

28th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
February 6-10, 2009
Orlando, Florida

Using an Alternate Reality Game (ARG) to Teach Information and Technology Literacy on an iPhone Campus

Charles Mattis
Dean of the First-Year Program
Abilene Christian University
325-674-2212
mattis@acu.edu

While first-year students are digital natives with a firm grasp of technology, they typically have not spent much time thinking critically about the influence of technology on themselves or on society. When ACU was developing its mobile learning initiative, there was considerable discussion about the need for students to be exposed to the implications of technology on themselves and the world. In the fall of 2008, ACU distributed either an iPhone or an iPod Touch to all of its entering students.

This presentation will briefly describe ACU's mobile learning initiative, address the institutional concerns about the initiative as it relates to technology and information literacy, and relate ACU's philosophy about the appropriate use of technology within a learning community.

This information will be followed by the design, rationale, and student learning outcomes of the Alternate Reality Game (ARG). The various components of the ARG will be outlined including video clips of some of the tasks. Evaluations of the student learning outcomes will be discussed including what worked, what didn't and what we might do differently.

The last 15 minutes will be spent in answering questions about the ARG and a discussion of other ways that technology and information literacy can be addressed on our campuses.

Promoting Interactive Classroom Teaching

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson
Director, General Education Program
American University
202-885-2036
ptjack@american.edu

Summary: None

The Ever-Evolving/Always Responding First-Year Seminar

Joni Petschauer
Director, Western NC Network for Access and Success
Appalachian State University
828-262-3878
petschaerjw@appstate.edu

Cindy Wallace
Vice Chancellor for Student Development
Appalachian State University
828-262-2060
wallaceca@appstate.edu

This session will provide an overview of how Appalachian new First Year Seminar (FYS) course differs from its predecessor, Freshman Seminar, as well as how FYS remains a reflection of Appalachian's commitment to serving the first year students who enroll on its campus. Specifically, the facilitators will review the dynamics that drove changes in course content, student and faculty recruitment, campus engagement, faculty orientation, training, and support, and course assessment. Additionally, participants will be given an opportunity to reflect on the forces which exist on their own campuses that might influence the direction of their own student success efforts and how they can ensure that no matter the change, students will succeed.

The ABC's of Summer Reading

Janet Beck
Academic Advisor
Appalachian State University
828-262-3054
beckjk@appstate.edu

Summary: None

Help I'm Failing and I Can't Get Up: From Suspension to Success

Jill Simons
Director Advisement Services
Arkansas State University
870-972-3001
jsimons@astate.edu

Paula Bradberry
Director, First-year Studies
Arkansas State University
870-972-2080
pbradber@astate.edu

The Restart@state program is designed to provide students in academic distress a successful transition back to solid academic performance through proper decision-making and study skills strategies. Now in the ninth year of operation, the Restart@state program has been evaluated consistently each year from conception. The assessment component has allowed the Advising Center to completely redesign or simply tweak program components as needed. While a brief outline of the history of the Restart@state program will be shared, the main focus of this presentation is to describe the use of program assessment for program improvement. Assessment data will be utilized to tell the story of the evolution through program pitfalls and successes. Changes in the design of the program directly correspond to both enrollment and completion numbers. The assessment of the program will include a look at semester-to-semester persistence, long-term graduation rates and student self-assessment.

A review of national trends and a survey of ASU students placed on academic suspension will be discussed. The vast majority lack appropriate study skills, life management skills, as well as, proper decision-making. A review of the classroom intervention model taught in a portfolio approach will be outlined. The program was designed with a behavioral modification focus. Students are responsible for taking an introspective look at the four components deemed necessary for academic achievement: (1) time management; (2) transcript review, clean up, and long-term planning; (3) essential study skills; and (4) personal decision-making. Presenters will provide an overview of the four modules designed by the campus and the activities used within each module. The presenters will also contrast teaching FYE courses with courses specifically for those in academic distress.

Establishing Student Participation and Campus Collaboration for a New First-Year Portfolio Development Program

Suellen Lazarek Dean
Coordinator of the CALLS Program
Assumption College
508-767-7689
slazarek@assumption.edu

Presentation includes program timeline, history, challenges, marketing, portfolios, mentoring, major exploration, technology, self assessment and experiential learning. Successes include collaboration with academics affairs in first year programming, student participation and student portfolio use.

In 2004, the First Year Task Force at Assumption College comprised of academic and student affairs recommended implementing CALLS (Career/Academic/Lifetime Learning Skills). Program goals were:

1. Work collaboratively with other departments
2. Provide career counseling with self assessment/choosing a major
3. Establish a portfolio development program
4. Help students formulate a customized plan with career exploration, academic and personal goals
5. Promote the development of a portfolio that includes skills acquired through academics, campus involvement and experiential education.

In 2005, the program began and students were encouraged to make an appointment, complete a portfolio plan and receive portfolio starter kits. Marketing began by conducting outreach in residence halls, student government, student clubs/organizations and athletics.

Collaboration with Academics was challenging. Some faculty felt the word “career” didn’t fit with liberal arts. Faculty outreach included a luncheon, department meetings and presentations. CALLS initiated a Majors Fair and asked Academics to co-sponsor. The event was successful and has grown annually. CALLS implemented a First Year Mentor Program and trained upper students to be a resource for first years and encourage campus involvement. This program has gained recognition as a student leader group. The mentors collaborate annually with Academics on a First Finals Forum. CALLS is collaborating with Academics and Athletics on a portfolio development seminar series.

A new summer jobs/internship program and alumni/parent job shadowing program reinforce career exploration and portfolio building. Electronic portfolios are now available via the college website and some academic departments and student leadership groups now require and assess

portfolios. CALLS is supported by Admissions, faculty, students, alumni and parents. CALLS participation continues to grow annually.

Building Collaborative Relationships Among Faculty and Staff

Melissa Gomez
Director of New Student Programs
Austin Peay State University
931-221-7045
gomezm@apsu.edu

Bonnie Hodge
Associate Professor
Austin Peay State University
931-221-6429
hodgeb@apsu.edu

Nanci Woods
Professor
Austin Peay State University
931-221-7236
woodsn@apsu.edu

Discussion will focus on how to build bridges rather than barriers between faculty and staff on campus who share the same common goal, that is, the success of our students and institutions. Facilitators will include a Director of New Student Programs and two faculty members, one of whom now works full-time with the director and first year students. The director, Melissa Gomez, has support from a wide range of staff and faculty for her initiatives with new students. She will share her perspective on how she has intentionally or unintentionally built this support. The two faculty members will express their views on why Ms. Gomez is successful at promoting faculty support and engagement.

Input will be sought from participants on how we can best reduce the misunderstandings and stereotypes that often lead to antagonism between faculty and staff. For example, how we can use language more positively and not stereotype entire groups on campus when we have discussions (e.g., saying “staff don’t care” or “faculty won’t participate”). Examples of successful staff-faculty relationships on participants’ campuses will be examined for insight in how to increase the number of faculty and staff who work well as a team to serve students and collaborate professionally. Facilitators will try to keep discussions directed in a positive team-building direction so that neither staff nor faculty participants will feel disrespected or disparaged. In fact, effort will be made to understand how the different nature of most faculty and staff positions lead to some of the misunderstandings (e.g. staff can be fired by their supervisors, tenured faculty cannot).

Staff and faculty provide different but complementary services to students. Both groups have the power to be important change agents in students’ lives. When we share this power and support each other we can improve the academic and personal outcomes for our students.

The Strengths to Succeed: Research on Strategies to Enhance Student Success in the First Year

Laurie Schreiner

Professor and Chair of Doctoral Higher Education
Azusa Pacific University
626-335-6375
lschreiner@apu.edu

This session will focus on the successful implementation of a strengths-based approach to the first-year experience. The premise is that awareness of one's strengths, along with the knowledge to develop and apply those strengths to new situations or to overcome obstacles, gives students a foundation for succeeding in college. This foundation is both affective and cognitive; strengths awareness has motivational properties that can lead to increased engagement with the academic environment, but it also has the cognitive capacity to increase a student's range of intellectual behaviors that can be applied to the academic arena.

The session will focus on the strengths philosophy and its implementation in three studies. One controlled study was of 200 at-risk first-year students at a public university randomly assigned to either a strengths-based first-year seminar section or to a control group section. The second controlled study utilized 500 first-year private university students randomly assigned to either: (a) a strengths-based first-year seminar that emphasized becoming more aware of existing talents, (b) a strengths-based first-year seminar that emphasized strengths development and application—the investment of effort into acquiring the skills and knowledge that would enable the talent to develop into a strength, and (c) a control group that received no strengths-based programming until after the posttests had been conducted. The third study was a four-year longitudinal study of over 4,000 students participating in a strengths-based first-year seminar at a private university. The discussion will focus around psychological capital building, the way in which a strengths-based approach builds hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resiliency, which then enhances students' likelihood of success in the first year. The main focus of the session will be on the best ways of implementing strengths-based practices in the first year. Participants will receive a copy of the instruments used, along with samples of the most effective strengths-based activities.

Dispelling Myths and Confirming Realities of Today's First-Year Students: A Look at the Data

Rob Major
Associate Dean, Office of Academic Services
Babson College
781-239-5246
majorr@babson.edu

Babson College has been a faithful participant of the CIRP and YFCY and these surveys and have gathered some significant insight into to the many issues facing first year students. Babson College is a highly selective Business school in Wellesley, Massachusetts with a diverse undergraduate population. This population provides a unique and instructive view into the insights of first year students.

The following is a sample of the topics to be addressed in the session:

- Views on Academic Honesty and Integrity
- Partying vs. Studying
- Global Awareness
- Impact of Social Networking Sites
- Political Views
- Utilization of Counseling Services

This presentation will focus on the trends in first year student responses over the past six years. Session participants will be encouraged to contribute what myths or realities exist on their campus. In addition, the discussion will focus on how these myths/realities are created and how we can educate the higher education community on these issues.

Finding Success and Navigating Growing Pains: The Transition to an Academically Focused First-Year Seminar

Lisa Johnston
Assistant Dean for Student Academic Services
Baker University
785-594-4527
lisa.johnston@bakeru.edu

This session will detail the transition from a one-credit hour First-Year Experience course that was focused entirely on adjustment to the college environment to a two-credit hour First-Year Seminar course that paired the former course content with an academic topic that varied across course sections.

First Year Initiative survey assessment data revealed that the old version of the course was not yielding the gains on survey factors that were desired. There was also a growing sentiment of boredom with the decade-old course model among both students and faculty. Furthermore, it had become clear that the old model was not keeping up with current trends in the literature.

As a part of the course revision, academic advising was linked with the course in order to provide more consistent contact and communication with the advisor during the first semester. Additionally, the Student Readiness Inventory was administered to new students during summer enrollment and orientation days and the use of educational technology was encouraged.

Both assessment data and anecdotal reactions of students and faculty indicate increased course effectiveness on most First Year Initiative survey factors. As an institution, we feel that the course revision has been a success and better serves the needs of our new students.

Although the course revision was successful, we did experience some transition issues relating to the new academic nature of the course. With the shift in focus to include an academic topic, it was no longer possible to allow the course to serve as the relatively open forum that had been the expectation of a variety of offices and departments in the past. Moreover, staffing challenges pre and post revision as well as credit hour sensitivity in an institutional environment with a sizable general education program will also be discussed.

“Intrusive” Is Not a Bad Word: Brainstorming Session for Delivery of Academic Support Programs for At-Risk Student Populations

Doriss Hambrick
Academic Support Advisor, Paul L. Foster Success Center
Baylor University
254-710-3828
doriss_hambrick@baylor.edu

Summary: None

Impact of Working on First-Year Academic Performance

Theresa Hitchcock
Project Associate
Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)
Indiana University
812-856-5824
thehitch@indiana.edu

Jim Cole
BCSSE Project Manager
Indiana University
812-856-3004
colejs@indiana.edu

Tiffani Butler
Project Associate
Indiana University
812-856-5824
butlertn@indiana.edu

The session will consist of three sections: a brief description of the survey instruments, an explanation of the findings about the connection between working and academic expectations and performance, and discussion of the impact of working for pay on student academic expectation and performance.

The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provide an opportunity for colleges and universities to survey incoming first year students, first year students and seniors. We will briefly discuss BCSSE and NSSE in relationship to the data collected. We will examine how working for pay affects first year student academic expectations and performance. We will also discuss the need for balance between academic and financial responsibility.

In addition to survey data, the session will provide examples of schools that are creating the academic/financial balance and suggestions for ways to create the balance. We will allow time for participants to share their experiences. The session will conclude with a question and answer session about BCSSE, NSSE, and working.

A Civic Approach: Community, Responsibility, and Education

Ken Spring
Coordinator of the First Year Seminar and Associate Professor of Sociology
Belmont University
615-460-6231
springk@mail.belmont.edu

Matt Burchett
Director of Student Activities
Baylor University
254-710-2371
Matt_Burchett@baylor.edu

At Belmont University a strategic partnership has been established between the Office of New Student Programs and Office of General Education to work on a variety of initiatives. From the Faculty Fellow in New Student Programs to Common Book Selection in First Year Seminar to Welcome Week, this partnership has been the incubator for new campus programs and seamless learning initiatives. This program will explore the partnership, its establishment, and the programs that have emerged from it.

Our presentation will highlight the following five initiatives as needed to establish a civic approach to education within the first year experience. They are:

1. Proposition the Positions: Creating the Cross-Functional Team
 - a. It all begins with the network and ensuring the right people are in the right place.
2. Research and Resources: Creating the Context for the Work
 - a. Communication is key... it's not about the new but fully understanding the current climate.
3. Three's Company: Creating a Collaborative Effort
 - a. It's about quality over quantity, starting small with small successes.
4. Moving the Masses: Creating Momentum for the Project
 - a. It's about people...programs don't change people; people change people.
5. Marketing Matters: Creating the Selling Points
 - a. It is not in our nature to brag but it must be a part of our work.

By strategically creating an established network of faculty and staff that keeps lines of communication intact, we are able to build an environment that creates a seamless learning experience for students from the moment they arrive on campus. This experience then continues, grows and changes the academic culture through the integration of community, education and responsibility.

Retention of Summer Bridge Students

Elaine Davis
Chair, Department of Natural Sciences
Bowie State University
301-860-3876
edavis@bowiestate.edu

Anisha Campbell
Assist. Professor of Biology
Bowie State University
301-860-3878
acampbell@bowiestate.edu

The Summer Bridge Program at Bowie State University provides a second chance opportunity to prospective students who applied but were not accepted to the University. Non-admitted students are invited to participate in a five-six week residential program designed to enhance their skills in Mathematics, Reading, and English. Other activities provided to assist in bridging the gap from secondary to college education include tutorial services, focus seminars and workshops that provide information related to skills needed to be successful in college. Program participants generally find that their biggest challenge is in the area of Mathematics and readily admit that their mathematical exposure and more importantly their learning process were not taken seriously. Nonetheless, the participants, once admitted tend to perform on par with students who were admitted through the regular process. The Program provides focus on academic preparation, strongly encourages discipline and engagement, and encourages student responsibility and attitude change. Between 2005 to 2008, the Program has hosted 507 participants, 456 participants were admitted and 452 enrolled during the appropriate Fall

semester. Not including the 2008 participants, 79% of the 2005 to 2007 participants, have been retained through the first semester of their sophomore year. This data is higher than the overall University retention rate involving the same time frame. Lastly, as these students progress through their college career, most become academically sound students, many become student leaders and upon graduation enter graduate and professional schools.

"Big Changes in Little Packages": Integrating Academic and Student Life Initiatives

Harriett Hayes
Associate Professor of Sociology
Bridgewater College
540-828-5654
hhayes@bridgewater.edu

Crystal Lynn
Assistant Dean of Students
Bridgewater College
540-828-5356 clynn@bridgewater.edu

Jonathan Wiley
Senior, Sociology Major
Bridgewater College
540-515-3692
jdw005@eagles.bridgewater.edu

The 2008 "Welcome Week--Passport" initiative at Bridgewater College offers a model for integrating the efforts of Academic Affairs and Student Life. Previously, frustration existed on both sides in terms of understanding the division of labor and student learning outcomes during the orientation and first year experience. Faculty have been dubious about how students are transitioned into the rigors of academic life, and student affairs staff have felt disenfranchised from educating students to be successful in the academic community.

The presentation will illustrate how "big changes can come in little packages" by first outlining Bridgewater College's signature program, The Personal Development Portfolio (PDP). Session participants will be introduced to the four-year PDP Program which requires students to be intentional about their development during college by critically reflecting on their transformation in the areas of Wellness, Intellect, Ethics, and Citizenship. The first year course, PDP 150: Introduction to the Liberal Arts, (and its parallel, PDP 350 required of all transfer students) introduces students to the skill of critical reflection which is honed over their career at Bridgewater College. Session participants will learn how the "Passport Initiative" offered greater collaboration between Student Life and Academic Affairs. Welcome Week integrated efforts to familiarize students with the college mission of educating the whole person and the availability of campus services designed to support their success.

Explanations and assessment of the Passport Initiative will be offered to participants. Finally, session participants will hear student samples of "reflective exercises" which ensured the full integration of the academic and residential life experiences by making the passport the first reflective exercise in all freshmen seminars. Without altering the budget for Welcome Week, or increasing staff, new students were more effectively engaged in orientation activities, Student Orientation Leaders' attitudes improved; and there was full buy-in from PDP 150 faculty. Ultimately, the initiative has offered a bridge for better communication and trust between student life and academic affairs. The presentation will include a representative from the PDP faculty, Student Affairs, and a student orientation leader. Time will be given for

questions and answers.

Delving Into Differences: A Creative Approach to Incorporating Diversity into First-Year Seminars

Laurie Hazard
Director, The Academic Center for Excellence and the Writing Center
Bryant University
401-232-6744
lhazard@bryant.edu

According to the 2006 Survey on First-Year Seminars, 42.5% of institutions award one-credit hour for their FYE classes. This translates into roughly fourteen instructional hours. As a result, program coordinators are left to grapple with the perennial question in curriculum, “What is most worth knowing?”

What topics should be “covered” within those instructional hours? The long-established topics of study skills, campus resources, and time management are inevitably included. In an effort to keep up with curricular trends, how do we incorporate a complex subject like diversity into our overburdened one-credit FYE curricula?

Indeed, delving into diversity raises a mixture of concerns. Faculty are worried that they don’t know enough about it to teach it. This places stress on coordinators responsible for faculty development. Students feel they’ve “been there, done that” in high school. In short, diversity presents difficulties.

At Bryant University, the fourth curricular goal of the FYE course emphasizes “understanding the importance of respecting diversity.” We asked ourselves, “How do we meet this lofty goal? How do we get students to come to this understanding?” When polled, instructors and students alike felt this topic would be explored more freely “student to student.” In the fall of 2005, a group called the Student Diversity Advocates (SDA) was formed. SDAs visit classes to conduct diversity exercises. During visits, SDAs moderate activities to talk about topics such as diversity resources on campus, individual diversity, personal values, perceptions of self, and community and cultural values. This session will explore our innovative solution to delving into diversity. Participants will learn how this student group was formed, and how SDA’s are recruited, hired, trained and assessed. Packets for participants will include information such as recruiting and hiring materials, training hand-outs, and assessment tools. Institution wide benefits will be discussed and assessment results will be shared.

Create Community and Pride Among First-Year Exploratory Students

Jennifer N. Griggs
Director, Learning Resource Center
Butler University
317-940-9308
jgriggs@butler.edu

Summary: None

Using Performance-Based Assessments to Promote Critical Thinking in First-Year Students

Kimberly Boyd
Associate Professor of Biology, Coordinator of First-Year Advising
Cabrini College
610-902-8397
kboyd@cabrini.edu

Performance task-based assessment is growing in its' use and reputation for helping academic institutions move past content knowledge and satisfaction-based surveys as the primary assessments of student learning. Performance tasks allow for assessment of those “intangible skills”, like critical and creative thinking, that most schools think paramount to a liberal education.

This round table discussion will revolve around the use of performance task-based assessment tools at individual course, program, and institutional levels.

Discussion will revolve around current research in the benefits and limitations of performance tasks and the use of tasks as part of integrated general education curriculum initiatives or in conjunction with institutional wide assessments of student learning (i.e. NSSE, CLA). The agenda, materials and assessment products developed during an “Academy for Engaged Pedagogies” offered on Cabrini’s campus, used to train faculty in the design of individual tasks for their own courses and train staff in task-based educational programming strategies (i.e. Residential Life staff using tasks in their alcohol awareness training program), will be distributed and discussed.

Measuring Identity in First-Year Learning Communities

Susan Ingram
Teaching Associate/Graduate Candidate
California State University, East Bay
925-465-4258
susaningram@hotmail.com

Over the last 20 years, the Learning Community model has taken hold in over 600 higher education institutions. As more federal funding for institutions becomes available through Title III and Title V funding programs, the appeal to colleges and universities to service the non-traditional student becomes more attractive. The National Learning Communities Project found in their synthesis of research and assessments that, for many participating institutions, these models have positively impacted retention, prestige, diversity and revenue for the university. This study is an attempt to examine the dynamics of student self identity and roles as they relate to the learning community.

While the literature is full of quantitative data regarding academic success, especially as it relates to remediation, very little research has examined the impact and roles student identity and group solidarity play in retention and academic success. Identity and role performance are key elements in understanding some of the factors that may predict retention and performance of students.

Synthesizing the theoretical and methodological approaches of previous scholars, one may see yet another dimension of the collaborative learning environment. A mixed methodology will explore the learning community and attempt to explore the first of the research questions: What role, if any, does the learning community play in individuals defining themselves as “student”, specifically as it relates to non-traditional students?

The study began in July of 2008 and surveyed incoming freshmen during six 2-day orientation sessions sponsored by the California State University, East Bay in Hayward California. Two subsequent surveys will be administered in the fall and winter quarters, in conjunction with both focus groups and individual interviews.

The first survey attempted to provide a baseline for each participant in 3 distinct areas: self-esteem, ideal student role definition, and “self as student” definition. It also addressed issues relating to priorities, the importance of family and community in the students life and the level to which they had been exposed to higher education. Subsequent surveys will continue to track identity and role measurements and priorities. As of September 11, 2008 a total of 196 participants had been recruited for the study.

Confronting High-Risk Drinking Among First-Year Students

Douglas Engwall
Professor of Psychology
Central Connecticut State University
860-832-3124
engwalld@ccsu.edu

Karen Engwall
Counselor
Central Connecticut State University
860-832-1945
engwallk@ccsu.edu

Substance abuse has been a long-standing problem at most colleges and universities. Alcohol use is particularly endemic among first-year students, who drink more heavily and experience more problems than any other class. This poster session describes three different programs we implemented to change student beliefs about the actual alcohol usage of their peers and to reinforce some of the negative consequences of high-risk drinking.

Beginning in 1998, our first efforts to address the problem of student alcohol abuse focused on a social marketing approach. This strategy was prompted by research done on many college campuses, including our own, which indicated that most heavy drinkers believe their level of drinking is typical, when, in fact, more moderate drinking is the true norm. This misperception of norms was more prevalent among first-year students who are unfamiliar with campus life.

As a first step in developing this campaign, first year students were surveyed to identify drinking patterns, academic concerns, and their preferred sources and channels of information. Based on this information, our marketing campaign was developed for First-year Experience courses. Accurate, consistent messages about campus drinking norms and negative consequences of high-risk drinking were included in a presentation of two widely available prevention programs. Faculty teaching FYE courses agreed to invite a staff member to present either the Alcohol 101 or Choices programs during a regular class period. We found that both of these programs were equally effective in changing attitudes about drinking and, in some cases, led to an actual reduction in high-risk drinking. In order to reach a large audience, we now require that all first-year students complete Alcohol EDU, an online program, before coming to campus. Our experience and assessment of these three programs will be covered in our poster session.

Successful Academic Endeavors in Residence Halls and Non-Academic Settings

Cathy Warner
Residence Hall Director
Central Michigan University
989-774-3293
warne1ca@cmich.edu

Crystal Sattelberg
Residence Hall Director
Aquinas College
616-632-8900
cls001@aquinas.edu

JanaMarie Tramper
Career Services
Central Michigan University
lewis3jm@cmich.edu

Katie Quinn
Undergraduate - Resident Assistant
Central Michigan University
989-774-4804
quinn3km@cmich.edu

Richard Hinger
Undergraduate - Res. College Peer Mentor
Central Michigan University
989-774-5323
hinge1rt@cmich.edu

Creating a culture of academic success in settings traditionally considered “non-academic” is not an easy task, but many institutions are taking steps in order to bridge academics, develop academic pride, and build academic successes in the housing and auxiliary service sectors. This session provides participants an opportunity to discuss successes and challenges in bridging these ideas as well as share ideas and innovations that are working to support student academic success.

Building an Academically Supportive and Successful Culture in a Non-Academic Campus Setting

Richard Hinger
Education & Human Services Residential College Peer Mentor
Central Michigan University
989-774-3293
hinge1rt@cmich.edu

Cathy Warner
Residence Hall Director
Central Michigan University
989-774-3293
warne1ca@cmich.edu

CMU has taken purposeful steps to improve the academic climate for first year students and create communities in the residence halls where academic success is a valued point of pride. The various action steps include (community standards), programs “Study Bucks” and the “Academic Incentives” which recognize academic efforts and success, purposeful one on one conversations with staff, full integration of the CSI into residence life, creation of study niche spaces, integration of residential college peer mentors in addition to RA staff, etc. The various action steps are evaluated through looking at student data from the 2007-08 academic year, including GPA, retention and persistence, EBI survey results, and data collected from 2007-08 academic year students in the Fall of 2008. Quantitative and qualitative data collected through a survey to 300 2007-08 students provided a fuller picture of students’ perceptions of the purposeful efforts made by the university.

Impact and Outcomes of Purposeful Diversity Education and Programming for First-Year Students

Katie Quinn
Resident Assistant
Central Michigan University
989-774-3293
quinn3km@cmich.edu

Cathy Warner
Residence Hall Director
Central Michigan University
989-774-3293
warne1ca@cmich.edu

In 2007-08 CMU engaged in purposeful diversity program and initiative in order to develop a successful and welcoming community for all students. Programming and initiatives occurred at all levels of students contact and included passive efforts, bulletin boards, floor-wide, residence hall wide, campus-wide, and university wide programming. In order to evaluate the outcomes and impact of the efforts, the researchers followed up with 300 students/ participants during the Fall 2008 semester. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Students provided feedback on their personal perceptions of their experiences participating in various events in terms of enjoyableness, quality, and learning (exposure to new idea, etc.). Students also provided data on the degrees of impact and changes in thought as a result of participation. Other areas addressed included changes in assumptions, increased ability to relate to or understanding of people different from themselves, and future participation in diversity related programming, readings, activities, or events. Open response data provided further insights into what students perceived they gained as a result of participating, changes in their thoughts and behaviors, self-identified learning, and future ideas for things they would want to see. All data was compared to that of upper-class participants in order to understand if a difference existed amongst the two populations.

The Role of Electronic Technology in the Transition to College: Potentials, Problems, and Practice on One College Campus

Phame Camarena
Professor and Chair, Human Development and Family Studies
Central Michigan University
989-774-6434
camar1pm@cmich.edu

Jamie Brown
Academic Advisor
Central Michigan University
989-774-1454
brown3jl@cmich.edu

Jill Trumbell
Research Assistant
Central Michigan University
989-774-3218
trumb1jm@cmich.edu

Jason Bentley
Coordinator, First Year Experience Program
Central Michigan University
989-774-2434
bent11jm@cmich.edu

Taking a historical snapshot on one college campus, a group of First Year professionals and scholars have gathered data from multiple sources to document the role of electronic technology in first year students' lives. Panel members will share findings from their work to illustrate key themes and will offer practical suggestions for activities and applications to enhance technology's potentials while minimizing its problems. Presentations include:

"The Meaning of Electronic Communications: Students Speak"

Drawing from data collected through internet surveys of first year students, themes of new communication technology use are identified and illustrate the variability of how students perceive the role of electronic communications and the degree to which advanced electronic communication technology is "taken for granted."

"Beyond Helicopter Parenting: Parents Speak"

Although frequent contact between parents and students made possible by new communication technologies has been conceptualized in terms of dependence and helicopter parenting, case study data from parents in daily contact with students illustrates how frequent contact can either be a sign of secure attachment or a sign of something less positive for new student development.

"A Week without Facebook is Like..."

Drawing data from an experiential activity used in First Year classes, this presentation highlights patterns of technology use and describes the learning experience that comes as students give up their most "treasured" technology for a week. The results illustrate how students can make a critical self-assessment about the role of technology in their new college lives.

"Embracing Technology in First Year Programs: Strategies and Activities"

Using examples drawn from First Year Experience instructors and student surveys, this session examines current uses of electronic technology in first-year courses and identifies the gaps between current approaches and student preferences. Specific examples of how faculty can use technology in teaching and student-learning FYE exercises are provided.

First-Year Student Perceptions of Mental Health and Counseling Services

Jana Tramper
Assistant Director Career Services
Central Michigan University
989.774.6612
lewis3jm@cmich.edu

Kristie Filipchuk
Resident Assistant
Central Michigan University
989.774.5349
filip1kr@cmich.edu

Presenters Jana Tramper and Kristie Filipchuk have conducted research on first-year student perceptions of mental health and counseling services at Central Michigan University. They have also surveyed first-year students and asked them what program titles are appealing and discouraging. The presenters will provide copies of their resources and research findings on first-year student perceptions and encourage discussion among participants to share knowledge and best practices. Discussion will revolve around the following questions (in no particular order):

- What mental health or counseling services have been successful at your institution?
- What marketing strategies have you used to attract first year students?
- How have they been successful or why do you believe they weren't?
- What are key words that turn students "off" of programs?
- What are the reasons that students don't seek help?
- For the students that do seek help, what motivates them?
- How can we make services more available and approachable to students so we can intervene earlier?

Exploring 8- and 16-Week First-Year Seminar Options

Jana Tramper
Assistant Director Career Services
Central Michigan University
989.774.6612
lewis3jm@cmich.edu

Janet Parker
First-Year Experience Program Peer Mentor
Central Michigan University
616.745.5350
parke1je@cmich.edu

The goals of FYE 101 at Central Michigan University are to increase retention, teach academic success strategies, engage students in the university, and connect first-year and transfer students to faculty members and peer mentors. There are three basic course schedule options:

- o one 110 minute session/week for eight weeks
- o two 50 minute sessions/week for eight weeks
- o one 50 minute session/week for sixteen weeks

Data was collected from fifty-four courses. Thirty courses were eight-week sessions that met twice per week, eleven were eight-week sessions that met once per week, and the remaining thirteen met for sixteen weeks.

This study examined the effectiveness of the three course schedule options based on the course objectives and goals measured in the course evaluation. The research explores the benefits of each option as well as the challenges presented to students, faculty and peer mentors. Student information was also gathered to measure any differences in student academic success and retention from the fall to spring semester.

Developmental Learning Communities: Fostering Success in the Community College

Kathy Matel
Student Success Coordinator
Century College
651-779-3449
kathy.matel@century.edu

LuAnn Wood
Reading Instructor
Century College
651-747-4044
luann.wood@century.edu

Cullen Bailey Burns
English Instructor
Century College
651-779-3412
cullen.burns@century.edu

In 2006, Century College offered its first learning community for developmental learners. This community consisted of a developmental reading, developmental writing and college-level academic success course. The three teachers who developed this community continue to teach together today, and this session will provide information based on what we've learned.

A general overview of the first-year initiatives at Century will be given, followed by an in-depth description of the learning community itself, data demonstrating its success, and the evolution of the three courses as they have become better integrated. We will share our successes, our challenges, and invite discussion on the unique opportunities that learning communities for developmental learners provide.

First-Year Students' Library Fear Deconstructed

Shawn Hartman
Assistant Director of Public Services
Chadron State College
(308) 432-6150
shartman@csc.edu

The transition from high school to college can be incredibly terrifying for the first-year college students. Moving into unfamiliar surroundings, making new friends, and living on their own can be an overwhelming experience. Along with the new lifestyle changes, college classes and coursework also contribute even more anxiety. Librarians recognize that certain skills are needed to perform library college research and can help lessen this anxiety by showing the students how to effectively retrieve and evaluate the information that they need for their

coursework.

One of the biggest barriers to academic success is a psychological syndrome known as "library anxiety," fear of the library and the process of finding the information needed. Understandably, studies have shown that freshmen exhibited the highest level of this documented anxiety. Based on this research, both faculty and librarians should learn how to recognize these "fear" characteristics and know how to ameliorate them by providing the appropriate anxiety-reducing interventions.

Librarians can help these individuals overcome this fear by making them first recognize it (anxiety), then deconstruct it (non-productive energy), and ultimately sublimate it (transform it from DIS-Ease to Ease). Since it is a well known fact that people like to go where they feel welcome and comfortable, libraries (and librarians) need to create such an environment. We (librarians) also need to realize that the minute a patron enters the library, his/her impression of the library is made by the greeting he/she receives.

Like dancing, using a library is a social skill, one that requires focused attention and can be more easily learned when taught by a competent instructor - in this case, a librarian. Freshmen often are library wallflowers who never learn the art of acquiring information. And the longer they put off this learning skill, the higher are the chances that they will not succeed academically- or in life.

Using Clickers to Promote Active Learning at Orientation and Assess New Students' Perceptions about Success in College

Tammy Kahrig
Assistant Professor, Student Affairs
Clemson University
864.656.1446
tkahrig@clemson.edu

Ruth Darling
Associate Vice Provost
University of Tennessee
865.974.6641
rdarling@utk.edu

Although the standardized test scores and high school grade point averages of the incoming classes have risen significantly in recent years, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data and student academic performance data at the University of Tennessee reveal that first year students at the institution often underestimate the effort necessary for achieving academic success. In 2007, the university's Retention Task Force's study of this issue led the group to conclude that the institution's traditional methods of communicating information about academic expectations, particularly at new student orientation, were not achieving the desired results.

Recognizing that new student orientation is an institution's "best opportunity to introduce a strong learning environment and build the foundations for academic success" (Mullendore & Banahan, 2005, p.391), university administrators embarked on an effort to revamp key sessions for students and parents at orientation. Could technology, which has been shown to enhance student learning in college classrooms, transform a "talking heads" orientation presentation into one in which a group of 250 students are engaged learners? Could technology provide a means for collecting data to inform institutional retention efforts?

This session will examine the use of clickers in the 45-minute, “how hard is college” session for students at orientation. Presenters will introduce clicker technology and demonstrate how the clickers were used to enhance student engagement, shape students’ expectations about academic success, and energize the presenters. Presenters will share student data that has been collected during the last two summers and will discuss ways in which the data has been used to: 1) transform a session for parents at orientation, and 2) inform larger institutional retention efforts. Participants will learn the potential benefits of clicker technology as well as the challenges one might face in employing the use of clickers. Applications to a variety of settings will be discussed.

Faculty Training for Academic-Based First-Year Experience Programs

Susan Kattwinkel
Director of the First-Year Experience
College of Charleston
843-953-8218
kattwinkels@cofc.edu

At the College of Charleston, the First-Year Experience program is a discipline-based program, consisting of both First-Year Seminars (disciplinary and interdisciplinary special topics courses) and Learning Communities (linked courses of regular classes accompanied by a Peer Facilitator hour). Faculty who will be teaching in the First-Year Experience program for the first time participate in a four-day training session designed to provide them with relevant pedagogical material and with focused time to prepare their syllabi for the coming semester. Training has five major parts: 1) demographic and analytical material to acquaint them with who first-year students at the College are and with learning patterns of millennials; 2) discussions of learning objectives (faculty are reminded of FYE goals and their own learning objectives that they chose when they proposed their course) and pedagogical tools that can help them achieve those goals; 3) discussion of assessment and presentation of relevant tools; 4) introduction to the Peer Facilitator element of the FYE and the common content of the courses; 5) planning time for Learning Community faculty to work together and for First-Year Seminar faculty to incorporate “introduction to college” material into their courses. This presentation will discuss the training process and its assessment, and provide attendees with some of the materials used in training. The presenters will also facilitate audience discussion about issues encountered in their own training programs.

BAM!..Let's Kick It Up A Notch: Developing FYE at a Community College

Felicia L. Ganther
Executive Director for Student Life
College of Lake County
847-543-2288
fganther@clcollinois.edu

The College of Lake County considers a student who has completed less than 30 credit hours a freshman class designee. As we have found, a significant number of students in the 0-30 hour frame are not persisting due to academic performance, lack of preparation, financial aid restrictions and socialization issues. For many of our students, balancing work, family and school has become a “no win” situation for success in the classroom.

In order to reach out to freshman students, the Student Life area developed a retention effort

that would utilize the College's available resources alongside newly created activities that are either sponsored or absorbed into existing departmental budgets. Additionally, personnel resources have been combined to develop a team of retention specialists who are available to coach and mentor freshman students.

The presentation will highlight the following topics:

- THRIVE Student Conference – an academic preparedness day-long workshop
- Boot Camps – mid-term and finals study halls, tutoring and test preparation workshops
- Mentoring – faculty and staff who mentor minority students one-on-one
- Peer Mentoring – student mentors who work with “pods” of 20 new students
- Academic Workshops – i.e. study skills, anxiety, test prep
- Wellness Activities – i.e. fitness, substance abuse
- Freshman Social Events – i.e. “Party Like A Rock Star”
- Leadership Activities
- Academic Coaching

The purpose of this presentation will be to show colleagues how to pool resources, reach out to student organizations and create partnerships with academic departments, inevitably to help a student be successful in his/her educational endeavor. The presentation will showcase how to obtain campus-wide support and faculty buy-in. The presentation will touch on assessment, surveying and intervention strategies that are being used for early alert initiatives. In all, we hope to show colleagues how to start from scratch, secure non-existent funds and seek donations/in-kind resources.

“It Takes a Village to Raise a First-Year Student”: Proven Strategies for Supporting First-Year Seminar Programs and Ensuring Buy-In from the Faculty and Beyond

Michael Reder
Director, Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning
Connecticut College
860-439-2122
reder@conncoll.edu

Andrea Rossi
Associate Dean of the College for Freshmen and Sophomores
Connecticut College
860-439-2050
rossi@conncoll.edu

Faculty are central to creating, supporting, and assessing a coherent First-Year Seminar Program. Without strong faculty buy-in, sophisticated learning outcomes that integrate learning across the disciplines are difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. This session will directly address the question: What concrete work with faculty can be taken to not only increase their support of a First-Year Seminar Program, but also to help give them the necessary skills related to course & curriculum design, pedagogy, and assessment, to best ensure that the educational goals for a FYS Program are realized? *

In this interactive session, the college's Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning and its Associate Dean for Freshmen and Sophomores, both of whom teach regularly in the FYS Program, will share their recent efforts to help advance the FYS Program through a variety of faculty development activities and programs. These initiatives have successfully involved faculty in a range of FYS-focused activities, including discussions on student intellectual development, collaborations with other academic support units that relate to FYS goals (such as

the library for information fluency), workshops on course and syllabus design, and pedagogical discussions about teaching a FYS.

