The Trusted Expert and Internationally Recognized Leader
for all Postsecondary Student Transitions
The First-Year Experience: Lessons Learned and Emerging Issues

Jennifer R. Keup
Director, National Resource Center
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Overview

Talk a bit about:
• Provide definitional parameters for FYE
• History of the first-year experience
• Lessons learned from the decades of work in the U.S.
• Current challenges & looking ahead in the U.S. context

Qualifications
• Time!!!
• Not necessarily new information
Data Sources

- National Resource Center
  - 2012-2013 National Survey of First-Year Seminars
    - 2009 National Survey of First-Year Seminars
  - 2011 National Survey of Senior Capstone Experiences
  - 2009 Peer Leadership Survey
  - 2008 National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives
  - Journal of the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

- WNSLAE Data

- JNGI Student Success & Retention Survey

- AAC&U High Impact Practices

- ACT
However, let’s be sure to begin at the beginning...
Before we get too far down the path...

- When does “the first-year experience” begin?
- In the U.S., our answer is complicated by the highly integrated nature of the educational system.
  - Early outreach
  - Community relationships
  - Transfer students (lateral, reverse, “swirling”)
  - Dual enrollment programs
  - Admissions
What words would you use to describe your first-year students?
Not as Homogeneous as this Suggests

- Adult learners
- Veterans
- Transfers and “swirlers”
- Diversity along race, ethnicity, national origin, and first-language
- Working and financially needy students
- Physical, emotional, and learning ability levels
- Gender balance
- Academic preparation
- Others?
“First-year experience educators need to identify how their programs, policies, and pedagogies capitalize on the multiple perspectives that...college students bring with them—perspectives that contribute to the total campus environment.” (Keup, 2008)

• Balance between acknowledging the individual student and forging a community culture

• How to remain flexible for personality profile of the next generation
...and, finally...

• What do we mean when we say “first-year experience”?
  – Comprehensive
  – Intentional
  – Integrated
  – Flexible
  – Systemic
  – Organizationally horizontal
  – Student centered
FYE: A Working Definition

“The first-year experience is not a single program or initiative, but rather an intentional combination of academic and co-curricular efforts within and across postsecondary institutions.”

(Koch & Gardner, 2006)
FYE: A Working Definition at UJ

“The FYE has been conceptualized as a holistic initiative which encompasses all aspects of first year student experience in the context of an invitational and equitable institution. It comprises both curricular and extra-curricular initiatives, and is far more than a single event, programme or course. It attempts to establish an ethos and a way of life, through which all first year students will experience the transition into university life.”

(Van Zyl, 2011)
FYE: FOUNDATIONS AND BEGINNINGS

374 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- **1636**: Harvard College is the first U.S. higher education institution.
- **1791**: The Bill of Rights is passed by the first Congress of the new United States. Education becomes a function of the state.
- **1848**: Massachusetts School for Insane Female (now Wellesley) is established, the first school of its kind in the U.S.
- **1862**: The Land Grant Act becomes law. Public lands donated to the states and sold. Money collected is used for endowed support, and maintenance of at least one college.
- **1894**: Jewell Lutheran College charges $27.50 for a 10-week semester; includes tuition, room, and books.
- **1905**: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is founded.
- **1910**: The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is first administered. It is based on the Army Alpha test.
- **1944**: The G.I. Bill is signed by FDR. More than 2 million WWII veterans go back to school, nearly doubling the college population. About 238,000 become teachers.
- **1964**: The Civil Rights Act is signed into law. It prohibits discrimination in public accommodations, employment, and education.
- **1966**: The Equality of Educational Opportunity Study (the Coleman Report) is conducted in response to provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It concludes that African American children benefit from attending integrated schools.
- **1970**: Four students are killed by Ohio National Guard troops on May 4th during an anti-war protest at Kent State University.
- **1980**: Whiteboards begin to replace the blackboard in U.S. classrooms.
- **2000**: The Higher Education Act is amended and reauthorized, expanding access for low and middle income students, providing additional funds for graduate, and increasing accountability.
- **2010**: The Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act represents major investment in education - expands educational opportunity for students and families.

