

## Collaboration on Freshman Learning Communities between Two-Year College and Research University

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## Collaboration on Freshman Learning Communities between Two-Year College and Research University



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## Seamless Learning Transfer Consortium (SLTC)

- FIPSE Funded
- 3 Pairs of two- & four-year institutions
  - Portland State/Clackamas Community College
  - Alverno College/Waukesha County Technical College
  - Georgia State University/Georgia Perimeter College
- Project Goals
  - Student success in transfer
  - Alignment of standards for achievement
  - Use of electronic portfolios as a tool for transfer
- Collaboration continues after grant expired

## Comparisons

### Georgia State

- Doctoral research/extensive
- 27,000; 27% graduate
- 4,000 Freshmen
- Rapid growth
- Steady Increase in quality
- More traditional
- 49% minority (stable 10yr +)
- 2,500 new freshmen/year
- 4,000 new transfers/year
- 8-years of Freshmen Learning Communities and First year programs
- Over 50% of freshman now in FLCs

### Georgia Perimeter

- Two-year college
- 39 associate; 4 career degrees
- 20,461 students
- 11,963 freshmen
- Many part-time students with work commitments
- 55% minority; 17% international
- 6 branch campuses
- Past piloting of learning communities with mixed success
- No comparable FLC's at the time project started
- Now in sixth year of FLCs

## Georgia State/Georgia Perimeter Collaboration

- Barrier to transfer is cultural
  - Students concerned about impersonal research university
  - Fear of adequacy of preparation
- Similar first year experience
- Companion Learning Communities
  - Pairing of FLC's on both campuses
  - Faculty collaboration
  - Georgia State faculty/staff presentation at GPC
  - GPC students field trips to GSU, shared workshops

## Overarching Themes

- Diversity and Multiculturalism
- Technology
- Aesthetic Appreciation
- Student skills for academic success



## Developing the Learning Community Model

- GPC College and Career
  - College Algebra
  - English Composition
  - Public Speaking
- GPC Revolution and Rebellion
  - English Composition
  - American History
  - Political Science
- GSU Quantitative Sciences
  - College Algebra
  - English Composition
  - Political Science
  - Critical Thinking
  - Freshman Seminar
- GSU Conflict Resolution
  - English Composition
  - Global Issues
  - Perspectives
  - Math Modeling
  - Freshman Seminar

## Developing the Learning Community Model

- GPC ENSL/Art
  - Art Appreciation
  - English as a Second Language
- GSU Exploring Diversity and Multiculturalism
  - English Composition
  - Sociology
  - Media, Culture, and Society
  - Perspectives
  - Freshman Seminar

## The Experience

### Community building

- Faculty interaction
- Group development among students
- Social events with students
- Georgia State Day
- Diversity training
- E-portfolios
- E-mail



## Example Assignments

- Engage in a discussion on 3 occasions and with 3 students from another campus.
- Exchange ideas, not just a response.
- Write a typed two-page paper.
  - “Do you believe that diversity awareness training of some type should be required of all freshmen?”
  - What academic skills will you need to succeed at a university?

## Use Of Electronic Portfolios As A Tool For Transfer

### Description of Activities:

- Students in Freshman Seminar participated in a project to create electronic portfolios.
- Instructors coordinated efforts so that students in both classes created and shared similar electronic portfolios.
- Instructions on downloading the portfolios were provided so that students could continue to work on their portfolios on their own after the semester if they so desired.

## E-portfolio Elements



## GPC Student's E-Portfolio

- Ikeisha Aytch's E-Portfolio

[Aytch/index.htm](#)



## GSU Students' E-Portfolios

- Tiffany Young
- Paul Masserat
- [Blessing Deeyaa](#)



e-Portfolio Tiffany Young

"Life is just a mirror, and what you see out there, you must first see inside of you."  
Wally "Famous" Amos

e-PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

- Personal Photograph
- Graphic Symbol
- Motto or Quote
- Statement of Goals
- Representation of Academic Work
- Personal and Institutional E-mail

e-Portfolio Tiffany Young

Personal Photograph

Name: Tiffany Lakecia Young  
D.O.B.: November 12, 1986  
Major: Mathematics  
Concentration: Decision Sciences  
Hobbies: Spending time with family and friends, playing the piano, SHOPPING!!!!  
Interests: Enjoying life and trying to live it to the fullest. Shopping for shoes!!!

Personal Photograph

e-Portfolio Tiffany Young

Representation of Academic Work

First Semester Freshman Year

My memories of my first semester of college as a Freshman at Georgia State University!

"The only place where success comes before work is a dictionary."  
Vidal Sassoon

Representation of Academic Work:

- (WhyXCCollegeXStudentsXProcrastinate [1].ppt)
- (CreditXCrdXCraze.doc)
- (TeamXBaldrin)

ePortfolio Paul Masserat

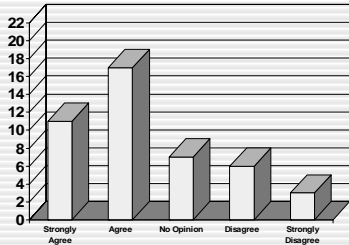
e-PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

COMMUNICATION GOALS

Comments about this Portfolio

This is my GSU 1010 class on the first day of our class. we learned everybody's names on the first day.

