

## First-Year Experience Learning Community Agreement

**The First-Year Experience at Minot State University is an opportunity for first-year students to participate in a powerful learning experience that will inspire the transition to university life and learning through unique learning communities, peer mentors, and opportunities to engage with the campus and larger community**

**In support of this endeavor, the FYE Director does the following:**

- Collaborates with curricular and co-curricular departments and offices in providing orientation programming which gives new students the appropriate transition to Minot State University, while providing a seamless transition to first-year programming.
- Provides first-year experience learning communities that connect students to their peers and faculty members, engage students with the campus and larger community, enhance students' sense of belonging at MSU, communicate and facilitate student understanding of the academic expectations of the university, and enhance student competency in skills and capacities that are essential for success in higher education.
- Collaborates with faculty to provide professional development to the campus community regarding active learning and engagement opportunities.
- Provides peer mentoring for first-year students, with an emphasis on supporting the transition into higher education.
- Collaborates with academic departments to provide faculty and staff advisors with professional development opportunities and resources to assist with advising.
- Offers training sessions which support, prepare for, and facilitate faculty/staff members' participation in first-year learning communities.
- Offers common reading resources.
- Supports and facilitates faculty/staff members' implementation of engagement activities in learning communities.
- Acts as a resource for all first-year and engagement-related questions and activities.
- Offers opportunities, upon request, for faculty to observe FYE faculty

**The responsibilities of the participating faculty or staff member, *BEFORE* the semester that the community is offered, are:**

- To work collaboratively with the other faculty to form a learning community that connects courses from differing disciplines by a theme and meets the goals of the first-year experience.
- To work with the FYE Director and your supervisor to handle scheduling issues and any overload issues.
- To submit a learning community description and syllabus *prior* to the start of the semester in which the course will be taught and according to the deadlines given by the FYE Director and Minot State University.
- To work with the other faculty in your learning community to make connections across *all courses* of the learning community, through discussion, activities, assignments, etc.
- To work with the other faculty in your learning community to select and use a common reading for the learning community (if appropriate).

**The responsibilities of the participating faculty or staff member, *during* the semester that the community is offered, are:**

- To use active learning principles and strategies to promote and encourage students to engage and collaborate in the classroom during student-led initiatives, and individuals within the learning community.
- To work collaboratively to facilitate student involvement in the intellectual and social environment of the university by providing intellectually stimulating and relevant academic experiences, by providing feedback to students, and by maintaining high and clear expectations.
- To connect students to academic and social support services, including, but not limited to, the range of social and professional development opportunities available to students at MSU.
- To meet regularly with your learning community colleagues, including the peer mentor, to discuss course goals, student issues, course planning, assignments, how to make connections between the courses and the UNIV 110 course, and other issues, as they arise.
- To work with the library, the peer mentoring and tutoring coordinator, student affairs staff (residence life, counseling, disability services, career services, etc.), and other relevant people and resources to support your first-year students and to enhance the learning community's environment.
- To work cooperatively and collaboratively with the peer mentor assigned to your learning community.
- To notify ASC staff of any significant problems or issues related to your learning community. To respond, in a timely manner, to the requests of ASC and its staff as related to your learning community and its courses.
- To make your FYE class available for observation by the FYE Director or designated observer.
- To share course evaluations, specific to the FYE, with the FYE Director.

**The responsibilities of the participating faculty or staff member's supervisor are:**

- To support the faculty/staff member during their participation in the first-year experience learning community.
- To work with the FYE Director, VPAA, and the Registrar's Office to handle scheduling issues and any overload issues related to the faculty/staff member's participation.
- To encourage first-year students to participate in first-year learning communities when applicable.
- To notify the FYE Director of any significant problems, issues, or changes related to your faculty/staff member's participation in a first-year learning community.
- To allow and encourage the participating faculty/staff member to participate in FYE faculty development opportunities, and to note these efforts on annual faculty evaluations.
- To share student evaluations of first-year learning community courses with the FYE Director.
- To recognize the faculty/staff member's participation in the first-year learning community when writing his or her annual evaluation (when applicable).