Transferability

Using handouts and a brief explanation, we will share the details of a wide variety of FYS-related faculty programming, almost all of which are easily adaptable and transferable to a variety of institutional types, needs, and desires. After the facilitators frame the potential role of faculty teaching and learning programs in advancing a strong FYS program, they will guide participants in examining the needs of their own specific campuses and FYS programs. Participants will then spend the majority of their time working in small groups designing and adapting faculty programs to help advance and integrate their current FYS agenda.

Participant engagement

The session facilitators, both experienced workshop leaders, will engage participants using a variety of active learning techniques, including guided writing, small group discussion, group problem solving, and large group discussion of “best practices” and “new ideas.” Participants will be provided with handouts that will include detailed descriptions (and support data) of the FYS-centered faculty programming at our school, a document framing the issues related to designing successful programs for faculty, and a list of important references and resources specifically related FYSs and faculty development. *

As stated above, participants will leave our session with 1) specific ideas about how a faculty program for teaching & learning can contribute to the success of First-Year Seminar program, new or old, by enhancing faculty teaching skills, buy-in, and participation; 2) knowledge of a variety of specific programming that has successfully engaged faculty in support of the goals of FYSs; and, 3) an initial plan for how some of these activities that focus on FYSs can be adapted for use in their own institutions.

The Road to a Collaborative First-Year Course

Brant Bynum
Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences
Converse College
864-596-9092
brant.bynum@converse.edu

Witney Fisher
Director of First Year Programs & Retention Initiatives
Converse College
864-596-9016
witney.fisher@converse.edu

Implementing a successful first -year course has proven to be an effective tool to ensure student success and improve retention. However, the implementation of such a course is not always easy. In fall of 2007, Converse College was not meeting the needs of our students in the form of a first-year course. Over the next two years, members of academic affairs and student life were faced with these questions: How to successfully create and implement such a course? Is the work of student and academic affairs mutually exclusive? Or are we able to collaborate in order to create a program that best meets the needs of our students?

This presentation will describe some of our challenges, articulate the unique collaborative

approach that was developed, and share lessons learned for you to consider on your respective campuses.

Specifically, this session will provide:

- Institutional background, and the role culture plays
- Details about the curriculum design, and process of implementation
- Road blocks and unforeseen challenges
- Process toward collaboration
- Lessons learned
- Assessment tools to demonstrate impact and need on campus

Leap-Frogging Into Innovative Programming

Shannon Reed
Assistant Professor of English
Cornell College
319-895-4329
sreed@cornellcollege.edu

Erin Davis
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Cornell College
319-895-4296
edavis@cornellcollege.edu

Kara Beauchamp
Professor of Physics, Chair of Student Life Committee
Cornell College
319-895-4540
kbeauchamp@cornellcollege.edu

Cornell College is a small, private liberal arts college in Iowa with a student population just under 1200. Fifteen years ago, Cornell College instituted a minimalist, elective first-year program. Two years ago, as part of a broader initiative to review the college's B. A. requirements, a small group of faculty began meeting to discuss the need for a more fully developed, required, and consistent first-year program that would meet the academic as well as retention goals of the college. That grass-roots effort has blossomed into a campus-wide discussion that will lead this year to a proposal for a first-year program, replete with collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs. Getting to this point has not been easy. Coming into the conversation on first-year programs at this point was daunting since so many other schools have comprehensive programs that have been in existence for twenty years or more. This round-table will discuss the problems and issues involved in re-developing a first-year program: how to create a distinctive, institution-specific program when there are so many models; how to begin a collaboration between Student and Academic Affairs; how to create faculty buy-in. This round-table will also discuss the issues particular to liberal arts colleges and will consider the possibility of building a first-year program that is part of a multi-year program.

Making the First Year Experience Part of Your Organization's Culture

Debra Borden
Associate Professor of Psychology and Coordinator of the First Year Experience

Corning Community College
607-962-9424
borden@corning-cc.edu

This session begins with a brief overview of Corning Community College including the college's demographics, retention issues and the attitude across campus regarding developmental/orientation courses when the introduction of the First Year Experience course was broached.

Following the overview there will be discussion on how, with just five sections of the course and less than 100 students, the First Year Experience course became visible and more accepted by the campus community. Included in this discussion is:

- How to get the most bang for your buck: designing and implementing a campus wide media blitz with little money.
- How to get students on-board quickly: ensuring parents know about the course, activities to engage the students and get them talking about the First Year Experience outside of the classroom, techniques to make a FYEX student visible on campus.
- Convincing a skeptical faculty: experimental assessment, presenting empirical data, illustrating how FYEX helps faculty, taking advantage of the governance structure effectively, using FYEX students to make your case.
- Growing the number of courses: continuing the media blitz, continuing the dialogue, program specific discipline courses and mandatory placements.
- Lessons learned and the challenges ahead.

The session will conclude with a question and answer period.

Improve Student Retention: From Research to Practical Applications in a Student Success Course

Marsha Fralick
Professor Emeritus
Cuyamaca Community College
858-560-0675
marsha.fralick@gcccd.edu

Research done by CCSSE over the last five years has guided community colleges in improving student success and retention. Session participants will review and discuss the five strategies identified by CCSSE that work well in improving student success outcomes. These outcomes are as follows:

1. Set high expectations and clear goals
2. Focus on the front door
3. Elevate developmental education
4. Use engaging instructional approaches
5. Make engagement inescapable

Program participants will review research completed at Cuyamaca College which shows improved a 28% improvement in retention for students completing a college success course. Participants will learn about the student success course taught at Cuyamaca Community

College and how the strategies recommended by CCSSE have been implemented. As suggested by CCSSE, career planning is included for all students and they are required to see their advisor or counselor to develop an educational plan as part of the course requirements. These practices help to make engagement intentional and inescapable.

CCSSE research indicates that focusing on the front door (the first 12 units) dramatically improves retention. In the college success course at Cuyamaca College, the first two weeks are seen as a critical time start students on the journey to success. During this first two weeks faculty set high expectations and set clear goals and follow up with students to make sure they are engaged from the first day of class. Instructors can check on student engagement and monitor student progress through an electronic portfolio where they can view the students' journal entries and assessment of personality, career interests and learning style. Instructors can use early intervention strategies to help students who have not begun to work on the class during the first 2 weeks.

The first two weeks are also a time for instructors in get to know their students, establish a positive environment for learning and use interactive teaching strategies to engage students in learning. Participants will be given access to my website with interactive classroom exercises for engaging students in learning.

Why Don't My Students Think I'm Groovy? Engaging The First-Year Millennial Student

Christy Price
Professor of Psychology
Dalton State College
706-537-0433
cprice@daltonstate.edu

This presentation begins with a captivating hook in which participants view a very brief, yet humorous video clip that illustrates the concept of the current generational gap that exists between the millennial college freshman and the typical professor.

After the initial hook, a brief overview of the literature on the millennial student will be provided. This literature will include the most commonly referenced authors on the topic such as Strauss & Howe who wrote *Millennials Rising* and *Millennials go to College* and Jean Twenge who wrote *Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled – And More Miserable than Ever Before*.

The majority of the session will then focus on applying both the literature and the presenter's own research findings regarding what millennial students describe as their ideal classroom environment, ideal assessment methods, and the characteristics of their ideal professor. After viewing compelling video clips of student interviews, participants will be asked to reflect on their own teaching by responding to open-ended questionnaires and check-lists which will assist them in applying the research findings. Throughout, the presenter will facilitate discussion regarding practical steps we can take to understand, connect with, and engage first-year millennial students.

Closing Note: Last year I received extremely positive evaluations of my FYE conference presentation on motivating freshman. Many participants suggested that I present it as a two-hour preconference workshop. I have presented this new millennial student research as an invited presenter at several faculty/staff retreats in the region and beyond. It has received incredibly rave reviews and even been described as having a transformative impact on professors and their teaching. I can trim it down to a one hour presentation, but it would be

most beneficial to present this in a one and a half or even two hour workshop format.

Thank You for your Consideration of this Proposal

Millennials as Mentors

Gregg Amore
Director of Counseling and Student Development
DeSales University
610-282-1100 x 1214
gregg.amore@desales.edu

Wendy Krisak
Assistant Dir. Counseling & Coordinator of FYE
DeSales University
610-282-1100
wendy.krisak@desales.edu

Chad Serfass
Grad Assistant
DeSales University
610-282-1100
chad.serfass@desales.edu

The PACE (Peers Advising, Counseling, Educating) team of Desales University is committed to the education of students both in and out of the classroom. Their bold, new, comprehensive and integrated initiative – Character U is evidence of the power and responsibility peer educators/mentors can have in influencing the course of higher education. Through the unique and comprehensive structure of Character U and the adoption of Russell Gough’s book “Character is Destiny,” for first year students, we have been able to engage over forty mentors and a diverse group of campus personnel. With assessment of our first two years under our belt we have many “Fresh Insights” to share, including the good, the bad and the ugly.

The goals of our presentation are:

- to offer hope that peer educators/mentors can significantly impact the course of education on their campus.
- to illustrate why millennials are primed as peer mentors
- to illustrate how to build strategic alliances on and off campus to facilitate the accomplishment of you mission.
- to share an understanding of how to engage other campus personnel in the pursuit of your goals.
- to provide examples of building team unity among the immediate staff and principle participants
- to help participants understand the importance of identifying the tipping point and targeting their efforts in that direction.
- to provide participants with able opportunity to discuss how a similar program may be implemented on their campus, given their unique circumstances
- to share the assessment results of our first two years and the subsequent changes

This year-long program has engaged 20 professional staff and 50 students committed to weekly meetings as well as faculty and staff on occasional special project basis.

The presentation will be a combination of lecture, slides, video, group participation, and

discussion. Monthly character development themes and programming will be highlighted. Participants will find it engaging, informative, and certainly motivational.

The structure and implementation of Character U is founded on principles from business, psychology, philosophy, theology, and education. We will explore how these particular disciplines and years of practical experience in higher education contributed significantly to the conception and implementation of the program.

Character U is structured in a unique fashion, providing each of the 400 first year students with a personal peer mentor. Each mentor is assigned ten first year students. Mentors are grouped into pods of five mentors each. There are a total of eight pods. Every pod is assigned two professional staff advisors and one advanced peer counselor/educator referred to as a PACER (Peers Advising, Counseling, Educating). All PACER's are certified through the Bacchus network. PACER's and advisors serve as resource persons to the mentors and conduct weekly group sessions with their pod of mentors.

Mentors have two meetings per week. The first meeting of the week is with their advisors in preparation for their second meeting of the week, which is with their ten first year students. Meetings and discussions are centered around character development and readings from the books "Character is Destiny" and the "Golden Counsels of St. Francis DeSales."

Speakers, workshops, seminars, movies, activities and events are programmed around various character traits. One Character trait is featured each month. September is patience, October – trust and cooperation, November – perseverance, February – love, March – forgiveness, and April – hope. The ten teams of first year students are engaged in friendly competition and earn points for attending events, and programs. Individuals, teams and pods who accumulate a critical number of points will become eligible for prizes. Attendance at one monthly major event is required for first year students.

Character U has been successful in attracting much faculty participation and contribution to programming. Destination South Africa is one of the biggest spin offs of Character U. It is an international experience for freshman. Students will travel in January, conduct research be mentored by faculty, staff and PACER's.

We will share our assessment techniques and the results. You will learn the good, the bad, the ugly and the subsequent changes for the continued improvement of the program.

At-Risk Low-Income Student Retention Issues

Beverlyn Grace-Odeleye
Assistant Professor/Director of the Act 101 Program
East Stroudsburg University
570-422-3508
Beverlyn@po-box.esu.edu

Barbara Miccio
Associate Professor/Counselor, Department of Academic Enrichment and Learning
East Stroudsburg University
908-362-7964
bmiccio@po-box.esu.edu

Summary: None

Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Student Body Through the First-Year Seminar

Aaron Thompson
Professor of Sociology
Eastern Kentucky University
(859) 622-1358
aaron.thompson@eku.edu

This session will introduce participants to diversity concepts (i.e., race, ethnicity, culture, etc.) and how using the concepts to prepare for a profession can be a powerful liberal arts education for first-year students. A self-awareness process known as the 4 A's (Awareness, Acknowledgment, Acceptance, Action) will be demonstrated as a mechanism for this competence. This process will assist students in becoming more culturally competent individuals and it allows them to relate to their classmates and the campus community as a whole. To demonstrate how the nation's society will continue to become more diverse, current population statistics and future projections will be given. As educators, it is our goal to engage a diverse population of students and enrich the college experience. In addition, it is our goal to prepare them for their personal and professional lives after graduation. Introducing students to the uniqueness of their own identities and those of others is an important step in them becoming confident and successful individuals who are comfortable in engaging those around them. Indeed, employers are seeking students experienced with diversity and not just a statement of believing in diversity. Thus, the first year is an ideal place to introduce students to the needs of the global economy and the human relations skills it will take to operate in it. Exposure to diversity in the first-year increases the opportunity for a student to think on a higher level and increasingly employers are seeking graduates that have expanded their consciousness to think at the critical and creative levels.

First-Year Students and Diversity

Aaron Thompson
Professor of Sociology
Eastern Kentucky University
(859) 622-1358
aaron.thompson@eku.edu

Summary: None

MAP-Works: An Early-Warning Indicator of First-Year Student Success

Darlana Jones
Director of Research and Development
Educational Benchmarking (EBI)
417-831-1810
Darlana@webebi.com

For many first-year/freshman students, the first college year is the first time they're away from home and independent. Life choices like time management, self-management, and healthy behaviors are in their control. Some students make the transition easily while other students struggle. This period can set the tone for what students expect, how much they get involved, and what they experience. Sophomore students, having successfully transitioned to college life, find that a new set of transition experiences face them. Sophomores can struggle with choosing

a major or career path, family expectations, or increased academic expectations and challenges.

EBI, in collaboration with Ball State University, developed a survey project to provide quality information and to share the responsibility for student success. The project is titled Making Achievement Possible Works (MAP-Works) because it is structured, literally, to help make student achievement possible and to focus on early interventions. These surveys are designed to reveal the strengths and talents of students, to help them identify areas for further growth, and to facilitate one-on-one interventions with students at risk. Individual information and feedback are provided to students and to the faculty/staff that are directly connected to them (e.g. residence hall staff, academic advisors, first-year seminar instructors, or retention committee members). In addition, smaller check-up surveys are administered to measure the key transition areas. Faculty/staff use the information from these assessments to identify and support individual students and to create group programming and monitor group progress.

The presentation will be organized in three sections. First, we will review transition issues typically encountered by first-year/freshmen and sophomores. Second, the MAP-Works project will be discussed including the transition issues covered by the assessment instruments and the reporting formats provided to staff and students. The presentation also includes small group discussion regarding how participants would use assessment information to support their own students.

An FYE Program Model for Community College Students

Mary Perkins
Associate Dean of Enrollment Management
Elgin Community College
847-214-7414
mperkins@elgin.edu

Amybeth Maurer
Director of Orientation and Student Life
Elgin Community College
847-214-7423
amaurer@elgin.edu

Provide basic geographic and demographic information about the college to help audience understand the setting. Provide brief overview of ECC's programs and services that have been in place but not fully integrated and aligned to promote first year student success. Describe the impetuses for developing an FYE program which included: new leadership, assessment results from COL 101 and new student orientation, staff feedback, the development of student development milestones which clearly articulated student learning expectations through the first year. Describe the four phases of ECC's FYE program which include Phase I: Foundation (admitted student communication and messages), Phase II: Orientation (student and parent orientation), Phase III: Engagement (convocation, campus jam, welcome week, and COL 101), and Phase IV: Integration (social activities, academic support services, clubs/organizations, and retention services). The integration of these four phases also resulted in significant changes within many of the FYE components. These changes will be described and include modifications to new student orientation, revised learning outcomes for COL 101 as well as development of a common syllabus and enhanced instructor training and resources, and development of new student convocation. Describe the future of ECC's FYE program which includes continued enhancements to integrate orientation and COL 101 such as connecting COL 101 students and instructors during convocation and campus jam, expansion of modalities for orientation, developing first-year student learning communities, developing a first-year

student communication plan to share key information at critical periods, and developing learning outcomes for the FYE program.

Living Simply: Lessons from a First-Year Learning Community

Michele Lee Kozimor-King
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Elizabethtown College
717-361-1571
kozimor-kim@etown.edu

Joseph Allen
Area Coordinator for Residence Halls
Elizabethtown College
717-361-1596
allenjo@etown.edu

Learning communities are found in hundreds of diverse institutions of higher education representing a national movement toward purposeful and experiential learning. This type of learning has experienced a growing presence in first-year programs. At Elizabethtown College, one unconventional course has changed the shape of learning communities. The Simple Living first-year seminar combines the first-year seminar design with a first-year learning community. This design enables students to continue purposeful life work outside the classroom in a supportive environment. Programming for the floor expands and reinforces simple living concepts and encourages meaningful interaction of students, faculty, and residence life staff.

This session will describe the formation of the Simple Living Seminar and Learning Community including the goals and outcomes of the project. The connection of the Simple Living theme to the college's overall mission and vision will be addressed. We will discuss how faculty and college life staff work together to provide a learning environment outside the classroom. The overlap between academic curriculum and residence hall programming will be explained. Learning objectives and assessment of the program will be examined. Pictures, media-coverage of the learning community, comments from students, and discussion of the follow-up sophomore learning community will be provided. Merits and challenges of the program will be articulated.

Creating Coherence across First-Year Seminar Sections

Beverly Dolinsky
Professor of Psychology
Endicott College
978-232-2194
bdolinsk@endicott.edu

Summary: None

Optimizing and Automating Your Center Services & Data

Mary Oberhelman
Eastern US Consultants
Engineerica Systems, Inc - AccuTrack, Accudemia

407-574-3714
mary@accutrack.org

Is your Center really running at its maximum efficiency using an Automated Center Management System?

How are you collecting & tracking the information that you need to meet grant requirements? Is an automated system affordable for me?

Are you automatically emailing your no-shows or cancellations?

Web appointment scheduling keeps your data safe & secure behind your college security!

How do you track walk in appointments? What about after the fact appointments?

Are you having problems coordinating tutors/staff schedules during your busiest hours?

When are your busiest hours/seasons?

Are you automating student and staff, surveys and feedback?

Can you instantly print, fax, or email a .pdf of your CURRENT center/student statistics in a clear concise report or chart for a last minute meeting?

Why bother with AccuTrack if you have systems like Banner, DataTel, or PeopleSoft?

Pen and paper sign in systems are inaccurate and time consuming. Using an automated system gives you more accurate reports by collecting data and keeping it current. Automated systems that can be customized for your individual needs will optimize services and automate manual processes like appointments scheduling and loaned material checkouts.

In this session we will address the above questions/comments & open the floor for a discussion of the advantages of using a computerized tracking system. We will also take you through a tour of the AccuTrack software, the most popular administrative software for tutoring centers in the US.

A First-Course Experience for the Online Adult Learner: The Excelsior Model

Timothy Maciel
Associate Provost
Excelsior College
518-608-8249
Tmaciel@excelsior.edu

The benefits of first-year experience (FYE) courses for freshmen at traditional colleges is clear: when well-designed and delivered, they result in higher retention, greater use of college resources, faster time to completion, and improved overall satisfaction with the college experience. While strengthening learning communities, they often include strategies to help students manage their college lives and to learn necessary skills to succeed in college and successfully transition from high school to college.

But what about the adult learner who is returning to college or starting college anew in an entirely online environment? What fears and challenges does the part-time, working adult face

in an online degree program? This interactive session presents a model of an online student success course that was designed specifically for adult learners, a group of growing significance as we find more and more working adults returning to college or beginning for the first time after years in the workplace or raising a family.

Excelsior College's "EC Success Seminar" is an eight-week, fully online course that was launched in the summer of 2008. Built on principles of andragogy, effective online learning strategies, and successful FYE models, the course is an innovative model of how to help adult learners adapt to the college environment and succeed in their college aspirations at a distance.

Since we consider the EC Success Seminar a work in progress, participants will be asked to critique parts of the course and to engage in a series of two-minute discussions on topics related to the course. Syllabi and other course materials will be distributed at the session.

Excelsior College is a distance education college providing associate, bachelors and masters degrees to over 35,000 students in the fields of Nursing, Health Science, Business and Technology and Liberal Arts.

Re-Aligning the First-Year Seminar with Changing Student Needs and Expectations of Higher Education

Jeffrey Knapp
Director, Academy for the Art of Teaching
Florida International University
305-348-4214
knappj@fiu.edu

Lidia Tuttle
Assoc. VP, Undergraduate Education
Florida International University
Tuttlel@fiu.edu

Students increasingly enter institutions of higher education underprepared. According to AAC&U's Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College (2002), only 47% of high-school graduates have taken college-preparatory curricula, and 53% take remedial courses once in college. The National Center for Educational Statistics (Department of Education) predicts an unprecedented increase in enrollment through 2015. At the same time, students are often unconcerned with the value of liberal education and see their college experience primarily in terms of career training.

FIU's began its first-year seminar course in 1994 as a young regional-comprehensive university and is now ranked High Research Activity, with medical and law colleges. Responding to the change in students' needs and expectations, the change in our institutional mission, and the need to better prepare our minority-majority student population for success inside and outside the classroom, we undertook a thorough review of all aspects of the course—student learning outcomes, curriculum, instructor training, assessment, and the textbook, to name but a few—and redesigned and renewed.

This workshop will explore the issue of keeping apace of the changing and challenging landscape of higher education; discuss how a curriculum grounded in current student-development research promotes the transition from high-school to, in our case, a research university; and promote an interactive exchange of ideas and experiences in renovating and rejuvenating a course that began at the University of South Carolina 35 years ago and is now

well established in higher education throughout the world.

How Lessons From "the Open Road" Transformed Frostburg's First-Year Seminar

Tom Bowling
Vice President for Student and Educational Services
Frostburg State University
301-687-4311
tbowling@frostburg.edu

Amy Shimko
Coordinator of the Advising Center
Frostburg State University
301-687-3132
alshimko@frostburg.edu

Brian McAllister
Co-Founder
Roadtrip Nation
949-764-9121
bmc@roadtripnation.com

Mike Marriner
Co-Founder
Roadtrip Nation
949-764-9121
mwm@roadtripnation.com

Jeff Graham
Counselor, Student Support Services
Frostburg State University
301-687-4481
jlgraham@frostburg.edu

The Roadtrip Nation Story

A few years ago, buddies Mike, Brian, and Nathan faced the end of college with the realization that they had absolutely no idea what to do with their lives. Their solution: take a roadtrip and interview people to learn how they got where they are. Three months and 17,000 miles later, they'd met the CEO of National Geographic, the scientist who decoded the human genome, and 70 others who had found their callings -- their "open roads."

Educational Themes for First-Year Students

Their experience led to a PBS series and the creation of Roadtrip Nation, an organization devoted to providing students opportunities to "find the open road." Common themes have emerged from their interviews: the importance of following your passion, being persistent, and the importance of believing in yourself -- themes very relevant for students as they begin their college careers. Video excerpts from the lessons that explore these themes will be shown.

Frostburg's Roadtrips

This section describes how the University was inspired to fund its own roadtrips: one to the LA area, one to Miami and Puerto Rico, and one to New York City. Interviews with alumni in these areas have been filmed by FSU students. A short clip from one of the films will be shown.

Transforming a Course

The success of these roadtrips inspired FSU and RTN to explore ways that all first-year students could have a “roadtrip” experience as part of their FYE course. This section will describe both the on-line curriculum and the workbook, and how instructors can customize their own on-line syllabi. Participants will also be able to view excerpts from interviews conducted by first-year students.

Assessment Results

The results of quantitative and qualitative assessment efforts will be shared, and how we are using these results to improve the course.

Why is Emotional Intelligence Important in College?

Catherine Andersen

Associate Provost

Gallaudet University

202-651-5804

catherine.andersen@gallaudet.edu

Summary: None

Assessing Student Learning Outcomes in a First-Year Transition Course for SACS Accreditation

Jacquelyn Nash

Assistant Director, The Freshman Center and University Transition Programs

George Mason University

703-993-3223

[jhilldr@gm.edu](mailto:jhilldru@gmu.edu)

Elizabeth Bernard

Director, The Freshman Center and University Transition Programs

George Mason University

703-993-9080

epatten@gmu.edu

To prepare for the 2010 SACS accreditation process, the directors of The Freshman Center and University Transition Programs at George Mason University implemented a model for identifying, measuring, and evaluating student learning outcomes in the university’s freshman transition course, as well as sophomore, junior, and senior-level transition courses. The model identified four major learning outcomes that could be baselined at the 100-level and then further developed in higher level transition courses, promoting a scaffold approach to fostering students’ readiness for life after college. The student learning outcomes identified were the demonstrated ability to: 1) gather and articulate self-knowledge, 2) understand and interact with the external environment, 3) integrate knowledge gained about self and environment, and apply to decision-making and goal-setting, and 4) strengthen verbal and written communication/interpersonal skills.

The critical artifact used for assessment at the freshman level was the final paper. Based on the curriculum presented during the semester, this assignment asked the students to create a narrative identifying several discoveries of self-awareness, several items learned about their

external environment (the university), and, in particular, several thoughts about how this information has shaped their decisions, plans, and goals for the rest of their college experience and beyond. A grading rubric was developed to determine each student's grade on the assignment, and then all of the artifacts (approximately 550) were accumulated and further content analysis was processed. We looked at clarity and conviction of the individual narratives, as well as patterns and themes that emerged across the narratives.

Successful implementation of the SACS accreditation process dictates that the findings identified by the assessment be used to inform the further refining and improvement of the targeted program. These findings and improvements will be the focus of our presentation.

Project Peak: A First-Year Seminar With an Adventure Twist

Elizabeth Bernard
Director, The Freshman Center and University Transition Programs
George Mason University
703.993.9080
epatten@gmu.edu

Susanna Adams
Program Coordinator
George Mason University
703.993.8477
sadams2@gmu.edu

Jacquelyn Nash
Assistant Director
George Mason University
703.993.3223
jhilldru@gmu.edu

Project Peak is a two-phase, one credit course, offered in a student's first semester at Mason. The first phase consists of a six-day wilderness adventure trip held the week before school begins. The second phase is a follow up to the trip in which students meet once a week in a University 100 class throughout the first semester. Our presentation will review the basics of the course and the trip itself. Information will be shared regarding the Project Peak Leadership team, its selection, and training. Details of the trip including a sample agenda, outfitters, campgrounds, transportation, budget, menu planning, and curriculum components will be covered. In addition, risk management necessities and marketing strategies will be discussed. Another important component that will be addressed is incorporating adventure into the classroom. Finally, results of student surveys, focus groups, and final project narratives will be reviewed. There will also be time for questions, and for participants to share their experiences relating to the topic.

Implementing a Campus-Wide Initiative to Extend the First-Year Experience Orientation Course into an Academic, Topic Centered Seminar: Emerging Themes and Issues

Wendy Chambers
Associate Professor of Developmental Psychology
Georgia Southern University
(912) 478-5921
wcuster@georgiasouthern.edu

Lisa Smith
Information Services Librarian
Georgia Southern University
(912) 478-1315
lsmith@georgiasouthern.edu

The purpose of this roundtable discussion is for participants to share ideas, experiences and challenges related to developing (or modifying) and implementing a new first year seminar, which includes an academic theme-based component and/or an increased focus on information literacy skills. The session facilitators will discuss their involvement in a campus wide initiative to significantly extend the first year orientation course at their institution into a more academic, theme based course. One purpose of this initiative is to provide first year students with the opportunity to interact directly with a professor and fellow classmates in the context of an engaging, small group setting. Another key objective of the new seminar is to focus on the development of information literacy skills. Toward this end, interactive learning modules have been developed and are being utilized in a number of sections of this new course. The session facilitators will seek questions, comments, and suggestions, to encourage a discussion among participants who are also interested in, or currently engaged in, the process of developing or implementing this type of course at their respective institutions. Open exchange of ideas and resources will be shared, as well as a discussion of various programmatic and logistical issues related to the development of this type of course and possible ways to resolve them.

The session facilitators will discuss two key issues for which other roundtable participants may provide insight:

- Challenges and rewards of increasing the involvement of faculty and staff members throughout the campus in the first year experience of students, within the context of a first year seminar.
- Challenges and rewards of the increasing focus on development of information literacy skills within the context of a first year seminar.

Open discussion of any other related themes or issues will also be encouraged.

An FLC for Us: Opportunities for Culturally Based Learning Communities

Dhanfu Elston
Academic Professional for Student Retention
Georgia State University
404-413-2056
delston@gsu.edu

A consistent demographic shift in the United States toward greater racial diversity has not only changed the racial composition of collegiate student bodies, but also challenged the delivery format of academic programs. Culturally responsive teaching can help bring diverse school communities together and make learning meaningful. Recently developed learning communities geared toward students-of-color at Georgia State University have provided unique opportunities to enhance student learning and increase student retention. In fall of 2008, the Urban Excellence: Success & Leadership freshmen learning communities will target African American male students. The presenters will lead an interactive discussion on the challenges and successes of culturally-based learning communities.

A continuing trend in higher education is the attempt to fully integrate commuter students into campus communities. Leadership programming traditionally targets residential students, due to their ease of access to the programs (Stevens, 2000). The incorporation of academic learning communities (Evans and Reason, 2001) with cultural themes has assisted our institution in capturing elusive constituencies. An explanation of the program will include a discussion of the funding, university support, activity options, housing options, evaluations and outcomes, sponsorship, and follow-up with the students throughout their collegiate matriculation.

Integrated Classroom Advisement, Time Management, and Early Warning: A First-Year Learning Community Staff Advisor and Faculty Collaboration for Student Success

Elizabeth Firestone
Academic Professional for Retention Programming
Georgia State University
404-413-2058
efirestone@gsu.edu

Brian Buckwald
Academic Advisor
Georgia State University
bbuckwald@gsu.edu

Teresa Ward
Research Associate, Office of Institutional Research
Georgia State University
tward@gsu.edu

In the fall of 2006, Georgia State University's Office of Undergraduate Studies and the Student Advisement Center initiated an Integrated Advising Program in which advisors are assigned to the GSU- 1010 Orientation classes for the fall semester. These advisors make classroom presentations and continue to function as the students' academic advisor until the students matriculate into their major college.

Our Integrated Advisement program is based on research results that suggest students who have interactions with advisors in a systematic schedule make better course scheduling decisions, understand the curriculum requirements for their major, maintain a satisfactory GPA, and are more satisfied with their college experience. Our program design includes eight presentations that are made in the GSU-1010 Orientation class. There are learning outcomes associated with each of the presentations. Advisors and faculty collaborate on when to deliver and how to integrate the presentations into the semester schedule. Although the curriculum topics are standardized, each advisor is given the freedom to present the required topic in a presentation format that is personally comfortable.

In addition, as part of our retention efforts we have been considering the adoption of an Early Warning System. It became apparent to us that the Time Management presentation could be used as an Early Warning System. The Time Management presentation occurs early in the semester and there is a homework assignment the students are expected to complete. This assignment provided data that was easily compiled into a report that paralleled early behaviors the students exhibited associated with class attendance, participation in class, and the completion of other class assignments. In this presentation, we will share the intervention strategies designed to address what we saw as a tiered behavior pattern in these students' and the possible development of a university early warning system based on our student's

behaviors.

The Role of Libraries and Librarians in the First-Year Experience

James Huff
Reference/Instruction Librarian, Julia Rogers Library
Goucher College
410-337-6340
jhuff@goucher.edu

Summary: None

Habitudes: The Habits and Attitudes of a First-Year Student

Tim Elmore
Founder and President
Growing Leaders
678.367.4167
andrea@growingleaders.com

This interactive session, given by the author and creator of the Habitudes™ book series, will show participants how to nurture a leadership culture by teaching students leadership concepts using images, experiences and relationships. Students today are EPIC: Experiential, Participatory, Image-rich, and Connected. Consequently, faculty and staff must put more creativity into training to take leadership development beyond mere instruction. By leveraging the power of pictures, attendees will learn to teach leadership principles that are memorable and transferable. Inspired by the research done at UCLA by Dr. Helen & Alexander Astin, as well as the studies done by Coca Cola & Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance, Growing Leaders has pursued the creation of curriculum that helps students realize their highest potential. In 2000, the Kellogg Foundation published a report on the status of leadership on university campuses in North America. The report included both state and private schools, and was compiled by Dr. Helen and Alexander Astin, from UCLA. Some of their conclusions were: 1. Every student has leadership potential. 2. Leadership cannot be separated from values. 3. Leadership skills must be taught. 4. In today's world, every student will need leadership skills. Because we concur that in today's world every student will need to possess leadership skills, Growing Leaders attempts to enable first-year students to begin to see themselves and apply themselves as leaders in the respective fields in which they plan to enter. During the session, the presenter will guide attendees through Habitudes™ Teacher's Guide to show them how to create a language of leadership on their campus and use communication techniques that engage millennial generation students. The presenter will demonstrate a Habitudes™ teaching session including an image, learning objectives, a creative idea to introduce or teach the leadership principle, a story to illustrate the principle, ideas for a movie that demonstrates the leadership principle, a story to illustrate the principle, a student assessment, and an exercise in which student can participate. The session will include small group discussion and interactive exercises. A portion of the presentation time will be allotted for a question and answer session as well as a forum to brainstorm ideas on how to implement an EPIC teaching style at their institutions, including the use of eight building blocks for learning. Students with various learning styles can engage with the Habitudes™ curriculum because of the EPIC nature in which they are taught and written. Working in partnership with colleges, universities, and student groups both in the U.S. and internationally, "Growing Leaders" has been able to demonstrate that students can: 1. Understand the principles, 2. Remember the principles, 3. Practice the principles, 4.

Communicate the principles. Campuses that have used Habitudes™ with first year students have increased retention, participation in student leadership positions and GPA.

The First Year of FYE: A Parallel Learning Experience

Rebecca Signore
Coordinator of First Year Experience and Academic Advising
Gwynedd-Mercy College
215-646-7300 x243
signore.r@gmc.edu

In 2007-2008 Gwynedd-Mercy College began its First-Year Experience program, which has been in planning since 2005. Designed to assist a student's transition into college and to promote student success, the program is comprised of two courses—FYE 1000 and FYE 1001 — for a total of three credits. The FYE program at Gwynedd-Mercy has three main goals: fostering the development of academic skills, educating students in the Mercy tradition and the mission of the college, and supporting the positive growth of interpersonal and social skills, all of which are necessary for success in the collegiate environment.

What has proved most interesting over the past year is the learning process that the faculty teaching the course found themselves involved in. In many ways, there was a strong parallel to the transitions and issues that the first-year students were experiencing in their new roles. This presentation will examine the lessons learned by the faculty (and to some extent the institution) as we moved through the first year of our FYE. Specifically, the presentation will focus on the three goals established for the course and how they were reflected in the experiences of the instructors. Because the core faculty team was comprised of faculty from across our programs and staff in key student/academic support positions, the presentation will also include the effect of the first year on instructors' other roles and responsibilities at the college. The first year of our FYE program was rich in discovery for both students and faculty, and this presentation will highlight, both anecdotally and quantitatively, what we learned and how we plan for the future with that information.

Training for the Sport of Taking Risks: Assuring College Success —Regardless of the Score

Harlan Cohen
Author, Syndicated Advice Columnist, and Speaker
HelpMeHarlan, LLC
773-477-1234
harlan@helpmeharlan.com

The session begins with the presenter playing a song on the guitar (relating to theme of session). The presenter then shares his risk-taking history relating to college life. From his first days as new student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, to his decision to transfer to Indiana University, to his days as a college intern at The Tonight Show with Jay Leno – the message is clear and concise, life is about making choices and with each choice comes risks. Participants will then fill out a “Risk Threshold Evaluation.” The RTE will help participants identify common risks facing students in transition on their campuses. After a brief discussion about the RTE, participants will then be introduced to "The Universal Rejection Truth" and how this unavoidable truth affects new students. The Universal Rejection Truth states: not everyone we want to appreciate, include, and desire us will always appreciate include and desire us. The problem facing the vast majority of students in transition is that they are stuck in

a state of rejection denial. Rejection denial is a dark and frustrating place where we insist that everyone we encounter must respond to us the way we want them to respond. Participants will then be introduced to the larger concept of “Training for The Sport of Taking Risks.” Training is centered on helping students get comfortable with the uncomfortable by enabling them to create realistic expectations and giving them tools to navigate the unavoidable obstacles that come with being a student in transition. The applications of this approach are far reaching and will prove invaluable beyond the first year experience. The session concludes with discussion, questions and answers.

Measuring Change in the First Year of College

John Pryor
Director, Cooperative Institutional Research Program
Higher Education Research Institute
310.825.1925
john.pryor@ucla.edu

This presentation will use matched data from the 2008 administration of the Your First College Year (YFCY) Survey and the 2007 CIRP Freshman Survey, a total of 27,418 students, to demonstrate the utility of information gleaned by using this pair of nationally available survey instruments. Designed by the experts at the Higher Education Research Institute and the Policy Center on the First Year of College as a companion piece to the CIRP Freshman Survey, the YFCY examines critical issues in the social and academic adjustment to college that takes place over the first year of college. The presenter will illustrate, using research findings from this large-scale administration of the two surveys, how institutions can use these instruments locally to learn about their own students. Attendees will learn about the concepts that are examined in the two survey instruments, how the concepts map onto survey items, and ways to examine their own data that do not require knowledge of statistical analysis.

Shared Service-Shared Learning: First-Year and Graduate Students Working Together

Wendy Troxel
Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Administration and Foundations
Illinois State University
309-438-7668
wgtrox@ilstu.edu

Research on first-year students continues to encourage collaboration across existing structures and to find ways to connect better with our students and institutions. This proposed session describes 4 years of research based on a collaborative service-learning project assigned in 2 courses: a graduate class that focuses on college students and their “cultures”, including research and programming for first-year students, and an undergraduate, learning community for first-year students. The service-learning projects are organized and carried out because of a relationship that has been developed between several university departments and faculty members, the community, and student affairs. The research itself explores what students actually learned from participation in this service-learning project, reflections about the interactions between first-year and graduate students, and their likelihood to engage in future volunteer service. Understanding what students take away from a service-learning project that involves a partnership, in terms of their individual and group outcomes, will help campus leaders design more meaningful projects that may encourage learning through service over a lifetime. This session was developed based on qualitative research conducted over 4 years with 140 first-year undergraduate and graduate students.