Retain the e-portfolio project in future GSU 1010 classes.

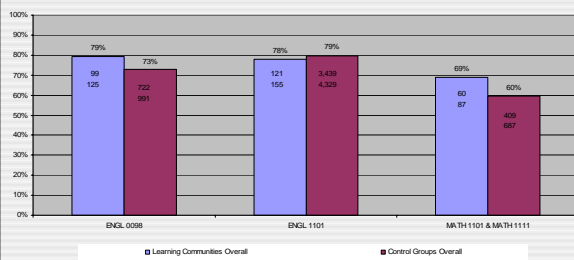


## Georgia State Assessment

- How well is the program working?
- Are the FLC's meeting our goals?
  - **YES!!**
  - Retention, graduation rates, load, ease of registration, advisement, community, familiarity with campus, writing, technology, satisfaction (NSSE).
- No significant difference in entering academic profiles of FLC and non-FLC cohorts (not significant at  $p < 0.5$ ).

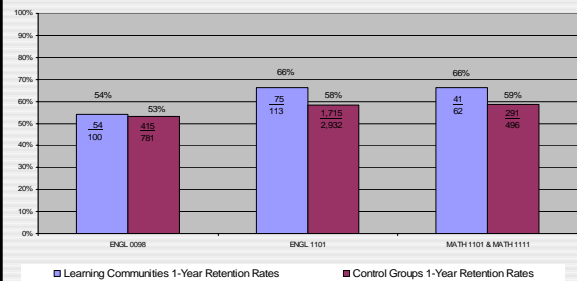
## GPC Assessment

OVERALL PASS RATES  
Fall 2001 - Fall 2006  
(C or Better)



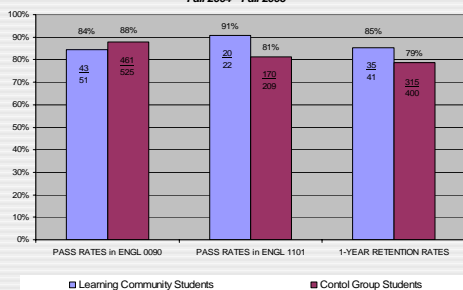
## GPC Assessment

OVERALL RETENTION RATES  
Fall 2001 - Fall 2006



## GPC Assessment

ESL 0090 STUDENTS  
Fall 2004 - Fall 2006



## GPC End of Semester Survey Results

- Small sample size for Learning Community
- 85% thought the LC experience would make it easier to transfer to a 4-year institution.
- 91% of the Learning Community (LC) students said they would participate again in future LC classes.
- 57% thought the LC helped them succeed in English; 71% thought it helped success in mathematics.
- 96% would recommend the LC to another first-year student.

## Student Comments

### Georgia State

- "It [e-portfolio] was a nice activity that gave each student a chance to express themselves."
- "The e-portfolio was a very neat assignment. It allowed me to dig deep and consider how I want to be represented."
- "[The LC] makes things simple and easy. I chose my specific learning community because it has a great schedule."

### Georgia Perimeter

- "This semester in the FLC taught me things about life that none of my other classes taught me."
- "I was surprised to find that the teachers are loving and caring and they have no problem making time for their students"
- "I really liked how all of my classes are connected."
- "I grew personally, academically, and some socially."

## Student Comments

### Georgia State

- "The classes I am taking in the FLC are required courses, but will also help me decide if law is a subject I would like to pursue."
- "The community offers me smaller classes and a chance to get to know the people in my classes."
- "The final aspect that made Georgia State University the right school for me is its sense of community in such a large environment."

### Georgia Perimeter

- "I wish for loving friends and teachers, just like the ones that I met in the learning community."
- "Working with the same group of people provided me with the emotional and academic support I needed as a nontraditional student returning to school after so many years."

## Faculty Comments

### Georgia State

- "This has been a delightful experience for me, and I strongly encourage other faculty to get involved. Working with freshmen will remind you of why you got into this racket in the first place!"

### Georgia Perimeter

- "We loved working as a team of three faculty members with the same students."
- "We enjoyed getting to know these students better as individuals."
- "We saw the academic and personal benefits of the learning community on the students."

## Faculty Comments

### Georgia State

- "Where else can an economics professor work with a biology professor, an English instructor, and a faculty member from academic foundations? We are all striving to convince students that knowledge really is interdisciplinary."

### Georgia Perimeter

- "Students respond positively to the synergy of the two classes. There is frequent dialogue, as well as an energetic exchange. One class enhances the other--and that's really the point."
- "We would do it again..."

## Future Plans

- Continue and expand project
- Continue expansion of stand alone FLCs to GPC's other campuses as well as increase number of paired FLCs.
- Increase use of e-portfolios to facilitate transfer.
- Share more programs and promote cultural exchanges.
- Encourage more faculty collaboration between institutions.
- Expand assessment.

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