Sources: National Resource Center, www.sc.edu/fye

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
FYE: Foundations and Beginnings

• Mass Higher Education Era in the U.S. (1945-1975)
  – WWII GIs: GI Bill and Baby Boom
  – Civil rights and desegregation led to greater access
  – Institutional expansion especially large public and CC
  – Increased financial aid (Higher Education Act)

• Access does not equal success

• “Rediscovery” of student support initiatives
  – Orientation
  – Learning communities
  – Service learning
  – First-year seminars
FYE: Foundations and Beginnings

• Student activism and a riot at the University of South Carolina in Spring 1970
• University 101 was created by President Thomas Jones
• Strong social justice undertones
• Teach students to “love” the university
FYE: A History

National Resource Center Milestones of Development

1980

1982: First “National Conference on the Freshman Seminar/ Freshman Orientation Course Concept” held at USC

1983: Annual conference series on The Freshman Year Experience begins

1986: National Center for the Study of The Freshman Year Experience established

First “International Conference on The First-Year Experience” held in the UK

1986 - 1999: John N. Gardner, served as executive director of the National Resource Center

1988: First monograph and FYE newsletter published

First National Survey on Freshman Seminar Programs conducted

First Canadian-American Conference on The First-Year Experience held in Toronto

1989: Journal of The Freshman Year Experience introduced

1990: National campaign to recognize Outstanding Freshman Advocates begins

1990: First Conference on the Senior-Year Experience hosted by the National Resource Center

1991: Center name changed to the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience

1994: Website created

First-Year Experience listserv (FYE-List) established

www.sc.edu/fye
FYE: History

1995: First National Conference on Students in Transition
Center name expanded to National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience & Students in Transition
Assisted Queensland University of Technology in launching Pacific Rim Conference on the First Year in Higher Education

1997: Senior Year Experience listserv (SYE-List) established

1998: Center name changes to National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

1999: Transfer Year Experience listserv (TYE-List) established
Center founder, John Gardner, retires and named Senior Fellow
Stuart Hunter becomes the second Director of the National Resource Center

2000: First Year Assessment listserv (FYA-list) established

2001: Joint international conference held with Pacific Rim Conference on the First Year in Higher Education

2003: Launch of an electronic newsletter, E-Source for College Transitions

2004: Sophomore Year listserv (SOPH-List) established

2005: Establishment of Paul P. Fidler Research Grant
First National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives conducted

www.sc.edu/fye
FYE: History

2006: 25th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
2007: Annual First-Year Experience Conference
Undergraduate Student Fellowships established
Stuart Hunter named Executive Director of University 101 Programs and the National Resource Center

2008: 2nd National Survey of Sophomore-Year Initiatives conducted
Jennifer R. Keup becomes the third Director of the National Resource Center
National Resource Center receives 2008 ASHE Special Merit Award

2009: Graduate Student Transitions listserv (GRAD-List) established
Helping Sophomores Succeed: Understanding and Improving the Second-Year Experience published with Jossey-Bass
Launch of The Toolbox, an online professional development newsletter

2010: Launch of online courses
National Award for Excellence in Teaching First-Year Seminars established
National Resource Center awarded a Spencer grant to study the impact of first-year seminars on student outcomes

2012: 25th International Conference on The First-Year Experience
Administration of the 9th National Survey of First-Year Seminars

2011: 30th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience

2013: Release of the five-volume book series, The First-Year Seminar: Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Courses to Support Student Learning and Success

www.sc.edu/fye
FYE: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

Christmas Past

Christmas Present

Christmas Future
FYE: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow
FYE: Lessons Learned

- Connecting FYE to **Retention** and moving beyond
- Choosing **Outcomes** effectively
- Effective use and transferability of **High-Impact Practices** (HIPs)
- **Assessment**, accountability, and accreditation
- **Integration** across FYE programs
RETENTION

“Look to your left, look to your right—one of you won’t be here next year.”
# National First-to-Second-Year Retention Rates by Institutional Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Level/Control</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD*</th>
<th>Mean %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-Year Public</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Year Private</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA/BS Public</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA/BS Private</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA/First Professional Public</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA/First Professional Private</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Public</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Private</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2,543</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source Year: 2012
National First-to-Second-Year Retention Rates at Four-Year Colleges

[Graph showing retention rates from 1989 to 2012 for Public, Private, and All institutions.]
National First-to-Second-Year Retention Rates at Four-Year Colleges

Completion rates for 2-year colleges
High (1989): 44.0%
Low (2010): 28.3%
Retention was not the primary purpose for the renaissance of the first-year seminar and other student success initiatives for the first year.
And yet, we are still invested...

