus programs with technology. This includes not only the central computer hardware and software systems, but also provision of

computer laptops for check out through campus libraries and computer labs throughout the campus and residence halls. The digital divide persists as a barrier to full participation by students from marginalized backgrounds who often lack access to desktop computers, laptop computers, and Internet access at their residence or while elsewhere.

Due to the pivotal role of technology in CLA, this section is also related to Section Three: Learning Environment, Section Four: Program Design and Activities, Section Five: Professional Development of CLA Facilitators, Section Seven: Program Leadership, Section Eight: Human Resources, and Section Twelve: Collaboration and Communication.

A. Conduct a needs assessment with student leaders and use relationships with other units on campus as well as learning center funding to provide essential technology to them.

Section Eleven: Ethics, Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Within the context of each institution's mission and in accordance with institutional policies and applicable codes and laws, the CLA program must create and maintain educational and work environments for students, faculty, staff, administrators, designated clients, and other constituents that are welcoming, accessible, inclusive, equitable, and free from bias or harassment. Due to the essential nature of this section's values, this section is related to Section Three: Learning Environment, Section Four: Program Design and Activities, Section Seven: Program Leadership, and Section Eight: Human Resources.

A. Access & Opportunity

1. Nondiscriminatory personnel policies have been developed, disseminated, and practiced regularly regarding age, race, creed, cultural heritage, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, political affiliation, religious affiliation, sex, sexual identity, or social, economic, marital, or veteran status.
2. CLA program identifies and addresses actions, policies, and structures within its operation that perpetuate privilege and oppression (e.g., hiring practices, promotion practices, CLA session activities, and staff professional development).

B. Diversity

1. CLA session readings, activities, and learning aids portray racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.
2. Facilitators discover information about their students at the beginning of the

academic term to address students' needs and preferences. (e.g., short surveys to learn learning preferences, countries of origin, interests, and background).

3. With the aim that all students receive assistance and benefit from participation, special efforts are made by the facilitators to design learning activities that are anti-racist and culturally inclusive to enable all students to participate.
4. Multiple learning modes are used during CLA sessions to accommodate different learning modalities and preferences.

C. Inclusion

1. CLA staff and facilitators employ culturally responsive, inclusive, respectful, and equitable practices to provide services.
2. Ongoing professional development on anti-racism, cultural competence, and workplace inclusion is provided for CLA staff and facilitators.
3. Personnel within the CLA program promote respect for commonalities and differences among people within their historical, racial, and cultural contexts.
4. CLA program activities create an inclusive environment that enhances student awareness and appreciation of cultural commonalities and differences with their classmates and uses this knowledge to enrich student learning.

Optional Professional Development Resources

In Section Four: Program Design and Activities, the optional resources section identified several books that emphasized diversity and inclusion with new approaches to the learning environment. Additional resources are available in the final section of these guides. Naraian (2017) released an excellent recent book on inclusion.

Section Twelve: Collaboration and Communication

A strong team effort is needed for the CLA program to successfully serve the students. Building awareness of the program, collaborating with others within the institution and community, and disseminating CLA program effectiveness reports are essential activities. The following guide sections relate indirectly or directly to this section: Section One: Mission and Goals, Section Two: Assessment and Evaluation, Section Six: Institutional Governance and Policy, Section Seven: Program Leadership, Section Nine: Financial Resources, and Section Ten: Technology.

A. Internal Institutional Communications and Partnerships

1. Establish a campus-wide advisory group for the CLA program, including faculty, students, multicultural organizations, and other stakeholders. Example tasks for the group could include: (a) providing feedback about current services, (b) predicting new areas that will require support soon, and c) lobbying for an increased CLA budget to support services to more classes, higher salaries for facilitators, and additional staff support). The composition of the group represents the demographic diversity of the campus.
2. Develop and annually/biannually update an overall communication plan which targets all internal and external stakeholders. For each communication strategy:
 - a. Identify the internal and external stakeholders to receive information (e.g., upper-level administrators who influence annual budget and personnel assignment, campus learning center, CLA advisory group, and academic advisors).
 - b. Benchmark set for what success would look like with the communication (e.g., submit annual CLA activities report to upper-level institution administrators, CLA advisory group, and other campus groups).
 - c. Timeline for each communication strategy (e.g., CLA program administrator completes the report after spring data reports are available and submits the annual CLA report by June 30).
 - d. Identify budget requirements for communication strategies (e.g., cost of display advertisements in the campus newspaper).
 - e. Collect feedback from stakeholders regarding the CLA program (e.g., what are new courses identified by faculty, administrators, and students to expand the CLA program budget and CLA staff capacity to supervise; student surveys of participants and nonparticipants in classes that offered CLA; CLA advisory group; multicultural organizations; racial or ethnic Greek sororities and fraternities; and other groups).
3. Compose an annual report of the program activities and reports and forward it to the program's immediate supervisor, CLA program advisory group, academic department chairs and deans of academic units served by the CLA program, chief academic and chief student affairs officers, and multicultural organizations. Publish it to

the website and promote it through other communication channels described earlier in this guide section (see Section Two: Assessment and Evaluation in this guide for examples of such reports).

4. CLA staff maintain effective working relationships with campus academic departments, student affairs units, multicultural organizations, and community agencies whose operations are relevant to the CLA's mission and make referrals on behalf of participants as needed (e.g., advising, orientation, admissions, counseling, disability services, early support, financial aid, student-athlete academic assistance, and campus learning assistance).
5. Meet with faculty, staff, and administrators around the campus (e.g., learning assistance program, multicultural center, disability services, counseling center, education department, the office of research) due to their expertise (e.g., learning theory and strategies, antiracism and cultural competence training programs, research assistance, and referral) are invited to be involved in training and support of the program.
6. Meet regularly with Black, Latinx, Native American, and Asian student staff to hear about their issues/concerns. Listen with compassion, and take actions such as reviewing policies, modifying procedures, and addressing student experiences with biased faculty and staff (McGuire, 2020).

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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