



General Information Brief

1

LEARNING CONNECTION, Inc.

201 WAYLAND AVENUE, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02906

401.274.9330 800.432.5520 FAX 401.521.3910

www.learnconnect.com e-mail > education@learnconnect.com

What is Learning Connection, Inc.?

LEARNING CONNECTION, Inc., originally the Providence Learning Connection, was started in July, 1981, to provide an opportunity for people in the community to learn easily and inexpensively from others with skills and knowledge to share. Today, LEARNING CONNECTION is a learning network with learning centers in Providence, Newport, and Needham, Mass., offering a wide variety of short courses, trips, seminars and programs designed to give adults an opportunity to meet new people and learn new skills. Recognized as one of the country's leading community-based adult education programs, LEARNING CONNECTION is known for its ability to respond quickly to educational trends, offering innovative, quality programs that make learning fun. Since its inception, LEARNING CONNECTION has remained committed to the philosophy that inexpensive, community-based education enriches the life of the community and the people who live there.

LEARNING CONNECTION is supported by class registrations, membership fees, special events and contract training. It currently serves approximately 12,000 students per year. Annually, over one half-million copies of our catalog are distributed throughout RI, MA, and CT, and by direct mail, targeted street drops and local newspapers. A dedicated staff, supplemented by consultants and freelance professionals, administers the program — handles registrations, instructor recruitment, support and evaluation, and program development.

Who is a Learning Connection student?

Typically students taking classes at LEARNING CONNECTION are employed professionals. 70% of our student population is female. They take courses because they want to combine learning with having fun, doing something new, and because they want to meet people with similar interests. Many of our students are new to the RI area and are looking to make contacts. Teaching at LEARNING CONNECTION is a fabulous networking/marketing opportunity.

Who can teach?

LEARNING CONNECTION does not require its instructors to have teaching degrees or certification. Adults who have skills or knowledge they would like to share are invited to submit a course proposal. All proposals are reviewed and if selected, the instructor is called in for an interview with the Director of Education.

Instructors are independent contractors, not employees of LEARNING CONNECTION. As such, they are responsible for developing their own courses and materials. LEARNING CONNECTION can arrange for a space within the community for the instructor to teach his/her class.

How do I design a program?

LEARNING CONNECTION schedules programs year round. Each term typically runs 5 weeks. You may schedule a class that lasts that entire 5 week term or you may design a program that is shorter. Keeping in mind that our population is busy working professionals, we find that the shorter the course can be the better. The exceptions to this rule are language, fine arts, and more intensive courses. Though traditionally longer in length, it is sometimes convenient to schedule these as weekend intensive programs. The course is for you to design. Feel free to use LEARNING CONNECTION's expertise in determining how long and when to offer a course. In partnership, we can come up with exciting programs that fill the needs of our students.

continued ►

... continued:

Scheduling. Most courses are scheduled in the evening from 7pm and run as late as 9:30pm. Course are also scheduled on weekends. We are looking to develop more daytime offerings on weekdays. Course and workshop proposals may be submitted at any time but there are pre-determined deadlines for each teaching session. See “Proposal Deadlines,” right. Please keep holidays in mind when scheduling your programs. We will not schedule classes on the following major holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday (January), Memorial Day (May), July 4th, Labor Day (September), Columbus Day (October), Thanksgiving (November), New Year’s Eve & Day. Also, avoid scheduling classes on well-observed religious holidays such as Christmas Eve & Day (December); Passover, Good Friday, Easter (late March or April); and Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur (both September).

Proposal Deadlines

TERM	DEADLINE
Winter	September 1
Spring	December 1
Summer	March 1
Fall	June 1

Writing Your Proposal.

We’ve come up with the following guidelines to help you design a winning proposal. The best instructors are those who have a love of their subject, a desire to share it and a basic competence in the subject they will be teaching. If you think that you meet these qualifications, then don’t hesitate to try teaching at LEARNING CONNECTION.