- The word “retention” was found 95 times in the program for the 32nd Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
  - 59 times in the program for the 25th Annual International Conference on the First-Year Experience
- Metric that is required for reporting
- Goal to “increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60% by the year 2025” – Lumina Foundation
- Income and employment options are directly related to level of education
## Common Goal of Undergraduate Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal of “improved retention/graduation rates”</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-year seminars</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early alert warning systems</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning communities</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge programs</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So how do we address the “issue” of retention in the first year?

4 Ps of student retention *(Kalsbeek, 2012)*

- Profile
- Progress
- Process
- Promise
So how do we address the “issue” of retention in the first year?

4 Ps of student retention *(Kalsbeek, 2012)*

• Profile-The strongest predictor of student retention and success is the profile of the student and the institution.

• Progress

• Process

• Promise
So how do we address the “issue” of retention in the first year?

4 Ps of student retention (Kalsbeek, 2012)

• Profile
• Progress - Need to focus on students’ progress toward a degree and not just their presence.
• Process
• Promise
So how do we address the “issue” of retention in the first year?

**4 Ps of student retention** *(Kalsbeek, 2012)*

- Profile
- Progress
- Process-retention and success is contingent upon systematic attention to **processes that hinder and facilitate retention** rather than just at-risk students.
- Promise
So how do we address the “issue” of retention in the first year?

4 Ps of student retention (*Kalsbeek, 2012*)

- Profile
- Progress
- Process
- Promise—“student attrition is a function of unmet expectations...unfulfilled promises, and unrealized experience of the ‘brand’.”
Beyond Retention: Theory

“While many [theories] have seen the role of first-year and transition programs as solely focused on retaining the student, these programs should have a greater influence on setting the tone for what it means to be an educated individual and the responsibilities that come with gaining a postsecondary education.”

(Torres & LePeau, 2013)
Beyond Retention: Methods

“Student persistence, or retention to the sophomore year, and academic achievement...are common measures [and] are of great importance as metrics for student success [but] learning outcomes desirable for all college students, such as written and oral communication, information literacy, problem solving, civic engagement, and intercultural and global understanding are also worthy of study.”

(Kinzie, 2013)
"The almost singular focus on retention and graduation rates as...student success is inadequate, [there must be] a revised definition grounded in student learning outcomes."

"Definitions of student success must include not only retention and graduation rates, but also a wide range of student learning and developmental outcomes."

(Reason & Gansemer-Topf, 2013)
Persistence

• Persistence: [verb] “to continue steadfastly or firmly in some state, purpose, course of action, or the like, especially in spite of opposition, remonstrance, etc.”

• Questions:
  – Should this be the primary goal?
  – Does this actually measure progress?
  – Does it actually limit the scope of our thinking and work with the FYE?
  – Does it have a “shelf-life”?
“Excuse me,” said Alice, “how do I get out of here?”

“That depends a great deal on where you want to end up” said the cat.

“I don’t care where I end up,” said Alice, “I just want out!”

“Well,” said the cat, “if it doesn’t matter where you end up, it doesn’t matter which road you take.”

*Carroll, 1865*
How would you know you were a “successful” educational institution if you had 100% retention?