Transitions: Assessing Writing and The First-Year Experience Using BCSSE/NSSE Data

James Cole
Project Manager of Beginning College Student Survey of Engagement
Indiana University
812-856-3004
colejs@indiana.edu

Tiffani Butler
Graduate Assistant at the Center for Postsecondary Research
Indiana University
812-856-1437
butlertn@indiana.edu

Theresa Hitchcock
Project Associate for the National Survey of Student Engagement
Indiana University
812-856-1958
thehitch@indiana.edu

This session will focus on writing, remediation and the first-year experience. We will use data from the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and the National Student Survey of Engagement (NSSE). BCSSE is administered prior to the start of the fall semester and asks first-year students about their high school academic experiences (including writing) and their expected academic engagement during their first year of college. In the following spring, these same students are invited to complete NSSE, which includes questions regarding their academic engagement including involvement and experiences with writing during their first year. We intend to look at the hours of writing completed in high school to both their expectations the similar work in college as well as what they actually completed. The results of this study will lead to a discussion with audience members regarding effective practices those meaningful engage students in writing.

Creating Collaborative and Comprehensive Programs for Entering Student Success

Scott Evenbeck
Dean, University College
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
(317) 274-5032
evenbeck@iupui.edu

Frank Ross
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life & Learning
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
(317) 274-4431
frross@iupui.edu

Maggy Smith
Vice President of Academic Affairs
St. Mary of the Woods College
(812) 535-5151
msmith@smwc.edu

Gayle Williams
Assistant Dean, University College
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
(317) 278-2256
gawillia@iupui.edu

The purpose of this workshop is to examine a structure and strategy that has proven successful in addressing student transitions to a collegiate environment in a comprehensive and collaborative fashion. Strategies for developing necessary collaborations that include faculty, advisors, librarians, student affairs, support staff, and students themselves will be considered.

Some participants may have a goal of forming a new university college unit, while others may want to enhance already existing programs. Participants will become familiar with the history of university colleges and be able to identify the essential components of a successful university college program.

Presenters will discuss existing programs at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). They will discuss the challenges and successes of starting a new university college program and explain how those programs have grown. Both institutions now have comprehensive programs. Participants can use ideas presented in this workshop at a two-year or four-year institution, whether public or private.

The workshop features a PowerPoint presentation, group discussions, and interaction with the presenters. The participants will leave the workshop with specific ideas of what will work at their institutions and specific plans to implement these ideas. Numerous handouts will be provided.

Summer Bridge Programs: What Works

Gayle Williams
Assistant Dean, University College
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
317-274-8923
gawillia@iupui.edu

Summary: None

Enhancing First-Year Student Civic and Political Engagement

Frank Ross
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life & Learning
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
317-410-7381
frross@iupui.edu

Ratona Harr
Senior Education Account Manager
USA Today
rharr@usatoday.com

Scott Evenbeck

Dean, University College
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis
evenbeck@iupui.edu

The national Collegiate Readership Program is designed to promote civic engagement, global awareness and media literacy by exposing students to current news.

First, newspaper representatives will share data regarding why it is critical that college students engage in print news publications.

Presenters will then provide strategies for how attendees can enhance civic and political engagement for first-students on their home campuses.

Presenters will detail the national Collegiate Readership Program, which is a partnership between the USA Today and New York Times.

Using Indiana University- Purdue University as a case study, participants will learn about a first-year seminar which has been successful in increasing student civic and political engagement.

Participants will also learn about the new Voices initiative, which helps students learn about, debate, and inspires action on important social issues.

Next, newspaper representatives will share highlights from other colleges and universities on how they have integrated the College Readership Program into their curriculum.

Finally, presenters will discuss the VOICE project, which was developed to enhance first year students' active participation in critical issues in their local and national communities.

Assessment data will be shared, and the presenters will spend time answering questions from the audience.

Faculty Making a Difference: Improving Retention Through Collaboration and Research

Kenneth Wendeln
Clinical Associate Professor in Management
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis
317-278-3209
kwendeln@iupui.edu

John Kremer
Professor of Psychology
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)
317-523-2875
jkremer@iupui.edu

Kate Thedwall
Director, Gateway to Graduation Program
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)
317-278-6480
kthedwal@iupui.edu

A large urban university used DFW rates among gateway courses to make important policy decisions. (1) High school GPA and SAT scores predicted course failure. This led to the policy of attracting more FTFT and out-of-state students. (2) Some courses had consistently high DFW rates. Students were advised to not take these courses simultaneously.

The gateway faculty were organized and supported in a variety of ways. (1) Departments identified course coordinators responsible for large gateway courses. (2) Gateway coordinators met annually with administration to discuss their efforts to reduce the DFW rate. (3) A university-wide gateway coordinator position was created to lead gateway initiatives through the coordinators and key faculty.

Key faculty have concluded that there were “gateway-course” principles that seemed to be uniform across courses and instructors: (1) The DFW rate has a base level and that these students do not become engaged in their courses; (2) Ability does not seem to be the primary predictor of failure; (3) The major contributor to the DFW rate was a failure to complete some of the basic requirements of the course; (4) Many faculty thought that they could predict these students very early in the courses.

Data gathered by the faculty suggests that DFW students could be divided into four descriptive and predictive groups: (1) non-attenders, (2) non-compliers, (3) low-performers, and (4) drop-outs. The student mentoring program changed from a group-oriented, content-based intervention to an individual, problem-solving approach focusing on student motivational factors and test-preparation skills. Faculty are now experimenting with other early identification and intervention initiatives.

In conclusion, the model of forming course coordinators and engaging them and key faculty in initiatives led by an administratively appointed leader has been effective. The faculty perspective through action research provides new insights that can take a university in a different or parallel direction.

Convincing Faculty: The "Proof" Is in the Survey

Gregory Anderson
Associate Director of FYE
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne
260-481-6066
anderson@ipfw.edu

Rachelle Darabi
Associate Provost for Student Development and Community Outreach
Missouri State University
260-481-6140
darabi@ipfw.edu

Faculty often hesitate to participate in the first year experience without “proof” of the program’s success. At Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW), we could see that the success of our learning communities was faculty driven; therefore, to gather evidence supporting our hypothesis, we conducted a survey of the (LC) faculty. A ten-question instrument, implemented through WebSurveyor, measured beliefs regarding learning communities and student engagement, attendance, grades, faculty teaching styles and development. Also, we asked questions concerning faculty attainment of FYE goals and course integration. Faculty responded using a likert scale and had an opportunity to add some personal comments.

A sampling of what the faculty was asked follows:

1. Learning Communities enhance students' learning to a greater degree than stand alone classes.
2. My teaching style has improved since teaching in learning communities.
3. I value faculty development sessions.

The results of this survey show that faculty perceives FYE Learning Communities at IPFW in a most favorable light. For example, concerning question one listed above, sixty-two percent of the faculty strongly agreed that learning communities do enhance a student's learning as compared to stand alone classes. Also, over sixty-eight percent of the faculty believes that their teaching style has improved since teaching in learning communities, and slightly over ninety-three percent of the faculty value faculty development sessions. Another encouraging outcome was that over eighty-six percent of the faculty say that they are meeting the learning community objectives of connecting IPFW students to writing, technology, our library, academic disciplines, and to their university. If faculty chose to contribute comments, we will share these.

In this presentation, we will offer a brief history of the IPFW first year learning communities in the context of the different learning community models, discuss the survey, its outcomes, and the significance of the findings.

Why Is Helping Students Hurting Me So Much: Leveraging Student Success Work for Success with Promotion Committees

Jerry Pattengale
Assistant Provost for Scholarship and Public Engagement
Indiana Wesleyan University
765-677-2170
jerry.pattengale@indwes.edu

Bill Millard
Executive Director, Center for Life Calling & Leadership
Indiana Wesleyan University
765-677-2520
bill.millard@indwes.edu

Brian Fry
Professor of Sociology
Indiana Wesleyan University
765-677-2428
Brian.fry@indwes.edu

This session will begin with an interactive exercise that highlights the possibilities attached to first-year programs for scholarship. In addition to sharing various resources, both Web helps and handouts, the presenter will utilize the Ernest Boyer model in showing possibilities for pursuing recognized scholarship. And, the session will build on this to show how any academic discipline can have intersections with these efforts. Like the Medici Effect's thesis, the presenter will show the significant gains of working across disciplines. A fun part of the session is highlighting some of the key scholars in the student success field and tracking their journey from their academic discipline to recognition at their universities for efforts in this area. All of this is laid against the backdrop of capitalizing on student success work for career gains. This

session shows how our inherently good efforts in helping students succeed can simultaneously be linked to scholarship and portfolio items important to appointment, rank and promotion consideration. The presenter will share best practices gleaned from numerous campuses. The session will have various interactive times, along with practical suggestions for leveraging student success efforts for promotion. Although we're often asked to help with "retention" programs or first and second year efforts far afield from our professional training, we can find these assignments both fulfilling and personally rewarding.

Partnerships to First-Year Reading Successes in Critical Thinking and Civic Engagement

Gretchen Hazard
Assoc. Professor, Administrator General Education
James Madison University
540-568-3428
hazardga@jmu.edu

Carol Hurney
Asst. Director Faculty Innovation, Biology dept.
James Madison University
540-568-4846
hurneyca@jmu.edu

Kathy Clarke
Librarian
James Madison University
540-568-2911
clarkeke@jmu.edu

As First Year Reading Programs (FRPs) evolve, questions arise; Can FRPs promote critical thinking? Can programs bring students from orientation to classroom? Are campuses stuck with a living author discussing their work? Can divergent divisions, namely Academic and Student Affairs, partner for success?

The 2007-8 academic year marked the centennial of James Madison University and the choice of Madison's Federalist 10 as a common text seemed appropriate but controversy surrounded the choice.

The Fed 10 themes of unity vs. faction and representative democracy were highlighted for students. A team from Orientation, Libraries, University Studies and Theater developed a convocation program around a faction-creating scenario, The Drawbridge. Students met the Drawbridge characters in their 30-member student-led orientation groups and were asked to come to a consensus vote deciding which character was responsible for a horrible crime. At First Year Convocation, a faculty moderator introduced and led the 3900 students in a "discussion" of the first vote and introduced scenario characters who brought the scenario to life. Orientation groups reconvened to reconsider this new information and recast their group's vote via delegates using remote control classroom clickers.

Faculty-panelists and the moderator brought text themes back using the scenario as a channel to view how issues of unity and faction can play out in classrooms, campuses and life. Group delegates were asked to vote again – this time without group consultation - by representative vote.

This is our most "connected" FRP event to date. FRP programming can successfully guide

students through orientation into the classroom, but as our experience indicates a healthy partnership between Student and Academic Affairs divisions is imperative. This presentation will highlight that partnership and discuss innovative FRP programming designed to emphasize student critical thinking and civic engagement themes. Participants will receive copies of our supplementary materials see video highlights.

Weaving Together Academics and Student Development in the First-Year Experience

Rick Ostrander
Dean of Undergraduate Studies
John Brown University
479-524-7228
rostrand@jbu.edu

Jane Klosterman
Assistant Professor of Biology
John Brown University
479-524-7434
jbeers@jbu.edu

Stephen Beers
Vice President for Student Development
John Brown University
479-524-7133
sbeers@jbu.edu

John Brown University has developed a successful first-year seminar that inspires students intellectually while helping them transition to college life. The key to the seminar's success has been close collaboration between academics and student development, producing a course that blends the curricular and the co-curricular. While not necessarily unique, the Gateway Seminar combines several innovations to make it successful:

1. Friday Sessions. The Gateway Seminar is a two-hour academic course that meets on Monday and Wednesday. Thus, students have a Friday time slot available that we use for sessions led by both academic and student development personnel on discovering your strengths, choosing a major, building healthy relationships, etc. This format enables professors to focus on academics in the course while students still receive an extended orientation to college life.
2. Topic-based seminars. Each section of Gateway is organized around a topic that engages students intellectually and introduces them to the basic purpose of higher education. When students register for classes, they receive a brochure explaining the topics and professors, and they get to choose the section that most interests them. Course evaluations have thus demonstrated both an increase in academic rigor and student satisfaction with the class.
3. Faculty buy-in. The course is a two credit hour course, but professors receive three hours of teaching load for the course. Moreover, professors have the opportunity to devote their section to a topic that interests them. Thus we can recruit some of our best professors. In exchange, professors devote extra time to serving as mentors and companions to their students by hosting them for dinner, leading field trips, etc.
4. Peer Mentors and Summer Reading. Upper-level honors students as Peer Mentors for Gateway sections, and each Gateway section begins with a discussion of the Summer Reading book during Orientation Week.

Text, Countertext: Helping First-Year Students Meet the Goals of General Education

Wayne (Mick) Charney
Associate Professor of Architectural History
Kansas State University
785.317.1035
charney@ksu.edu

The distinguishing feature of general education courses, in contrast to other electives, is the goal of imparting to students an interdisciplinary breadth of knowledge along with those communication and analytical competencies that will prepare them for a future impacted by global diversity. For many first-year students, however, general education is only a faintly discerned concept. In an era where passion for technological progress has reduced knowledge to push-button cut-and-paste searches, general education demands more than just revealing contending world views. Students, with so much information accessible to them on the Internet that they nonchalantly dispense with great books, are experts nevertheless at Googling their way to “wisdom” (tasks with low intellectual bars and immediate payoffs). Still, students’ inability to judge the relevance of that information (along with a peer-affirming blogosphere and “hecklebot” culture) while formulating a personally meaningful and useful world view creates only the semblance of an intellectual life that regards knowledge to be a matter of opinion—at best. They cling to the belief that texts ought to be permitted to “speak for themselves” because all meaning and authority can be read easily enough by skimming the surface. This session posits that text/countertext assignments can help otherwise tech-savvy first-year college students “begin to remember that [they have] a mind, and that the mind may be made the source of great pleasure,” as poet Matthew Arnold wrote. Session participants will learn what constitutes a countertext through sample class assignments drawn from a variety of genre—academic discourse versus popular culture, retrospective perspectives versus topical concerns—in the sciences, arts, and humanities. A variety of short, reproducible classroom experiments in perception will be demonstrated—scriptio continua, “blard” paradox, Aardvark conundrum, Stroop test—all devised to alert students to the questionable functioning of brains when not engaged in deep, critical thinking.

The FYE at the Postmodern Multiversity

Gregory Eiselein
Professor of English and Coffman University Distinguished Teaching Scholar
Kansas State University
(785) 532-0386
eiselei@ksu.edu

Emily Lehning
Assistant Dean of Student Life
Kansas State University
(785) 532-6237
lehning@ksu.edu

This roundtable will facilitate a lively, open discussion around issues related to the creation and maintenance of unified first-year experience programs at large, public, research universities.

LARGE, diverse, and sometimes scattered multiversities face particular challenges in the creation of a FYE. They often have many different programs for new students, each its own autonomous kingdom, governed by talented and well-intentioned administrators who often find themselves competing rather than collaborating. These programs are not always well

coordinated with each other and operate with little attention to related campus programs.

PUBLIC institutions face specific political and budgetary hurdles in the creation and maintenance of a FYE program -- hurdles that can sometimes seem both insurmountable and all too familiar to those of us at state institutions. Small classes and personalized attention to incoming students is pedagogically effective but also at times cost prohibitive to under-funded state universities serving sizable populations.

RESEARCH institutions often have faculties whose greatest interests and commitments are to research and graduate education and not to students who are new to the university. The needs and specific circumstances of first-year students are sometimes easily lost among the other intellectual, pedagogical, and fiscal priorities of Carnegie Research I schools.

This roundtable will provide an opportunity for those from large, public research universities to discuss the unique challenges they face and the ways they have overcome those challenges to establish unified first-year experience programs. In the session, we hope to encourage a sharing of ideas and information among participants from large public school, but we also seek participation from faculty and administrators from other types of institutions as a way to broaden our perspectives and to think creatively about solutions to the challenges of a FYE in a late modern multiversity.

New Student Orientation in Online Education

Sara Connolly
Professor of Higher Education Studies
Kaplan University
203-283-3341
sconnolly@kaplan.edu

The presence of online education is growing substantially. Research has shown that online education has grown in recent years by 20% or more, and over 90% of colleges and universities offer at least one course via distance education (Ashburn, 2006). In 2005-2006, 61.3% of all colleges and universities offered distance education. In the fall semester of 2006, over 3.5 million students took at least one online course, a 9.7% increase from the fall of 2005 (Carnevale, 2006, Carnevale, 2005). Additionally, during this same semester, approximately 20% of all students were taking an online course. This growth is larger than the growth in the ground environment, which was 1.5% in the period of fall 2005-fall 2006. (Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac, 2007-2008). Despite this growth, there is little research regarding student services in the online environment. This study sought to begin to fill that gap by using The Council for Academic Standards (CAS), to analyze new student orientation programs in online education.

The presentation will be a mixture of presentation and discussion. The researcher will present background of the study that will include rationale for choosing this research topic as well as literature review and gap in literature. CAS Standards and their relationship to this presentation will also be discussed. The researcher will present the methodology of this project, as well as the results, summary, synthesis and limitations. The final portion of the presentation will be in discussion format. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions regarding the study and will engage in a discussion regarding future research in this area and practical implications of the study.

Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate understanding of research in online orientation

2. Synthesize research findings to determine practical implications
3. Analyze research to determine future research opportunities

References:

Ashburn, E. (2006). Growth Fueled by Online Courses. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Volume 53, Issue 3, Page A27

Carnevale, D. (2006). Online Education Continues to Grow, Report Says. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Volume 53, Issue 14, Page A36

Carnevale, D (2005). Online Courses Continue to Grow, Report Says. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Volume 51, Issue 44, Page A29

Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac, 2007-2008. Available online at <http://chronicle.com/free/almanac/2007/index.htm>

Summer Reading: A Paradigm Shift

Paul Carty
Director, National Book Program
Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company
563-589-1153
pcarty@kendallhunt.com

Aaron Thompson
Professor, Sociology
Eastern Kentucky University
888-872-9864
aaron.thompson@eku.edu

The traditional approach taken by FYE summer reading programs is to have entering students read a novel or literary piece in the summer preceding their first term in higher education. For many incoming students, reading novels over the summer is something that they have repeatedly experienced in high school (So, their attitude toward the reading tends to be: "Same ol', same ol'" or, "Been there, done that.").

This session will explore the viability and desirability of a "paradigm shift" away from this standard practice toward the use of alternative summer readings that relate more directly to new students' upcoming college experience and has the following intended outcomes: (a) inspire students about the value of higher education, (b) generate anticipatory interest and motivation for college, and (c) enable students to "hit the ground running by having a direct and immediate impact on students' during their first term on campus.

The session will also examine strategies for actively engaging students in their summer reading via inclusion of reflective, writing-to-learn exercises that give students a purpose to read, increase student accountability for completing their reading, and enable students to come better prepared to discuss what they learned from the reading when they arrive on campus. Students will have already thought about their reading before they share their reflections--making their contributions more meaningful. Furthermore, shy or verbally reticent students (e.g., first-generation or international students) will be able to have a written record of their thoughts ahead of time, which should reduce their reticence or anxiety about becoming involved in the discussion. This practice would also encourage "writing across the curriculum" proactively by having students write in response to their pre-college reading.

Enhancing and Assessing a Seminar Course: Ensuring Continuous Program Development

Stephen Braden
Coordinator of First-Year Programs
Kennesaw State University
770-420-4437
sbraden1@kennesaw.edu

Keisha Hoerrner
Chair, Department of First-Year Programs
Kennesaw State University
770-499-3222
khoerrne@kennesaw.edu

James Davis
Assistant Professor, Department of First-Year Programs
Kennesaw State University
678-797-2475
jdavi231@kennesaw.edu

Carlton Usher
Assistant Professor, Department of First-Year Programs
Kennesaw State University
770-499-3540
cusher@kennesaw.edu

Ken Hill
Lecturer, Department of First-Year Programs
Kennesaw State University
678-797-2366
Khill@kennesaw.edu

In fall 2008 the Department of First-Year Programs served more than 2,300 first-year students in 95 sections of KSU 1101, some of which were independent and others in learning communities. Seven sections were a new globally focused version of the nationally regarded first-year seminar. Because assessment is vital to the enhancement of first-year initiatives yet time-consuming for students and faculty, the department developed a central quantitative instrument to assess numerous course components, including new learning outcomes, advising teams, and the common reader program. This instrument also allows for comparison between learning communities and independent sections as well as between the traditional and the new globally focused course.

Assessment beyond retention and GPA data were needed for each of the following primary course initiatives: (1) meeting four learning outcomes (life skills, strategies for academic success, campus and community connections, and foundations for global learning); (2) collaborating with the Counseling, Advising and Program Services (CAPS) Center and the Center for Student Leadership to assist students with first semester advising and second semester registration, and to promote the early selection of a declared major; and (3) the Common Reader Program, which promotes student engagement in a common experience to enhance global perspectives.

More than 750 students were surveyed in one of the first three class sessions with a 39-question survey. Students then take a very similar survey in weeks 13 or 14 of the semester to analyze

impact of the course's initiatives.

While the results of the assessment will be discussed, this session will also talk about the “nuts and bolts” of refining a long-standing first-year seminar and its learning outcomes, incorporating new initiatives like the advising teams and the common reader without diluting other aspects of the curriculum, and launching new delivery options for the essential KSU 1101 content.

Kennesaw State University's Early Start Bridge Academy: Connecting Mathematics Self-Efficacy with Academic Success and Retention

Kathy Matthews
Director of First-Year Retention Initiatives
Kennesaw State University
770-499-3550
kmatthew@kennesaw.edu

Nicolý Myles
Program Coordinator Early Start Bridge Academy
Kennesaw State University
770-499-3550
nmyles@kennesaw.edu

Pinder Naidu
Assistant Professor of Mathematics
Kennesaw State University
770-499-3456
pnaidu@kennesaw.edu

Albert Bandura's theoretical studies (1986, 1994) on the important links between self-efficacy, motivation, and goal-setting helped inform the development and structure of Kennesaw State University's Early Start Bridge Academy (ESBA) initiative. This session reports on the success of students enrolled in the ESBA, a pilot summer 2008 optional two-course (developmental mathematics and first-year seminar) program to enhance the success of at-risk students. Creating a strong sense of students' self-efficacy became a major emphasis in the design of ESBA academic curricular units and social activities that would address the students' transitional issues. Bandura's four key elements in building self-belief provided these cornerstones: 1) acquiring mastery experiences; 2) interaction with social models; 3) social persuasion and verbal coaching; and 4) reducing students' stress reactions. The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire and the Mathematics Self-Efficacy Scale were used to provide baseline data upon which ESBA faculty and staff helped move students from passive thinking about their learning to become more aware of their competencies. The Early Start Bridge Academy also offered opportunities for student interaction with experienced, full-time professors who would provide continuous support to participants beyond summer.

This session summarizes the incremental steps in this collaborative project that has been heralded as a success not simply for bridging the transition needed for ESBA students' academic and social success. Highlights include: the successful outreach to involve student families, particularly those family members who were unfamiliar with the college experience; the use of Supplementary Instruction in a Learning Support Mathematics course; the emphasis on reflective journaling; and promoting leadership principles. Finally, we will provide examples of how the ESBA's collaborations between Academic Affairs and Student Services can be adapted to duplicate positive results on student retention and persistence. ESBA's tag

line says it all: Get In. Get Started. Get Through.

Planning for a Lifetime of Transitions

Scott Vandever
Vice President
Kuder, Inc.
800.314.8972
vandever@kuder.com

Informed decision making, planning, and preparation are part of the lifelong career development process. With any process there are critical transitions along the way, and successful transitions at any stage are made possible through proper planning and preparation. Along, with the help of guidance staff, effective educational and career planning gives students the tools they need to achieve career success.

By exploring and researching their education and career options, students, at any age, will experience an easier, more successful transition between high school, college, and the workforce. And, it all starts by building a lifelong portfolio, which includes creating a four-, six-, or eight-year education plan, searching for colleges, scholarships, and job opportunities, taking research-based assessments, and much more. All of which, help guide students in making well-informed education and career decisions. Research tells us that by accessing these tools, students are more likely to complete high school and postsecondary education and receive a higher degree of satisfaction in their career.

Get your students on the right path with the right educational and career planning tools - proven to help students academically succeed, giving them more education and career options for their future.

This presentation will combine a discussion with an interactive question and answer session as well as provide supporting materials for attendees. The presentation will also demonstrate effective tools and resources and highlight best practices for incorporating tools into classroom experiences, curricula, and career guidance programs.

Hitting the Road: A Collaborative Living-Learning Community Designed to Help Undecided First-Year Students Map Their Own Success

Linda Lantaff
Academic Planner, Instructor
Kutztown University
(610) 683-4735
lantaff@kutztown.edu

Kathleen Hartman
Professor
Kutztown University
(610) 683-4735
hartman@kutztown.edu

Vera Brancato
Professor, Department Chair
Kutztown University

(610) 683-4735
brancato@kutztown.edu

While some of the Approximately 400 first-year students who enroll at Kutztown University as undeclared students each fall have prospective majors in mind, there are many students who are completely uncertain about their future plans and need to explore their options.

In fall 2006, the Advising Center for Undeclared Students established a living learning community for undeclared students that targeted the most undecided first-year students. The goals for the community were to 1) encourage self-awareness and intentional career/major exploration, 2) increase the student's knowledge about the workplace, 3) help the student adjust to the college environment, 4) increase the student's knowledge about campus resources, policies, and procedures 5) help the student develop skills for success in college, and 6) increase retention, academic achievement, and goal directedness of undecided students.

In its second year, the living learning community collaborated with Residential Life and Housing Services, Career Services, the Speech and Theatre and Instructional Technology Departments, and university alumni and local/regional employers to provide opportunities for students to map their own success at KU and beyond. Using the PBS special Road Trip Nation as a resource, the students not only learned about their own interests, abilities, and values and how they related to the world of work, but also learned how others found their life passion and followed their dreams. As a final project, learning community students created their own "Road Trip" multimedia presentation that highlighted an interview with an inspirational individual working in a field of interest.

Highlights of both the development of this living learning community and the outcomes based on student assessment will be presented through the use of PowerPoint, digital video, and group discussion.

Attendees will receive copies of the PowerPoint and will be encouraged to share their own experiences with learning communities.

"Connect Four": Games That Promote Interactive Learning

Loriann Irving
Counselor & Professor, Student Support Services
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
610-683-1347
irving@kutztown.edu

The presenter will show how to connect four common games to topics found in the first-year seminar experience. Participants will learn about these creative teaching methods through active involvement as "students." Explanations of the appropriate places to use the activities will be given. At the end of the presentation, participants will receive an explanation of the activities presented for future reference.

To portray "Effective Studying Techniques," participants will receive lists of vocabulary words frequently used during the freshmen seminar. They will write definitions in their own words and play "Pictionary." Participants will then take the words and definitions and turn them into test questions a professor might ask. Fortune cookies will be used as a catalyst to prompt a question-and-answer format.

To present concepts related to "Money Management," participants will take part in a modified

version of "Life." Groups will receive a card with a salary written on it. Posters with different types of cars, prices, APR's, insurance costs, and annual gas costs will be displayed. Groups must work together to choose an appropriate car for their budgets, keeping in mind other life costs. Choices will be shared.

"Emotional Intelligence" and "Don't Forget the Lyrics" will be connected. Participants will listen to pieces of songs, sing out the finishing line, and then write about how the song makes them feel. This activity shows students how environmental factors like music can trigger one's emotions.

"Scene It!" will be used to show the various "Learning Styles" students must remember. Letter tiles will be given so groups can unscramble key words of a lesson and show the meaning of tactile/kinesthetic learners. Auditory learners will revel in "Soundclips," and visual learners will appreciate the "Picture Clues" portion.

All games will promote a positive and social environment of learning in which participants will feel comfortable.

Celebrating the END of First Year

Kurt Penner
Coordinator, Student Life & Development
Kwantlen Polytechnic University
604-599-2927
kurt.penner@kwantlen.ca

The purpose of this session will be to encourage participants' sharing of models, programs and strategies related to celebrating successful student completion of the first year of university. Attention will be given to the goals of encouraging student persistence and development, consolidation of learning, institutional identification, retention and engagement.

Kwantlen Polytechnic University is a four-campus, fully commuter institution with a very broad base of educational programming. 2009 will see Kwantlen's 4th Annual "Celebration of First Year Excellence," at which student success in the first year is recognized, as well as integrating recognition for significant student leadership contributions. An overall model for the evolution of this program will be briefly presented as an introduction to participant discussion.

Participants will be invited to share models and strategies from their own institutions, as well as discussing the larger issues around encouraging successful transition and retention from first year into second, as well as fostering greater student engagement. An important theme of discussion will be sharing ideas related to integrating students, faculty and student peer leadership as well.

Another important theme for discussion may be models and strategies that focus on, or include attention to the realities of the commuter student population.

Academic Coaching: An Integral Component of the First-Year Experience

Lynneth Solis-Berdugo
Assistant Director, Center for Student Academic Success
La Sierra University
951-785-2480

ssolis@lasierra.edu

Jill Rasmussen
Director, Center for Student Academic Success
La Sierra University
951-785-2452
jrasmuss@lasierra.edu

This session will chronicle the implementation of the Center for Student Academic Success (C-SAS) at La Sierra University (LSU), with special attention to the academic coaching program that serves as the cornerstone of the Center's First-Year Experience offered to incoming students. Presenters will discuss the institutional conditions and retention concerns that led to the conception of the Center, and will outline the research conducted and lessons learned that informed the development of the current academic coaching model.

In the C-SAS coaching program, every first-year student is paired with an academic advising coach, who is a full-time staff member of the Center and team-teaches, alongside a faculty member, a first-year seminar in which every student enrolls. In addition to their interaction in class, student and coach meet weekly in 30-minute advising sessions. The role of the academic coach is to serve as mentor, resource, and academic advisor during the students' first year. As students face academic challenges and other personal troubles that affect their academics, coaches are available to problem-solve with and encourage students to work toward possible solutions, utilizing campus resources. The goal is for students and coaches to form meaningful relationships that can foster and ease the transition to college, improve academic performance, and eventually lead to students' freshman to sophomore persistence. It is our belief that this coaching relationship can serve as a foundation for students' continued success and integration at the institution.

In this session, presenters will describe the academic coach selection process, responsibilities, expectations, training, and supervision. Furthermore, specific quarterly coaching goals of the model will be outlined and sample coaching materials will be shared. Evaluation results and data from the program's first year of implementation (07-08 academic year) will be presented as evidence of the program's achievements.

Getting to Know You: Partnering With the Library To Create Life-Long Learners

Pamela Dennis
Library Director
Lambuth University
731-425-3479
dennis@lambuth.edu

Bess Robinson
Reference/Instruction Librarian
The University of Memphis
(901) 678-8206
merobnsn@memphis.edu

Each year the university library must work to stay involved with and be relevant to the overall campus. Remaining an entity unto itself only results in eventual extinction. Thus, partnering with other departments has become a challenging and exciting aspect of the library's mission. One way that the library can become involved with student affairs is through freshman orientation events.

Lambuth University's library sponsors a two-hour scavenger hunt during freshman orientation each year dealing with a theme agreed upon by the library director and student affairs director. This year, the QEP motto was chosen to prepare students for the upcoming SACS visit. Each library staff member taught the students one aspect of library service, and students left with valuable information and personal encounters with staff members who will serve as mentors over the next four years. The event was highly successful and students had fun, were engaged, learned something, and became immediately involved in their university's accrediting process. While this personal approach works well on the small campus, larger universities partner in other ways.

At The University of Memphis Libraries, freshman orientation programs have swelled this year--from some 57 sections of the ACAD ("Welcome to the University") course and approximately 30 second-semester freshman English classes--to include all 110 sections of first-semester English classes. As a student could potentially attend all three orientations, our challenges included providing three unique experiences by establishing classes that built on each other while reinforcing some of the same information. Each class focuses on various facets of Information Literacy, but each does it in a completely different way.

Through this joint presentation, participants will be encouraged to share their own experiences and will learn ways that academics can partner with other departments in preparing students for life-long learning and academic excellence.

ADHD, Executive Function Disorders, and the First Year Challenge

MacLean Gander
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College
Landmark College
802-387-6709
mgander@landmark.edu

Summary: None

Implementing the Virtual Learning Community for Students

Ida Asner
LiveText Solutions Consultant
LiveText
773-297-6790
ida.asner@livetext.com

In the world today, the effective and efficient use of technology has become an indispensable skill. Those institutions and programs that embrace this technology, work to integrate it, and take full advantage of its capabilities will thrive – offering expanding opportunities to students.

In this session, attendees will learn how specialized capabilities can support the missions of their institutions, measure student learning through performance and outcome-based assessments, address program accreditation requirements, meet regional and state accreditation requirements, and provide evidence of student learning in the most efficient, effective, secure ways.

When exposed to e-portfolios in their First-Year Experience course, students gain the

communication, collaboration, and critical analysis skills needed to succeed in and beyond college. With a comprehensive, digital collection of their works on hand, students can study a tangible record of growth, thereby developing more reflective learners and productive workers. With such technology, students will begin to see the true value in a coaching, mentoring, collaborative teaching-learning process.

Institutions then can use these e-portfolios to assess and measure evidence of student learning, outcomes, and competencies. With LiveText's extensive reporting capabilities to help programs assess, collect, and analyze student progress and program effectiveness, institutions can present a demonstrable picture of evidence and progress, successfully meet accreditation requirements, and fulfill an institution's mission.

To illustrate these claims, LiveText will discuss and present samples of university portfolios that address the needs at the student, faculty, and institutional levels. Attendees will observe how the right set of tools, processes, and support will lead to continuous student learning improvement. Special guest speakers will share their first-hand experiences of using LiveText tools in First-Year Experience programs, creating a fully developed informational demonstration rooted in direct experiences and on-the-spot references.

Five Ways to Use Social Networking Web Sites to Increase First-Year Student Engagement

Reynol Junco

Associate Professor in the Department of Academic Development and Counseling

Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania

570-484-2926

rjunco@lhup.edu

Julie Alexander

Assistant Director for Assessment Administration

Policy Center on the First Year of College

828-877-6009

alexander@fyfoundations.org

Student engagement is an important facet of success in college, especially for first year and transfer students. Tinto's (1993) longitudinal model of institutional departure explains why some students withdraw from college. This model takes into account markers in a student's collegiate experience that affect persistence. Some of these markers are directly related to how students use SNS (such as involvement in extracurricular activities, peer group interactions, social integration, and faculty/staff interactions).

College students use instant messaging, blogs, and social networking websites at higher rates than individuals from any other generation (Fox and Madden, 2005; Junco and Mastrodicasa, 2007; Lenhart and Madden, 2007; Rainie and Tancer, 2007). Educators have an opportunity to "meet students where they are" online and help support their transition to college.

This session will cover the most recent research on using technology to help enhance student engagement and improve educational outcomes. Furthermore, we will explore the connection between using technology to enhance engagement and improved educational outcomes. Participants will leave the session with an understanding of SNS and how their students use them. Finally, participants will learn five tangible ways in which they can use technology to improve student engagement including:

- Having first-year program peer leaders and mentors use SNS to develop and maintain

connections with program students;

- Helping first-year students connect to each other and to faculty and staff who instruct their courses;
 - Using Facebook applications to help students connect to groups and activities on campus;
 - Creating SNS groups to help increase the engagement of commuter and non-traditional students;
 - Using SNS groups in pre-enrollment orientation efforts to connect new students with academic advisors and to help new students get to know each other before coming to campus.
- The presenters will invite audience discussion and Q&A.

Supporting Students Successful Academic and Cocurricular Transition Through an Experiential and Learning-Based Orientation Program

Lisa Grinde

Director, First Year Experience Program; Associate Professor of Psychology

Loras College

563.588.7113

lisa.grinde@loras.edu

Kim Walsh

Director, Student Life and Program Coordinator, Launch into Loras

Loras College

563.588.7417

kimberly.walsh@loras.edu

Through Launch into Loras, an intensive first-year orientation taking place the four days prior to the start of the fall semester, a teaching team consisting of a faculty member, student development professional, and peer assistant work collaboratively to launch and support new students' academic and social transition from high school to college. The program provides a common curriculum based upon Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy and sets the stage for the first year experience course, Modes of Inquiry, and the college's expectations of its students. The four-day program begins with concrete, hands-on activities and ends with more abstract reflection and discussion. These activities, which include a common reading, a service project, diversity simulations, presentation and discussion of academic honesty policies, and participation in a low-ropes course, introduce incoming students to the mission, values, life-long learning skills, and roles of curricular and co-curricular activities of the college. Because students are organized by their first year experience course, they continue building upon knowledge gained and experienced in Launch throughout the fall semester.

Assessment data confirms that the program conveyed expectations of the college community, created a climate of openness and trust, and introduced students to important campus initiatives, such as service learning and respecting diversity. Teaching team members have reported a number of benefits, including a more active learning environment, reduction in social violations, and general preparedness.

In this session, the director of Launch into Loras and the director of the Modes of Inquiry program, both of whom have been active facilitators in Launch since its inception, will discuss the theoretical approach, how each program component fits within that theoretical structure and fulfills the goals of the program, and the defined successes, challenges, and modifications based on five years of assessment data.

Extending the Family: Developing a Family Association

Darrell Ray
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life
Louisiana State University
225-578-7357
dcray5@lsu.edu

Family Associations within the higher education community have morphed in a completely different entity within the past decade. Coordinating programs and events for parents appears on the surface to be an easy task, but as more parents approach higher education with a consumer mentality, institutions must become savvy in understanding and responding to the needs of parents and families. In the fall of 2007, the LSU division of Student Life embarked on a mission to expand its outreach and service to parents. Efforts included a reorganization of the LSU Family Association, intentional changes in reporting lines, and new human resources. After only one academic year, the University has seen marked improvement as a result of the research and subsequent actions taken. Through this session participants will gain insight into the structural changes made, the strategic communications and marketing plan enacted, and the new programmatic model for engaging parents with the institution. As a result of the changes the plan for stewardship and relationship building has been rolled out. Additionally, cost effective mechanisms for providing services and programs to parents and family will be shared.

