

## Finding the Questions Beneath the Questions....

### Free-writing Prompts for CEL-1 Reflection

Very often, when we are asked to answer complex questions, it's difficult to get started. Breaking down the questions into smaller parts that we can manage more easily can be very helpful. Answering smaller questions and then thinking about the smaller answers can lead to a more sophisticated, organic understanding of the topic. When we approach the bigger questions again, we may find that we're more familiar with the ideas behind them, more comfortable with the questions, and that we have much more to say. The questions below are aimed at helping you get started on thinking deeply about your CEL-1. This free-writing exercise, which breaks down the bigger issues into smaller pieces, is also a model for how you might approach your Division I retrospective as a whole. Remember that the Division I Retrospective must include a section or a discussion about the CEL-1.

1. What was the easiest aspect of your CEL-1 activity? Why was it easy for you?
2. What was hard, and why?
3. What do you think makes for a strong community?
4. Did your CEL-1 activity bring a 'community' into being? If so, how?
5. Did the CEL-1 give you new ideas about how a community could be strengthened?
6. Did you meet new people? Did you find common ground with them? Did you find that your views and expectations differed? If so, in what ways?
7. What did you achieve together?
8. Did the CEL-1 give you any opportunities to \*teach\* someone else or give anyone advice about how to do something?
9. The next time you are collaborating with others, what will you do differently?
10. What are your main academic interests? Can you see any connections between your interests in classes and the CEL-1 you chose? If not, can you see any benefits to doing CEL-1's that are not directly related to your academic focus? What might these be?

11. If you could change something about your CEL-1 experience, what would it be? How would you advise a 1<sup>st</sup> year student, next year, about how to have a successful and enjoyably challenging CEL-1 experience?

12. If you could organize and run a CEL-1 activity next year for incoming students, what would it be?

#### THE FINAL QUESTIONS FOR THE CEL-1 SECTION OF YOUR DIV 1 RETROSPECTIVE

- What knowledge did you gain while learning with and from others?
- In what ways did your CEL-1 help you to engage/shape/contribute to the campus community and/or influence your sense of community, belonging and mutual responsibility?
- How did the CEL-1 activity intersect with or depart from what you are learning in courses and what new questions did it raise?
- How might the CEL-1 influence your future academic work and civic engagement?
- What challenges did you face and how were these addressed?
- If you were to improve your CEL-1 experience what would you change? If you had an opportunity to design a new CEL-1 for incoming students what would you propose?