What if all your students were also guaranteed jobs upon graduation?
21st Century: Learning Outcomes

• Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
• Intellectual and practical skills
• Personal and social responsibility
• Integrative learning
Metacompetencies for Employability

- Build & sustain working professional relationships
- Analyze, evaluate, and interpret data from various sources
- Engage in continuous learning
- Oral communication and persuasion
- Project planning and management

Gardner, 2009
Metacompetencies for Employability

• Ability to create new knowledge
• Understand the impact of company practices in a global setting
• Build a successful team
• Coach, mentor, & develop others
• Initiative

Gardner, 2010
Examples of FYE Outcomes

Write down as many outcomes of the first-year experience as you can think of.
Domains for FYE Outcomes

- Retention
- Academic skills/experiences
- Campus connection
- Interpersonal skills
- Personal development
- Civic engagement/democratic citizenship
- Employability
Examples of FYE Outcomes

- **Retention**
  - Persistence to the second year
  - Graduation rates

- **Academic skills/experiences**
  - Analytical & critical thinking skills
  - Development of educational career goals
  - Declaring a major
  - Knowledge integration & application
  - Academic engagement
  - Academic achievement
  - Cognitive complexity
  - Study skills
  - Introduction to a discipline

- **Campus connection**
  - Knowledge of university requirements
  - Ability to identify, seek, & use organizational resources
  - Connection to campus community
  - Understanding history & traditions
  - Involvement in cocurricular activities
  - Satisfaction with student experience

- **Interpersonal skills**
  - Conflict resolution
  - Written & oral communication skills
  - Development of a social support network
  - Multicultural competence
Examples of FYE Outcomes

• Personal development
  – Time management
  – Identity exploration & development
  – Values clarification
  – Practical competence
  – Life management skills
  – Physical health
  – Emotional wellness
  – Moral and ethical development
  – Leadership skills

• Civic engagement/democratic citizenship
  – Participation in service
  – Engagement in philanthropy
  – Political awareness/engagement
  – Political activism/social advocacy
  – Community involvement

• Employability
  – Analyzing a problem from various sources
  – Innovation and creation of new knowledge
  – Providing direction through interpersonal persuasion
  – Ability to integrate ideas and information
  – Applying knowledge to a real-world setting
  – Ability to coach and mentor others
  – Project planning and management
  – Engage in continuous learning
  – Desireability as a candidate
  – Initiative
  – Ethical decision-making
  – Professionalism
  – Ability to build a team

• Others?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year Seminar Objectives*</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop academic skills</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop connection w/the institution</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide orientation to campus resources &amp; services</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-exploration/personal development</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create common first-year experience</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop support network/friendships</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase student-faculty interaction</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve sophomore return rates</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop writing skills</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to a discipline</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Select the three most important course objectives*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation Goals**</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the institution/facilities</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building connections with students, faculty, &amp; staff</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrating arrival of new students</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving retention/graduation rates</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course registration</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement testing</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Community Goals &amp; Outcomes**</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-to-student interaction</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher levels of academic achievement</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved retention and/or graduation rates</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty-to-student interaction</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkages between different disciplinary perspectives</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved critical thinking</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty-to-to faculty collaboration</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effective Selection of Outcomes

• Communicate values and culture
• Help focus your efforts
• Identify institutional partners
• Create a “brand” identity for your program
• Indicate assessment methods and strategies
• Suggest specific interventions
What tools do we have to achieve these FYE outcomes?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Who’s in charge?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic advising</td>
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<td>Bridge programs</td>
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<td>Career planning</td>
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<td>Class events</td>
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<td>Common reading program</td>
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<td>Service-learning</td>
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<td>Convocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural enrichment activities</td>
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<td>Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early warning/alert systems</td>
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<td>Financial aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>First-year seminar</td>
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<td>Internships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
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<td>Learning communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library/information literacy services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring/leadership for first-year students</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Print publications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence life (e.g., first-year student arrangements)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retreats</td>
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<td>Supplemental instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing-intensive courses</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In which of the following areas does your institution currently have initiatives for first-year students?
“High-Impact Practices...”

...are curricular and cocurricular structures that tend to draw upon high-quality pedagogies and practices in pursuit of 21st century learning outcomes; they are “teaching and learning practices that have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students...[toward] increase rates of retention and student engagement.”

Kuh, 2008
Characteristics of High-Impact Practices

• Creates an investment of time and energy
• Includes interaction with faculty and peers about substantive matters
• High expectations
• Includes frequent feedback
• Exposure to diverse perspectives
• Demands reflection and integrated learning
• Accountability
High-Impact Practices

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses & Projects
HIPs in Combination

89.7% of campuses offered a First-Year Seminar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Impact Practice in the FYS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative assignments &amp; projects</td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity/Global learning</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing-intensive</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common reading experience</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning community</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence of Effectiveness?
Evidence of Effectiveness? YES!
However,…

• “High-impact practices...combine and concentrate other empirically validated pedagogic approaches into a single multideminenational activity that unfolds over a period of time.”