The session will be divided into the following sections: 1) philosophical and theoretical foundations for change; 2) the action plan and implementation time line; 3) overview of the strategic marketing and communications plans; 4) review of the programmatic model; and 5) the fund-raising and development plan for future efforts. The program will conclude with an open time for questions and participants will have the opportunity to share best practices from their campus

The Evolution of a First-Year Experience Office

Darrell Ray
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life
Louisiana State University
225-578-7357
dcray5@lsu.edu

Maggi Spurlcok
FYE Program Coordinator
Louisiana State University
225-578-1188
mspurl1@lsu.edu

Louisiana State University has set forth on a course to impact the retention and graduation rates of its students. The division of Student Life was seen as integral to accomplishing this new mission. In February of 2008, the decision was made to establish an administrative unit for the First Year Experience. This decision was a complete philosophical shift from previous leadership and is sure to significantly change the campus culture. From February to July, 2008 a series of meetings and research occurred to prepare for the roll out of a new administrative unit and the subsequent restructuring of the division of Student Life. Unlike any other University planning process the creation of an FYE has been extremely successful in an environment that is competitive for resources. Through this roundtable participants will be provided with an overview of the planning model, research conducted, and the communications plan for

implementation.

The most important aspect of this roundtable will be the opportunity to share best practices from their campuses, program ideas, and how to manage campus politics involving FYE. This includes how participants have promoted institutional buy-in for initiatives and how challenges were overcome. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss key elements of the first year experience from their campus. Participants will discuss signature program ideas and their campus implementation plan for efforts.

Partnering With Parents for Retention

Jennifer Belichesky-Larson
Director of First Year Experience
Loyola Marymount University
310-338-5252
jbelichesky@lmu.edu

Mary Plumb
Parent Program Coordinator
Loyola Marymount University
310-338-1798
mplumb2@lmu.edu

Three years ago the Office of First Year Experience at Loyola Marymount University, in an attempt to meet the University retention goal of 95% for our first year students, implemented an Early Alert Referral System (EARS) for “at-risk” students who were having trouble transitioning into their new environment and were at risk of leaving the university. What became apparent in our first year of EARS was that parents were a valuable asset that we had not been utilizing, and in not utilizing them we found that they were inadvertently working against our retention efforts. Prior to EARS, the university had a closed door policy regarding parent communication which resulted in parents feeling uninformed about university services or procedures available to help support their student. There was a lack of information and parents felt shut out of the process. The millennial parents were no longer willing to accept this closed door policy.

In refining the Early Alert Referral System (EARS), we created a programmatic approach to opening the lines of communication with parents to quell their growing anxieties, and allow for more open communication. We began with the implementation of an orientation for parents, developing an on-line community, and encouraging parents to become a part of the process. In implementing these changes, parents have become an invaluable resource for EARS. We have found that parents have become our first line of defense in identifying students at-risk. They are no longer working against us, and have become one of our best tools for development of a retention strategy for their student.

The key to the success of this initiative is creating the right balance of education and communication with parents that empowers their students to help them through the transitions of the first year to find success at LMU.

Where's the Beef? Substantive Course Content for the First-Year Seminar

Joe Cuseo
Professor, Psychology; Director, First-Year Seminar

Marymount College
562-431-8051
jcuseo@earthlink.net

This session will provide a research-based rationale and blueprint for the identification, prioritization, and sequencing of essential course content for the first-year experience (college transition) course. Key target topics and subtopics will be outlined, including liberal arts and general education, educational planning and major selection, learning and critical/creative thinking, time and money management, diversity, career exploration and development, and wellness. Each topic will be discussed in terms of its empirical relationship with student retention and academic achievement. A case will be made that a comprehensive, holistic (whole-person) approach to the content of the first-year seminar is likely to exert a more systemic and synergistic effect on student success, while simultaneously providing new students with a challenging, academically substantive learning experience.

The First-Year Seminar: So Much to Cover, So Little Time

Joe Cuseo
Professor, Psychology; Director, First-Year Seminar
Marymount College
562-431-8051
jcuseo@earthlink.net

Summary: None

The Mentors' Experience

Tracey Florence
Assistant Dean for Student Development
Marymount University
703-284-1613
tflorenc@marymount.edu

Steven Krzanowski
Peer Mentor Supervisor
Marymount University
724-366-6490
steven_krzanowski@marymount.edu

Four years ago, Marymount University started a Peer Mentoring program to help the transition and success of first-year students. The program was structured to work closely with MU's FYE courses, pairing upperclass students with instructors teaching one-credit orientation seminars. In 2007, as an outgrowth of reaccreditation, Marymount decided to develop a new focus on inquiry-based education, and as part of this program, decided to transition our one-credit FYE course to three-credit content-specific introductions to inquiry-based learning. This year, Marymount is piloting four of these sections concurrently with 14 sections of our traditional seminar. By 2010, all first-year students will take our three-credit courses.

This decision grew out of the knowledge that we have about the positive impact of the one-credit course on our first-year students. We continue to review that impact and have added additional assessment comparing our one- and three-credit courses. Through all of this evaluation, however, we have not assessed our mentors' experience. We are now turning to the

mentor experience to learn more about how their position impacts their learning and growth.

For the 2008-2009 school year, we are surveying our current and past peer mentors to assess the program's impact on the mentors. We are examining academic achievement; connectedness to first-year students and the university; research participation; leadership skills; and conflict and time management; and group facilitation skills. Based on previous, less structured research, we are projecting positive outcomes that support the impact of peer mentoring.

The presentation will:

- Explain how Marymount's FYE courses are evolving.
- Explain the importance of peer mentoring from a personal and institutional perspective utilizing research.
- Assess the impact peer mentoring has on the mentors themselves.
- Share Marymount's plans for the future regarding mentor and FYE assessments.

Balancing the Scale: Maintaining Wellness and Job Satisfaction as a First-Year Professional

Karen Violanti
Assistant Dean for First Year Students
McDaniel College
410-857-2750
kviolanti@mcdaniel.edu

Robyn Reafler
FYE Instructor/Coach
Rochester Institute of Technology
585-475-7033
rmrlde@rit.edu

This session will specifically give participants an opportunity to discuss their experiences as higher educators in the first-year field of transition around "wellness" and job satisfaction. The roundtable session and discussion will begin with an overview of research in the field of occupational stress and job satisfaction and research findings of the presenters in this subject area. The session will continue with opportunities for participants to share professional experiences and challenges associated with specific work in the first-year professional field. The session will continue with discussion on how higher educators can effectively stay "well" to most effectively serve this important field and student population. The session will conclude with a question and answer period with the presenters as well as between participants.

Sharing the Responsibility: A University Wide Effort to Improve the First-Year Experience for Students at McNeese State University

Donna Self
Director, Freshman Foundations and Students in Transition
McNeese State University
337.562.4207
dself@mcneese.edu

Harold Stevenson
Administrator, Quality Enhancement and Professor of Environmental Science
McNeese State University

337.475.5663
hstevenson@mcneese.edu

The focus of our discussion will be on the planning, organizing, implementation, and assessment of a university-wide initiative to improve the first-year experience for first-year students.

A freshman foundations committee, consisting of faculty from each of the six academic colleges, general and basic studies, and the Quality Enhancement Plan administrator, was charged with developing a course to introduce the writing component of the Quality Enhancement Plan and to enhance the existing campus orientation program.

In January a director was hired to oversee the Freshman Foundations implementation. Pilot sections of FFND 101 were offered in spring 2008 and were taught by FFND committee members.

Pre- and post-surveys were given to all FFND 101 students to assess changes in attitudes and knowledge of course content. A focus group of FFND faculty, students, and peer mentors was interviewed to assess strengths and recommend changes. As a result, changes were implemented in the student learning outcomes and course content.

Prior to full implementation of FFND 101 in fall 2008, the committee agreed on the number of sections needed for each college and recruited instructors. Weekly updates on enrollment were sent to all deans and department heads to facilitate the management of enrollment. The director recruited upperclassmen to serve as peer mentors. Training was provided for both faculty and peer mentors.

Assessments of student learning outcomes during the fall term include the continuation of the pre- and post-surveys. Students' writing proficiency will be assessed through an electronic portfolio system. Faculty input will be maintained through weekly Class Climate surveys. Peer mentors will provide written assessments weekly and will be interviewed at an end-of-semester meeting. The final assessment phase will be facilitated through a focus group consisting of students from one section in each academic college and general and basic studies.

College Connections: Transformative Learning for At-Risk First-Year Students

SusAnn Key
Coordinator of Supplemental Instruction, Instructor, and Academic Advisor
Midwestern State University
940-397-4842 or 940-397-4684
susann.key@mwsu.edu

Pamela Moss
Coordinator of Academic Referrals, Instructor, and Academic Advisor
Midwestern State University
940-397-6231
pam.moss@mwsu.edu

Naoma Clark
Director, Academic Support Center
Midwestern State University
940-497-4544

naoma.clark@mwsu.edu

Students admitted conditionally to Midwestern State University are required their first semester to enroll in a 3-hour credit course, College Connections. Academic Support Center Faculty Advisors teach the course and provide leadership training and development for peer leaders assigned to each class section.

An intentional process utilized in the course creates an environment for students to gain self-knowledge, participate in teambuilding, and refine study skills. The course goals are to provide transformative learning experiences and transition students toward persistence and graduation.

The conceptual framework is based in student development theory focusing on students' needs and expectations integrated with fundamentals of information processing, critical thinking skills, and learning strategies. Creative and experiential applications enable students to practice academically successful behaviors and actively engage with the academic environment.

The presentation will offer a model for collaborative and dynamic teaching that facilitates the transformative process and will identify the essential elements of the curriculum. Presenters will discuss course components including incorporation of an array of campus student resources, class T-Shirts, common reading project, combined sections collaborative exercises, guest lecturers, library research team projects, and career research presentations.

The format of the session will be interactive lecture and experiential exercises augmented with handouts and a PowerPoint presentation. Quantitative and qualitative data collected over the course of two semesters following students' completion of the targeted course will be presented to illustrate the successful effects of the College Connections course on student persistence and success.

Session participants will have the opportunity to experience a practical and effective approach that maximizes flexibility within a structured learning environment and how to incorporate the essential elements of a curriculum designed to promote positive change. Sample syllabi, worksheets, and instructions for engaging students in assignments and experiential exercises will be provided.

A Dynamic Exploratory Program--23 Years and Thriving

Michelle White
Director of Academic Advisement
Millersville University
717-872-3254
michelle.white@millersville.edu

Ralph Anttonen
Director of the Exploratory Program
Millersville University
717-872-3257
ralph.anttonen@millersville.edu

The Exploratory Program has been in existence since 1986. Beginning with 137 students and 10 volunteer advisers, the program has grown to 900+ students and 125 volunteer advisers. This program has won the NACADA Certificate of Merit for Outstanding Institutional Advising Program. This poster session will highlight the key elements involved in the Exploratory

Program. These elements include a web page, videos on majors and minors, an Improve My Performance Program designed to help students raise low grade point average (GPA), role of volunteer advisers, and the training of these advisers. Statistics on the retention rates, average GPA and credits earned, and majors selected will be presented for all graduates, students still at the institution and students who have left the institution. Content of the summer training program for all advisers, the process and work with low GPA students, the recruitment of volunteer advisers, and the initiative of establishing a Campus Wide Advisory Committee will be available for interested conference participants and especially for those attendees who plan to establish or enhance a similar program at their institution. Finally, the first year inquiry seminar for Exploratory students and its compliment, a resident hall living-learning experience, will be featured. All participants are encouraged to ask questions and concerns of the poster session leaders, as the main goal is the sharing and exchange of information on the development and success of Exploratory programs.

Poster Learning Outcomes:

1. Discover a successful program and strategies for working with Exploratory students
2. Explore strategies about building a comprehensive and continuing volunteer adviser recruitment and training program
3. Discuss techniques, strategies and outcomes for adviser intervention—Improve My Performance Program for low GPA students

First-Year Seminars Revitalize Senior Faculty

Ralph Anttonen
Director of the Exploratory Program
Millersville University
717-872-3483
Ralph.Anttonen@millersville.edu

Michelle White
Director of Academic Advisement
Millersville University
717-872-3254
michelle.white@millersville.edu

To negate the old adage, “you cannot teach an old dog new tricks”, Millersville University is providing the opportunity for senior faculty to learn new “academic” tricks. Beginning in 2005, Millersville has offered a three credit First-Year Inquiry seminar for its undecided students. Currently, this seminar is part of the general education curriculum and is taught by “senior faculty” who serve as advisors to the students in their class. This seminar allows the faculty members to teach a new topic or academic “passion”. This session will show a video of a “senior” faculty member discussing why they became involved in this endeavor and the many benefits for both themselves and their students.

More specifically, this session will examine how senior faculty have been revitalized and exhibit many of the traits of First Year Advocate Award Recipients. Traits such as “risk taking”, “passion” and a “sense of humor” will be highlighted. The process of the formal approval for these seminars will be described so that academic rigor is maintained. The session will also discuss why senior faculty, even those who were at one time naysayers, have become involved in teaching first-year credit seminars. The benefits of the faculty member, being both

teacher and advisor, seeing their advisees two or three times a week will be discussed as part of this presentation.

This session will conclude with a question and answer period that will allow the audience to ask questions about recruiting senior faculty and ways the administration can help in making it feasible for faculty release time and the benefits that are realized for the individual and the institution.

A First-Year Seminar That Counts: Incorporating Seminars Into the General Education Curriculum

Lynn Marquez
Associate Professor of Geology
Millersville University
717-872-3288
Lynn.Marquez@millersville.edu

Linda McDowell
Professor
Millersville University
717-872-2388
Linda.McDowell@millersville.edu

Fred Foster-Clark
Associate Professor
Millersville University
717-872-3933
Frederick.Foster-Clark@millersville.edu

Many universities, including Millersville University of Pennsylvania, have created first-year seminars to fulfill various curricular needs. Seminars typically follow three formats: one-credit extended-orientation seminars, three-credit content-rich seminars that include transition elements, and one to three-credit seminars housed within academic departments. An important component of seminars at all institutions is that they help students progress toward graduation: both by helping students transition to the collegiate environment and earning credits that count toward graduation. One way to accomplish this is to incorporate First-Year Seminars into the General Education curriculum. Of course, this may lead to difficulties in that seminars must maintain the continuity of FYE programming while fulfilling the purpose of General Education. Another way to incorporate seminars into the institutional structure is have academic departments embrace the first-year mission and create their own first-year seminars. This often faces more significant hurdles. Roadblocks may include incorporation of transition issues as expected by FYE, maintaining a welcoming small class size, and making room within the major curriculum. This roundtable proposal is designed to bring together faculty and administrators to discuss issues of institutionalization of the FYE curriculum while maintaining quality instruction. Participants will share experiences from their home institutions and brainstorm various ways to overcome challenges to create seminar experiences that count.

CHOICES: A Unique Approach to Alcohol Education

Daniel O'Neill
Associate Professor, Department of Counseling and Human Development
Millersville University

717-872-3122
doneill@millersville.edu

Linda McDowell
Professor
Millersville University
717-871-2388
linda.mcdowell@millersville.edu

Student alcohol abuse is a national collegiate concern. Its negative consequences threaten to derail a student's education. In 1999, Millersville University appointed a task force to study the impact of student alcohol abuse. These faculty, students, staff and community members were charged to recommend ways to reduce alcohol consumption across campus. Task force recommendations were the catalyst for the creation of intentional programming to foster student engagement, including freshman seminars and living/learning communities and efforts focused on assisting new students in establishing themselves both academically and socially. Students who were more engaged and connected, it was thought, were less likely to drink alcohol in dangerous ways. Other recommendations led to the appointment of an Alcohol Counselor and the development of Student Affairs prevention/intervention programs.

The University's Judicial Office began offering CHOICES workshops to students who violated the university alcohol policy. Student feedback from participation in the program was enthusiastic. As a result, Student Affairs urged that the program be included in the fall Freshman Orientation for all incoming students.

This presentation provides participants with program details, lessons learned, and assessment data about CHOICES, a facilitated discussion group program about alcohol and college life. CHOICES educates students about alcohol and its effects, encourages personal reflection on college drinking, and provides strategies to assist students in reducing the risk of alcohol's negative consequences. Traditionally the purview of alcohol educators, Millersville's unique approach was to invite faculty and staff from across the university to facilitate CHOICES groups. In the first year, George Parks provided training for 30 facilitators; subsequent trainings have been conducted in-house. During New Student Orientation, CHOICES was offered to all incoming first-year students. Pre- and post-test assessments measuring changes in factual knowledge and attitude are evaluated to determine program impact. Student evaluation and faculty/staff facilitator feedback is also collected.

Advocating for Students, a Glimpse Into the Process

Ralph Anttonen
Director of the Exploratory Program
Millersville University
717-872-3483
Ralph.Anttonen@millersville.edu

Sally Roden
Associate Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies
University of Central Arkansas
(501)450-5074
sallyr@uca.edu

Tim L. Walter
Dean of Academic & Student Services

Oakland Community College
(248)522-3812
Tlwalter@Oaklandcc.edu

Summary: None

Beyond the Book: Developing Academic Programming and Assessing the Common Reading

Laurie Hanich
Associate Professor of Educational Foundations
Millersville University
(717) 871-2231
laurie.hanich@millersville.edu

Linda McDowell
Coordinator of First-Year Experience Program
Millersville University
(717) 871-2388
linda.mcdowell@millersville.edu

Thomas Burns
Associate Provost for Academic Administration
Millersville University
(717) 872-3703
thomas.burns@millersville.edu

The intent of this roundtable is to promote and open discussion around the theme of common reading programs. Because our program is relatively new, we are eager to hear from other participants about their program development. Our intent is to focus the roundtable discussion on two key area of common reading programs: academic programming and assessment. To facilitate discussion among participants, we are prepared to share what we've done at our institution. Below we provide a short summary of these efforts.

In 2007, Millersville University designed and implemented a Common Reading Program. A committee of faculty selected *The Color of Water* by James McBride as the inaugural common reading. In 2008, the committee selected *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah as the common reading.

During the first year of the common reading program, book discussions took place during fall orientation with all entering first-year students. Mr. McBride visited campus in the fall semester for a lecture and a jazz concert. While very successful, there was unanimous agreement that additional academic programming would complement and enhance the Common Reading Program. In preparing for the second year of our program the committee focused their efforts in this area. In addition to book discussions during orientation and the author's lecture on campus, campus events tied to the Common Reading program in Fall 2008 include a film series on children at war, a panel discussion, including a speaker from the UN, a student writing contest based on the Common Reading text, and Trick or Treat for UNICEF, creating a service-learning component to the program.

To evaluate our Common Reading Program, each year we collected assessment data from students, peer assistants, and faculty/staff facilitators. The measure consisted of several short open ended prompts that focused on students' behaviors (e.g., how much of the book did you

read?), perceptions (e.g., what did you like about the book?), and past experiences (e.g., how did the book compare to other books that you have read)?. We also asked facilitators to evaluate a range of behaviors that students demonstrated during the book discussion.

Our roundtable will encourage participants to share ideas, resources, and experiences with other educators in open, collegial discussion.

A Qualitative Assessment of First-Year Students' Understanding of Liberal Arts Education and Civic Responsibility

Laurie Hanich
Associate Professor of Educational Foundations
Millersville University
(717) 871-2231
laurie.hanich@millersville.edu

Linda McDowell
Coordinator of First-Year Experience
Millersville University
(717) 871-2388
linda.mcdowell@millersville.edu

Frederick Foster-Clark
Coordinator of General Education
Millersville University
(717) 872-3933
frederick.foster-clark@millersville.edu

After three years of pilot-testing a new model for three-credit, content-based first-year seminars, Millersville University has adopted the First Year Inquiry (FYI) seminar into its revised General Education program for fall 2008. In an ongoing effort to implement this initiative, various assessment strategies have been considered, with a goal of measuring all General Education learning objectives. A survey of literature failed to yield satisfactory assessment tools for measuring students' understanding of liberal arts education and civic responsibility; both significant general education learning objectives.

To address these objectives, we developed a course-embedded assessment strategy using open-ended prompts asking students to share their conceptions of a liberal arts education or civic responsibility. Content analysis of students' responses were used to develop and refine coding rubrics designed to assess the students' apparent understanding of the construct (i.e., liberal arts education or civic responsibility) as well as the level of elaboration of their responses.

Results over a two-year pilot-test period have been quite instructive. Initial results indicate that students begin their University experience with a more refined understanding of civic responsibility compared with a more limited understanding of the liberal arts. Pretest – posttest comparisons within each construct show significant changes over the course of the students' first semester in both understanding and elaboration.

In this poster session, we will share our assessment rubric, discuss the refinements we have made in the instruments, provide an overview of the assessment procedures/coding process, and share comparative results. Lessons learned through the assessment results are being integrated into planning for the first year of full program implementation as a general education requirement. Progress in that area will be summarized. Implications for curriculum and

pedagogy will also be explored through discussions with visitors to our poster session.

The Day One Leadership Learning Community: Living, Learning, Leading...Together

M. Cade Smith
Global Leadership Continuum, Assistant Dean of Students
Mississippi State University
662.325.0244
cade@saffairs.msstate.edu

Allison Pearson
Professor, Management and Information Systems; Director, Day One
Mississippi State University
662.325.7015
allison.pearson@msstate.edu

Melissa Moore
Associate Professor, Marketing; Assistant Director, Day One
Mississippi State University
662.325.8556
mmoore@cobilan.msstate.edu

April Heiselt
Assistant Professor, Counseling and Educational Psychology; Service-Learning Coordinator,
Day One
Mississippi State University
662.325.7919
ah384@msstate.edu

This presentation focuses on the conceptualization, planning, implementation, 2nd-year revisions, and student outcomes of the Day One Leadership Learning Community at Mississippi State University. Day One was initiated in 2007 with an enrollment of 220 students who were diverse in ethnicity, academic major, gender, and socioeconomic status (SES). Enrollment grew to 290 in 2008, with low-SES and minority students comprising about half of the population. All students are housed in a moderately priced residence hall and enroll in a two-credit hour leadership class that consists of leadership content lectures, a semester-long service-learning experience, and mentoring from faculty/staff and peer educators. Content is delivered by faculty in a large auditorium on Wednesday of each week. On the subsequent Fridays and Mondays, service-learning project development is facilitated at the “action team” level. An action team consists of 6 or 7 students, one mentor, and one peer educator who serve a community partner for a semester. Mentors, peer educators, team dynamics, and weekly reflections allow students to integrate and apply leadership content into action plans that meet the defined objectives of the community partners. Daily learning objectives, service-learning progress benchmarks, weekly reflection questions, and facilitated learning activities are included in the Day One Guidebook. Service-learning outcomes and student development stories are celebrated in the Day One Showcase, where action teams present their projects in an interactive poster session. Parents of each student, University members, community partners, and the broader community are invited to the Showcase. Multivariate and probit regression analysis suggest that Day One students are more likely to remain enrolled and maintain a GPA at or above 2.0 during the fall and spring semesters of their freshman year than are students not enrolled in Day One. The positive effects of Day One are most pronounced in minority and low-SES subpopulations.

250 "Random Acts of Kindness Toward College Students" That Build Fun, Family, and Favorable Outcomes Inside and Outside the Classroom

Tom Carskadon

Professor of Psychology and Director of First-Year Experience Programs

Mississippi State University

(662) 325-7655

tomcar@ra.msstate.edu

Alexander Astin's extensive research showed significant positive correlations between faculty-student interaction and student satisfaction. Students at small colleges tended to be more satisfied with their overall experiences than students at large universities were; but the difference in satisfaction disappeared when the variable of faculty-student interaction was controlled. These data suggest that if we could come up with ways of ensuring a similar quality of faculty-student interaction, then those of us at large universities could achieve levels of student satisfaction similar to those at much smaller (and more expensive) institutions.

Mississippi State University is a comprehensive research university, yet we also have a longstanding tradition of being a friendly university with a personal touch. Thus, efforts to increase faculty-student interaction and personalize its nature were a natural extension of our mission and goals. Many specific techniques can create good, personal, "family" feeling. Such an atmosphere is not merely pleasant; it also helps students respond positively to heavier-than-normal workloads and learn significantly more.

The best methods we have found are basically simple, and not terribly new; more than once, we have had that "Ozzie and Harriet" feeling. Yet student (and even parent) response has been so positive that it is almost bewildering. Clearly, many students have some otherwise unmet needs or desires for relatively personal faculty-student interactions, and surprisingly intense appreciation of kindnesses large and small. The good news is that such interactions and "random acts of kindness" are neither difficult nor expensive to provide, and they are also highly satisfying for the faculty and staff involved.

In this session we share a list of "250 Random Acts of Kindness Toward Students" gleaned from our own experience and from the suggestions of colleagues and students. Conference participants are invited to make their own contributions to this list.

Anywhere, Anytime: Things That Work in First-Year Seminars and Beyond, Under Many Different Models

Tom Carskadon

Professor of Psychology and Director of First-Year Experience Programs

Mississippi State University

(662) 325-7655

tomcar@ra.msstate.edu

After 22 years and 12 different models of FYE courses and programs at Mississippi State University, we have identified key course elements and teaching techniques that lead to successful first-year seminars: "things that work" in University 101-style courses, academic core curriculum courses serving as first-year seminars, FYE learning communities, etc. Clearly, the "magic" of a successful FYE course is in the method of teaching, rather than in the course content per se. Even College Algebra can be turned into an FYE course to write home about! A single course can serve multiple purposes, depending on institutional goals, priorities, and

resources, delivering maximum “bang for the buck.”

This presentation includes many specific ideas and extensive handouts, summaries, and sample course materials. We speak to: selecting and training faculty; optimal and feasible class size and lecture/discussion mix; “sure fire” readings and assignments that work well in many different courses; testing methods; aids to good writing; assignments for writing journals, which we consider to be a singularly powerful tool; a some sex education tips; innovative approaches to teaching cultural literacy and cultural diversity; and inexpensive systems of faculty-parent contact that generate enormous institutional goodwill.

Many FYE teaching techniques can be extended into upper-level courses, too. Quite often, what is good for first-year students is good for upperclass students, as well.

Creating a Successful Student Engagement Culture on a Commuter Campus

Steady Moono
Vice President of Student Affairs
Montgomery County Community College
215-641-6547
smoono@mc3.edu

Leonard Bass
Associate Dean of Student Affairs and First Year Initiatives
Montgomery County Community College
610-454-1840
lbass@mc3.edu

This session will provide insights into leadership strategies used by the College in orchestrating systems change towards the goal of expanding Community College access and enhancing student engagement and success. Presenters will highlight the theoretical and practical framework behind having an organizational vision as a mobilizing catalyst for change; data guided decision-making and strategic planning in engendering focus and involvement from administration and faculty. Montgomery County Community College is a two-year college with two campuses, located at Blue Bell and in Pottstown Pennsylvania. It has an unduplicated headcount of over 12,000 students and like many community colleges has experienced unprecedented enrollment growth over the past five years, reflective of over 17%. This enrollment spurt has outpaced the college’s existing organizational infrastructure with respect to its adaptability of its existing processes and systems in effectively transitioning, and retaining students. Given the increasingly diverse demographic profile of the community college student, one of the early and subsequently chronic challenges faced by the College was addressing the very complex issue of facilitating system/organizational change to better meet the needs of students. To address this concern the college proactively sought to become involved in three nationally competitive efforts that focus on strategically expanding access and enhancing student success, including Achieving the Dream, Foundations of Excellence, and Title III. The presenters will provide a brief overview of each initiative sharing supporting data to discuss how, both individually and collectively, they work in concert to form the College-wide Student Success Initiative, and are enabling the college to create a culture focused on student engagement and success.

Participants will be able to see the step by step framework used by Montgomery County Community College in undergoing its process of re-organization and process re-structuring. Additionally, participants will learn more about the; a. Framework for developing the vision, goals and objectives of the Student Success Initiative, b. The critical role of utilizing a strategic

planning framework in orchestrating change, and c. Become more knowledgeable about the critical role of data driven decision making.

Presentation Schedule:

Dean of Student Success, Steady H. Moono, (10 Min) - Overview of MCCC's Strategic Plan to 2010, Great Expectations: Keeping the Promise of Student Access and Success, the College's commitment to increasing the ability of all students to reach their learning goals is the focus of the first strategic issue, Expand Access and Increase Student Success.

Associate Dean of Student Affairs & First Year Initiatives-Leonard C. Bass, (15 Min) - Presentation and overview of key initiatives and lessons learned.

Dean of Student Success-Steady H. Moono, (20 Min) – Lead discussion on how national projects are enabling the institution to create culture focused on expanding access and student success issues.

Question and Answer (15 Min)

Fostering Critical Thinking through Discussion and Journals

Leslie Werden

Director of First Year Studies & Assistant Professor of English

Morningside College

712-274-5226

werden@morningside.edu

Susie Lubbers

Assistant Professor of Education

Morningside College

712-274-5249

lubbers@morningside.edu

Rebecca Anderson

Student

Morningside College

rma002@morningside.edu

Nancy Perrin

Student

Morningside College

njp003@morningside.edu

This roundtable discussion will focus on fostering critical thinking through discussions and journal writing. Led by a diverse group of faculty and students from Morningside College, the session will provide opportunities for conference participants to share methods of engaging students in analytical conversations of a common reading and explore options for creating writing prompts to further delve into the readings and discussion. Two sophomore students will help model interaction between instructor and student and participate in the discussion to help participants understand how students respond to and engage in the process. All participants will have the opportunity to delve into critical thinking aspects that enhance discussion in their classrooms.

Program Evaluation of a First-Year Enrollment Counseling Program at a Small Independent College

Philip Conroy
Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing
Mount Ida College
617-928-4071
paconroyjr@mountida.edu

Michael Bosco
Manager of Enrollment Management Operations
Mount Ida College
617-928-4537
mbosco@mountida.edu

Jay Titus
Dean of Admissions
Mount Ida College
617-928-4724
jtitus@mountida.edu

David Goldman
Director of Financial Aid
Mount Ida College
617-928-4099
dgoldman@mountida.edu

The FYECP was designed to aid first year students and their parents with challenges and problems that may precipitate a student's dropping out after the first year in college. The FYECP included a series of communications with family members to resolve student and family issues through information, activities, and counseling to improve the recruitment of students who could succeed at an independent baccalaureate college. The FYECP's goal was to enroll students in the college who would be retained beyond the first year, hopefully to graduation. The desired strategic outcome was to increase enrollment and the financial stability of the institution.

Tinto (1993) suggested institutions have to consider a wide range of both general programs and highly differentiated ones specifically tailored to the needs of different types of students in order to increase retention. The FYECP had Tinto's concept of general and student specific programming at its core. The goal of the FYECP is to integrate the admissions measures and the financial aid measures and attempt to counsel each student and family uniquely. The admissions counselor supported by a corresponding financial aid counselor for each student, worked with the student and the parents to develop an enrollment plan that looks beyond the first year with the stated goal of seeing the student walk across the stage at graduation.

The creation of individual student enrollment plans requires collaboration between the admissions and financial aid counselors. The counselors must have a more in depth knowledge and understanding of each student and family's needs. The result of the counseling includes the admissions decision and the formulation of a four-year financial plan. In addition, there is a discussion with the student and parents for performance expectations for the first year of college.

The session will review the process and results of a formative participatory evaluation of the first year enrollment counseling program. Patton's Utilization-Focused Evaluation Checklist was used to guide the evaluation. Enrollment counseling staff volunteered to serve on the evaluation committee. Archival data collected over the five years of program operation was

analyzed and a user defined set of recommendations was developed.

Teaching Tools with Zing!

Nancy Hunter Denney
Professional Speaker
Nancy Hunter Denney
508-864-4027
nhdenney@aol.com

If you want to engage students, you need to go behind the traditional syllabus and get creative. Your learning outcomes need to be clearly articulated and the force behind all of your time and efforts. This session will begin with a discussion and presentation of desired learning outcomes for any classroom setting with first year students.

The next part of the program takes a look at what's been working according to the participants, and where we have failed. Inspiration to raise the bar will be offered through examples of engaging curriculum, supportive exercises and homemade assessment tools.

The presenter will review a format for putting together a curriculum by covering the five most important considerations followed by examples of how to operationalize the desire to the delivery! A host of different engaging techniques pulled out of a text or series of readings will be presented, along with dialogue on how to measure for comprehension. Participants will leave with an extensive handout, having learned not only why "doing it yourself" may be a wonderful alternative to following a "script."

Personal Factors of Deaf Students That Influence Their First-Year Experience

Ronald R. Kelly
Professor of Research and Teacher Education
National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology
585-475-6802
ronald.kelly@rit.edu

John A. Albertini
Professor and Department Chair for Research and Teacher Education
National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology
585-475-6276
jaancr@rit.edu

Mary Karol Matchett
Career Development Counselor and Chair of the NTID Retention Committee
National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology
585-475-7651 TTY
mkmnca@rit.edu

Persistence and success of deaf and hard-of-hearing (D/HH) students is a concern for today's college educators. At the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, a college of Rochester Institute of Technology, the retention to graduation rate for D/HH students in two-year programs is 49% compared to 31% nationally; and for D/HH students in four-year programs, it is 70% compared to 40% nationally at four-year programs (NTID Annual Report, 2006). While these graduation rates for D/HH students are comparatively positive, it is desirable and

necessary to improve them given the length of time these students need to complete their degrees (5 years on average for an associate degree and 5-6 years on average for a baccalaureate degree), and because of the cost of extensive support services.

Prior research (e.g., Cuculick & Kelly, 2003) indicates that academic factors alone do not predict deaf students' graduation rates. To better understand reasons for deaf students' persistence and success in their first-year experience, two nonverbal visual reasoning assessments and two personal inventories were administered to entering students. The inventories assessed such personal factors as intellectual interests, academic motivation, dropout proneness, general coping skills, anxiety, attitudes, confidence, study habits, time management, and sociability. This battery of assessments has been administered to two cohorts of entering deaf students at NTID/RIT (n = 132 in 2007; n = 170 in 2008).

To date, the results of this longitudinal study indicate that personal factors and nonverbal visual reasoning relate to deaf college students' progress and success in their first-year experience. It is anticipated that a number of these personal factors and nonverbal visual reasoning abilities may potentially be influenced through appropriately designed and evaluated intervention strategies.

Developing an Online Community Site to Infuse Diversity Into a First-Year Enrichment Program: Successes and Challenges

Ila Parasnis

Professor, Department of Research and Teacher Education

National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology

585-475-6708

impncr@rit.edu

Latty Goodwin

Director of First-Year Enrichment

Rochester Institute of Technology

585-475-7033

latty.goodwin@rit.edu

Robyn Reafler

FYE Instructor/Coach

Rochester Institute of Technology

585-475-7033

rmrlde@rit.edu

The curriculum of the First-Year Enrichment (FYE) program at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) lacked a systematic plan to engage instructors and students in an examination of issues related to diversity, even though one of the stated goals for the FYE program has been “to foster a community that appreciates the viewpoints of diverse personal experiences and prepares students to succeed professionally in an increasingly global society.” We undertook this project to infuse diversity into our FYE program by creating a framework that would engage the 40 instructors and over 2000 students in a meaningful dialogue regarding issues related to race/ethnicity, gender, and hearing status differences. First, we solicited active participation from the instructors at all stages of the project planning, which increased the instructors' awareness of diversity issues and their commitment to discuss them in their FYE course sections. We provided a panel discussion by experienced experts in deafness, women's studies, and sociology that addressed “hot topics” and some strategies to approach difficult dialogues related to diversity. Second, we designed an online community site where students

across all colleges of RIT who were enrolled in winter quarter FYE course sections had access to video clips excerpted from published DVDs or from You Tube videos related to race/ethnicity, gender, and hearing status differences. We also posted a few questions to initiate discussion. Students participated in a voluntary online discussion related to the clips. Every week a different team of instructors monitored the online discussion. The instructor feedback regarding the community site was collected mid-quarter and at the end of the quarter. Feedback from the students regarding the community site was obtained as a part of their overall FYE course evaluation. We will discuss the feedback and our perspective on the successes and challenges of this project.

First-Year Students as Professionals: Teaching Career and Professional Skills for a Lifetime of Success

Dawn Sherman
Assistant Dean for Special Academic Programs
Nichols College
508-213-2263
dawn.sherman@nichols.edu

Students become professionals as soon as they begin their collegiate career. As professional students, they prepare for their future by learning how to interact with others, how to act professionally, to be ethical and honest in their work, to be critical thinkers and writers, and to be able to positively represent their school or employer. These skills can develop through maturation but a more intentional process of developing these skills in students gives them the advantage with the interview process upon graduation, and beyond.

According to USA Today, 57% of employers said “half or fewer of today’s college graduates have the full set of skills and knowledge necessary to advance in today’s workplace” (Marklein, January 11, 2008). Employers want students with more applicable skills. NACE, the National Association of Colleges and Employers, reports the most important skill on the list of the Top Ten Personal Qualities Employers Seek is communication skills (NACE, 2008). Professional presentation and communication skills, ranging from expert resumes to appropriate body language, can be intentionally and successfully taught to better meet the needs of employers.

The Professional Development Seminar (PDS) Program at Nichols College focuses on developing a multitude of professional skills. This developmental process begins in the First-Year PDS course and includes how to address professors, write professional emails, dress for success, make professional presentations, and demonstrate ethical behavior in the workplace. The students develop oral skills, written skills, and behaviors becoming a professional. Additionally, students are introduced to career concepts and career decision making. The goal of the program is to develop professional skills, leading to successful careers.

This session will cover the skills employers seek and how the First-Year PDS Program effectively teaches many of these skills. The First-Year PDS course goals and objectives will be discussed, along with course content and classroom activities. A brief discussion of the Sophomore through Senior courses in the PDS Program will be included, to demonstrate the value of addressing professionalism in various forms over 4 years in a planned and systematic process. The various institutional evaluation processes used to assess this program will be included.

FYE Career Project: Myth Busters

Shelly Stone
FYE Instructor
North Arkansas College
870-391-3301
sstone@northark.edu

Wilma Finney
FYE Instructor
North Arkansas College
870-391-3346
wfinney@northark.edu

Carri Butcher
FYE Instructor
North Arkansas College
870-391-3283
cbutcher@northark.edu

The Career Project, which is the capstone assignment of the First Year Experience course at North Arkansas College, was implemented to facilitate students' investigation of various job opportunities that will be available to them upon graduation. In the Career Project students are asked to address the following:

- definition of the career and characteristics of those employed in the field
- education requirements
- working hours
- current salary and future opportunities
- public speaking requirements
- writing, reading, and math requirements
- balance between personal life and career based on learning styles
- strategies to address stress management
- continuing education requirements, exams, certifications, etc.

