

PROGRESSIONS:
PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING

The PLTL Developmental/Teacher Preparation Mathematics Collection
Introductory Algebra
Introduction

It all began at the Peer Led-Team Learning conference held at Goucher College, Maryland during the summer of 2001. Four professors from diverse colleges met for the first time and decided to form a mathematics task force. Peggy Beck (Prince George's Community College, Maryland), June L. Gaston (Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York), Janet Liou-Mark (New York City College of Technology, New York) and Mitsue Nakamura (University of Houston – Downtown, Texas) convened several times over the next two years to discuss the organization of their existing workshop materials with the help of AE Dreyfuss (City College, New York), a learning specialist. Due to the vast nature of the field of mathematics, the group decided separate the workshop materials into two general categories: Pre-Calculus and Developmental/Teacher Preparation Mathematics. Peggy Beck and Mitsue Nakamura headed the Pre-Calculus Team while June L. Gaston and Janet Liou-Mark headed the Developmental/Teacher Preparation Team.

We independently both received a Workshop Project Associate (WPA) grant in the winter of 2002 that facilitated the development and field testing operation of the workshop materials. The WPA program, made possible by a grant from the National Science Foundation through the Peer-Led Team Learning National Dissemination Project, provided the funds needed to assist faculty in creating and implementing a peer-led team learning course at their institution. Several PLTL workshops were formed at the Borough of Manhattan Community College and emphasized mathematical concepts related to teacher preparation, while the workshop at New York City College of Technology focused mainly on intermediate algebra.

The modules used in the workshops are still a work in progress. Keep in mind the importance of group dynamics when you use these modules. Solving problems in pairs or using a round robin method, for example, can generate great conversations over a simple mathematical problem. When students are engaged and having fun, they are learning. If you are interested in authoring modules or like to comment on any existing ones, please feel free to contact Janet Liou-Mark. We look forward to hearing from you.

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