

Learning Framework Reflections Lessons Learned 2018



End of Year Team Meeting, December 11, 2018. From top left to bottom left: Collaborator Pioneers for HOPE Program Coordinator Darice Ingram, Research Assistant (RA) Connie Lan, RA Joel Bovey, Collaborator Dr. Lael Adediji, Co-Investigator Dr. Sarah Taylor, Collaborator Dr. Alina Engleman, Collaborator Dr. Nidhi Khosla, RA Shelby Bergeron, Project Coordinator Ali Jones-Bey, Collaborator Dr. Ryan Gamba.

I feel like we've been part of the learning community for a long time.

I learned a lot. - Faculty Member

I will be able to use what I have learned going forward.

- Student Research Assistant

As we began our year-end discussion to reflect on lessons learned, one of the first things that came up was the feeling that although it's just been 12 months, because of our teamwork and the things we have been able to accomplish, we feel like we've been a part of this learning community for a long time. Over the past year, we've learned quite a bit.

Student Involvement

Student Research Assistants were surprised at the impact that interviews had on the students who participated in the study. After the study was over, some students reached out to their interviewers, just to ask how were they were doing, and said they missed the interviewer. Interviewers were surprised by the impact that just meeting with students would have.

Student Research Assistants have also learned a lot from the Learning Framework, including how to write peer-reviewed papers, prepare conference proposals, and give presentations.

Students who participated as interviewers and interviewees also said they learned a lot, in part about the power of building relationships and setting goals.

Sometimes you feel so alone and isolated. Just like goal-setting, even to have a daily goal. I knew I would learn a lot, but didn't realize how much.

- Student Research Assistant

Early Impact of Pilot Intervention

Two students have already told a staff member, "Thank you. I met with my mentor. I love my mentor. I'm so grateful that you did this." They've only talked to their mentor once or twice, but took the time to go back and give feedback.

The Complexity of People's Stories

When sitting down with someone, we were constantly struck by the complexity of people's stories, and how many factors go into their path. For everyone, there is a rationale for why and how they are doing what they're doing.

So for the student who is sitting in class and isn't engaged, or isn't showing up, there is a reason, it may just not be readily apparent. - Faculty Member

The Importance of Reviewing the Data

It's so important to review and tell stories, and tell them accurately and well. It's also really important to disseminate the data collected, to honor the time the interviewers and the students spent.

Challenging Assumptions

Faculty and staff participants found that learning more about the challenges students face is an important step to changing assumptions, which is difficult and necessary. It is both a "great and horrible" feeling in that faculty appreciate knowing why a student may be having difficulties in making academic progress, but challenging in that there is uncertainty about how best to provide support or respond.

Reviewing transcripts and seeing what students are saying, team members are seeing some of the issues students encounter with various offices and departments.

East Bay students often face unique challenges, ranging from food and housing insecurity, learning difficulties, and disabilities to struggling with the negative impact of microaggressions and stereotyping that students who are more affluent or who have more social advantages may not face.

The place where you sit changes everything, and it's good to put yourself in other places and suspend judgment. - Staff Member

Teamwork Makes the Dreamwork

Although the project is complex, everyone is working together well, and that's so powerful and critical when it comes to both the products of the study and the intervention. We appreciate our team and the opportunity to work and learn together.