

Abstract Submitted
for the PHYSTEC17 Meeting of
The American Physical Society

Its okay to be wrong: Developing identities of competence in the TXST LA program¹ HUNTER CLOSE, ELEANOR CLOSE, JESSICA CONN, Texas State University — We analyze the experience of students in the Physics Learning Assistant program at Texas State University in terms of the existing theoretical frameworks of community of practice (Lave Wenger, 1991) and physics identity (Hazari et al., 2010). We find that changes in practice facilitated by the LA program shift LAs sense of community membership and their understanding of what comprises competent physics participation. In interviews and written reflections, LAs report that participation in the LA community changes their ways of learning and of being a student, including shifts toward believing that diversity of ideas and approaches is valuable for learning and that its okay to be wrong and to ask for help. This suggests that the LA experience contributes to shifting students from fixed mindset to growth mindset learning orientation (Dweck, 1986). These findings show that a focus on supporting community membership is useful for effective LA program design.

¹Supported by the Halliburton Foundation, NSF DUE 1240036, and the Office of the Provost

Hunter Close
Texas State University

Date submitted: 30 Jan 2017

Electronic form version 1.4