• “Only when they are implemented well and continually evaluated...will we realize their considerable potential.”

Kuh, 2010
Selected Findings

• First-year seminars
  – More first-year seminars in CC and MSIs
  – 60% of are “extended orientation”
  – Class size of first-year seminars is drifting up (>21)
  – Changing patterns of requiring the course
  – 44% are offered for one credit
  – Traditional models of instructor compensation
  – 80% have a dean, director, or coordinator but >1/2 of these leaders serve this role in a part-time capacity
Selected Findings (cont.)

• Service learning
  – Service is often of short duration (<less than 10 hours)
  – One-shot experience or service “plunge”
  – Some evidence of integration into the classroom and reflection

• Common reading
  – Often solely an orientation or welcome week activity
  – Occasional connection to FYS, freshman composition, or developmental English

• Learning Communities
  – Range from structurally-related to thematically integrated
  – Mostly co-enrollment
Selected Findings (cont.)

• Online components
  – Reliance upon outdated technologies
  – Mostly used as a repository for course documents, assignment submission, and discussion boards
  – Low levels of social media use

• Student support tends to be heavily “book-ended” in first year and senior year

• Sophomore-year initiatives are still developing
  – Heavily connected to institutional type
  – Curricular opportunities underutilized

• Wide variation of use, type, and impact of HIP by major
So, what’s the grade?
A Call for Innovative and Integrative Pedagogy in HIPs

Pedagogical “practices [tend to] be used in more functional rather than novel approaches. It seems that these course practices have great, albeit currently unrealized, potential for transformation into truly high-impact learning experiences for students [and] pillars in an integrated, intentional first-year experience.”

(Padgett & Keup, 2011)
Emerging Evidence

• High-impact practices have **minor direct effects** on student learning

  *Salisbury & Goodman (2009)*

• A more significant connection exists between **“good practices”** and student-learning outcomes

  *Goodman, Baxter Magolda, Seifert, & King (2011)*
What are Some Vetted “Good Practices”?

- Effective teaching
- A variety of teaching methods
- Teaching clarity and organization
- Active learning
- Cooperative learning
- High expectations
- Integrative learning
- Quality non-classroom interactions w/faculty
- Influential interactions with other students
- Academic rigor and challenge
- Diversity experiences
- Meaningful discussion and homework
- Productive use of class time
Bottom Line

• We overemphasize the impact of offering and participating in HIPs on learning outcomes and retention

• It is what we are doing within the HIPs that is contributing to these outcomes
  – Innovative and integrative pedagogies
  – Vetted good practices

• Better understanding of the processes
Consider transferability

“It stands to reason that [HIP] key conditions can be adapted and incorporated into any teaching and learning situation inside or outside the classroom to promote higher levels of student performance. There are doubtless other high-impact activities...in which large number of students participate.”

Kuh, 2010
Consider transferability

What are common student experiences that have the potential to become HIPs?
Possibilities

- Employment
- Campus activities
- Student media
- Advising
- Athletics
- Physical fitness and wellness
- Portfolios and performance
- Transactional experiences
  - Course registration
  - Parking
  - Financial aid
- Peer leadership
Characteristics of High-Impact Practices

- Creates an investment of time and energy
- Includes interaction with faculty and peers about substantive matters
- High expectations
- Includes frequent feedback
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Demands reflection and integrated learning
- Accountability
Are FYE programs and HIPs being “continually evaluated?”
Short Answer: “Not Enough!”