The Career Project culminates with an oral/visual presentation. This comprehensive assignment addresses many of our Learning Outcomes: students demonstrate successful adjustment to college by utilizing various campus resources; students exhibit skills for academic success as evidenced by time management, interviewing techniques, and using technology; students establish a comprehensive career plan; and students develop a greater self-awareness related to a variety of life skills, i.e. professionalism, relationship building, and managing stress.

We envision our presentation set up with samples of students' assignments, including both written and visual components (posters). We will provide handouts describing our project, its grading criteria, and assessment results in detail. We will also provide our course syllabus with our Learning Outcomes. We plan to have a video of our students' presentations. FYE instructors will be present at the display to answer any questions or explain the Career Project in detail.

Incorporating Service-Learning into a Linked First-Year Orientation Course

Matthew Rust
Assistant Director & Academic Adviser
North Carolina State University
919-515-5597
matthew_rust@ncsu.edu

Nancy Gustke
Visiting Teaching Professor
North Carolina State University
919-513-2237
nancy_gustke@ncsu.edu

In fall 2007, my co-presenter and I decided to infuse our linked first-year orientation and American history course with a service-learning project that produced a book of traditions, history, and opportunities that make North Carolina State University unique. This was designed to meet a perceived need on campus: better transmission of traditions and history that help students connect with the institution. We developed this project and its learning outcomes in line with our institution's service-learning model allowing for effective assessment of the project—a process we hope to share with others by presenting this program.

Through our presentation, we will achieve the following objectives:

- participants will understand three categories of learning outcomes associated with effective service-learning as developed by our institution's model
- participants will understand how service-learning outcomes can span two linked courses in a first-year living-learning community
- participants will understand how well-developed reflection questions assess learning and help make meaning of a service-learning project

We will utilize a lecture format, with opportunities for large group participation through question and answer time. We will review the professional literature and theory that grounds the practice of incorporating service-learning into a linked first-year orientation course as well as that which supports the importance of transmitting university culture. We will discuss the context of our course within its living-learning community and within NC State as a whole. In discussing the process of this project we will focus on the learning outcomes developed and assessment evidence showing that outcomes were met. In addition to sharing the impact had on the students in the course, we will also share evidence of the impact of this service on the University overall. Copies of the book produced by this project will be passed around for review by participants.

The First-Year College Village: A Partnership

Karen Hauschild
Associate Director, First Year College
North Carolina State University
919-515-8266
karen_hauschild@ncsu.edu

John Ambrose
Interim Dean for Division of Undergraduate Academic Programs
North Carolina State University
919-515-4373
john_ambrose@ncsu.edu

Our presentation Goals include:
? Participants will learn about the FYC Village and extract information for use in developing

their own living and learning communities.

? Through hearing our approach to partnership development, participants will understand the value of collaboration between academic and student affairs.

? Participants will understand FYC Village's assessment plan and data to date and extract ideas for their own programs.

We will briefly cover general NC State background information and where First Year College and University Housing fit into that larger scheme and how our partnership evolved especially since the establishment of the First Year College Village Advisory Council (VAC). We will share the VAC's purpose, participants involved, structure, and the accountability factor.

After some programmatic overview and background information, we will share the components of the Village including the FYC Curriculum, our linked courses and our Resident Mentor position. Our most recent initiative involved our developing a value statement that helped merge the curricular with the co-curricular and is affectionately known as the WOLFPACT. Our Village program initiatives include: Faculty Fellows Program , Pizza & A Prof, Preview Dinner & Broadway South Theater Nights, Leadership Potential Retreat, Resident Mentor Dinner Discussions; FYCV Banquet and traditional Events such as Battle for the Beach & Spring Fling. We will be using these examples to illustrate our collaboration.

Certainly all of these programmatic efforts do not come without a cost. We will discuss the FYCV Financial Evolution including shared Resources (Staff Time/Talent, Money, Space) as well as the evolution of our shared physical space: the FYC Commons Building, which opened in May 2007.

And lastly and most importantly, we know that what we are doing is working through our ongoing assessment. We will share assessment plan, data collection/findings and how findings have driven the direction of the Village.

Weaving the Diversity Thread: Good Intentions Are Not Enough

Shannon Brandt
Assistant Director of Advising Services
North Carolina State University
919-515-8130
shannon_brandt@ncsu.edu

Andrea Atkin
Assistant Director of Publications and Research
North Carolina State University
919-515-8130
andrea_atkin@ncsu.edu

One of the central learning objectives of the First Year College and North Carolina State University is commitment to increasing students' awareness of their own cultural values and the values of others. We also strive to help students identify their strengths and weaknesses in understanding and valuing diversity. Thus FYC advisor / instructors in USC 101A and 102A (Introduction to University Education) course create a classroom environment in which all students can learn. Because understanding diversity is integral to the FYC and NCSU communities, the textbook for the course does not include a separate "diversity chapter." Diversity is addressed throughout the course of the year as learning about community, values, learning styles, wellness, and other topics. Classroom activities and out of class assignments for the course encourage students to reflect on these issues. FYC instructors re-examine their practices, the curriculum committee evaluates the textbook and class activities and assignments,

and the assessment committee evaluates the components of the FYC annually to ensure that these are responsive to the needs of all students and that they help students engage with and reflect on diversity.

This program will highlight the various ways FYC integrates diversity into the first year experience and into advising practices. Advisors and instructors seeking to enhance the understanding of student diversity issues will benefit from this program. We will interactively demonstrate the use of various activities, teaching strategies, class assignments and outreach programs. Planning, assessment, challenges and benefits will be addressed.

Meeting the First-Year Seminar Requirement with an Online Option

Carolyn Schnell
Associate Dean, College of University Studies
North Dakota State University
701-231-7014
carolyn.schnell@ndsu.edu

Pat Venette
Senior Lecturer
North Dakota State University
701-231-7014
pat.venette@ndsu.edu

The First Year Seminar, Skills for Academic Success, has been a requirement since 1997 for all students entering North Dakota State University with fewer than 24 credits. The course is designed to ease the transition for new students and stresses skills and techniques used by successful college students. In addition to introducing the students to campus resources and governance, topics include study techniques, time management, test taking, note taking, goal setting, wellness, stress management, and career orientation.

Accommodating students who fail to complete the course in a timely manner has been a challenge. While upper-class students may have mastered much of the first year content, General Education requirements mandate that they successfully complete the course.

NDSU has addressed this challenge by creating an online version of the original course. This section addresses each of the items in the original syllabus but is viewed from the perspective of a more advanced student. Instead of a campus orientation, the online version of the course challenges the student to prove familiarity with campus resources and analyze their usefulness. In place of traditional classroom exercises, students are asked to review appropriate web sites, provide a brief written overview of the topic, synthesize what has been learned with specific examples, and demonstrate how the information can be incorporated into current academic practices. Frequent on-line discussion is a requirement for the class, and exams are taken online via BlackBoard.

Final assessment of the class is accomplished via the BlackBoard survey function, allowing participation points to be assigned to the student while the comments submitted for the assessment remain anonymous.

This presentation will address the manner in which a required classroom experience was successfully converted to an online course. The two courses are designed to meet the same general education requirements using two different perspectives.

Making the High School-to-College Connection Work

Lynda Edwards
Dean of Educational Partnerships/Student Recruitment
North Lake College
972-273-3130
ledwards@dccd.edu

Detra Craig
Director--TRIO Student Support Services
North Lake College
972-273-3143
dcraig@dccd.edu

Lesly Castillo
Student Services Specialist
North Lake College
972-273-3153
lcastillo@dccd.edu

Zena Jackson
Exec. Dean of Liberal Arts
North Lake College
972-273-3482
zjackson@dccd.edu

Making the High School-to-College Connection Work is the result of several initiatives in the Educational Partnerships Department to better equip high school seniors with knowledge to make a successful transition to college. By working with high school counselors and college mentors who staff Go Centers (College for All Texans), first generation high school students begin the process of thinking about college with the help of a college student who serves as a role model and mentor.

Our program works with identified high school students over the course of the senior year to provide college, financial aid, and career information. Students are given the college assessment if needed and are invited to the college for an information session and tour. Enrollment in Human Development 1300 (student success course) is required. Student and academic services, i.e. tutoring, advisement, learning communities, etc. are important elements of support during the first year.

Several students have already signed on to become mentors in the high schools they just graduated from. The opportunity to return as a college student who can motivate and assist their peers is rewarding to the student in addition to others. Surveys will be conducted this semester to gain feedback from these students about their readiness for college based on the high school-to-college connection. The results of these surveys and first semester grades will be available in February.

A Degree Closer: A Community College-University Dual Admissions Program

Rebecca Campbell
Coordinator, Academic Transition Programs
Northern Arizona University

928-523-8225
Rebecca.Campbell@nau.edu

Richard Bruner
Graduate Assistant
Northern Arizona University
982-523-8225
reb58@dana.ucc.nau.edu

Betsy Buford
Graduate Assistant
Northern Arizona University
928-523-2803
betsybuford@mac.com

Cody Canning
Graduate Assistant
Northern Arizona University
928-523-2786
codycanning@gmail.com

This session will profile a growing trend in higher education; dual admissions programs between community colleges and four-year universities. Inherently, these dual admissions processes are intended to facilitate the transition, successful transfer, and retention of the community college student to the university. While issues related to the university transfer and retention of community college students are not new concerns in higher education, the collaborative partnership presented in this session is uniquely dealing with these issues. Participants will gain access to our model for recruitment, advising, and retention of our dually admitted students from their first year at the community college through their transfer to the university. Particularly, our “bridge” course will be highlighted as a cornerstone of the program as it is taught on the university campus during student’s first year of full enrollment on the community college campus. Similarly, the university’s advising staff has been situated on the community college campus while access to resources and services on the university campus has been granted. The session will share how these collaborative relationships have been forged on each area of the university campus, from admissions to the recreation center. Our program goals, assessment processes and learning outcomes will all be included in this session as models for consideration by institutions participating in the session.

REACHing Out to At-Risk First-Year Students

Scott Peska
Director of the Office of Support & Advocacy
Northern Illinois University
815-753-0940
speska@niu.edu

Denise Rode
Director of Orientation & First-Year Experience
Northern Illinois University
815-753-1535
drode@niu.edu

Danielle Kuglin

Assistant Director of Orientation & First-Year Experience
Northern Illinois University
815-753-1933
dkuglin@niu.edu

This interactive poster session will provide detailed information of the REACH program at Northern Illinois University from conceptualization to assessment of the third year of implementation. The REACH program is a cost effective initiative (approximately \$8.00 per student contacted) that may have significant impact student success and retention that other campuses may wish to explore implementing. At Northern Illinois University nearly 1,200 new students are identified as potentially entering with characteristics that may put them at-risk of failure or dismissal. The REACH program is designed to proactively extend information about key support services to this population of students for their benefit through the use of peer callers.

The session will provide data collected and analyzed regarding the type of calls and recommendations made by the REACH peer callers, the materials utilized to train the REACH peer callers, a detailed program budget, and a general overview of the history of the REACH program. Additionally, the presenters will share the strengths and pitfalls that have been experienced in establishing this new initiative on the NIU campus.

When the Unthinkable Happens: Supporting First-Year Students in the Aftermath of a Crisis

Denise Rode
Director of Orientation & First-Year Experience
Northern Illinois University
815-753-6781
drode@niu.edu

Scott Peska
Director, Office of Support & Advocacy
Northern Illinois University
speska@niu.edu

Andrew Cinoman
Director, Orientation Services
University of Iowa
319-335-1497
andrew-cinoman@uiowa.edu

This session will begin with case studies from several universities which have recently experienced catastrophes of such magnitude that they have profoundly affected the entire campus community (i.e., the Virginia Tech shootings, the Minneapolis bridge collapse near the University of Minnesota, a terrorist threat followed by a campus shooting at Northern Illinois University, and flooding at the University of Iowa). Brief video clips will be used to depict the crises. The presenters will explain how prospective and first-year students--who are still in transition to the institution--can be affected by such events on a variety of levels, including physical, interpersonal, emotional/psychological, and spiritual. Several prominent student development theories will be explored as they relate to first-year students in crisis. Factors influencing commitment to the institution, first-to-second year retention after a tragedy, and the expanded use of campus resources and services will be discussed. The importance of having a crisis management plan in place will be emphasized, with sample protocols from institutions

such as Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois made available to participants. A list of recommended resources (e.g., books, videos, speakers) will be provided. One goal of the session is to assist faculty and staff in preparing for the possibility of a major campus event by considering such factors as communication plans, crisis management teams, and critical partnerships on campus and in the community.

The three presenters, all experienced orientation and first-year experience professionals, will share their experiences of working with first-year students during crisis points and will suggest strategies that have been most effective in helping students recover from such life-changing events. Also discussed will be how a college or university recovers and moves on from tragedy and the impact the crisis has had on future institutional efforts for entering and first-year students (e.g., a common reading initiative, participation in the Foundations of Excellence self-study). Examples of positive outcomes from these events will be shared, as each tragedy has brought with it with hope and healing in unexpected ways.

Ample time will be allotted for participants' comments, questions, and discussion. Some of the questions posed may be:

What about "survival training" for new students?
After a tragedy, what's appropriate to share with new students and parents?
What do first-year students need first during and after a campus crisis?

Because this topic can raise strong emotions for some participants who have been closely connected with a campus tragedy, every effort will be made to bring closure by the end of the session. The program presenters, two of whom have counseling doctoral degrees, will stay as long as needed to talk with individual participants.

Northern Kentucky University's Book Connection: A Decade of Discovery

Jennie LaMothe
Interim Assistant Director
Northern Kentucky University
859-572-7559
lamothej1@nku.edu

In 2000, born out of 1998-99 CIRP data, Northern Kentucky University's Book Connection began with one simple idea: a fundamental key to academic success is reading. The Office of First-Year Programs introduced the Book Connection in 2000 for our freshman with the purpose of creating community among students and faculty through a shared reading experience while focusing on issues addressed in a compelling fiction or nonfiction book. Historically, the books have afforded professors in first-year classes the opportunity to address issues pertaining to race, class, gender, and identity -- issues that are often difficult for freshmen to explore.

What began as class book discussions followed by a visit from the author has evolved into a content rich program ten years later. We now have an interdisciplinary approach to the Book Connection integrating expertise from across campus and within the community. Included in this year-long program of co-curricular opportunities is a visit from the author to campus for a series of events, including: three or more large "conversations with the author" (attended by 1900+ students, staff, faculty and community members), a special reception with student winners of the Book Connection Essay and Visual Design Contest, a Public Speaking Contest, small group discussions, and a book signing. These events give as many students as possible the opportunity to meet and interact with the author in person. Students frequently cite this as

one of the highlights of their first year of college.

Through an engaging, interactive discussion, participants will explore: the book selection process, funding/program fee/sponsorship opportunities, faculty development workshop, promotion, dissemination of the books through orientation and beyond, faculty/student/campus engagement, community involvement, learning community specific integration. Attendees will leave with concrete ideas for integration, a copy of a past book selection (limited quantities), a program proposal and a sample calendar of events.

Global Cognitive and Behavioral Strategies of Critical Thinking: What Works for All First-Year Students

Timothy L. Walter
Dean of Academic & Student Services
Oakland Community College
(248) 522-3812
Tlwalter@Oaklandcc.edu

James Berry
Dean of Academic and Student Services
Oakland Community College
(248) 522-3912
JJBERRY@Oaklandcc.edu

Dr. Walter has developed a validated instructional program of basic cognitive and behavioral critical thinking and learning strategies that are viewed as general education outcomes by many institutions of higher education throughout the world. These critical thinking and learning strategies are typically taught across the liberal arts curriculum. The critical thinking strategies that these students have learned are those basic strategies upon which much higher level critical thinking is based as described in Bloom's Taxonomy. One of the challenges that first year students face throughout the world is that much of what they are expected to do requires what are thought to be "higher order" thinking skills, but most students haven't had the opportunity to learn or refine the basic "lower" or "mid-level" skills upon which higher level skills build. The presentation will focus on introducing participants to the intellectual model upon which these cognitive and behavioral strategies are based and then participants will see how instructors in the classroom can engage students in interactive classroom exercises which facilitate the learning of basic critical thinking strategies. Participants will leave this presentation with the skills to teach students in all courses, including the FYE seminar, the critical thinking and learning strategies upon which higher level thinking and learning is developed and which make thinking and learning more orderly and effective. Participants will learn how to teach students how to apply these strategies to information whether written or spoken. They will specifically learn how to teach students to apply these cognitive and behavioral strategies to their texts, readings, lectures, and class discussions. The experience provides students with an opportunity to learn strategies in a "user friendly" environment and then apply the strategies across the curriculum.

The Chicken and the Egg of the First-Year Seminar

Donna Younger
Director, Learning Center
Oakton Community College
847-635-1655

dyounger@oakton.edu

Lorenz Boehm
Professor of English
Oakton Community College
847-635-1600
lboehm@oakton.edu

Introduction: The session will first introduce the methodology used in College 101 for outcomes assessment and how faculty interpreted the data to identify to key issues that the course revision might address. This will further be explained in the context of the College's strategic plan that identifies anti-bias as one of eight goals to address by 2012.

The context: The nature of the course prior to the revision and the composition of faculty who taught it will be described to provide a foundation for examining the revision process and resulting course plan. Key issues that will be highlighted will include: the disconnect between the skills orientation of the courser and the needs and interests of students; the distinctions between faculty and advisors as instructors for the first year seminar; the importance of creating and communicating a clear identity of the course to drive marketing since the course is an elective.

New course plan: The revised course plan will be presented, emphasizing that faculty will choose specific content for their sections of the course, drawing on disciplines and fields familiar to them and that help illuminate issues of anti-bias. The presenters will suggest content they will use in the course and invite participants to suggest other material that might be used. The selections will be examined in terms of their fit for the course theme and the ways they can lead students to learn and apply academic skills. In addition, the presenters will describe the assessment plan for the revised course and invite critique from participants.

Conclusion: Presenters and participants will discuss how changes in the course are likely to affect 1) students 2) faculty 3) institutional policy and 4) curriculum. Concepts at work in the revision process will be revealed and discussed for their relevance to other curriculum revision projects.

American Society, the Economy, and the Community College

Donna Younger
Director, Learning Center
Oakton Community College
847-635-1655
dyounger@oakton.edu

Summary: None

A Sampling of Library Instruction Ideas for First-Year Students

Sherri Saines
Instructional Librarian / First Year Outreach Librarian
Ohio University
740-593-9587
saines@ohio.edu

Colleen Boff
Associate Professor, FYE Librarian
Bowling Green State University
419-372-7901
cboff@bgsu.edu

Librarians often play a significant role in First Year Experience courses because a consistent goal has been to introduce students to the library. Librarians belong in the middle of any of these experiences, providing experiences ranging from a basic tour of the physical library, to in-depth research instruction aligned with class projects. Librarians who work in these collaborations, however, usually work in isolation. Therefore, we have begun to create an online clearinghouse of resources which will allow further collaboration and creativity.

In 1992, the National Resource Center for the First-year Experience and Students in Transition established definitions for the five most common types of first year seminars on college campuses. In fact, this type of course in all its variations is more prominent than ever in higher education across the country. The five types are:

Extended Orientation Seminar

Academic seminar with generally uniform academic content

Academic seminars on varied topics

Discipline-linked seminar

We will give varied examples of real, effective, and innovative library experiences embedded in each of the five types of FYE courses. We will include examples from public and private, two- and four- year, and small, medium and large institutions. We will also cover examples of 100-level and nonacademic outreach to new students.

Learning Communities for Undecided Students: Required or not? Absolutely Required!

Wendy Merb-Brown
Director, Learning Community Programs
Ohio University
(740)593-1936
merbw@ohio.edu

Doug Orr
Director, University Experience Course
Ohio University
(740)593-1935
orr@ohio.edu

Joni Wadley
Associate Director for Academic and Student Assessment, Institutional Research
Ohio University
(740)593-1054
schallej@ohio.edu

Ohio University is a large, public research institution with over 4000 first-year students enrolled annually. Retention, over the past few years, has been steadily decreasing by a percentage point every year (from a high of 84 percent to 78% for the 2006 class.) University College (UNC) students, which constitute 1000 students each year, have traditionally had much lower retention rates than the other eight undergraduate colleges on campus. In Fall 2006/Winter 2007, staff in University College decided to make a drastic policy change

requiring all UNC students to be in a learning community. The change, based on the success of the learning communities throughout the institution, was made thoughtfully but quickly to help our UNC students be successful. Not only was the decision best for the students, but also thought to make a tremendous impact on the institution. The policy required all information marketed to students to be changed -- from letters, flyers, brochures, websites to admissions counselor information shared to students and parents. Student and staff reaction was also vital to the success of the decision. Preliminary data throughout 2007-08 showed a marked change in the number of students on academic probation as well as a culture shift in UNC. Rather than managing students one-on-one, the learning communities allowed for students to be clustered in various ways. At the core of each learning community was imbedded the University Experience Course, where students were able to explore majors and careers more purposefully. In some instances, the students' academic advisors were assigned to the communities. Data after the first year shows a 7% increase in retention for these students, much higher GPAs, a significant decrease in students on academic probation, and a staff commitment level within the college that was unforeseen. Future research and implications are also being explored.

Let's Give Them Something to Talk About: Enhancing Student Out-of-Class Interaction Through FYE on a Commuter Campus

Patrick Munhall
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Ohio University Lancaster
740-654-6711
munhall@ohio.edu

Candice Thomas-Maddox
Acting Associate Dean and Professor of Communication
Ohio University Lancaster
740-654-6711
thomas@ohio.edu

Leigh Atkinson
Director
Ohio University Pickerington
740-654-6711
atkinsol@ohio.edu

The primary goal of the FYE program on our commuter campus was to increase students' exposure to faculty while increasing students' social connections with other students. Previous research indicates that students' interaction with faculty and students on campus predicts retention (Barefoot & Siegel, 2000). Upcraft and Gardner (1989) also noted that the perception of being "unimportant" on campus contributes to a lack of retention.

As a small commuter campus, students engage in few extracurricular activities. Hence there is less exposure outside of the classroom to faculty, staff, and classmates. In our FYE program students enrolled as a cohort in three courses during the Fall term. In addition to class sessions, students also participated in an outdoor adventure/team building exercise at the start of the quarter. Once or twice a month students met for lunch or dinner to focus and discuss academic topics such as choosing a major, and so forth.

To assess whether the program was effective in increasing students' interaction with faculty, staff, and students, FYE participants were surveyed at the conclusion of the first quarter of study. FYE student responses were then compared to a group of non-FYE freshman.

The results of the study indicate students in the FYE program spent more time outside of class with friends from the university ($M = 3.83$) than students who were not in the program ($M = 2.06$, $t(27) = 2.374$, $p = .031$). In addition, students in the program indicated that they knew their professors better ($M = 5.92$ vs. $M = 4.53$, $t(27) = 2.097$, $p = .046$) and spent more time with their professors outside of the classroom ($M = 3.67$ vs. $M = 1.35$, $t(27) = 3.19$, $p = .007$) than non-FYE students.

Future research will examine the impact of these differences on retention.

A New FYE Approach For Millennials

Joan Takayama-Ogawa
FYE Coordinator
Otis College of Art and Design
310.665.6920
takayama@otis.edu

Jean-Marie Venturini
CAS Coordinator
Otis College of Art and Design
310.665.6920
jventurini@otis.edu

Joan Takayama-Ogawa, representing studio faculty, and Jean-Marie Venturini, for English faculty, will present the OTIS FYE program synthesized into first year English classes. The theme of FYE is Wellness and Community with various topics in key categories: diversity, health, social and fiscal responsibility. This approach has resonated among millennial students.

Otis instituted an FYE program 5 years ago in response to transition issues. Our diverse population, approximately 1200 undergraduates 45% non-white and 13% non-resident alien, come for studying art and design but needed to learn how to become resilient, accept criticism and take responsibility. Most were not prepared for the rigorous demands of a studio and academic program.

Unable to support seminars outside of class time due to rigorous 6 hour studio and 3 hour liberal arts schedules, FYE topics were placed into English and studio curriculum with no attempt made at connecting to coursework. Presentations were viewed as intrusions on class time and there was little student engagement with subject matter.

Guest lecturers were invited into the classes with key points being reinforced through different academic coursework. For example, an early project involved a scavenger hunt where students found important locations, learning about the services provided while conducting a semiotic analysis of that space for the class. Enhanced podcasts were created on topics such as Time Management and Personal Responsibility. Enhanced podcasts are audio presentations with visuals downloadable from iTunes. Students can access podcasts whenever and wherever they want, viewable not only in the classroom but on cell phones and iPods. These projects expanded the instructors teaching methods and also allowed for active student learning.

Sharing results of various assessments will show the overall success engaging faculty and students in the first year experience has had in producing greater heartiness and persistence among first year students.

Assessment and Implementation of a Successful Comprehensive First-Year Experience Program

Anne Fulkerson
Enrollment & Retention Research Associate
Owens Community College
567-661-2073
Anne_Fulkerson@Owens.edu

Renay Scott
Dean, School of Arts & Sciences
Owens Community College
567-661-7545
Renay_Scott@Owens.edu

Owens Community College is a two-year public institution serving over 45,000 students annually in Northwest Ohio. Although headcount enrollment has increased by more than 25% over the past 10 years, one-year retention rates of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking freshmen hover around 50%.

OCC received a 5-year federal grant to increase retention of first-year students. One grant initiative is a first-year-experience seminar (FYE), designed to introduce students to the college culture.

A significantly higher percentage of freshmen who completed FYE between Spring 2007- Fall 2007 (93.2%) re-enrolled the following term than freshmen in a control group who did not take FYE but who successfully completed at least one course during the same time period (68.3%). Results of a logistic regression controlling for confounding variables revealed that FYE completion significantly predicts retention, resulting in a 21.1% retention gain.

A second grant initiative is a mentoring program designed to provide intensive academic, career, and personal advising to at-risk first-year students. To identify students most in need of support, analyses were conducted to determine the student characteristics most predictive of FYE non-completion. These analyses revealed that the following groups are at significantly greater risk for FYE non-completion: African-Americans, males, freshmen, students with low test scores, and students on need-based aid. Students with significantly less risk include those on academic scholarship and those majoring in the Health Sciences. A risk index was constructed by assigning students one point for each characteristic they have that increases their risk and subtracting one point for each characteristic that lowers their risk, resulting in a total score ranging from -2 to 7. Correlation analysis ($r = -.37$) and inspection of score frequency distributions indicate that the index is a good predictor of FYE non-completion. The College is currently implementing the index to target students with the highest risk scores.

Passion, Purpose, and Service: Best Practices and Strategies for Including Service-Learning in First-Year Seminars

Aurelio Valente
Assistant Dean for Student Development
Philadelphia University
(215) 951-2634
ValenteA@PhilaU.edu

This session will be designed to showcase the work of University of Rhode Island, Millersville University and Indiana Wesleyan University which have successfully included service-learning in their various models of first year seminars. The research is clear; service-learning positively affects students, communities, and the learning experience. However, many faculty and staff still have trepidations about including service-learning in first-year seminars.

The session will start by providing a background and history of service-learning. In addition, the session will provide theoretical support (Kolb, 1984; Perry, 1999) for advancing service-learning in the first year, consistent with teaching and learning pedagogy. The institutions included in this session have been chosen for the diversity in their institutional profile and because of the varying models of seminars. It is the goal of this session to provide evidence that service-learning can be implemented successfully in any of the various models of the first-year seminar. Suggestions and recommendations will be provided based on literature review and lessons learned from the case studies. Lastly, the session will conclude with questions and action plans for including service-learning based on the concerns of the session participants.

NOTE: This session is being proposed by the author of a paper published in the Journal of College and Character and available online at <http://collegevalues.org/pdfs/Valente.pdf>

Improving the First College Year: Areas of Focus

Julie Alexander
Assistant Director for Assessment Administration
Policy Center on the First Year of College
828-877-6009
jewels2504@yahoo.com

Betsy Griffin
Associate Director
Policy Center on the First Year of College
828-966-5313
griffin@fyfoundations.org

Many institutions have never evaluated the first college year as a single unit of analysis. This presentation will introduce a voluntary, guided self-study model, Foundations of Excellence® in the First College Year, which supports institutions in determining the degree to which they are effective in the delivery of their first year. Specifically, the model is based on a set of aspirational principles, Foundational Dimensions® for excellence, and provides an accompanying evaluation process. The goal of this self study is to produce a campus strategic plan for subsequent actions to improve first year student learning and retention.

This presentation will draw from strategic action items for improving the first year produced by institutions that have participated in the Foundations of Excellence self study. Examples of what institutions can do to better understand the components of the first year, the role institutional policies and practices can take in enhancing first-year student success, and how institutions can learn which actions will likely be most effective in a given institutional context will be presented. At the conclusion of the campus-wide assessment, each institution develops an action plan based on select recommended action items. The areas most commonly identified for change and improvement will be discussed and ten low-cost, but effective, actions proposed by participating institutions to improve the first year will be described.

Participants will be encouraged to consider the analysis in light of their own institutional

contexts and share how their campus goes about improving the first year.

Building Student Team Skills, Inclusion, and Diversity Appreciation - Simultaneously

Scott Boone
Founder
Positive Diversity, LLC
248-462-1807
scott@onetheproject.com

If I have learned anything over the course of a 20-year career focused on changing attitudes and behaviors to produce more desirable outcomes, it's that I must answer for all involved, "What's in it for me?" Advancing positive change for greater diversity appreciation, inclusion, and teamwork can be difficult if only a minority of people in a social system perceive their value. After many attempts and lessons learned, I forged a connection that changed everything:

1. Your success in life will be strongly influenced by your ability to work well in teams.
2. Teams perform more work.
3. Successful teams show Respect for Individuals: Extent to which the different capabilities and personal styles or preferences of individual members are respected and valued.
4. Differences in capabilities, styles and preferences can vary significantly by ethnicity, gender, generation, and work style.
5. To show respect within a team, you must understand differences and create group norms that accommodate differences.
6. If you want to improve your team skills, you must develop an understanding and appreciation for diversity.

Presentation will define the components of the Exploring Teamwork Essentials program and describe their history before and after being crafted into a holistic program. Given that I am a fledgling entrepreneur, I will also attempt a compelling case for it to become a foundational program that supports your existing pedagogy and first-year programs.

I will suggest that this inexpensive, easy-to-implement program is no panacea, but can become a means to put your best foot forward toward Making Excellence Inclusive©.

To enable broad adoption, the program has been designed for R.A. implementation in mind, but is certainly not limited to an R.A-centric application.

Beta-site level 1 assessment and video will be shown as well. Attendees will receive a free and complete program sampler package.

CSI: University College, Identifying-Understanding-Advising-Teaching the Millennial Generation

Juanel Sippio
Assistant Director of Academic Advisement
Prairie View A&M University
(936)261-5918
jdsippio@pvamu.edu

Shante' Jones
Professional Advisor

Prairie View A&M University
(936)261-5927
sljones@pvamu.edu

Stephanie Bankett
Professional Advisor
Prairie View A&M University
(936)261-5907
sybankett@pvamu.edu

Each generation has its own set of values, ideas, and learning styles. “How do we reach the millennial student?” Advisors and faculty have expressed ambivalence on communication with this generation. This presentation will identify and expose assumptions and preconceived notions of each generation that have created this barrier. We will break the barrier of communication and our own generational biases in hopes to better connect with the student. We will do this by providing an arena for the audience to “walk in the shoes” of the millennial student. As a centralized university, we will employ the practices that have worked for our students. Through actual role playing, you will understand the key concepts of technological advances, mental issues, and societal norms that shape the students we influence. This presentation illustrates a format for teaching, advising, and understanding millennial students. We will venture into the characteristics, trends, and issues this generation has faced (past and present). This is a presentation to help administrators, faculty, and staff better relate to the new generation and its trends. Being able to properly advise the Millennial student plays a vital role in his/her academic progression. Since communication is the key in any academic or professional relationship, this presentation will emphasize on communication tools such as providing proper feedback and avoiding generalizations. This presentation is a great avenue to refresh advisors, faculty, and staff in providing a vivid blueprint of the Millennial student.

How Do We Reach the Millennial Student?

Shante' Jones
Professional Advisor, University College
Prairie View A&M University
(936)261-5927
sljones@pvamu.edu

Summary: None

Professional Development for First-Year Seminar Faculty

Amy Baldwin
Professional Development Coordinator
Pulaski Technical College
501-812-2262
abaldwin@pulaskitech.edu

Challenges Facing First-Year Gay and Lesbian College Students

Sara Carvell
Residential Life Manager
Purdue University

765-494-2312
scarvell@purdue.edu

Carol Kraus
Residential Life Manager
Purdue University
765-494-2289
ckraus@purdue.edu

Sexual orientation is a large contributing factor to social and academic aspects of development in college students. Since sexual orientation is an intrinsic factor, individuals who identify lesbian or gay are an invisible minority; fear of negative societal reaction to their sexual identity often overshadows social and academic development during their college years. Fears of rejection or isolation could cause gay and lesbian students to experience depression or anxiety, leading to the use of substances, or other negative coping mechanisms.

Individuals raised in a homophobic society are likely to face a great deal of intrinsic stress about identifying as gay or lesbian. Before an individual accepts this identity as his own, he must first work to overcome his own homophobic beliefs (Cabaj, 2005). College students who identify as gay or lesbian could have fears of rejection by family, friends, peers, or clergy and fear the cessation of emotional or financial support from individuals in these sectors of their lives if they were to reveal their true sexual identities. Additionally, these individuals may fear that their professors or department chairs may not accept their true sexual identities and if sharing their identities may influence their academic success. Gay and lesbian students of certain racial and ethnic minorities also have to deal with the added stress of being gay in a culture where that is perceived extremely negatively, leading to additional stress (Wall and Evans, 1991). These stressors can lead to increased likelihood of depression, low self-esteem, and substance abuse, possibly inhibiting the social and academic success during the college experiences of these individuals.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide tools and resources for professional staff when working with gay and lesbian students as they experience this transition.

Orientation 101 ~ The National Orientation Directors Association

Marcus Langford
Director, New Student Programs
Rhodes College
901-843-3816
langfordm@rhodes.edu

The National Orientation Directors Association (NODA), chartered in 1976, continues the tradition of orientation, retention and transition professionals who have met annually for over 40 years. The mission of the NODA is to provide education, leadership and professional development in the fields of college student orientation, transition and retention. A large part of NODA is the sharing of ideas and resources to improve programs and services in an attempt to enhance the experience of students transitioning to college and university life. Whether new, advancing or seasoned professionals; all will leave this presentation with an increased perspective on the diversity of orientation programs.

Orientation programs can have a great impact on community building, retention and transition of first year students. However, just as no two institutions are identical in structure and culture, there are and can be a number of ways to design, implement, manage and evaluate orientation

programs. The information in this program will benefit those who are interested in developing, refining or simply hearing about other orientation programs.

This session will explore the variation that exists within the realm of orientation programs. The presenter will offer details about program standards, program types, program components and elements of program evaluation. Information on various first-year initiatives will also be covered. While developing a programmatic framework is important, the strength and success of these programs often are impacted on how well they capture the essence of and fit within the framework of the institution that they represent. As such, participants will have an opportunity to interact with each other and share unique successes and challenges that they are having on their respective campus.

Using On-Hand Assessment Data to Answer Student Learning Questions

Sonia Gonsalves
Director, Institute for Faculty Development
Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
609-652-4622
sonia.gonsalves@stockton.edu

Summary: None

Dreaming of the Perfect Student Staff: A Look at FYE Student Leader Recruitment, Selection, and Training

Shelley Friesz
Program Director of the Undergraduate Initiatives Department
Saint Louis University
(314) 977-2801
frieszsk@slu.edu

Katharine Pei
Graduate Assistant, University 101
University of South Carolina
803.777.1861
peik@mailbox.sc.edu

Astin (1993) reported that “the student’s peer group is the single most potent source of influence on growth and development during the undergraduate years” (p. 398). Various researchers have shown that students’ peers help them feel comfortable on campus and connected to the institution. Students will be more likely to stay at their institution if they have made connections on campus, have established close relationships, and feel a sense of belongingness (Peltier et al., 1999; Kuh, et al., 1991; Upcraft, 1985, 1989). In the absence of these connections, students may not feel the sense of belonging that is so important to new students. Student leaders chosen as FYE paraprofessional mentors can provide the connection in ways that cannot be achieved by professional staff or faculty, for better or for worse. The students chosen to provide mentorship to first-year students are extremely important to the effectiveness of FYE programs on campuses. The Hazen Report of 1968 credits students as the most effective teachers on college campuses. For this reason the recruitment, selection and training of these students is immensely important.

In this session, we will provide brief introductions of ourselves and the purpose for the

presentation by citing research showing the importance of the FYE student leaders in our programs and then sharing overviews of the two institutions represented in the session. We will each, then, share the evolution of the recruitment, selection and training procedures on each campus, detailing problems that we were attempting to address through changes, as well as qualitative and quantitative results from the changes that brought us each to our current successful strategies.

Participants will be engaged in the session through small group discussion and question and answer. Discussion will include student leader qualities that are sought, as well as other institutional recruitment, selection and training processes. Participants will have time to ask questions of presenters and other participants.

Engaging FYE Students in Civic Learning

Debra David
Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies
San Jose State University
408-924-2639
Debra.David@sjsu.edu

Summary: None

EI + C= The Best You Can Be! A First-Year Initiative That Encourages Emotional Intelligence Skills Through Coaching

Lisa Decandia
SUCCESS@Seneca
Seneca College
416-491-5050 ext. 2923
lisa.decandia@senecac.on.ca

Steve Fishman
SUCCESS@Seneca
Seneca College
416-491-5050 ext. 2923
steve.fishman@senecac.on.ca

Participants who attend this session will learn the details of a first year initiative that promotes the development of emotional intelligence skills through the innovative College Coach Approach. A College Coach is a college employee who chooses to participate in the SUCCESS@Seneca program. Each coach takes an active interest in students' college progress, is willing to assist students in a variety of ways that will improve their emotional intelligence skills, and motivates them to successfully complete their college journey. The aim of the College Coach is to keep the students connected, on track, goal oriented and motivated. College coaches can help students establish goals, anticipate and troubleshoot problems, encourage them to explore and connect with the appropriate college resources and people, and promote self sufficiency.

Participants will discover how the College Coach Approach contributes to student success and personal effectiveness, engages a diverse and sizeable employee population, creates a college culture that reflects a sense of community and pride and requires minimal employee time

commitment, yet produces a significant impact with the college community.

