

ILC FAQ: Interdisciplinary Learning Collaborative Frequently Asked Questions

1. What does ILC mean?
 - a. The ILC stands for the Interdisciplinary Learning Collaborative. This means that our program emphasizes collaboration; students are in an environment that fosters student-to-student as well as student-to-coach collaboration and coaches are constant collaborators as well. This also means that the ILC emphasizes interdisciplinary learning which means that students should be earning some credits for multiple courses with one project, seminar, or activity.
2. ILC Philosophy -
 - a. The ILC, sometimes referred to as the “Academy”, is a program that, at its core, is about personalized learning, that is, finding out what a student’s interest is and then using that interest to open the door for learning. We believe that if a student is invested in their learning, that that will lead to more meaningful learning experiences.
3. How do students earn credits?
 - a. Students can earn credits in their coursework through several ways, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Individual, self-interest projects
 - ii. Group and/or community service projects
 - iii. Through multidisciplinary seminars (more about seminars below)
 - iv. One-on-one help from a learning coach
4. What is a seminar?
 - a. Seminars are like a mini-course that lasts approximately 6 weeks. They are more structured learning times when a coach and/or student will be leading a group of interested students in a particular topic. An example is *The Poisoner’s Handbook*. In this seminar, students read the nonfiction book by Deborah Blum. This book examines the development of forensic science in Jazz Age New York. Each chapter explores a particular poison (i.e. cyanide, carbon monoxide, radium), discusses several cases in which those poisons were used, and how the medical examiner, Charles Norris, and his toxicologist, Alexander Gettler, developed tools to find traces of the poison’s use, established the protocols that forensic scientists still use, all while facing the ravages of Prohibition. While taking this seminar, students will have an opportunity to earn some English, US History, world history, and chemistry targets.
5. Other ILC “words” -
 - a. Some vocabulary the ILC uses may be confusing. Here is a list to get you started:
 - i. Learning coach/Advisor - this is a teacher. We use the word “coach” to indicate that the ILC teachers are available to encourage and root for students. While we have subject areas that are specialized, we, as coaches, are here to supervise our students’ WHOLE learning, no matter which courses they are taking.

- ii. Advisees - these are students. Each student will be assigned a learning coach/advisor (*see above).
- iii. Targets - these are state standards. Learning coaches develop curricula and take those and write them in a way for advisees to understand. These become our “targets”.
- iv. Ad hoc - sometimes students interests do not “fit” one of our targets. In these instances, coaches can use the ad hoc feature on myLC in order to provide students with some credits for the work that they have done. For example, if a student wants to research black holes, they will earn some ad hoc for physics, because there are no state standards in physics for learning about black holes. This is learning beyond what the curriculum calls for.
- v. myLC - this is the ILC’s “Power School”. This is the online management system that advisees and advisors use to keep track of student progress.
- vi. Red, Yellow, Green - on myLC, when advisees are behind in their course work overall, the online managing system will show their progress as “red”. This means that they will need extra time to get their work done, which means that they will need to *stay after school for study tables*. When advisees are a little bit behind, myLC will show their progress as “yellow”. When advisees are either on track or ahead in their progress, their myLC will show “green”.
- vii. Study Tables - this means that a student is behind in their work, according to our online management system (myLC), and needs extra study/work time. These after school sessions are an opportunity for students to get some structured, quiet work time and to have access to a learning coach.
- viii. Workshops - this is a mini-seminar. A workshop is approximately two weeks for a learning coach to offer some specific focus. Workshop time may also be used to extend a seminar.