The foundation of your proposal should be your course description. If you can make your course sound appealing and communicate clearly and concisely what you will be teaching, chances are you will also be successful as an instructor. Good course descriptions will also interest more people in your course and increase enrollments. The course proposal is comprised of:

- A title
- A description of what you will be teaching
- An instructor biography or list of qualifications.

For LEARNING CONNECTION purposes, your entire course proposal cannot exceed 95 words. Please attach your resumé and the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three professional references.

Titles. A good course title can mean the difference between a course that zooms off the charts and one that doesn’t live up to its potential. The purpose of the title is to attract the readers interest to what you are offering. Here are a few techniques:

- Keep title simple or catchy. Long or complex titles tend to confuse and dull titles will not capture the reader’s eye.
- Ask the reader a question.
- Use the word *you* in the title. This makes it personal and involves the reader.
- Identify your target audience. *Investing for Young Married Couples* is better than *Investment Basics*.
- Keep it positive.

Course Description. Your course description should be enticing or interesting. The narrative should be written in the second person (“you”). The description should be factually complete and accurate and should provide solid information about the course so people can decide whether it will serve their needs. Keep these points in mind when writing your description:

- Descriptions should run 30-65 words in length.
- Do not use abbreviations unless everyone knows what they mean.
- Write in complete sentences.

The first five words of a course description will often determine if the reader will go on or pass to another course description. Make them count! The opener should focus on either the course content or the learner — not the course or the instructor! Tried and true opening techniques include: the definition, the question, the outstanding or impressive fact, the quotation and the distraction (a catchy lead in not directly related to course content). Questions, quotations or distractions should be used sparingly. Following your opener, you can talk about what will be covered in the course (and other content matter).

continued ►

... continued:

Instructor Biography. Your biography should be 15 to 30 words in a paragraph underneath the description. The biography should establish the instructor as qualified at the same time it projects the instructor as a peer, not too far above the potential learner. Qualifications should be stated in terms of experience. By including the instructor's interest or motivation in teaching the course, the participants will see the instructor as a likable peer.

Interviews. All proposals are reviewed by the LEARNING CONNECTION staff. If your proposal is accepted, an interview will be scheduled. Following the interview, if your course has been selected to be included in the LEARNING CONNECTION catalog, you will be sent a contract and an instructor report. If the staff feels there is not a match between your course and our program, we will let you know in writing.

During the interview, we will discuss:

- Your proposal in greater detail.
- Pay scale and contractual policies.
- Time of course and starting date.
- Logistics such as specific needs, limits, equipment.

What can Learning Connection offer you as an instructor?

Your experience as a LEARNING CONNECTION instructor gives you visibility with a diverse audience both through the catalog and in the classroom. We put your name in the hands of over 100,000 people in the Rhode Island area every six to eight weeks. We have established ourselves as an expert resource guide for those who are looking for training and services as well as classroom instruction. Being a LEARNING CONNECTION instructor has opened the doors to many professional opportunities for many of our instructors. We are proud of the visibility that we have been able to provide to our team of experts. If you have your own business or are in a private professional service to the public, being a LEARNING CONNECTION instructor offers you a new clientele resource. We do not allow "sales pitches" or in-class advertisements of your company or office. We list your biography in each catalog beneath your course. We provide a vehicle for the display of your talent and expertise. Additional benefits of being a LEARNING CONNECTION instructor include:

- One class at half-tuition (some restrictions apply) during the term you are currently teaching.
- Status as an independent contractor.
- Access to education and reference materials.
- Option to teach in Newport and Needham, Mass., programs.

Also, many LEARNING CONNECTION instructors appear as guests on local radio and television programs. Newspapers have written feature articles about many LEARNING CONNECTION courses and instructors. Within the community, we are looked at as a resource for information and trends. A number of our instructors are invited to other cities to present their programs. If you are interested in traveling to affiliate programs, please inform the education office.