

Jessica Lopez-Acevedo

Congratulations to the panelist on such a well thought out & comprehensive presentation. Would this also be available in FAU's partner campuses?

Yes, we are open to proposals for course redesign on all FAU campuses. Strong consideration would be given to courses from a campus not previously included for any course redesign, among other criteria. We also intend to consider using funds to re-design a classroom for active learning on a partner campus to make it more accessible to teach with the LA model if needed.

Donna Cooke

If we continue to offer fully online and mixed-mode courses, how would this model work in that context?

We are currently using the LA model in Calculus and Chemistry at FAU in hflex, online live lecture, and fully online delivery since Covid. We are using Zoom in math and chemistry to have LAs present in breakout sessions. For example, in Calculus online live lecture classes, we require attendance/participation as part of the grade and students are required to use their webcams during breakout sessions. The first half of class is lecture (and recorded); the second half is group work guided by LAs and the faculty member. During this time, students are put into a break out room (4 students per room) and work on an assigned worksheet. LAs and the instructor move between the groups to facilitate effective group work. The groups stay the same all semester (unless there is a compelling reason to make a change) allowing them to develop relationships as a true learning team. For fully online and hflex classes, we built a weekly schedule for 50 minute group work sessions. These occur M/W/F at all hours throughout the day so we give them as many opportunities as possible to participate. As this is OUTSIDE class time, we offer a pretty substantial carrot to get students to attend—but, we find once we get them there, they see the value in attending and continue to do so. Again, these are just ideas to consider when a faculty member redesigns their course... they may envision a different scenario.

Julie

You mentioned University of Boulder using LA . Is there a community of support from other universities who have implemented this program to share resources and experiences?

There are 107 universities currently using LA programs. There is a significant community of support available. Please feel free to go to <https://www.learningassistantalliance.org/> and sign up for more information and to investigate the LA model further. Research articles, materials for pedagogy, and content assessments are just some of the free resources you will find there.

Anonymous Attendee

Are students able to tell that a course is taught in the LA model prior to registration?

At this time, no. Although, we have been teaching ALL sections of Calc 1 and 2 with LAs since 2019—and students are aware. They frequently comment how much they miss their LAs when they are taking classes without LAs.

Patrick Dempsey

Are the student pedagogy courses credit bearing?

At the moment, it is being run as a workshop through either the MLC or CLASS office. But, we have been speaking to our friends in the College of Ed about creating 0-credit Pedagogy and Advanced Pedagogy courses for our LAs. Some universities have 0 credit, some have 1 credit, and some have 3 credit pedagogy courses. For us, we decided 0 credit mainly because of equity--we want anyone to have the opportunity to be an LA without worrying about paying for a course. And by creating this as a course, it

provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have learned effective teaching and learning strategies by having the course on their transcript.

Anonymous Attendee

Can Dr. Mireles-James or another faculty member teaching in the program speak to what the course redesign involved -- what makes this program different from what you might have done on your own?

The biggest piece of course redesign in math was creating preworksheets and worksheets for the students. The next biggest challenge was deciding how and what to cover in lecture with the reduced time. A huge difference, and what I cannot do on my own, was communication with my LAs. Each week, we meet to discuss how students are doing, where they are still struggling, and the content coming for the next week. The feedback from my LAs is invaluable. They make me a better instructor because I am getting real-time feedback about my students, which allows me to adjust my teaching when necessary. In regards to the group work, I could implement this without LAs... however, I see two main challenges to this without LAs: it would be difficult for me spend time with every group and, at the end of the day, I am the instructor—students just feel more comfortable talking to their peers. Students say they feel more comfortable talking to LAs because they are not afraid to ask (what they think) are stupid or repeat questions.

Anonymous Attendee

How much is new rather than just based on the Colorado model?

How we implement the model is unique to FAU (the redesigned LA classes, our pedagogy course, etc.). The three main pillars that are essential to an effective program are based off the Colorado model: Practice, Pedagogy, and Preparation. Practice is the course redesign piece that incorporates small group active learning strategies facilitated by trained peers. Pedagogy is the weekly seminar for first semester LAs in which they discover how students learn, reflect on their own teaching strategies, and share challenges with other LAs. Preparation is a weekly meeting between faculty and their LAs in which they discuss upcoming content, reflect on past content and where students may still be struggling, and discuss how to best facilitate learning. LAs can also act as student advocates during preparation meetings and share with instructors the student perspective on learning.

Kimberly Dunn

Can class sizes be increased with LA support without loss of positive outcomes? Can you show savings in faculty salary costs by converting a course to LA model?

We should point out that we “think” we are saving money by increasing class size – increasing the student to teacher ratio. But many times, success rates in these courses drop, which means the university is actually losing money. And student learning suffers as does student engagement with both the material and the instructor. Generally, it is cheaper to add LAs and increase the section size (while decreasing student to “teacher” ratio since the learning team now consists of LAs AND the faculty member) versus adding another section and paying another faculty member.