- 59% of respondents to the National Survey of First-Year Seminars say that they have assessed their seminar in the past three years.
- 58% of institutions responding to the National Survey of Sophomore Year Initiatives say that they have ever evaluated their second-year initiatives.
- 56% of institutions responding to the National Survey of Capstone Experiences indicate that they have assessed their seminar in the past three years.
## Assessment Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYS Assessment</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student course evaluation</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional data</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey instrument</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct assessment of student learning outcomes</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups with instructors</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program review</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups with students</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual interviews with instructors</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual interviews with students</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What is Being Measured?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYS Objective</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop connection w/the institution</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide orientation to campus resources &amp; services</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop academic skills</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop critical thinking skills</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create common first-year experience</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-exploration/personal development</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop support network/friendships</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve second-year return rates</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase student-faculty interaction</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYS Assessment Outcome</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the seminar</td>
<td>75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of learning outcomes</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence to sophomore year</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with faculty</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student self-report of course impact</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade-point average</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections with peers</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in campus activities</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of campus services</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-class student/faculty interactions</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence to graduation</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Misalignment

“Too often program objectives represent articulation of broad learning objectives but the assessment strategy relies upon transactional measures that do not adequately capture progress and achievement of student learning and program goals.”

Keup & Kilgo, forthcoming
FYE Assessment Considerations

• “Just Do It!”
• The methods and tools we use to assess the impact of FYE need to consider students’ self-selection
  – Who is taking advantage of FYE and HIPs?
  – Is it equally impactful for all students
• Need to maintain an institutional lens while considering national data
• Integrate longitudinal models
• Consider appropriate metrics: “expected retention”
Criteria of FYE “Excellence”

• “Evidence of an intentional, comprehensive approach to improving the first year that is appropriate to an institution’s type and mission.”

• “Evidence of assessment of the various initiatives that constitute this approach.”

• “Broad impact on significant numbers of first-year students, including, but not limited to special student subpopulations.”

• “Strong administrative support for first-year initiatives, evidence of institutionalization, and durability over time.”

• “Involvement of a wide range of faculty, student affairs professionals, academic administrators, and other constituent groups.”
INTEGRATION

Early Alert
Writing Intensive Courses
Service Learning
Learning Community
Residence Life
Orientation
First-Year Seminars
A “Constellation” of Support

“Excellence [is] characterized by an approach to the first year that spans the curricula and cocurriculum. This approach is central and systemic rather than appended or patched to the core institutional mission.”

(Barefoot et al., 2005)
FYE: A Working Definition

“The first-year experience is not a single program or initiative, but rather an intentional combination of academic and co-curricular efforts within and across postsecondary institutions.”

(Koch & Gardner, 2006)
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Capitalizing upon Connections

• Program audit, including funding channels
• Branding
• Engaging campus advocates
  – Traditional partners
  – Emerging advocates
• Community partnerships, K-12 collaborations, other campuses
• Shared ownership but also accountability
• Turn existing programs into HIPs
Marketing

• Logos
• Branding
  – Subsidiary of university branding
• Theme
  – Continuous
  – Annual
• Merchandise
People

• Early champion
• Task Force/Advisory Board
• Leadership
  – Formal/appointed (e.g., Director)
  – Informal
• Ambassadors
• Student leaders
• Gatekeepers
• Objectors

Cross-campus collaboration
Assessment/Outcomes

• Common learning outcomes
  – Related to branding
  – Appropriate to first year
• Omnibus surveys
• Longitudinal/comprehensive assessment strategy
• Linked to accreditation/self-studies
Structures/Systems

• Shared technology and alert systems
• Common documentation
• Organizational structures
  – University College
  – FYE department
• Physical spaces
  – Student Success Centers
  – Living-Learning Environments in Residence Halls
THE FUTURE:
MEETING NEEDS, SETTING AGENDAS
FYE: Current Challenges & Looking Ahead

• FYE maturing into a subspecialty of Higher Ed
• Moving beyond retention framework & employability
• Welcoming new voices in the field and preparing the next generation of leaders
• Advancing research and scholarship on student transition and success
• Growing presence of FYE in accreditation
• Internationalization of FYE
• Integration
FYE: Current Challenges & Looking Ahead

• New learning tools: technology
• New issues in FYE
  – Peer leadership
  – Developmental education
• Engage new FYE advocates
  – K-12 sector
  – “Business” services
  – New institutional types
• Address new FYE constituents (e.g., parents, public)
Need a Paradigm Shift?

http://youtu.be/47rQkTPWW2I
Questions & Comments

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