Shifting the Paradigm: Using Covey's Seven Habits to Nurture Highly Effective College Students

Agnes (Tracy) Gottlieb
Dean of Freshman Studies and Special Academic Programs
Seton Hall University
973-761-9786
gottlitr@shu.edu

Robin Cunningham
Mentor/Director of the Seton Summer Scholars
Seton Hall University
973-275-2159
cunninro@shu.edu

In previous years at Seton Hall University, the first-semester University Life course, a one-credit, mandatory course, focused on traditional freshman issues. Lesson plans worked to strengthen time management skills, active learning and study skills. In 2007, however, Freshman Studies adopted the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, by Steven R. Covey, in our first-year University Life course to provide a novel learning platform for those issues that commonly plague new students. The University Life course, which meets once a week for 15 weeks, spends half the class time exploring each of the Covey seven habits. By discussing positive habits that reinforce mature growth in the course context, students are encouraged to develop life-habits that spill over in to their college experience. The Covey first habit, "Be Proactive," for example, provides the opportunity to discuss personal responsibility. Instead of focusing on lessons that students may not see as part of the "big picture" of life in the real world, the Covey Seven Habits provides students with lessons that apply to all aspects of their life. In addition, the Covey approach brings a new vocabulary to the student experience. Students write "personal mission statements" as part of their course, which prompts them to evaluate their goals and contemplate their life philosophy. Then, the students experience a "paradigm shift" that encourages them to look at problems from new perspectives. Assessment of the lessons and the course has shown that not only are students highly receptive to Covey's habits, but they also warmly embrace the new vocabulary. This presentation will describe Seton Hall University's own paradigm shift in its University Life course. It will provide copies of the University Life syllabus and specific lesson plans that illustrate how the Covey Seven Habits come alive in the classroom.

Successful Integration of First-Year Students Into Their Major Through First-Year Seminars/Learning Communities

Cathy Brinjak
Director, Academic Advisement Services and FYRST Seminar and Assistant Professor,
Academic Services Department
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
(724) 738-2009
cathy.brinjak@sru.edu

April Longwell
Coordinator of the Learning Communities and Summer Reading Program and Director of the Honors Program and Assistant Professor

Slippery Rock University
(724) 738-2732
april.longwell@sru.edu

Slippery Rock University's First Year Seminar/Learning Community (FYRST/LCC) initiative transformed student transition to the university environment. From 27 FYRST seminar/LCC sections in 2000, this initiative has grown to over 50 FYRST/LCC sections. Initially linked with liberal studies courses, 85% of FYRST/LCC sections are now dedicated to majors, highlighting the successful connection SRU's first-year studies program has made with the academic departments.

FYRST Seminar instructors, upper-class peer leaders, major faculty who teach the other courses in the LCCs, faculty advisors, and clerical staffs participate in a transformational FYRST Seminar/Learning Community initiative to develop relationships with first-year students entering their majors. The major departments have embraced the concept of integrating their first-year students into their departments in order to improve their grades and increase their retention rates. Faculty and upper-class students improve their relationships with first-year major students through major activities such as social functions, major clubs and activities, advisement meetings, tutoring /study skill sessions, and electronic tools such as blackboard and MAP-works.

In this round table discussion we will share best practices and discuss challenges that address topics such as:

- How do you get more faculty interested in teaching a FYRST Seminar through a FYRST/LCC initiative?
- How do you assist faculty with designing an effective FYRST/LCC initiative for their specific major?
- How are faculty moving beyond pedagogy to improve their relationships with the first-year students?
- How does your university use the FYRST/LCC to successfully integrate new students into their majors?
- How do upper class students enhance the success of first-year students?
- Why are electronic tools such as blackboard and MAP-works essential communication tools to first-year success?

Assessment information and support materials will be shared. Come join us for a lively roundtable discussion!

Improving and Institutionalizing First-Year Seminars by Connecting Seminars, Liberal Education, and Career Development: Why and How

Leon Book
Director, Student Transitions & First-Year Experience
Southeast Missouri State University
573-651-2579
lbook@semo.edu

To provide a context for the session, presenter briefly outlines his institution's general education program, its objectives, structure, and intended outcomes, emphasizing the role of the present first-year seminar, UI100, in starting students' progress toward achieving those outcomes. Included in this short summary is the genesis of the general education program, focusing on the evolution of the seminar through all its iterations, of which the current seminar is the fourth.

To further set the context for subsequent discussion, presenter explains that this version of the seminar differs not only from previous versions at Southeast, but indeed, from the first-year seminars on most other campuses, both in terms of content and purpose, and he outlines some of the differences between “typical” first-year seminars and this one. Some of these rather unique aspects of UI100 give the course stability and constancy, yet those same aspects create administrative issues that cause the course from time to time to come under considerable scrutiny from a variety of constituent groups for a variety of reasons.

The final piece of background information is the 2005 addition of a co-requisite career proficiency attached to the seminar. CL001 is, in fact, the first of four 0.0-credit career proficiencies that Southeast students must meet in order to graduate. After outlining the purposes and structure of the career proficiencies, presenter then launches the discussions among and between session participants about these general education and career development connections.

For the bulk of the session, participants will discuss what they think might be the several advantages and disadvantages of including a first-year seminar in the general education program and of including formal, “official” career development activities in the curriculum. The presenter will react to audience suggestions based on his experience as both an instructor and administrator of the first-year course.

Connecting First-Year Seminars and General/Liberal Education

Leon Book
Director, Student Transitions & First-Year Experience
Southeast Missouri State University
573-651-2579
lbook@semo.edu

Summary: None

First-Year Interest Groups: The Solid Foundation to a Successful College Career

Chad Briggs
Assessment Coordinator
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
618-453-7535
briggs@siu.edu

Eric Davis
Undergraduate Researcher
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
618-453-7535
endavis@siu.edu

Kathie Lorentz
Education & Outreach Coordinator
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
628-453-7993
klorentz@siu.edu

Amy Fehr (Davis)
Occupational Therapy Graduate Student
Washington University in St. Louis
314-435-1270
fehra@wusm.wustl.edu

Sara Malek
Former Undergraduate Researcher
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
618-453-7535
smalek@siu.edu

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the Freshman Interest Group (FIG) program that was newly implemented on our campus in 2001. From 2001 through 2006, approximately 200 to 300 students participated in between 16 and 23 FIGs each year. To evaluate the program, we undertook three data collection efforts: (1) archival data (GPA and retention) were collected for the 2001 to 2005 cohorts (for both FIG and non-FIG students); (2) primary and archival data were collected for four quasi-experimental groups in the 2005 cohort (FIG students, students living on Academic Emphasis Floors [AEFs], FIG students living on AEFs and a random sample of non-program students); and, (3) focus group data were gathered from students representing 14 FIGs in the 2005 and 2006 cohorts. Results from uncontrolled analyses on the 2001 to 2005 cohorts revealed large and significant differences in GPA (in the expected direction) during the first year and in the fourth semester. There were no differences in retention rates, although we had complete data only for the pilot cohort. After introducing controls for key academic and demographic characteristics, the quasi-experimental data also revealed non-significant differences for both GPA and retention, although the patterning of the longitudinal data from the 2001 to 2005 cohorts seems to preclude any internal validity selection threats. Results from the focus groups further support the archival findings, with the students citing numerous academic and social benefits associated with participating in a FIG.

The Application and Promise of Hierarchical Linear Models in Studying First-Year Student Programs

Chad Briggs
Assessment Coordinator
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
618-684-4078
briggs@siu.edu

Kathie Lorentz
Education & Outreach Coordinator
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
618-453-7993
klorentz@siu.edu

Eric Davis
Undergraduate Research Assistant
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
618-453-7535
endavis@siu.edu

Students participating in first-year programs often do so within a group context. For example, first-year students participating in Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) are situated within

groups of students who attend class, study, live and socialize together. They are also situated within known non-LLC groups (e.g., non-LLC classmates, floormates and hallmates). The dynamics of these groups (LLC or otherwise) no doubt exert affects on an individual student's social and academic behavior. Yet, when we evaluate first-year programs, we often fail to account for these group-level sources of influence.

Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) is a relatively new statistical technique (see Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) that allows researchers to simultaneously control for and estimate the affects of both student-level characteristics (e.g., demographics and pre-college attributes) and group-level characteristics (e.g., aggregate demographic and pre-college academic attributes; and, floor, class and hall attributes). Beyond this attribute, HLM regression equations have several other advantages over traditional individual-level statistical methods. For instance, by incorporating group-level predictors of individual outcomes, HLMs acknowledge that behavior occurs in a context; as a result, HLMs are less likely to suffer from misspecification error. Additionally, and unlike individual-level statistical methods, HLM also allows researchers to obtain unbiased estimates of affect for group-level variables. Both of these latter characteristics allow researchers to obtain more complete and accurate results.

Here, we demonstrate how HLM can be used to study first-year programs by taking a look at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's (SIUC) LLC program. Archival academic, persistence and demographic data have been collected on the LLC program since 2001, and survey data have been collected from program participants and comparison group members since 2005. These data are used to help evaluate the effectiveness of the LLC program, and to demonstrate some of the primary advantages of HLMs in studying first-year student programs.

Brain-Based Learning: Its Impact on Students and Their Role as First-Year Mentors

Jill Wilks
Director, FYE and Learning Assistance
Southern Utah University
435.586.7847
wilks@suu.edu

The session will begin with the program chair presenting a skeleton of Southern Utah University's FYE program which has been developed over twenty years and includes general education learning communities; student-driven seminars; faculty and student mentors; early-warning for developmental advisement; student research; mentor/faculty development; and formative and summative assessment. Then, using interactive tools from the workbook *Your Expanding Intelligence*, participants will receive rudimentary information about brain-based and learned optimism pedagogies. Finally, FYS Mentors will tell personal stories of transformation in their academic abilities and life paths. The remaining time will allow the audience to ask questions of the mentors.

Peer-Led Supplemental Instruction for Key First-Year Core Courses

Robert W. Strong
Assistant Professor/The American Experience Course Coordinator
St. Edward's University
512.428.1299
bobs@stedwards.edu

Jennifer Johnson

Assistant Dean of University Programs
St. Edward's University
512.637.5648
jennj@stedwards.edu

Session presents the results of a 3 year program implementing Peer Led Supplemental Instruction (SI) into a diverse group of 1st year core courses at St. Edward's University in Austin, TX. History covered from its inception as a pilot program in 2005, in a few sections of one course to its current configuration of Peer Led SI for all sections of two Cultural Foundations courses (The American Experience and American Dilemmas) and all sections of the required general education (GE) mathematics courses. Grounded in the basic principles of SI, the modification and evolution of SI principles to fit the unique needs of diverse GE courses is traced. The role of external funding in establishing the initial versions of these SI programs and the transition to institutional funding to continue these programs is covered. Courses covered by SI are described, along with their roles in the GE requirement. There will be an explanation of the different strategies that were necessitated by fundamentally different course requirements of The American Experience course (a history/diversity course), the American Dilemmas course (a social problems course), and the requirements of the various mathematics courses, with emphasis on both commonalities and divergences. Included are sections on the core SI model, the staffing of each course type, SI program guidelines for each course area/type, "Best Practices" for helping peer SI leaders plan and conduct effective SI sessions, and data collection and assessment. The data collection and assessment component will present not only actual data and assessment on the programs it also will provide effective models, guides, and forms for applying these methodologies to any SI program. Session will include Participant Discussion. Participants provided printed guides for establishing Peer Assisted SI Groups: one for Social Science-type courses and one for Mathematics courses. Advanced materials are available on presenter's website.

A Huge Success: How to Bridge the Gap Between Academic and Residential First-Year Programs

Louise Tyo
Director, First Year Transitions
State University of New York at Potsdam
315-267-2735
tyola@potsdam.edu

Annette Robbins
Assistant Director, Residence Life
State University of New York at Potsdam
315-267-2358
robbinal@potsdam.edu

Oscar Sarmiento
Director, Learning Communities
State University of New York at Potsdam
315-267-2125
sarmieod@potsdam.edu

The three presenters will begin with introductions and a brief history of how our programs first developed in the late 1980s and into the 1990s. We will then discuss how our programs merged in the late 1990s, and how our collaborative efforts have evolved over the last decade. We will share the various components of our individual programs, explaining how First Year

Experience, our residential program, and how First Year Success Seminars and First Year Interest Groups, our academic programs, continue to serve our first year students. We will conclude by sharing assessment results from each program before opening the session up to the audience for approximately 15 minutes for a question and answer period.

Whatever Happened to Class (In Class?) Civility Issues in the College Classroom

Angela Camack
Librarian/Assistant Professor
Sussex County Community College
973-300-2164
acamack@sussex.edu

Many people who work in education have expressed concern about the increase in incivility in the classroom. Teachers often deal with problems such as rudeness to the instructor and to other classmates, students who frequently come to class late and leave early and distractions such as cell phone use and text messaging. This behavior can create an environment that interferes with learning and frustrates teachers and the majority of students, who come to class to learn. Teachers often struggle alone with the issue of classroom management, fearing that their problems are caused by inadequate teaching methods.

Often students who come to college with the need for remediation in skills such as reading and research also come with a lack of experience in appropriate behavior in an academic environment. As a result, many college orientations and first-year experience classes now include training in campus behavior.

The presentation will include a discussion of the social and cultural changes that lead to disruptions in how people deal with each other, and a review of the research on the causes of classroom incivility. The presenter will provide examples of ways to deal with classroom problems and encourage appropriate behavior, and will distribute examples of classroom syllabi and classroom and institutional policies that address student behavior. The session will include time for participants to discuss their experiences with student behavior and to share solutions.

From FYE to Advising: Learning Reconsidered and Tying the Web 2.0 Together

Kevin Prentiss
CEO
Swift Kick
877-479-4385
tom@redroverhq.com

This presentation will discuss the findings and plans of a free pilot program that began at the 2008 National FYE conference. The pilot involved ten schools that used the Facebook application, Red Rover, to increase and measure student engagement.

After covering preliminary conclusions from 2008, we will present and explore new opportunities brought to light by the pilot project.

NASPA's Learning Reconsidered says: "The focus of education must shift to identity development." The presentation will demonstrate how free Web 2.0 tools now make this goal possible.

We will discuss and demonstrate how these tools, in the proper architecture, encourage Suler's "benign disinhibition effect" creating greater opportunities for student development, student connectedness, peer mentorships and institutional support.

By providing students with their own self expression tools, the institution can enable new and important collaboration between departments by circumventing information silos. Orientation, FYE classes, advising, and activities, can now all work together to provide the student with a personalized success pathway.

Participants in the session will then be presented with an integrated model of pedagogy, curriculum, and free technology that they can apply to their campus.

In a Q and A session, We expect to explore questions like: What are the FERPA ramifications of students' online disclosure? What department is appropriate for leading an integrated initiative such as this? What are the theoretical correlates between the click stream data collected from within Facebook's application platform and the "offline" qualitative and quantitative metrics around involvement? What are the emerging assessment possibilities that this new technology creates? What are the keys to orchestrating successful technology initiatives between departments that speak a different language?

Through the exploration of these questions, participants will process and become familiar with the current nexus of the first year experience, technology, research, and changing student needs.

Collaborative Interventions for Conditionally Admitted First-Year Students: A Longitudinal Study on Academic Achievement and Retention

Carol Dochen
Program Director - Student Learning Assistance Center
Texas State University-San Marcos
512-245-2515
carol@txstate.edu

Russ Hodges
Associate Professor - College of Education
Texas State University-San Marcos
512-245-7922
rh12@txstate.edu

For over three decades, our mid-sized state university, located in the southern region of the U.S., has provided students with a comprehensive learning assistance center and a three-hour, elective-credit, learning strategies course, both of which are routinely employed to support students, especially during their first semester at the university. In 1986, the university implemented a new general education curriculum that included a required one-hour university seminar course designed to give freshmen a philosophical and practical look at the nature and purposes of a university education as well as to help them make a successful transition to the college environment.

Convinced that a closely supervised, integrated intervention would benefit our at-risk students, the university created a cross-divisional (i.e., academic affairs and student affairs), conditional admission program that incorporates the learning strategies course, the university seminar course, special academic advising, a unique admission contract, and other specialized support services. The program is designed specifically for academically at-risk freshmen students admitted to the university with minimal admission qualifications. The program, while first

implemented as a 15-week fall program, has now evolved into a grant-supported, five-week summer bridge program with continuing support throughout the subsequent fall semester.

The focus of this presentation is on the evolution and success of this integrated, collaborative program for conditionally admitted, at-risk students from Fall 1998 to the present. The presenters will provide participants with the entire overview of the program—from the special orientation programming to the curriculum and sample syllabi from both required courses (learning strategies and university seminar) and a timeline of the various steps needed for successful program administration.

To conclude, the presenters will provide conference attendees with quantitative data and student feedback on program participants compared with other freshmen entering in each cohort.

Providing Direction for First-Year Students: GW's Guide to Personal Success (GPS) Program

Brian Hamluk
Director, Student and Academic Support Services
The George Washington University
(202) 994-7210
hamluk@gwu.edu

Peter Konwerski
Assistant Vice President
The George Washington University
peterk@gwu.edu

As a result of an 18-month self study of The George Washington University's division of Student and Academic Support Services (SASS), we designed the University Guide to Personal Success (GPS) program to respond to student needs and assist their transition to both a new educational environment as well as a new community in an urban location.

The GPS program was created to provide new GW undergraduate students with one single point of contact who can assist them with personal, professional, and experiential needs during their transition to campus. GPS Guides support the existing resources of the various service departments across campus, working to help students learn to navigate the systems and support services of University life.

Incoming students are paired with a GPS Guide who is an experienced member of the GW community, and Guides include the University President, Vice Presidents, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni. Guides represent all major units of the University. Guides undergo a comprehensive summer training to be knowledgeable of student developmental needs and the resources available on campus. Guides also participate in monthly ongoing professional development opportunities throughout the academic year to ensure quality service to students and to enhance their own skills as higher education leaders in the process.

This session will highlight the demonstrated need for this support system for first-year students, the creation of this new initiative on GW's campus, and current data collected in the first 9 months of the program's implementation. The session will also focus on the numerous benefits for the entire University community by having hundreds of Guides more knowledgeable about the student experience and increasingly aware of University services and resources. This, in turn, creates a stronger University community through the combined efforts of welcoming, assisting, and transitioning GW's Class of 2012.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will have a better understanding of first-year student needs
- Introduce an innovative program designed to respond to first-year student needs on an individual basis with personal attention
- Discuss GW case study as a means of similar opportunities on other campuses.
- Discuss benefits of program not only to the incoming student but to the entire campus community at large
- Share best practices in incoming student transition and mentoring efforts.
- Provide hands-on, tangible examples of cross-community partnerships

The Impact of Pre-Enrollment Programs on Incoming Students

Amy Barnes
Assistant Director, First Year Experience Office
The Ohio State University
614.247.6285
barnes.269@osu.edu

Julie Schultz
Program Coordinator
The Ohio State University
614.247.4341
schultz.173@osu.edu

This session will start with a brief discussion of the theory used to build the outdoor adventure and leadership pre-enrollment programs at Ohio State. Highlighting Kolb's experiential learning cycle and Komives' leadership identity development model, previous research and theory will help to frame the discussion for why these programs can be useful to implement on a college campus. Learning outcomes for the programs at Ohio State will be shared.

The presenters will then briefly describe the four pre-enrollment programs at The Ohio State University: Camp Buckeye, Buckeye Adventures, the Leadership Collaborative, and the Buckeye Leadership Connection. In 2008, these four programs served approximately 320 incoming students. In addition to the programs' outdoor or leadership activities, there are intentional discussions about college academics, the social transition to college, and Ohio State traditions.

Following the brief description of the programs, the majority of the session will be spent discussing the various assessment efforts (see above) of these programs over the past four years as well as the results we have found. Highlights include that each year since 2005, participants have had a higher retention rate than the rest of the freshman population, 90% of Leadership Collaborative participants report being more knowledgeable about programs and resources for first-year students as a result of their participation, and almost all participants recommend others attending the programs and list the building of community with peers and staff as the main reason they choose to participate. Presenters will also discuss the proposed changes to the programs in future years based off of assessment results. The presentation will conclude with an opportunity for discussion and Q&A with the audience.

This presentation will fit into the conference presentation topics of using assessment to build better programs, utilizing active learning, and providing leadership education.

Students Leading Students: Peer Mentoring Organized by the Students for the Students

Sarah Cox
Academic Advisor
The Pennsylvania State University
814-863-1947
skc161@psu.edu

Jason DeRousie
Academic Advisor
The Pennsylvania State University
814-863-1947
jcd219@psu.edu

The Smeal College of Business at the Pennsylvania State University is extremely competitive. Because we expect our student to experience academic success during their first year, the advising center decided to implement a peer mentoring program called the Smeal Student Mentors. Over the last four years, the Smeal Student Mentors have evolved from an advising center initiative to a fully-run student organization.

The Mentors are a self-governing, self-selecting student organization comprised of upper classmen eager to help first year students during their transition from High School to College. The organization has developed a hierarchical system consisting of a Board of Directors, Team Leaders, and Mentors. The Board of Directors is selected and trained by the previous year's Board. They meet with the advisor once per week to review their various initiatives. This system provides the opportunity for leadership experience while offering first year students resources to succeed.

Peer mentors offer a unique perspective because they understand what resources freshman need. Because of this experience, the Mentors have implemented several programs such as a Welcome Picnic, a Scheduling Social, and a Professional Development program.

This model has been tremendously effective for Smeal. Both the Mentors and the first year students frequently express their appreciation for the opportunities that the Smeal Student Mentors organization provides. Encouraging upper-class students to give back to their community by mentoring the first year students is an efficient use of resources that benefits all stakeholders.

This session will provide a history of the organization's development along with hand-outs of resources that the mentors have found useful. The presentation will include a discussion of insights gained from focus groups conducted with both students providing the mentoring, and those receiving it. Session handouts will include resources the mentors have found useful. Lastly, attendees will receive a list of potential steps to take to create their own student-run peer mentoring program.

FYE Online - Making Two Transitions

Dudley Turner
Interim Asst. Dean for Academics
The University of Akron
330-972-6518
dbturner@uakron.edu

Jennifer Hodges
Asst. Dean
The University of Akron
330-972-5114
jhodges@uakron.edu

The University of Akron offers Student Success Seminar to all incoming students, but it is not required for all students. Those who are 'Provisional Admit' or otherwise underprepared are required to take the course. Other new students who register for the course include students wanting to become prepared for college, those who want an elective course to fill out their schedule, and those involved in learning communities of various kinds offered by the university. The online section is a pilot program to see if this format will be beneficial to some students. If successful, the university will be able to offer the course during summer sessions or other flexible times to help FY students.

Interviews with advisers who help FY students complete their first semester schedule were conducted to discover decision rules for suggesting students take the online section. Data on student preparation (high school GPA, ACT scores, etc.) were compared to see any differences between the online students and others. Surveys and interviews with students were conducted to gather quantitative and qualitative data on feelings of preparedness, belonging, community and other reactions. Retention information, whether or not the students registered for classes their second semester are also compared.

Although a pilot study, results will help instructors for both face-to-face and online sections in developing innovative approaches for FY students in their transition to college and as they develop innovative learning environments.

Discussion and Q&A during and after the formal presentation of the study is welcome.

The Brother to Brother Program: Helping Retain Multicultural and First-Generation Males

Wayne Jackson
Director, Multicultural Academic and Support Services
The University of Central Florida
407-823-2716
wjackson@mail.ucf.edu

Erik Range
Coordinator, Brother to Brother Program
The University of Central Florida
407-823-2716
erange@mail.ucf.edu

Travis Gabriel
Area Coordinator, Pegasus Landing Apartments
The University of Central Florida
407-362-5132
tgabriel@mail.ucf.edu

The Brother to Brother program at the University of Central Florida endeavors to tackle a growing concern over the disparity between male and female retention and progression rates here at the university, consequently increasing graduates prepared to pursue graduate education

or to help meet the future work-force needs of the global market. The 2008 – 2009 academic school year will mark our second year offering this program and MASS has already seen a huge increase in interest on the part of both students and community leaders. Last year's program served 50 First Generation and/or Multicultural, First-Time-In-College male students. This year, we are opening the program to many more male students (First Generation and Multicultural, freshmen, and upperclassmen).

Participants in the program become acclimated to the university setting and the greater Orlando community as well. The program will help these students become an integral part of the campus by introducing them to departments and resources that will lead to their success. The following departments and community entities have already expressed an interest in getting involved with B2B: Career Services, Conflict Resolution, Diversity Initiatives, RAMP/McNair, Undergraduate Research, INROADS, and State Farm Insurance. The above partners each share a common goal or mission with MASS and B2B which offer unique opportunities to address critical issues pertaining to retention and leadership of males at UCF.

There are several other goals that have been established for male students who want to participate in this program. They are as follows:

- I. To increase the persistence to graduation rate for First Generation and Multicultural male students
- II. To stimulate leadership development

A 'Major' Perspective on the First-Year Experience: Impact of Faculty and Academic Disciplines in Campus-Wide Efforts to Retain Students Beyond the First Year

Constance Goodman
Instructor and Program Coordinator for the Supporting Teacher Education Preprofessionals (STEP) program
The University of Central Florida
407-823-2959
cgoodman@mail.ucf.edu

Jennifer Platt
Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
The University of Central Florida
407-823-2046
platt@mail.ucf.edu

Colleges and universities have implemented multiple initiatives to improve the first year experience for students. Although significant progress has been made, campus-wide goals to increase retention rates and persistence beyond the freshman year are fragmented at best. Typically, first year programs have a single champion and are housed in student affairs with limited faculty input or support (Barefoot, 2001). Yet, academic disciplines are becoming increasingly concerned about the number of students available to pursue majors in critical shortage areas like education and nursing.

The literature is replete with programs and initiatives designed to improve the first year experiences of college students. However, programs or initiatives that connect first year students to their prospective majors or intended careers are less obvious. Academic discipline-based program initiatives appear to be the exception rather than the norm. Although the available research focuses on experiential learning and service learning opportunities as ways to build a coherent college education, it is unclear that freshmen are exposed to such opportunities. The involvement of academic disciplines and faculty members in freshman

retention strategies is almost nonexistent.

The proposed session provides qualitative and quantitative evidence that faculty involvement in campus-wide retention efforts does matter. The authors suggest that early connection to the major (1) strengthens institutional efforts to retain students beyond the first year, and (2) improves degree completion in targeted disciplines by addressing factors that cause students to drop out.

This session will demonstrate how to retain students beyond the freshman year. Participants will be able to: (1) identify effective strategies and exemplary practices that connect students to their major as soon as they enter college, (2) clarify and expand the roles and responsibilities of faculty in campus-wide efforts to retain first year students, and (3) identify effective strategies that strengthen cross-institutional relationships and foster intercampus collaboration.

When Generation X and Generation Y Meet in the College Classroom...

Chris Gurrie

Assistant Professor and Director of Speech; Chair, The First Year Committee

The University of Tampa

813-253-3333 Ext. 1711

cgurrie@ut.edu

The session will start with an interactive Power Point (self-supplied) about “our students.” I will highlight the characteristics of first year Millennial students. The presentation will show facts and figures and some fun pictures about their social and academic habits. Much of this will be a refresher for experienced first-year instructors or support-staffers. However, we need to look at the “young professor”, or the “Gen Xer” who is teaching the Millennial. I will then show the same style presentation with characteristics of Gen Xers. (All information on these characteristics will be supported with citations from the literature and I will define them at the outset for the participants.) Gen X is 1961-1981 and is the “grunge era” that asked questions of the Baby Boomer generation. Gen Y/Millennial: defined as 1982-1990.

So, why discuss this at a first year conference? Thesis/focus of the session: We need to focus on this because some of the groups’ social characteristics are similar. Fervor for technology, pop media, and the ability to ask questions and question authority—yet this is not necessarily appropriate in classroom culture. I will highlight some “issues” from my experience as a GenXer teaching Millennials—and will call for discussion from the room. For example, my students ask me where I “go out”, they find me on “Rate my Professor”, they dress the same as me when out with friends. The blurring of these boundaries leads to interesting exchanges in and out of the classroom. The students ask more personal questions than they may ask older faculty members.

After discussion, I want to offer some tips and conclusions about the future; and how I personally handle my students and perhaps how other young professors/TA’s/GA’s handle their students. This session could benefit the Baby Boomer who works with the Gen Xer.

The Icing on the Cake: Adding Peer Leaders to Your First-Year Seminar

Cynthia Jenkins

Director of Undergraduate Advising & Coordinator of FYE Seminar Course

The University of Texas at Dallas

972-883-2244

cynthia.jenkins@utdallas.edu

Eric Welgehausen
Assistant Director of Advising and Coordinator of the First Year Leader Program
The University of Texas at Dallas
972-883-6710
ericw@utdallas.edu

To begin our session, we will present a brief overview of the fundamental benefits of establishing a connection between new, first year students and older, experienced peers. Motivated by an outdated peer program which recognized this potential, but which lacked a definite structure, student and instructor buy-in, and clear definition of student roles, we began work on an entirely new initiative for a peer leader program at UTD. How this program was conceived and brought to fruition will be presented as follows.

Participants will get a look into our brainstorming process and the specific questions we asked in order to establish the foundations of our program. These prompts will help participants apply the remainder of the information in the session to the particulars of their own institutions and programs.

We will demonstrate how our program objectives took shape with regard to the role(s) and responsibilities of peer leaders, and the qualifications required for students to be eligible for consideration.

Establishing these elements drives the application and selection process. We will present a workable timeline for this process as we introduce our specific methods and materials for recruiting and selecting students.

We will then present ideas for pairing students with instructors and encouraging the teams to begin communicating and establishing their working relationship. Garnering instructor buy-in to the program and their understanding of the students' roles will be discussed as well.

Our training methods include a peer leader only retreat to promote bonding and establish an understanding of the program and their roles. Peer leaders then are required to attend the two mandatory instructor training days as well. An overview of each will be presented.

The session will conclude with ideas for encouraging student contributions to the program, program assessment, and the program's place in the larger campus community.

Modular Delivery and Supplemental Instruction (SI) for the Calculus Course

Emil Schwab
Associate Professor, Mathematics Department
The University of Texas at El Paso
915-747-6758
eschwab@utep.edu

Helmut Knaust
Associate Professor, Mathematics Department
The University of Texas at El Paso
915-747-7002
hknaust@utep.edu

We report on our experience with and outcomes of implementing modular course delivery paired with mandatory peer-led supplemental instruction in all sections of Calculus I at the University of Texas at El Paso during the last three years. This model builds on two successful instructional strategies employed at UTEP in the past. While UTEP's Precalculus course has been using a modular delivery format for quite some time, the chemistry department at UTEP has successfully implemented peer-led team learning in their introductory chemistry course. In the modular course delivery format, both the course curriculum and the semester are divided into three (or four) parts – students only proceed to the next module once they have shown mastery of the material presented in the current module; otherwise they immediately repeat the current module. While this means that some students will not be able to finish the course in one semester, it substantially increases the likelihood that they will eventually complete the course successfully. This is paired with supplemental instruction, fully integrated into the course and provided by advanced undergraduate science and engineering students. This strategy is aimed at helping freshmen students adjust to the unfamiliar learning expectations they experience at the university level and at increasing student knowledge of the course material, thus improving student success and reducing the student drop-out rate for the course. We have gathered and will present multiple assessment data for the project: (1) average student grades in the Calculus I course and in the Calculus II course (for those students taking both courses in sequence); (2) average completion time for the standard three-course sequence for the majority of our STEM students (from PreCalculus to Calculus II); (3) the drop-out rate for the Calculus I course.

The PACE Approach: Incorporating a Comprehensive Program Targeting Undecided First-Year Students

Sabina Kapoor
Director of Undecided Programs
The University of Texas at San Antonio
210-458-4696
Sabina.Bhattathiry@utsa.edu

Shannon Rios
Academic Advisor I
The University of Texas at San Antonio
210-458-7124
Shannon.Rios@utsa.edu

There will be an initial discussion on the myths surrounding the undecided freshman. The presentation will then provide the mission and philosophy that drives the PACE program to help undecided students with these myths by educating and guiding them through their initial year at UTSA.

The presentation will continue with a detailed outline of the support and tools provided by the PACE program. Main parts include academic advising, freshman seminar instruction and collaboration with Career Services. The advising components such as advisor caseloads, monthly appointments and at-risk interventions (Checkpoint & Phoenix) will be introduced and discussed.

A second component is UTSA's freshman seminar course. The presentation will explain how the PACE advisors teach this course to help with two main transitional areas (personal and academic). Through the university's freshman seminar course, PACE advisors/instructors introduce a concept called Strengths Quest and use the philosophy toward personal development. PACE advisors/instructors also teach students effective study skills and dispel the myths regarding the perceived success of "high school type studying". The presenters will

also elaborate on how seminar students are embedded into the advisor/instructor's caseload. A last review with the freshman seminar course is how the PACE advisors/instructors are paired with UTSA's career counselors. The pairs work together inside the freshman seminar course to facilitate the career exploration.

An examination of the program's growth will follow. One year retention numbers will be examined, along with statistics regarding GPAs. A brief look at the future of the PACE program will close the presentation and the floor will be opened for questions.

Intentional Design in Peer Mentoring: Developing a Peer Mentor Component That Optimizes Facilitation of First-Year Seminar Program Objectives

Brenda Amenson-Hill
Asst. Dean for Campus Life
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
920-465-2511
hillb@uwgb.edu

Denise Bartell
Associate Professor of Human Development
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
920-465-5041
bartelld@uwgb.edu

Samuel Seefeld
Undergraduate Student
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
SEEF26@uwgb.edu

Jessica Hopp
Undergraduate Student
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
HOPPJM06@uwgb.edu

Kirstin Thompson
Undergraduate Student
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
THOMKE10@uwgb.edu

Tracy Beyer
Undergraduate Student
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
BEYETL06@uwgb.edu

In this program we will (1) describe the development of a Peer Mentor (PM) program for First Year Seminar courses at UW-Green Bay and (2) compare student achievement of Seminar objectives in classes with and without Peer Mentors. During fall 2008 we piloted a Peer Mentor component in approximately half of our Seminar classes, whose work was intentionally designed to assist in the achievement of the objectives of our FYS program (e.g., fostering campus engagement, the development of academic success skills). In this presentation we will first discuss the development of the Peer Mentor program, focusing on: (a) how to design PM work to tie directly into your FYS program objectives, (b) how to identify and recruit potential PMs, (c) how PMs are different than Student Ambassadors (d) how to design instructional

materials to teach PMs the basic skills required to be an effective peer mentor (e.g., communication, personal responsibility) and to provide them with information on college student development and commonly-faced issues, and (e) how to work with course instructors to maximize the impact of Peer Mentors in seminar classes. The objective of this section is to provide useful information for schools looking to develop a PM component for their own Seminar programs, as well as to promote dialogue about how to do so. In the second part of the presentation we will report on the results of both quantitative and qualitative studies of the achievement of our FYS program objectives in classes with and without PMs. Specifically, we will analyze students' attendance records and grades in their Seminar classes, as well as the extent to which they felt they have achieved the FYS program objectives through their class work, focusing on whether students in classes with PMs reported greater achievement than did students in classes without PMs.

Using BCSEE Expectations to Raise the Bar for Engagement in the First Year of College

Denise Bartell
Associate Professor of Human Development
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
920-465-5041
bartelld@uwgb.edu

Georjeanna Wilson-Doenges
Chair of Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920) 465-2479
wilsong@uwgb.edu

Andrew Kersten
Chair of Social Change and Development
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
920-465-2443
kerstena@uwgb.edu

Donna Ritch
Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
920-465-2274
ritchd@uwgb.edu

A comparison of our students' BCSSE and NSSE data revealed that students arrive at our university expecting to work hard and to be highly involved in the activities of college, but, for some reason, by the end of their first year they report working significantly less and being significantly less involved than they had anticipated. One potential reason for the gap between students' expectations and reality is that they are not being sufficiently challenged in their first year of college, and are not being provided with adequate support to fully engage in the diverse components of college life. In this presentation we will first examine reasons for the difference between students' pre-college expectations and their reports of college experiences in the first year (e.g., Are they trying to work harder but not succeeding due to lack of relevant skills such as time management? Are they not being required to work hard? Do they find it difficult to identify and participate in engaging activities on campus?). We will explore this issue using focus group data from first year students on their experiences at our university. We will then examine whether students who completed a First Year Seminar class experienced less of a decline between expectations and actual college work than did students who did not complete a

Seminar, and which specific aspects of our Seminar classes best promote engagement and challenge. To examine these questions we will utilize data from recent BCSSE and NSSE surveys on our campus, as well as from a student survey examining their perceptions of the value of, and their achievement of, the different Seminar program objectives on our campus. Finally, we will draw conclusions about how best to use first year students' high expectations for their college experiences to maximize their effort and engagement in college.

Oh, the Places You'll Go!

Amy Petrucci-Effinite
FYS Instructor / Academic Advisor
Thiel College
724-589-2108
apetrucci-effinite@thiel.edu

Diane Donnelly
FYS Instructor / Academic Advisor
Thiel College
724-589-2072
ddonnelly@thiel.edu

The First Year Seminar is a required element of Thiel College's campus-wide First Year Experience and Learning Communities Program. In the fall of 2006, instructors in the Academic Success Center were encouraged to develop a Freshman Year Seminar course to meet the needs of a group of at-risk freshmen. The objective of this interactive First Year Seminar, Oh, the Places You'll Go!, is to present college study strategies in a more creative way utilizing the advice of someone students have been familiar with most of their lives, Dr. Seuss. This learning community was designed with the purpose of improving student learning, performance, and success, while increasing student persistence, as well as academic and social integration to the college. Freshmen need to be adventurous about learning to be successful in college. Through this presentation our goal is to share ideas with other educators, who may choose to use these concepts in their FYS course. Using excerpts from Dr. Seuss' book, Oh, the Places You'll Go!, will lead us to discussing best practices in regards to goal setting, making wise choices, and other critical life skills. Presenters will share materials related to course development and student learning outcomes.

An Orientation Course for First-Year International College Students and Its Impact in Their Ways of Coping with Stress and Psychological Well-Being

Fang-Mei Law
Assistant Professor, School of Criminal Justice and Social Sciences
Tiffin University
419-448-3381
lawf@tiffin.edu

Gwo-Jen Guo
Associate Professor, Department of Guidance and Counseling
National Changhua University of Education
011886-47-237295
gerald@cc.ncue.edu.tw

For many individuals, the transition to college life can be very stressful. New students face many social and psychological challenges during this transition. This is especially true for international students. International students come to the United States seeking a better education and greater opportunity. However, research results have shown that acculturation stress often impacts on international students' psychological well-being and academic performance.

