
The Summer Initiative for Successful Sophomores

Bridging the Gap Between the
First and Second Years of College

For more program details, please contact:

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WHY?

First-year programs at RIT have been successful in supporting students through their transitional college adjustment periods. However, our sophomores frequently comment on the lack of attention they receive.

WHO?

Hence, the Summer Initiative (called "Sophomore Boot Camp" for this pilot year) was designed to give sophomores a strong start to their second year.

HOW?

Full-time first-year enrichment (fye) instructors collaborated to develop a three-day program customized for sophomore needs as identified by current sophomore students. Three months of effort went into mapping out the curriculum and activities, identifying and inviting guest speakers, creating a schedule, marketing the program, and determining the logistics of space, transportation, meals, and housing which resulted in the following format:

WHEN?

Three days immediately preceding the beginning of fall quarter

WHERE?

Large meeting room at edge of campus (clearly separated from orientation activities) with round table

WHAT?

Action-packed days included:

- Workshops to affirm, develop and apply their top talents (through StrengthsQuest)
- Activities to develop their talents into academic and professional strengths
- Community and RIT leaders as motivational and informational guest speakers
- Community service project
- Social/fun activities (T-shirt art, bowling, baseball)
- Food - breakfast, lunch, and dinner with various guests

ASSESSMENT PLAN

- Paper survey of 10 questions at end of program.
- Winter quarter reunion and focus group.
- Informal tracking of grades and retention.

FORMAL OUTCOMES

Student Satisfaction Survey Results

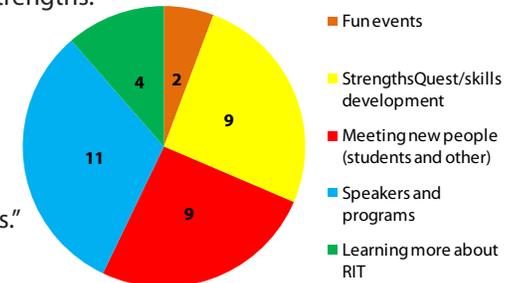
Percent of students who responded "agree" or "strongly agree"

| | |
|--|------|
| I am more aware of leadership opportunities at RIT | 92% |
| It was a worthwhile experience for the price | 80% |
| I am more aware of my academic and professional strengths | 100% |
| I feel confident and motivated to begin sophomore year | 92% |
| I am more aware of academic/professional resources at RIT | 88% |
| I would recommend program to other students | 92% |
| I feel a stronger sense of connectedness to others at RIT | 88% |
| I am satisfied with my overall experience during the program | 100% |

Open-ended Question Responses

What aspect of the program was most valuable to you?

- "Being able to connect with others and having the confidence to approach strangers."
- "Getting known in the academic community was valuable to my incoming interests. Also, community service with the sandwiches was valuable."
- "Getting to connect with other students who have similar interests and concerns, as well as some speakers who could help deal with my concerns and help me recognize my strengths."
- "I met a couple of people who are close friends now. The speakers and programs helped me learn"
- "Meeting sophomores in different fields, as well as meeting some of the bigwigs."
- "Learning what my skills are and finding allies."



INFORMAL OUTCOMES

- Students generated their own Facebook site before the end of the program.
- Some students who identified themselves as "socially awkward" commented that this was a safe environment to learn some interpersonal skills.
- For little cost to the student (\$125), a successful 3-day program can be delivered at almost any type of institution of higher ed. From the student comments, this type of sophomore program is well-received.