Although many institutions have provided a freshman seminar course to assist students to make a better transition to college life, the specific needs of international students may not be fully addressed by the existing curriculum. Furthermore, there is no up-to-date grounded theory about international student development that can be used as a framework for developing programs for international students. Therefore, the researchers of this study have developed and conducted a semester-long orientation course for international freshmen based on Chickering's student development theory and the cultural adjustment cycle. The goal is to help students make a successful cultural and academic transition from high school to college and from their host culture to the new culture by learning about the new culture(s), ways of coping with stress, and building social connections.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of completion of the proposed orientation course on the ways of coping with stress and psychological well-being of international students. Fifty freshmen who took the international freshman seminar course at a midwestern university participated in this study by filling out two questionnaires, the Ways of Coping Questionnaire and the Clinical Assessment of Depression, before and after the course.

Results indicated that after completing the international freshman course, the students showed a significant difference in their ways of coping with stress and depression levels. The results suggest that the international freshman course has a positive impact and contributes to greater well-being for international students.

The First-Year Seminar in the Two-Year College: Issues and Challenges

Susannah Chewning
Associate Professor/Coordinator First Year Seminar
Union County College
908-709-7182
chewning@ucc.edu

June Pomann
Assistant Coordinator, FYS
Union County College
908-659-5121
jpomann@ucc.edu

It is often not appropriate to include two-year colleges within the same category as four-year institutions when discussing FYE programs and courses. The types of institutions are different, but there are also similarities between them. Still, state-wide and national standards and expectation for graduation and retention differ; funding and resources differ; the training and interests of faculty differ; and most importantly, many two-year college students do transfer to four-year institutions, but a very large number never will, and their needs and concerns must also be included in the discussion.

This session will be based on two kinds of research, one based on a survey being sent to two-year college faculty and administrators, and one on the experiences and research accumulated

through the ten-year history of the First Year Seminar at Union County College. UCC serves a diverse population and its students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including first generation college students, immigrants and the children of immigrants and those with various academic backgrounds, from private high schools to some of the most over-burdened school systems in the nation. As a result, our First Year Seminar must meet the needs its types of students and anticipate the needs of those who seek only two-year degrees as well as those whose plans might ultimately include graduate school. Our data will be based on a survey being sent to other institutions, our own institutional research, and our recent participation in the CCSSE. We hope to open a broader discussion of the needs and concerns of this cohort of FYE faculty and staff in order to bring a more focused and coherent voice from the two-year college to the wider FYE conversation.

The Relationship Between Reasons to Attend College and Learning Community Participation

Jennifer Hodges
Assistant Dean, University College
University of Akron
330-972-5114
jhodges@uakron.edu

The purpose of this presentation is to share the findings of a study designed to investigate the relationship between reasons for attending college and participation in a learning community (LC). I was particularly interested in investigating the processes by which students shaped their own educational environments through the choices they made regarding curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular opportunities and the role reasons for attending college played in those processes. I collected 383 surveys from first-year students (44% LC participants, 56% non-participants). I also conducted 23 interviews (15 LC participants, 8 non-participants).

The purpose of the survey was to explore the importance that participants placed on 30 specific reasons for attending college and whether or not those reasons were related to participation in a LC. The focus of the semi-structured interviews was the relationship between reasons to attend college and LC participation and the processes through which students developed their reasons for attending college. The interviews also explored how students perceived the value of the LC experience as well as other curricular and co-curricular activities.

After a description of the institutional context of the study, I will give an overview of the research questions, research design, and participants. I will continue by sharing study results that explore the differences between LC participants' and non-participants' reasons for attending college as well as their perceptions of the value of the LC opportunity. Finally, I will present a model of the relationship between reasons to attend college and LC participation. Implications for the design, promotion, and assessment of Learning Communities will also be discussed. A more nuanced understanding of the decision to participate in a Learning Community may further educators' understanding of the differential outcomes of LC participation.

Meet Them on Their Own Turf: Web-Based Strategies to Excite First-Year Students and Foster Success

Peter Tomassi
Senior Vice President of Product Development, Education Dynamics
University of Alabama

201.377.3000
nmartin@csg-pr.com

Jennifer Jones
Assistant Professor of Higher Education Administration
University of Alabama
205.348.1169
lweiner@csg-pr.com

Despite best efforts to create Web-based content that engages students, many schools are now realizing that while students use .edu Web sites to access class schedules, homework assignments and grades, they spend most of their online time elsewhere. An examination of what first-year students do and don't do on the Internet will consist of research in support of the millennial generation's tendency to flock toward group activities, such as "friends" networks, blogs, instant messaging applications and lifestyle/entertainment, as well as analysis of where students actually spend their Web time. Colleges and universities can glean practical insights from these behaviors that can be channeled to better engage first-year students in content/activities that positively impact retention and student success.

Existing online communities (Facebook, Friendster, MySpace, AIM, etc.) and existing popular content sources (online magazines and entertainment sites) may turn off some institutions. However, such a platform can be extremely successful in retaining students by entertaining and engaging them at the same time.

The presentation will use the University of Alabama and insideUA as a case study for how collaboration in the form of online communities creates "lifestyle" content to capture student interest while exposing them to retention-oriented material. The use of technology to track student interaction/response to these tools is measurable, and not only are student retention numbers rising, patterns of use can identify students who are not engaging and at risk of attrition or under performance. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of program planning and implementation.

Using the Annual Discussion Book to Promote Campus-Wide Learning Outcomes

Marilyn Kurata
Director, Core Curriculum Enhancement
University of Alabama at Birmingham
205-996-6420
mkurata@uab.edu

Like many colleges and universities, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) selects an annual discussion book for freshmen to read during the summer and for the campus to discuss during the year. Unlike many such initiatives, our cross-campus program is not grounded in the English department or First Year Experience courses, and continues to flourish as it enters its fifth year despite choices that have been pulled from other university's reading lists and that have been criticized by parents, community members, and even members of the President's Advisory Council.

Success is a consequence of two main factors. First, the initiative is faculty and staff driven with full endorsement by the President and supported by community partnerships. Second, the book is consciously tied to the institution's Quality Enhancement Plan to improve student learning outcomes in writing, quantitative literacy, and ethics and civic responsibility. For example, the 2008-09 book, *Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change*

by Elizabeth Kolbert, is being used to promote the necessity for students (1) to be quantitatively and scientifically literate, (2) to discern the legitimacy of resource materials, and (3) to value the integrity of scientific inquiry in the service of the common good. More generally, each book promotes writing and civic responsibility, originally through an essay contest and now through published essays on a social issue relevant to the selected book.

Assessment surveys that query the effectiveness of the discussion book and support activities in promoting specific learning outcomes are distributed to students, faculty, and relevant staff. Additional supporting data is collected using the First-Year Initiative Survey, NSSE, and other standardized instruments.

Session attendees will receive lists of support activities, suggestions for community partnership events, the assessment survey and data, and Campus Conversations, the annual essay collection by faculty, staff, and students.

Peer Advisors as a Tool for Student Success

Debbie Toopetlook
Director, Rural Student Services
University of Alaska Fairbanks
907-474-6618
fndat1@uaf.edu

Catherine Moses
Alaska Village Council Presidents Student Liaison
University of Alaska Fairbanks
(907)322-8582
fscms7@uaf.edu

Dwayne Myers
Peer Advisor
University of Alaska Fairbanks
907-474-7871
fsdam7@uaf.edu

This session will address utilizing undergraduate students as peer advisors to positively impact freshman students' transitions at an institution. It will focus on peer advisors who advise side by side with a staff member in a comprehensive academic advising unit at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. This comprehensive academic advising unit is formally named Rural Student Services (RSS) but to students it is informally called a home away from home. Participants will learn how to engage in an effective technique developed by RSS that nurtures student's sense of safety and self-worth through the peer advisors guidance. The peer advisor is one of the programs biggest supports by sharing in the duties of scholarship information dissemination, planning and successfully carrying out after hour activities, planning and implementing student information sessions, and being a face of RSS while answering questions and directing traffic at the front counter. The positive impact of a peer advisor has been strength of RSS on and off for decades and has proven that students relate with their peers in a different way than the professional staff.

Using the Power of Assessment to Ensure Student Success

Florence Johnson

Director for Administrative Services, University Housing
University of Arkansas
479-575-3951
fjohnso@uark.edu

Participants will

1. Brainstorm examples of projects that have not impacted retention outcomes and discuss the reasons for the lack of impact.
2. Understand the basics behind action-driven assessments.
3. Learn to write action plans for their own campus. In other words, apply what we discuss to their particular situations.
4. Learn how to take tangible data and use in the intangible world of student services.
5. Discuss the materials in relation to their own campus situation.

This session will examine the ways in which assessment outcomes can be utilized in practice to achieve student success and retention outcomes through action planning.

The presentation will follow this format:

- Introduction: Explanation of assessment and benchmarking
- Section 1: Description of assessment methods include analysis techniques
- Section 2: Understand sub-populations and brainstorm intervention options on real life scenarios
- Section 3: Writing action-items to correspond with interventions
- Section 4: Identify key stakeholders and how to inform them about assessment outcomes
- Section 5: Need for re-assessment to establish continuous improvement
- Section 6: Assess the impact of the interventions and realign actions as needed

In order to impact student learning and retention, practitioners must be able to use assessment data wisely. Student affairs professionals are good at collecting assessment data but are not proficient at analyzing data and creating a management plan that puts those results into action. In order to keep staff focused on improvement, a management plan based on concrete evidence must be in place and monitored over time to assess its effectiveness. This presentation will give practitioners skills and concrete examples of effective action planning to take back to their campus. Solid action planning based on concrete evidence will help the staff be focused on areas of improvement and will aid in overall improvement.

Schuh, J. H., & Upcraft, M. L. (2001). *Assessment practice in student affairs: An applications manual*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.

Swing, R. (2004, July). Opening Remarks. Presentation at the Summer Institute on First-Year Assessment: Discerning Quality in the First Year of College, Asheville, NC.

A Strong Start in the Sciences: Academic and Social Engagement Factors Influencing Underrepresented Minority Student Experiences

Kevin Eagan
Research Analyst
University of California, Los Angeles
(310) 825-1925

mkeagan@gmail.com

Jessica Sharkness
Research Analyst
University of California, Los Angeles
(310) 825-1925
jsharkness@ucla.edu

Sylvia Hurtado
Professor and Director of the Higher Education Research Institute
University of California, Los Angeles
(310) 825-1925
sylvia.hurtado@gmail.com

Mitch Chang
Professor Higher Education and Organizational Change
University of California, Los Angeles
(310) 825-1925
mjchang@gseis.ucla.edu

This study fits into a larger research framework to understand how the biomedical and behavioral sciences can diversify the research and teaching workforce in the U.S. One of our key emphases is on how underrepresented minority (URM) students gain access to and become engaged in undergraduate activities that ultimately lead them to pursue health science research careers.

This study extends our previous work on the transition and adjustment of first-year minority science students by focusing on the nature of students' academic and social engagement with peers and faculty. Our previous research has pointed to distinctions in the quality of interactions that URMs may experience during college. Within this context, the questions guiding the study are:

1. What are the nature, quality, and context for engagement of URM biomedical and behavioral science students with peers and faculty?
2. How are engagement and access to resources linked with participation in campus programs (e.g., undergraduate research, living-learning communities, first-year seminars)?
3. How similar are the patterns of academic and social engagement across racial groups?

With particular emphasis on the effects of different types of peer- and faculty-based environments, our study further clarifies the formal and informal forms of engagement during college that contribute most effectively to first-year science students' academic and social support systems.

We will conclude our session by discussing with the audience ways in which our findings might apply to their specific campuses and by facilitating the sharing of innovative campus approaches to fostering academic and social integration among first-year science students.

Using Longitudinal Data to Assess Student Development

Jessica Sharkness
Research Analyst
University of California, Los Angeles
(310) 825-1925

jsharkness@ucla.edu

This session will explore the first year experience using national longitudinal data from the 2007-08 CIRP Freshman and Your First College Year surveys; this database contains data from over 27,000 students at 490 colleges and universities across the country. The aim of the presentation is to examine the impact of a variety of common activities and experiences on students during the first year of college. To do this, regression analyses will be performed that predict students' academic transition to college, general academic engagement, social engagement, cognitive development, and openness to diversity. Predictor variables will include student/faculty interactions, experiences with diverse peers, participation in college activities such as student government, sports, and fraternities and sororities, residence in special-interest housing (like first-year residence halls), enrollment in FIGs/linked courses/learning communities, enrollment in first-year seminars, and experiences with academic advising and orientation. The regressions will control for the influence of institutional characteristics, demographic information, and student predispositions in order to more accurately assess the unique contribution of each program.

The value of the approach described above is that it helps to untangle the complex effects of students' experiences using a methodology that controls for many confounding factors. We can therefore use the results of the regressions to make stronger inferences about what experiences impact students the most and how they impact students during the first year of college.

In displaying the results of the analyses during the session, I will not display abstract statistics. Instead, I will focus on the major findings as they pertain to each program, showing in meaningful ways (i.e. simple graphs and tables) how and whether each major experience or program affects students on the various dimensions. Attendees should leave this session with a sense of how common first-year experiences and programs affect student development over the first-year of college.

A Recipe for Student Success: Incorporating Research-Based Strategies into First-Year Programming

Geoff Cohen
CHASS FIRST Coordinator
University of California, Riverside
(951) 827-7831
geoff.cohen@ucr.edu

Melba Schneider Castro
Director of First Year Success Programs
University of California, Riverside
(951) 827-6254
melbac@ucr.edu

Edward Eason, Jr.
Peer Mentor
University of California, Riverside
edward.eason@email.ucr.edu

OVERVIEW: The presenters include Dr. Geoff Cohen, Academic Coordinator of First Year Experience Programs in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; Melba Schneider Castro, Director of First Year Success Programs in the office of Undergraduate Education; and Eddie Eason Jr., an alumnus of CHASS Connect and current Peer Mentor.

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY: This session will engage participants in an interactive thematic-based sample lesson that combines three different disciplines through one topic. By engaging participants in a sample lesson, they will experience how a theme can serve as the essential glue to bind together an interdisciplinary learning community program.

CHASS CONNECT MODEL & RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES: The presenters will provide an overview of the CHASS Connect Model and provide participants with program materials. Participants will learn about the various strategies that were used in developing this model, and how the combination of these strategies and the manner in which they are organized foster student success within a primarily first-generation and significantly diverse undergraduate student population.

PEER MENTOR LED STUDENT SUCCESS COURSE: A vital component of the success of CHASS Connect centers on the engagement of undergraduate Peer Mentors who teach a year-long Success Course to incoming first year students. The Peer Mentors are selected from alumni from CHASS Connect, who serve as role models and mentors for new students, in effect helping them integrate into the university.

EVALUATION FINDINGS: The presenters will provide an overview of various evaluation findings demonstrating the impact that CHASS Connect has had on student success. These evaluation studies include (1) quasi-experimental evaluation conducted by the Vice Provost, (2) impact on student retention conducted by the Director of Institutional Research, and (3) graduation rates of CHASS Connect participants.

TAKE AWAYS: Participants will be provided with the following products (1) syllabi, (2) student recruitment materials, and (3) past evaluations.

Behind the Registration Curtain: Developing Student-Centered Registration Systems That Support Enrollment in Learning Communities

Bracken Dailey
Associate Registrar
University of California, Riverside
(951) 827-3427
bracken.dailey@ucr.edu

Mary Livaudais
Director of Academic Information Systems
University of California, Riverside
(951) 827-2072
mary.livaudais@ucr.edu

OVERVIEW: The presenters include Bracken Dailey, Associate Registrar; Mary Livaudais, Director of Academic Information Systems; and Christopher Olivera, Coordinator for CAMP/CNAS Scholars in the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

(1) Student-Centered Registration System: The presenters will provide an overview of the UCR on-line student centered registration system that allows students to register for a cluster of pre-set courses. The registration system accommodates the needs of first year learning communities (FYLC) in three Colleges including the Bourns College of Engineering (460 FYLC students), College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (650 FYLC students), and the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (970 FYLC students), which combined serve

over 2,000 students. The registration system has been adapted to accommodate the needs of various learning community models, including coordinated students, cluster courses, and linked courses.

(2) **Demonstration:** The presenters will provide a visual demonstration of the on-line registration system. They will discuss the strengths, limitations, and challenges in developing a student-centered registration system that supports enrollment in first year learning communities.

(3) **Products & Logistics:** The presenters will provide participants with sample templates, priority registration guidelines, and timelines. The presenters will provide an overview of the logistics that are involved in implementing on-line student-centered registration in learning community programs.

(4) **Discussion & Questions and Answers:** Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the needs for registering students on their campus and share various models that are used on other campuses. In addition, this time will be set aside for allow the participants to ask follow-up questions regarding the on-line student centered registration system.

Building a Campus-Wide First-Year Movement: Developing Collaborations Across Campus Silos

Melba Schneider Castro
Director of First Year Success Programs
University of California, Riverside
(951) 827-6254
melbac@ucr.edu

Patsy Oppenheim
Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
University of California, Riverside
(951) 827-2617
patsy.oppenheim@ucr.edu

OVERVIEW: This roundtable will engage participants in a rich dialogue focused on building campus-wide partnerships, programs, and organizational structures. UCR has developed a comprehensive First Year Workgroup to discuss critical issues, identify best practices and research, develop partnerships, and provide recommendations in support of undergraduate students through their first year at UCR. In addition, a First Year Reading Group was formed to provide staff with the opportunity to read, discuss, and apply current research into practice and program implementation. To complement the work of the Workgroup, a First Year Student Success Council was established to purposefully design a space for student input on programs and services designed to help first year students succeed.

FIRST, the presenters will provide an overview of the first year movement at UCR. They will discuss the strengths, limitations, and challenges of incorporating campus-wide first year programs.

SECOND, the presenters will provide an overview on how they facilitated the design and development of the first year movement at UCR. This will include the evolution of three phases (1) implementation in silos, (2) a need to collectively organize, (3) developing a campus-wide first year movement.

THIRD, through open dialogue participants will discuss the varying models that exist within

their campus. The participants will be provided with a worksheet to represent how their first year campus organizational charts. Participants will share their organizational charts, and discuss possible strengths and limitations of varying models. The purpose of the roundtable is to provide a space to reflect upon distinct models and discuss various strategies for implementing a first year movement that is appropriate for each campus.

Incorporating Information Fluency Into First-Year Seminar Curriculum

Joe Ritchie
Executive Director - First Year Experience
University of Central Florida
407-823-5105
jritchie@mail.ucf.edu

Jennifer Wright
Director - Student Academic Resource Center
University of Central Florida
407-823-5130
jewright@mail.ucf.edu

Stephen O'Connell
Associate Dir. - First Year Advising and Exploration
University of Central Florida
407-823-3789
[oconnell@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:connell@mail.ucf.edu)

Linda Colding
Associate University Librarian
University of Central Florida
407-823-4248
lcolding@mail.ucf.edu

Information Fluency (IF) was an initiative selected to complete the accreditation process required by SACS as part of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The First Year Experience course, Strategies for Success in College (SLS 1501), was selected as one of four pilot programs to implement Information Fluency into the University community at the University of Central Florida.

The presentation will describe the components of IF and the strategies being employed within the First Year curriculum. A brief overview will be provided regarding why SLS 1501 was selected as one of the pilot programs, the formation of the committee and University support. Currently, the IF initiative is in the third year of a three year implementation process.

In 2007, IF was integrated into all sections of SLS with the focus being on students ability to effectively use Library resources to gain better critical thinking skills. To foster the development of critical thinking skills, library instruction was provided, personality/career assessments were completed, and an information interview was conducted. Students then completed a research and reflective paper. The successes and challenges will be discussed on implementing a comprehensive project to first-year students.

A majority of the session will be dedicated to describing the activities in place for IF and the methods of assessment being used to determine if students are becoming information fluent. Netiquette and critical thinking activities will be provided, along with examples of assessment

tools will be shown to demonstrate the effectiveness of these activities. Finally, learning outcomes and measures will be stated and shown how they are incorporated into the office's institutional effectiveness plan.

The program will conclude with a look to the future and what IF initiatives are on the horizon for both the SLS program and the entire University. Finally, participants will be given the opportunity to share their own IF initiatives and what they are doing to assess their own students' learning outcomes.

Laying The Foundation of Academic Success for Student-Athletes and Other High-Risk Groups

Sarah Hill
Assistant Director, Academic Services for Student-Athletes
University of Central Florida
407-823-1515
schill@mail.ucf.edu

Corrie Scott
Academic Advisor
Tennessee State University
615-963-2145
cscott17@tnstate.edu

This presentation will discuss how Academic Services for Student-Athletes (ASSA), at University of Central Florida (UCF), works with incoming students from orientation through their first year. At the beginning of their academic career, which is orientation, student-athletes attend Knights Herald, where they are introduced to NCAA eligibility requirements, ASSA services and policies of the Athletics Department. ASSA also conducts a session for parents of student-athletes at orientation. In order to get acclimated to the college community, the most at-risk student-athletes begin their studies in the summer. During this time, student-athletes are enrolled in 6 credit hours, which includes, a Student Success class. The presentation will discuss in detail the course outline and requirements of the class. The program will also review how students are monitored throughout the entire academic year. ASSA has many programs in place, such as: weekly mentor meetings, tutorial support, wireless computer lab, structured study halls, advisors traveling on away trips and a class checking system. In addition to advisors, ASSA has a Learning Specialist on staff who coordinates LD Screening, the Mentoring Staff and monitors all students in the mentoring program (this includes all incoming students along with at-risk students). Since the inception of the Knights Education Enhancement Program (KEEP) in 2005, team GPA's along with Graduation Success Rates, Academic Progress Rates (APR), and retention rates have increased. This presentation will give detailed statistics on ASSA's academic success.

Although the student-athletes have done well academically at UCF, we continue to explore ways to improve our services with the freshman population. Future programming may consist of a new summer bridge orientation program, an extension to Knights Herald that would include tutoring and preparation for the CPT, and immediate LD testing upon admission.

A Strategy for Success: Incorporating the Library Into First-Year Seminar Curriculum

Linda Colding
Associate University Librarian

University of Central Florida
407-823-4248
lcolding@mail.ucf.edu

This poster session discusses the first two years of Information Fluency (IF) at the University of Central Florida. As part of the accreditation process, proposals were solicited from the university community and the Library's proposal on IF was selected. One of the four pilot projects involved the FYE class, known as SLS 1501, Strategies for Student Success. This course provides an overview of all aspects of campus life as well as critical thinking and problem solving skills and was deemed a great opportunity to introduce IF concepts.

The librarian collaborated with SLS faculty to develop curriculum and assessment tools. Because of their previous working relationship, it was easy to develop a written and/or oral assignment that included the three IF components. During the first year of implementation, each class had two library sessions. The first session focused on the gathering component of IF while the second session focused on the evaluation component of IF. After the first year, a curriculum review determined the second library session was not needed. Many of the critical thinking aspects taught in the second session could be included during regular class sessions.

While the overall assessment of IF was the written and/or oral assignment, the library portion was assessed through pre/post tests. The tests evaluated students' basic library and research skills. After the initial review, changes were made to more accurately reflect what was covered during the sessions. The data was analyzed to determine weak areas and topics needing more emphasis. Data also compared semesters to determine differences between students beginning college in the summer and the fall semesters.

To date, the IF implementation into the SLS curriculum has been very successful and will continue throughout the upcoming years.

Engaging 21st Century First-Year Students in a Flat World

Patricia Pates
Director, Research, Grants & Evaluation
University of Central Florida
407-823-6957
ppates@mail.ucf.edu

In the 2005-2006 academic year, 223,534 U.S. students studied abroad, representing only approximately 1% of all enrolled students. Of this group, only 3.5% were African American, 5.4% Hispanic American, and 6.3% Asian American. With so few students participating in study abroad, America is at risk of growing a generation of leaders who are not culturally competent to engage in diplomacy, foreign affairs, or international business.

The stakes are high; according to the Lincoln Commission report (2005), "Greater engagement of American undergraduates with the world around them is vital to the nation's well-being. It is in the national interest of the United States to send at least one million undergraduates abroad annually to study other lands, languages, and cultures."

The Commission is challenging the nation to achieve this goal by 2016-17. One million is about 50% of the number of undergraduate degrees awarded annually by accredited colleges and universities in the U.S. Many Universities, Harvard and Michigan State among them, are making study abroad an undergraduate degree requirement.

As first year experience professionals, what can we do to engage students to formulate a plan for study abroad from the first year? Ideally, students should plan to engage in their first international experience by the summer of the second year or fall of their junior year. In this roundtable discussion, responses to the following questions will be considered:

1. Why is international education a critical issue for 21st Century students?
2. How does your institution provide incentives to attract students to study abroad?
3. What are the perceived barriers to engaging students in study abroad programs; particularly underrepresented students?
4. How can we build global competence skills development into the First Year Experience?
5. What types of funding support programs are available for students desiring to study abroad?

REAL Peers: The Impact of Peer Advocates on the First-Year Experience

Thomas Hall
Director, Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programming
University of Central Florida
407-823-0869
tvhall@mail.ucf.edu

Patricia Pates
Director of Research, Grants, & Evaluation
University of Central Florida
407-823-6957
ppates@mail.ucf.edu

Bernadette Jungblut
Assistant Director, Assessment and Planning
University of Central Florida
407-823-4243
bjungblu@mail.ucf.edu

Colleges and Universities today engage students to serve as leaders in numerous capacities. Whether they work with incoming students during orientation, hold a leadership position in a Greek letter organization, serve as president or an active member of a registered student organization, are a member of an athletic team, or work as a resident assistant, these students have the ability to influence the culture of their community. Students, whether they are expressive or instrumental leaders, usually possess natural leadership or management skills, but the University typically offers little formal training to maximize their positive influence with regard to personal health and safety or community engagement. When a college or university does offer training, often basic information about policy and risk management is included. Information regarding how to recognize the impact of community on proximal social norms and the influence of leaders is needed. Traditional “helping” limits the peers’ ability to ‘go beyond’ basic facts and generalize information to different communities (Cohen, 2007).

REAL is an acronym for Research, Education, Assessment, Leadership. The REAL Peers program is a purposeful engagement of peer leaders within their communities with an expectation of achievement of learning outcomes. The training and engagement model was developed with consideration of the student learning outcomes identified by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and Chickering’s Seven Vectors. The CAS learning outcomes are interwoven throughout the training. Learning outcomes provide a way to assess achievement. Measuring this achievement is an important response to the increased demand for accountability regarding learning outcomes for programs and services outside of classroom experiences. REAL Peers was piloted in a one-day workshop session

during Spring 2008 and is currently being piloted in semester-long course form to determine the impact on both REAL Peers and first-year students.

Retention and Attrition of Multicultural Students

DeLaine Priest
Associate Vice President, Student Development and Enrollment Services
University of Central Florida
407-823-2137
dpriest@mail.ucf.edu

Summary: None

Partnering With Parents: Keeping Parents Informed During the First Year

Stephen O'Connell
Associate Director, First Year Advising & Exploration
University of Central Florida
407-823-3789
oconnell@mail.ucf.edu

Summary: None

Winning with Peer Mentoring

Mark Allen Poisel
Associate Vice President for Academic Development & Retention
University of Central Florida
407-823-4625
mpoisel@mail.ucf.edu

DeLaine Priest
Associate Vice President, Student Development and Enrollment Services
University of Central Florida
407-823-2137
dpriest@mail.ucf.edu

Edwanna Andrews
University of Central Florida

Abby Riggerbach
University of Central Florida

Summary: None

The Next Great Leap Forward: Leveraging Technology in an Integrated First-Year Experience

Jenn Wiswell
Associate Director of Undergraduate Programs, Director of Student Engagement

University of Cincinnati
513-556-7039
jennifer.wiswell@uc.edu

Alison Wright
Assistant Director, Undergraduate Career Services
University of Cincinnati
513-556-3682
alison.wright@uc.edu

Shannon Funk
Director of Information Technology
University of Cincinnati
513-556-3605
shannon.funk@uc.edu

The University of Cincinnati College of Business's first-year program has evolved annually since 2002. Through this cohesive and institutionalized experience, every student now participates in a learning community, experiences at least one small enrollment class, benefits from three quarters of FYE coursework, completes an intensive team project partnering with an area corporation, and meets with an academic advisor. The results have spurred a dramatic increase in freshmen retention from 77-83% – and that rate is expected to rise another three points in fall 2008 (final numbers available in October). With admission standards held relatively constant, ongoing FYE innovations appear to be driving improved retention. Annual revisions have become systematic, fueled by instructor, student, and corporate partner feedback.

Themes of integration and technology underlie our most recent, and particularly extensive, revision. We seek to foster powerful synergies between the required business courses and the required FYE courses. Together, they examine skills vital in business and means of developing those capabilities during students' collegiate careers. Technology often plays a central role. Our students spend their days on You Tube, iTunes, and Facebook, but can they leverage technology to excel both academically and professionally?

Through our integrated revision, students explore the value and challenges of technology in varied business settings, while developing related skills. For example, students examine the importance of social networking sites, then compare such tools as Facebook and LinkedIn and consider the role these sites can have on professional image. Collaboration and team dynamics are approached with project management software as well as with interpersonal theories and techniques. Likewise productivity discussions are complemented with cutting-edge uses of cell phones and iPods. Yet more important than any specific tool, such repeated linkages build students' confidence and capacity to learn changing technologies and their use as a management and personal tool.

Changing Student Culture From The Ground Up

Greg Metz
Assistant Director First Year Experience & Learning Communities
University of Cincinnati
513-556-4749
Gregory.Metz@uc.edu

There are four goals for this presentation/discussion.

The first is to succinctly review some key research from the anthropology of higher education and indicate its implications. I have taught graduate courses in this area and drew on it liberally for my Ph.D. work on college student experience. Sources include Small's *My Freshman Year*, Moffatt's *Coming of Age in New Jersey*, Holland and Eisenhart's *Educated in Romance*, and Becker's *Making the Grade*.

The second goal is to open a discussion as to how others view the implications of this literature (and related NSSE data).

The third goal is to succinctly state my thoughts and convictions. I believe this literature has profound implications as regards our competitiveness and civic literacy in this millennium. I believe that students can and perhaps even must play profound roles in providing leadership in acknowledging these contradictions and encouraging transformation from the ground up. I believe that Peer Leading and Mentoring programs are crucial in these regards. Obviously, structural and institutional action is vital as well.

The fourth goal is to open the floor for colleagues to provide their analyses, hopes and proscriptions.

Leading Peer Leaders - Let's Just Talk!

Greg Metz
Assistant Director, First-Year Experience & Learning Communities
University of Cincinnati
513-556-4749
Gregory.Metz@uc.edu

Summary: None

"In Pursuit of Excellence": Teaching Strategies to Get the Best From Today's First-Year Seminar Students

Constance Staley
Director, Freshman Seminar Program and Professor of Communication
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
719-262-4123
cstaley@uccs.edu

The University of Colorado-Colorado Springs has experienced rapid and continuing success with its Freshman Seminar Program, which originated with one section of 19 students (5 percent of incoming freshmen) during Fall, 1991, and now serves 850 students (80 percent) in 57 sections during Fall, 2008. The success of these 18 multi-disciplinary, three-credit, academic courses is due to the commitment of a core of faculty from more than 30 units across five colleges who motivate, engage, and support first-year students in the classroom. It is organized around broad and appealing content areas such as "Crime and Punishment," "The Mating Game," "Circle of Life," "Colorado Living and Recreation," "Unreality," "Wednesday Night at the Movies," "Food for Thought," "This I Believe" and "Trial & Error," and taught by interdisciplinary, cross-college teams of faculty, staff, and Junior Teaching Assistants. While focusing on their chosen compelling topic, students develop their college success skills; are introduced to the fundamentals of various disciplines; and work closely with faculty and peers. Freshman Seminar students spend one-half of their in-class time in small groups of fifteen with their individual instructor(s), and the other half with all students enrolled in the content area for

presentations by experts within a variety of disciplines. The course begins two days before other classes with “Preview Daze” and ends five weeks early. This session will focus on specific teaching strategies and hands-on exercises for the first-year classroom. According to UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute, today’s college freshmen are largely overconfident, disengaged, and often lacking in the focus required to attain a college education. Many are over-obligated and over-optionalized. This session will stress specific teaching strategies that help students engage in the classroom and strive to achieve their best, academically. Participants will receive practical faculty training materials to enhance first-year teaching at their home institutions.

FYE + SSS = SUCCESS!

Leo Lachut
SSS Counselor/ Coordinator
University of Connecticut
860-486-3574
Leo.Lachut@uconn.edu

David Ouimette
Director, First Year Programs
University of Connecticut
860-486-2150
David.Ouimette@uconn.edu

Cyrus Williams
PhD Candidate
University Of Florida
352-392-0731
CyrusW@ufl.edu

First generation college students are disproportionately overrepresented in the most disadvantaged racial, income and gender groups (Horn & Nunez, 2000). This college student population represents approximately 50% of all college students (Choy, 2001), unfortunately, students from first generation and low income backgrounds are among the least likely to be retained and complete a degree (Thayer, 2000). Although it is very important to provide this college going population with academic and environmental interventions, there is a danger in not acknowledging the unique interrelationships among age, race and class (Lorde’s, 1998). Strengths-based approaches are designed “to help students discover, develop and apply their strengths and talents so that they will persist, achieve and gain maximum benefits from the college experience” (Anderson & Noel, 2004, p.26).

Using the current data and trends on low income first generation students coupled with UConn's FYE program, we will demonstrate how the Federal TRiO Student Support Services program has collaborated with the First Year Program's office to meet the unique intrapersonal dynamics and conflicts and how those experiences affect their ability to graduate. This interactive presentation utilizing multimedia, contemporary research and personal narratives, will show how this collaborative effort not only has been successful at UConn but has also created advocates for students who take part in this program.

Each presenter will illustrate their role in this collaboration:

Cyrus Williams, PhD candidate from the University of Florida, will provide his current research on Strength Based retention strategies for the cultural and contextually unique needs of first-generation, minority college students.

David Ouimette, Director of First Year Programs at the University of Connecticut, will outline FYE at the University of Connecticut and the role FYE has played in increasing retention. Leo Lachut, SSS Counselor, will summarize how this shared effort has been instituted at the University of Connecticut.

The Evolution of an FYE Mentor Training/Support Program

David Ouimette
Executive Director - First Year Programs
University of Connecticut
869-486-3378
david.ouimette@uconn.edu

Kevin Sullivan
Director of Academic Support
University of Connecticut
860-486-3378
kevin.sullivan@uconn.edu

"To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any other exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, the steady intention almost of the whole life to this object." - Henry David Thoreau

At the University of Connecticut (UConn), undergraduate mentors play a key role in First Year Experience (FYE) classes (150+sections) as they support first year students (3500+) with the transition from high school to college. Mentors work cooperatively with their volunteer instructor, serving as a role model for first-year students. The philosophy of preparing students to mentor is focused on their own personal growth and development.

In this session, presenters will address the models, strategies, cognitions, and techniques presented to coach mentors in becoming the most effective, efficient players of the 'game of UConn', both in and out of the First Year Experience classroom. Session participants will be engaged in a discussion about what characteristics are necessary in an effective peer mentor and how to intentionally develop desired qualities and skills.

Mentors gain the skills essential to supporting first year students by participating in a class listed as Educational Psychology (EPSY) 3020. Through the use a three-day intensive conducted before the start of the fall semester and weekly two hour EPSY classes, mentors learn how they best manage their time, stress, information relationships and their view of themselves. In addition they learn to use online course management software, become knowledgeable of campus resources and policies, learn to facilitate discussions, and demonstrate course design. The elements and overarching concepts of EPSY 230 will be discussed with session participants and the course syllabus will be distributed.

Throughout this session, presenters will collaborate with participants to determine effective processes for preparing undergraduate mentors for the First Year Experience.

Community Service and Philanthropy in the First-Year Seminar

Jeremy Grossman
Honors Peer Leader

University of Florida
954-557-2634
jeremyg5@ufl.edu

Melissa Johnson
Assistant Director of the Honors Program
University of Florida
352-392-1519
mjohnson@honors.ufl.edu

Honors Professional Development, a class designed specifically for honors freshmen, seeks to expose first-year students to the various opportunities at the University of Florida, including undergraduate research, internships, and studying abroad. Getting to know the Gainesville community is one of the biggest components of the class curriculum. Students' exposure to this element of college happens in several different ways, including our community service day and our local philanthropy.

Each student is required to participate in a service plunge, where students can choose amongst several different service projects to attend for 3 to 5 hours. Last year, close to 150 honors students participated simultaneously in seven different service projects throughout the Gainesville community. The plunge allowed students to become acquainted with service agencies in the community. Students volunteered for more than 400 hours combined.

The other main component is our annual Superchallenge philanthropy. The Superchallenge combines a supply drive for the Girls Club of Alachua County with a field day competition. The challenge pits different class sections against each other to collect the most points. All supplies collected were given a pre-determined point value, and these points counted for 2/3 of the team's score. The rest of the score was determined by performance at the field day.

In this presentation, we will discuss the benefits of participating in civic engagement-type activities as part of freshman experience courses. We will divide the majority of our time between discussing the service plunge and the philanthropy events, so participants will leave with a detailed guide to creating their own similar events. We will leave the last 10-15 minutes for questions.

Designing a Professional Development Curriculum for First-Year Students

Melissa Johnson
Assistant Director, Honors Program
University of Florida
352-392-1519
mjohnson@honors.ufl.edu

Jeremy Grossman
Peer Leader
University of Florida
jeremyg5@ufl.edu

Michael Flegiel
Peer Leader
University of Florida
mflegiel@ufl.edu

This session will highlight components of a successful professional development course at the University of Florida. Although the course is offered to first-year honors students at UF, the course design can be applied to any first-year audience. We will focus on course topics and requirements for this presentation, and we will provide participants with copies of the syllabus and several activities.

Regarding course topics, we will discuss what types of academic involvement should be presented to first-year students and how. We have found that while most of our students are adept at finding student organizations to join, most do not know how to find academic opportunities during their first semester. Many express an interest in study abroad or research, but they don't know where to start or how to fit those opportunities into their 4-year plan. We coordinate panels of upper-division honors students who have participated in those types of activities and are willing to share their experiences and tips for involvement with first-year students. The panels tend to pique the interest of our students, and they begin to consider those opportunities more seriously.

Regarding course requirements, we will explain and provide examples of different components such as weekly online discussion topics, resume and interview critiques, common reading discussions, and our Gator Adventure Project where students pair up to explore the local community. We will also briefly share information about other community-building activities designed to help students bond not only within their own class, but also with the other sections of the course.

Assessing a First-Year Seminar for Honors Students

Michael Flegiel
Undergraduate Researcher
University of Florida
727.420.7859
mflegiel@ufl.edu

Melissa Johnson
Honors Program Assistant Director
University of Florida
352.392.1519
mjohnson@honors.ufl.edu

This presentation will be the end product of a semester long project assessing the course Honors First Year Florida / Honors Professional Development, developed under a grant from the UF University Scholars Program. The presentation is intended to inform interested individuals about the assessed student outcomes for the course gathered from various qualitative data. Data presented will include photos, specific student responses, and general observations of the impact the course had on students. Furthermore, this presentation, if accepted, will satisfy the conference presentation clause specified by the grant under which this assessment was conducted.

The main body of evidence this project will present will consist of qualitative data gathered from focus groups and open ended surveys administered to students who were freshman in the UF Honors Program at any point between Fall '05 and Spring '08. From the data collected via the focus groups and surveys the project aims to gather student perceptions of how the course Honors First Year Florida / Honors Professional Development impacted their involvement with campus opportunities such as research, study abroad, and internships, as well as with their general academic success and satisfaction with the college. To better understand the impact the

course had, survey takers and focus group participants will be divided into two cohorts, with one consisting of honors students who were enrolled in the course and a second cohort consisting of honors students who did not enroll in the course. There are two main reasons for such a separation. One, a comparison of the overall level of involvement, academic success, and general satisfaction may be made between students who were enrolled in the class and those who were not; and two, the impact the class had on students may be better isolated from more general experiences shared by all first year students.

Evaluating a Peer-Led Learning Community Program

Leilani Takeuchi
Coordinator, First-Year Programs
University of Hawaii at Manoa
(808)956-7513
leilani.takeuchi@hawaii.edu

First-Year Programs (FYP) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) utilizes multiple approaches to evaluate student support and program success. FYP includes Access to College Excellence Learning Communities (ACE) and Freshman Seminars (FS). Students participating in ACE take 2-3 courses together with a one-credit freshman success course led by an undergraduate peer mentor. FS are three-credit courses led by undergraduate seminar leaders under the direction of senior faculty. Institutional data is used to measure retention rates for students participating in ACE and FS. Qualitative data and feedback is collected through focus groups and surveys. In addition, ACE students complete two surveys: in August, ACE students complete a survey of their college expectations and aspirations; in December, students complete a second survey asking about their actual experiences. Survey questions measure institutional commitment and social integration. Students also answer questions connected to course learning outcomes.

Fall 2007 results indicate that ACE students enter UHM with high expectations of academic success and utilization of campus resources. Students do not utilize resources and services as much as predicted; however, they know where to locate these services. At the end of the semester, students felt more confident utilizing UHM technology and felt significantly more informed about core graduation requirements, major requirements, and registration procedures. At the end of the semester, students also felt significantly more connected to the university community and planned to participate in co-curricular activities.

Fall 2008 ACE student expectation surveys were completed online, increasing the response rate to nearly 90%. In addition to students completing a post-survey and participating in focus groups, FYP will expand its evaluation by collecting Drop-Failure-Withdraw (DFW) rates for classes offered as part of an ACE learning community. DFW rates will be calculated for students in an ACE cluster compared to the course's overall DFW rate.

Many Approaches to Supporting Student Success: MAP-Works at Multiple Campuses

Robin Brierton
Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Programs, College of Business Administration
University of Illinois at Chicago
312-413-8613
robin@uic.edu

Cathy Brinjak

Director, Academic Advisement Services and FYRST Seminar and Assistant Professor
Slippery Rock University
(724) 738-2009
cathy.brinjak@sru.edu

April Longwell
Coordinator of the Learning Communities and Summer Reading Program and Director of the
Honors Program and Assistant Professor
Slippery Rock University
(724) 738-2732

Aaron Scott
Graduate Assistant, Administrative Services
University of Arkansas
479-575-3951
ajscott@uark.edu

“If we have learned anything over the years in our attempts to improve student retention, it is that the earlier one attends to a problem or potential problem, the easier it is to deal with that problem and the less likely it is that it will manifest itself in the form of student withdrawal.” (Tinto, 1993, p.171)

Especially pertinent to Tinto’s comment is the fact that, for students making the transition from high school to college, the first year is particularly important to their success. This period can set the tone for what students expect, how much they get involved, and what they experience (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1992). Institutions have developed various learning communities, programs, and early start programs to ease that transition. As institutions focus on student success, it is important that various constituencies within those institutions share responsibilities, provide timely feedback, and initiate interactions to support the learning process.

A national survey project provides quality information and to share the responsibility for student success. The project is titled Making Achievement Possible Works (MAP-Works) because it is structured, literally, to help make student achievement possible and to focus on early interventions. This year, the project was utilized on more than 40 campuses nationwide. Although every campus is using the same system, each implementation is tailored to match programs, campus culture, and students served. In addition, MAP-Works involves different departments (i.e. residence halls, academic advising, enrollment management, first-year experience, etc.) Therefore, much can be learned from those participating in MAP-Works regarding the variety as well as best practices in supporting first-year students across a wide range of campuses. This presentation specifically includes multiple campuses; each campus will bring their own perspective and experiences.

First Contact: The New Student Meeting at the University of Iowa

Michael Davis
Academic Advisor
University of Iowa
319-353-5700
michael-w-davis@uiowa.edu

The University of Iowa Academic Advising Center offers a proactive advising program for first-year students. Each advisor works with a specific caseload of students. The advising

relationship begins when students and advisors meet during summer orientation. Advisors expect to meet with each student a minimum of three times in the fall semester for a new student meeting, planning appointment and registration appointment. The focus of this poster session is the New Student Meeting (NSM).

NSMs provide a positive point of contact, reconnecting first-semester students and academic advisors in the early weeks of fall semester. NSMs lay the groundwork for the student-advisor relationship, communicate information on university procedures and policies that impact students in their first semester and introduce students to major requirements. Students learn—early on— what they can expect from advisors and what advisors expect of them. NSMs are delivered in both small-group and one-on-one sessions. Advisors use varied approaches in these meetings, including learning syllabi. According to a 2001 AAC phone survey, student satisfaction with NSMs is high.

NSMs may also serve as an “early alert” for students who are struggling with their transition. A 2006 Center pilot study on first-semester students who missed advising appointments indicates the value of student-advisor meetings. This study is being conducted again in the Fall 2008 semester. The results will be incorporated into the poster session.

This poster session shares the framework and expectations of the NSM along with approaches used by advisors to communicate information on academics and advisor support. Handouts include sample NSM agendas, learning syllabi, and information on the studies mentioned above.

Bridging the Gap: Teaching Research Skills to Incoming Student-Athletes

Tami Albin
Undergraduate Instruction and Outreach Librarian
University of Kansas
785-864-8926
albin@ku.edu

Julie Petr
Social Sciences Librarian
University of Kansas
785-864-1773
jpetr@ku.edu

The University of Kansas Libraries has partnered with the University athletic department for the last two summers to offer a one-hour credit information literacy course, LA&S 292: Research Methods and Information Literacy, for incoming student-athletes. This presentation will describe how the class was developed, uniquely collaborating with both the athletic department and the University Writing Center. In essence, we partnered to create a mini “learning community” for these students.

In 2005, the NCAA sanctioned the University of Kansas to develop a Bridge Program for incoming student-athletes that would allow them to receive financial aid for Summer School. This is advantageous for the incoming freshmen because they have an opportunity to adjust to academic life and course expectations gradually over the summer. To participate, the student-athletes are required to enroll in six academic hours. Typically, a student takes a three-credit general education class and a two-credit life skills training class (PRE 101) that is offered through the Athletics Department. This leaves the need for a one-credit class. The KU Athletics Department met with their KU Libraries liaison about developing a one-credit class to

fill this need and in the summer of 2007, the first LA&S 292 was offered.

Feedback from this course resulted in a stronger infrastructure of collaboration. The Libraries, working with the PRE 101 instructor, designed a six-week curriculum that gave the students the skills they needed to write a research paper that was assigned in their PRE 101 class. A Writing Center staff member taught two of the class sessions, focusing on how to formulate a thesis statement and on how to avoid plagiarism. Throughout the six-week course, the instructors met weekly with the PRE 101 instructor and the Writing Center staff member, to ensure that our instructions were aligned.

Summer Program for First-Year Students

Stephanie Mayberry
Assistant Director, Center for Academic Resources and Enrichment Services
University of Kentucky
859-323-6347
stephanie.mayberry@uky.edu

Toni Thomas
Director
University of Kentucky
859-323-6347
toni@uky.edu

Vernida Emerson
Learning Specialist
University of Kentucky
859-323-6347
Vjemer2@email.uky.edu

The presentation will include the overall coordination of the Freshman Summer Program. The power point presentation will include the planning, budget, recruitment, campus collaborations, and the day-to-day operation of the program. The planning of the program is a continuous year-round project. We begin with the recruitment of prospective students during the fall semester in the form of UK Preview Nights and Come See for Yourself programs. The recruitment concludes with regional meetings in which the FSP staff travels to various areas of the state to interview and inform prospective students about the expectations and commitment it takes to succeed in the program.

Beginning in the spring semester collaboration begins with various campus units including, but not limited to summer conference housing, dining services, English and math departments, admissions, registrar, and student ID office. It is essential to maintain a working relationship with these offices to keep the program running smoothly. We will provide sample daily schedules for students in order to give attendees an idea of a typical day for students participating in the program. We will also provide detail about the study skills, workshops, cultural/social and educational activities. We will conclude the presentation by opening the floor to questions, comments, and suggestions.

Online Summer Peer Mentoring: Keeping the Connection from Orientation to Welcome Weekend

Christy Metzger

Associate Director, First Year Initiatives
University of Louisville
502-852-3200
cametz03@louisville.edu

At University of Louisville, CAPS Leader Peer Mentors use Blackboard, e-mail and Facebook to engage incoming students and help them transition to college and bridge the 7-week gap between summer orientation and Welcome Weekend/the start of the academic year. The presenter will share how we have developed, implemented, and assessed the summer peer mentor program, as well as modifications we will make for its third year.

Included in the presentation will be the process through which the program was developed, what goals we intended to achieve, the campus partners who made the 2007 pilot happen, and how we assessed the program in its first and second years. Copies of the assessment instruments and basic findings will be shared.

I will also discuss the specifics of mentor training and the structure and implementation of the summer program, as well as the benefits and pitfalls of an all on-line mentor program which takes place before classes start. The training guide and weekly lesson plans that the CAPS Leaders follow will be reviewed, as well as mentor reporting via contact logs, and the kinds of information that we can pull from Blackboard reports. The presentation will be structured such that participants can use our program as a template for programming on their campus, and understand what resources and information they would need to get such a program going.

Summer Bridge Program and Beyond: First-Year Experience Intensified

Bernita Sims-Tucker
Interim Assoc. VP for Academic Affairs
University of Maryland Eastern Shore
410-651-6508
bsimstucker@umes.edu

Charles Williams
Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Maryland Eastern Shore
410-651-6508
cwilliams@umes.edu

This presentation details the process used by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore to provide extensive and intrusive intervention to underprepared first-time, full-time students. The program was delivered in three distinct phases. The first phase entailed a detailed analysis of data on the academic progression and persistence of the students who were admitted to the university with low SAT scores and high school GPA's. Previously, these students were served during the summer in preparatory program and admissions to the university were predicated on satisfactory completion of the summer curricula. Data revealed that the progression and persistence of these students was no better or worse than the progression and persistence of the regular admit students.

Phase Two involved the creation of new summer program. This program admitted students prior to attending summer session; however, students were required to attend summer session in order to gain admissions. Highly qualified and motivated instructors, tutors, and mentors were selected for the program. Students in the program were required to enroll in two 3-credit classes during the summer. The program required students to participate in three-hours a day highly

structured math and English instruction. This instruction included lecture, study group and math/English computer lab time.

Phase Three of the intervention involved enrolling the summer participants in learning communities, which included specific designated sections of the first-year experience seminar. The learning community type selected was linked/paired courses. The students were grouped and linked in English, Sociology, Psychology and Biology classes. This learning community model requires students to participate in study-groups for the linked courses.

The Role of Technology in FYE Classes

Robert S. Feldman
Associate Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
413-577-1203
feldman@sbs.umass.edu

Summary: None

First-Year Seminars and First-Year Composition: A Writing Studies Approach

Tom Reynolds
Associate Professor, Department of Writing Studies
University of Minnesota
612-626-0065
reyno004@umn.edu

Pat Bruch
Associate Professor, Department of Writing Studies
University of Minnesota
612-625-6041
patbruch@umn.edu

This presentation by two faculty members in the relatively new area of Writing Studies will address the subject of how writing instruction in freshman seminars may be articulated with the first-year composition class. Often, the freshman seminar is a substitute for the composition class. Here, presenters offer a “writing studies” approach that presents the freshman seminar as a complement to the composition class. Both are worthwhile, in our view, and can form an effective introduction to academic writing in a university setting.

In the first part of our presentation, the presenters frame the thorny problem of coherence of writing instruction across the four-year curriculum. Of particular importance, we note a gulf between the student writing experience of the composition course and the writing that is done in “content” courses. Concepts and practices that are merely introduced in the composition course are often assumed to be mastered in, say, a history course. A middle ground might be found in the freshman seminar, where focus of content may be joined to the teaching and learning of how study and writing become knowledge in particular fields.

As the second part of the presentation, presenters discuss an approach to teaching the freshman seminar that pays equal attention to writing and the announced topic for the course. With examples from each presenter’s recently taught freshman seminar this part of the presentation will offer definite examples of a writing studies approach. Each presenter will discuss

assignments, discussions, and activities that ask students to participate in the work of creating both compositional and disciplinary knowledge. Joining these concerns gives students an opportunity to learn more completely the activities and habits of an insider working within broad areas of study, such as social science or the humanities, and eventually, in a major.

Moving Forward, Looking Back: Voices of First-Generation Students in a Multicultural Learning Community

Rashne Jehangir
Assistant Professor
University of Minnesota
612-625-3551
jehan001@umn.edu

Rhiannon Williams
PhD Candidate
University of Minnesota
612-423-1680
will1395@umn.edu

This research study interviews LI, FG students who were participants across four learning community cohorts 3-4 years after their participation in this curriculum. The aim of the study was to assess if their participation in a first-year learning community had any long-term impact on persistence and engagement in college.

The design of the Multicultural Learning Community (MLC) was twofold. First, it sought to challenge the isolation and marginalization many first-generation, low-income students experience in their first year at the university. Second, it sought to provide a safe space in which students lived experiences were valued, yet also a space in which students were challenged to critically analyze and listen to others lived experiences and viewpoints.

We will present findings from follow-up interviews of 25 students who participated in one multicultural learning community. Overall, we sought to more deeply understand how participation in the MLC affected these students over the course of their academic careers. Qualitative data analysis has revealed several themes that demonstrated students' progressive academic and social development within the academic realm. Specific themes include: disequilibrium, life-lines, claiming self, academic voice, connected knowing, and critiques of the academy. Many students' experienced a sense of disequilibrium; but using the support of faculty and peers they began to value the importance of grappling with big questions. This process of moving outside their comfort zone influenced their ability to claim self and develop and academic voice. The themes of claiming self and academic voice were characterized by a sense of belonging, strengthening one's resolve about goals and an expanded sense of confidence and accountability. Students expressed the value of the connection of curriculum to their own life stories and also felt empowered to make thoughtful critiques of the academy. The session will expand on these themes, share examples of student voices and conclude with suggestions for practice and pedagogical design.

In Their Own Words: First-Semester Challenges

Suzanne Maughan
Director of Sociology
University of Nebraska at Kearney

308-865-8763
maughanSL@unk.edu

Kristi Bryant
First Year Program Director
University of Nebraska at Kearney
308-865-8291
bryantkk@unk.edu

L. Jake Jacobsen
Lecturer in Communication
University of Nebraska at Kearney
308-865-8407
jacobsenj11@unk.edu

At a Midwest University students in the First Year Program participate in a program-level writing assessment. The writing assessment includes an essay submitted at the beginning of the fall semester and one at the end of the semester. The first prompt asks students to describe their goals and explain what they expect their highlights and challenges to be during their first semester. The second prompt asks them to reflect on their goals, assess how realistic they were, and discuss the highlights and challenges they experienced during the semester. In the course of reading essays for this assessment over a number of years, we realized that students were facing similar situations from year to year. Some challenges seem to be unique to students attending a university in a predominantly rural area while others are applicable to the majority of college freshmen. We conducted our research with a twofold purpose. First, using ethnographic methodology to code, identify and analyze those reoccurring themes; and second, with the goal of then addressing those areas of concern with our First Year students. Essay passages were coded by three trained research coders. The passages were then compared across coders and checked for inter-rater reliability. Finally, passages were analyzed and compared over both time points for each respondent. Recurring themes identify issues of student wellbeing, including social, mental, physical and emotional health. Our goal was to create a video featuring the freshman students discussing some of their concerns, how to appropriately handle their problems, and resources available both on campus and in the community.

Beyond Summer School: Summer Learning Community Effectiveness for Pre-First-Year Students

Carrie Petr
Academic Adviser and Coordinator, NU Start
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
402-472-6939
cpetr2@unl.edu

NU Start, the summer learning community at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is regarded as a successful programmatic effort to integrate new freshmen into campus life, and a strong example of effective learning community work for pre-freshmen. The program recruits students who are above the average ACT/HS GPA profile for admitted freshmen, but is not designed for high-achievers. Rather, it serves students who are academically-minded and eager to begin their college career. Many participants come to NU Start to make new friends and gain comfort with the campus prior to the beginning of school. During the three-week NU Start experience, students take a common course (a general education literature course) and complete a variety of co-curricular and social activities aimed at increasing student awareness of campus

and encouraging connectivity among participants.

This study examines the 5-year retention and academic achievement information for participants through paired t-test analysis, and indicates that participants emerge from their freshman year with a higher cumulative grade point average and a higher rate of retention than their peers. This statistical information is coupled with qualitative case study research which focuses on how summer learning communities affect student academic expectations and performance.

The session will present the research design and implementation and describe in-depth results and outcomes for program improvement and further research. Session attendees will discover how a program such as NU Start impacts freshman performance and expectations, and how they can implement a similar program on their own campuses. Furthermore, the presenter will demonstrate the manner of the program evaluation, and invite comments and discussion regarding other research gathered regarding the impact learning community participation – particularly summer programs – has upon freshman retention and achievement.

Walking Beside Students: Teaching Leadership to First-Year Students

Michael Denton
Assistant Director for New Student and Leadership Programs
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
704-687-7529
mdenton@uncc.edu

This program will examine the evolution, achieved objectives, assessment and remaining challenges of a living-learning community focused on building leadership capacity. A presentation on the pedagogical approaches and challenges for creating leaders and teaching leadership will be a large component of this program, particularly using service learning to create leadership learning opportunities. The various theories and approaches to leadership that we have used these past four years will be examined and a review of the literature available to teach students leadership, along with a brief review of the pros and cons of each.

We will also touch on the impact of living together on learning, classroom engagement, and other program aspects. Methods for creating engagement and setting up expectations will be shared. Creating expectations begins during student recruitment into the program and so marketing and selection strategies will be shared.

This program will discuss the evolution of the program and rationale for changes, most of which were made because of formal and informal feedback from students. Our assessment measures (both successful and failed) will be shared, along with the results and implications. A major component of discussion will be “how do you measure leadership”? This program also exists to serve as a forum for the interaction of the participants to address issues our and other programs have faced, such as a discussion on pedagogical approaches, assessment.

Learning Communities and Enrollment Management: Crossroads, Possibilities, and Potential

Rob Umbaugh
Director of Learning Communities
University of Northern Colorado
970-351-1175

robert.umbaugh@unco.edu

This program will begin by figuring out whom is in attendance, and what they are facing at their institution. This is done intentionally so that conversations started here can continue once we leave the room and conference. We will move to a discussion about common issues faced by all of us as we grow these programs (through a reflective exercise and resulting sharing). Once we have identified the commonalities, we will focus on 1) if any of us have successfully navigated through that process on our campus, and 2) our struggles with some of the processes we are currently trying to navigate. Some of the outcomes will lead to solutions, some solutions will be shared, and additional issues may be raised that will help us anticipate and navigate what is yet to come.

Living-Learning Communities: Bringing the Campus Together to Support Academics Outside the Classroom

Marilyn Linton

Associate Vice Provost of Undergraduate Studies; Director of First-Year Programs; Associate Professor, Department of German and Scandinavia

University of Oregon

541-346-1241

mlinton@uoregon.edu

Kevin Hatfield

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of History; Assistant Director for Academic Initiatives, Residence Life, University Housing

University of Oregon

541-346-1977

kevhat@uoregon.edu

Barbara Jenkins

Head, Reference Department, UO Libraries

University of Oregon

541-346-1925

jenkins@uoregon.edu

Amy Hughes-Giard

Freshman Interest Group Adviser

University of Oregon

541-346-1079

agiard@uoregon.edu

The session critically analyzes the intended and actualized learning outcomes of three co-curricular living-learning communities designed to enrich the established Freshman Interest Group (FIG) and Freshman Seminar curriculum at the University of Oregon. Additionally, the presenters will explain how these living-learning initiatives contribute to the cross-functional integration of undergraduate studies and student affairs, and catalyze the lateral exchanges of ideas and strategies regarding first-year student retention, development, and success between Residence Life professionals and academic faculty. Finally, the presentation will explore how upper-class student staff leaders—both FIG Academic Assistants (FAs) and Resident Assistants (RAs)—serve as peer mentors and “model learners” for first-year students within these three living learning communities.

The Undergraduate Practicum adopts a tutorial instructional model that enables students to

conduct an extended apprenticeship within a specific discipline or interdisciplinary field of study. Co-instructed by faculty and upper-class peer mentors, the practicum refocuses students from content mastery to inquiry-based research and analysis of the essential questions, methodology, and pedagogy of the disciplines. Students enjoy a breadth of experience through strategic collaborations with academic departments, research units, libraries, museums, and partnering cultural/art institutions. The session will share the learning outcomes from the Spring 2008 “Music & Censorship” practicum that engaged the scholarship and research of renowned Russian ethnomusicologist Dr. Margarita Mazo and Dr. Richard Taruskin.

The Community Conversations series sponsors six academic events each term, and is co-produced by two residential student academic groups. Two residential student academic groups co-produce the series and coordinate outreach to faculty, graduate students, and community leaders to serve as speakers, moderators, and facilitators. The events range from field research trips to hands-on workshops, panel discussions, and formal debates; and collectively strive to extend the academic enterprise outside the classroom and stimulate intellectual curiosity, contrarian debate, undergraduate research, and experiential/dialogic learning among the 3,600 residential students (of which 85% are first-year students). Perhaps most importantly, the series offer an invaluable venue for students to learn about the world-class research and scholarship performed by faculty at this AAU institution

Student organizers of SuperNova craft a series of “Educational Entertainment” events emulating the successful PBS program “Nova.” SuperNova showcases faculty, graduate, and undergraduate research performed in the field, laboratory, and archives within a “fire-side chat” environment. Although first-year students may catch glimpses of the research performed by academic faculty in their courses, SuperNova events encourage faculty to “open the curtain” and expand first-year students understanding of the full professional portfolio of a university faculty member at a large research institution. SuperNova events “demystify” and “humanize” faculty, and raise important educational and professional career questions for students that transcend the thematic or scheduling framework of regular courses.

Connecting Students Sooner: A Review of Successful Pre-Matriculation Initiatives

Karin Asher
Assistant Director for the First Year Experience, Office of Residence Life
University of Pittsburgh
412-648-1200
kmp15@pitt.edu

Jocelyn Cilik
Coordinator, New & Commuter Student Programs
University of Pittsburgh
412-648-7897
jab75@pitt.edu

Kenyon Bonner
Associate Dean of Students and Director of Student Life
University of Pittsburgh
412-648-1010
krb14@pitt.edu

The session’s introduction will include information about the University of Pittsburgh such as institution size, type, student demographics, and data about retention of first year students.

The intended outcomes for First Year Experience initiatives at the University will be discussed, including:

- Increase first-year student retention and success
- Accelerate and enhance students' sense of belonging and connectivity to the Pitt community

Presenters will then discuss the implementation and assessment of four successful pre-matriculation programs utilized at the University of Pittsburgh:

Life on Campus Session

This session provides an introduction to student life during students' summer academic orientation. Students and parents are acquainted with Student Affairs programs and services, watch a series of skits about college life, and break into discussion groups with First Year Mentors. Participant evaluations have demonstrated a high rate of satisfaction with the program

Virtual Residence Hall Communities

Incoming first year students are invited to join a "virtual community" through Facebook designed to introduce them to their residence hall floor or commuter group. Over 80% of students participated in their virtual community prior to arriving on campus, and RAs have the opportunity to share information in a useful forum.

Pitt Odyssey

This series of retreats provided incoming Pitt students with the opportunity to interact with a small group of peers in an off-campus adventure setting. The content of the experience centered around Pitt pride, history, and traditions. Pre and post-survey data indicate a high level of satisfaction.

Resident Assistant Welcome Calls

A final outreach prior to arrival & Orientation, RA Welcome Calls give incoming students the opportunity to ask any last-minute questions and increase connection to the community.

The session will conclude with comments and input from participants, questions, and advice about implementing and assessing pre-matriculation programs.

Enhancing Learning Outcomes for First-Year Geography Students

Graham Jordan

First Year Coordinator, Geographical Sciences and Planning

University of Queensland

07 33656529

g.jordan2@uq.edu.au

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS), also known as Supplementary Instruction (SI) in other institutions, were introduced in Geographical Sciences and Planning (GSP) at the University of Queensland, St. Lucia campus in 1995, albeit on a small scale of one PASS a week in one course. With the appointment of a first year coordinator in 2005, PASS expanded in GSP to eight, first year courses with an enrolment >1000 students and 15 student leaders. Attendance varies from 20% to 38% of course enrolment and sessions are run by high achieving, second or third year students. The PASS program aims to improve the quality of learning and is voluntary, student-centered and student-directed with a focus on providing self- and peer-formative assessment with immediate feedback within an interactive and collaborative learning environment. The poster provides a graphic snapshot of the impact of PASS on enhancing student's grades in a foundation geography course, GEOS1100, and highlights the importance

of PASS for average achievers in raising their grades proportionately more than other groups. The poster also illustrates attendance trends across a semester expressed as the percentage of the course enrolment attending PASS. Graphed data on attrition rates in GEOS1100 supports the contention that the expansion of PASS has stabilized attrition rates in this course to between 8-10 percent. Feedback from students who attend PASS sessions is consistently positive and their support for the program has resulted in its continued expansion.

The Challenges of Teaching for Engaged Citizenship in the First College Year: The Role of Cognitive-Structural Theories

Tracy Skipper

Editorial Projects Coordinator, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

University of South Carolina

(803) 777-6226

tlskippe@mailbox.sc.edu

Educating citizens for participation in democracy has been an enduring mission of American higher education. Whether through a focus on developing rhetorical skills, nurturing a critical consciousness, or using the tools of scholarly analysis to investigate everyday experience, the first-year composition course in particular and the core curriculum in general has attempted to provide students with a range of skills needed for engaged citizenship. In enacting such pedagogies, instructors have sometimes met with outright resistance from students. At other times, instructors have found that students' persuasive or analytical writing is mechanical and formulaic, lacking the depth such pedagogies seek to cultivate. Cognitive-structural theories of development may offer new insight into explaining why students sometimes resist and frequently struggle to achieve the learning outcomes associated with pedagogies of engagement. The speaker describes a qualitative study, informed by Marcia Baxter Magolda's Epistemological Reflection Model and Patricia King and Karen Kitchener's Reflective Judgment Model that examined the experiences of students in an argument-focused first-year composition course. Drawing on this study and research on cognitive-structural development during college, the speaker highlights the usefulness of these theories for shaping a range of pedagogies in the composition classroom and in a variety of other general education settings. In doing so, the speaker addresses the ways such pedagogies may facilitate increasing cognitive complexity while acknowledging the ways in which cognitive maturity may limit students' abilities to achieve the thoughtful analysis central to engaged citizenship.

15 Years and 1,200 Peer Leaders Later, University 101 Shares History and Steps for Success

Jennifer Latino

Assistant Director of University 101

University of South Carolina

803-777-8869

latino@mailbox.sc.edu

Katharine Pei

Graduate Assistant

University of South Carolina

803-777-1861

peik@mailbox.sc.edu

The presenters will engage learners in a conversation aimed at answering the following questions:

1. How are we as educators effectively shaping a leadership-learning environment for students charged with the responsibility of student transition?
2. How can we ensure longevity in peer educator programs while maintaining excellence?
3. What are the essential elements of a peer educator program?
4. What role does assessment play in continually bettering a peer educator program?

Institutions nationwide and internationally are recognizing the benefits of utilizing undergraduate students to assist in the education of first-year students. The University of South Carolina has been engaged in this work for over 15 years. This presentation will present concepts surrounding the recruitment, selection and training of peer educators. The presenters will encourage and explain effective methods for creating an environment that not only focuses on the successful achievement of program outcomes but also engages undergraduate students in leadership learning through their peer leader experience. Presenters will share a brief review of literature and research surrounding peer educators.

Presenters will share best practices surrounding recruitment and selection of peer educators and invite participants to share their challenges and successes in these areas. University 101 Peer Leaders are recruited and selected based on high academic standards, extensive campus involvement and demonstration of leadership skills and knowledge of campus resources. A variety of methods are used to ensure that the recruitment and selection processes reach a broad array of undergraduate students. These methods will be highlighted and details of each stage will be shared with participants.

Presenters for this program will educate participants about the essential elements of training programs that not only prepare peer educators for their job functions but also enhance the experience of the peer educator and focus on leadership development. The presenters will showcase the training programs of several effective peer educator programs.

The presenters bring extensive experience from a diverse array of institution and program types working with first-year students in areas of new student orientation, first-year seminar courses, and academic leadership development programs and curricula.

Is it Possible to Sustain Individual Spirituality, Authenticity, Wholeness, and Self-Renewal in the Academy Today?

M. Stuart Hunter

Assistant Vice Provost and Executive Director, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

University of South Carolina

803-777-4761

stuarth@mailbox.sc.edu

Jean M. Henscheid

Journal Editor, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

University of South Carolina

208-883-8191

henscheidj@earthlink.net

John N. Gardner

Executive Director

Policy Center on the First Year of College
828-966-5309
gardner@fyfoundations.org

Summary: None

Publishing on the College Student Experience

Tracy Skipper
Editorial Projects Coordinator, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition
University of South Carolina
803-777-6226
tlskippe@mailbox.sc.edu

Jean M. Henscheid
Journal Editor, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition
University of South Carolina
208-883-8191
henscheidj@earthlink.net

Barbara Tobolowsky
Associate Director, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition
University of South Carolina
803-777-5193
barbarat@mailbox.sc.edu

Session Outline:

The Research Article
Focus and audience for Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition
Strategies for crafting a publishable article
General considerations
Literature review
Method
Results
Implications
Research we'd like to see
The Newsletter Article
Focus and audience for E-Source for College Transitions
Strategies for crafting a publishable article
Differences between newsletter and journal
Outline for typical article
Articles we'd like to see
The Book or Monograph Chapter
Focus and audience for The First-Year Experience Monograph Series
Strategies for crafting a publishable chapter
Relevance
Currency
Readability and Organization
Supported Assertions

Book-length projects we'd like to pursue
Questions

Handouts:
Submission guidelines for NRC publications
Journal article review form
Monograph chapter review form

A Multi-Campus Study of the Perceived Effects of First-Year Seminars on the Experience of Students in Their First Semester of College

Stephanie Foote
Director, Academic Success Center and First-Year Experience
University of South Carolina Aiken
(803) 641-3321
stephanief@usca.edu

This study broadens the understanding of the value of first-year seminars in the undergraduate experience by examining how students perceive the influence of this course on their experience in the first semester of college. Specifically, the study addresses the following exploratory research questions: a. What are students' perceptions of the influence, if any, of first-year seminars on their experience; b. How do these perceptions vary based on the background characteristics of the students and the type of course taken; c. To what extent do students report that their perceptions of influence relate to: expectations about the course, course content, how the course is taught, what was learned in the course, frequency and context of instructor-student interactions outside of the classroom, and out-of-class interactions with peers?

The findings of this study illuminate the experience of first-year students – helping faculty and staff begin to understand more fully the impact first-year seminars can have on students – and providing these instructors with information to help them develop their course pedagogies to better meet the needs of their first-year students, and to emphasize the areas most likely to positively influence student success. The data collected in this study can also be used to create institutional policy related to first-year seminars.

Further, the findings will provide seminar directors with a framework they can apply to better understand the effects, beyond retention, that this course can have on their first-year students. This knowledge may help seminar directors adapt their course so it better supports the needs of their students, and identify ways in which they can encourage and support the instructors who teach this course on their campus. It may also provide a framework for future evaluation of other first-year seminars – allowing seminar professionals a mechanism to identify the perceptions their first-year students' have about the seminar.

Stuck in a Rut With Your Week of Welcome Program?

Keri Riegler
Director, New Student Connections
University of South Florida
813-974-9693
keririegler@sa.usf.edu

Victor Teschel
Graduate Assistant

University of South Florida
813-974-8013
vteschel@sa.usf.edu

The presentation's main purpose is to foster discussion between participants regarding their campuses Week of Welcome programs. Individuals will be placed into small groups to create opportunities for in-depth discussion from all participants. Discussion topics will include: determining key university and community partners (on and off campus) to invite to participate in the planning process in order to get started, the benefits of creating campus-wide tradition, and enhancing student participation during the planning process. After the small group discussions, participants will report any best practice recommendations to the group. Based on the ideas generated during the discussion, the presenters will compile recommendations for best practices when creating a comprehensive campus-wide Week of Welcome program.

A Twist on Summer Bridge

Christine Zielinski
Director, Academic Resource Center
University of St. Francis
815-740-5067
Czielinski@stfrancis.edu

Dorothy Resh
Associate Professor of Biology
University of St. Francis
815-740-3472
dresh@stfrancis.edu

Adjusting to college expectations can be difficult for many students. They must learn to develop their new learning skills and strategies, and make their adjustments to a new life at the same time they are beginning studies that have heightened demands, a formidable task for many. Summer bridge programs have concentrated on students-at-risk, "fixing" the deficiencies and teaching learning strategies, but students still must learn to make their learning modifications as they proceed through their first courses. They still get surprised by the expectations of those courses; often they discover how to adapt the needed changes only after their grades are adversely affected. And often students other than those designated at-risk experience the same challenges.

Summer Academy took the idea of summer bridge and set a different target audience and goals for the program. This presentation will provide the goals for the program, the strategies used to obtain the goals, the structure of the program, and the results, including opportunities for improvement.

Perhaps one comment from a participant sums up the feelings and discovery of the students in Summer Academy: "What I did in high school won't make it here." The test of the program is if this awakening carries over into the student behaviors during their first semester.

Assessing Summer Bridge Programs: A Multi-Level Approach

James DeVita
Research Associate, Center for Higher Education Research & Policy
University of Tennessee-Knoxville

(865) 974-2216
jdevita@utk.edu

Tricia McClam
Professor & Associate Department Head, Educational Psychology & Counseling
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
(865) 974-3845
mcclam@utk.edu

Terrell L. Strayhorn
Associate Professor & Special Assistant to the Provost, Educational Leadership & Policy
Studies
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
(865) 974-2216
strayhorn@utk.edu

Laura Crisp
Graduate Assistant
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
(865) 974-8145
lcrisp@utk.edu

Tara Jungersen
Graduate Assistant
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
(865) 974-8864
tjungers@utk.edu

In 2008, the University of Tennessee developed a summer bridge program for at-risk students through the Provost's Office. Similar to other programs, the UT LEAD Summer Institute (UTLSI) is designed to facilitate the academic and social development of at-risk students necessary for success in college. Several variables were used to identify at-risk students, including racial/ethnic minority status, low-income, and first generation status, among others. The 5-week program required participants to enroll in 2 academic courses and engage in several experiential activities throughout the first summer session.

To determine the overall effectiveness of the Institute and which aspects of the Institute contributed to specific developmental outcomes, a comprehensive assessment plan was developed and implemented using a concurrent mixed methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The assessment team was composed of 2 faculty members, 4 doctoral students (also course instructors), and 2 program administrators. In addition to utilizing multiple stakeholders, several sources of data were collected at the class, course, program and institutional level: (a) pre- and post-test survey on developmental outcomes; (b) program evaluation; (c) pre- and post-test reflections; (d) end-of-class reflections; (e) teacher evaluations; and (f) high school and college transcript data. Several data analysis techniques were employed to determine the extent to which the Institute achieved its original goals and objectives

This session will provide an in-depth review of the assessment plan previously described, survey questions used (quantitative and qualitative data), and results of data analysis. Additionally, participants will be encouraged to think about ways in which they can construct a similar comprehensive assessment plan for their own campus. Our discussion will focus on the use of locally constructed surveys, standardized instruments, and existing data such as students'

transcripts.

Academic Libraries and OneBook: Enhancing the First-Year Experience

Evelyn Barker
Information Literacy Librarian
University of Texas at Arlington
817-272-6064
ebarker@uta.edu

Gretchen Trkay
Instruction & Information Literacy Librarian
University of Texas at Arlington
817-272-7434
gtrkay@uta.edu

The intended audience for our presentation is educators and administrators who have the responsibility for common reading programs or who are seeking to establish such a program. The presentation will focus on maximizing the use of your college library in a common reading program by showing how the University of Texas at Arlington Library has become an essential partner in UT Arlington's OneBook effort.

Discussion topics will include:

OneBook selection committee involvement. Librarians bring a non-discipline-specific perspective, contributing a broad point of view to the selection process. Librarians also have facility with and awareness of appropriate databases to provide the committee with reviews, information about prospective authors, and suggestions for complementary subjects or books. Furthermore, the library can acquire books which support the shared reading program and its chosen theme.

Online and print study guides for students. UT Arlington Library researches and designs a study guide for students. The guide includes a biography of the author, pronunciations and definitions of terms, and maps and charts that illustrate key concepts of the book. Online, librarians prepare subject guides that point to reviews or discussions about the book, as well as bibliographies and databases useful for researching topics related to the book.

Use of facilities. UT Arlington Library offers classroom and meeting space for special events and hosts programs related to OneBook.

Promotion efforts including bookmarks, exhibits, posters, and fliers. The library creates bookmarks featuring the selected OneBook and including useful information like the year's scheduled OneBook events. The library also produces and distributes fliers related to OneBook events held in the Library. Exhibits highlight library collections related to the OneBook theme.

Innovative library instruction geared specifically to the OneBook. The library's instruction department develops innovative research methods classes incorporating OneBook for freshmen English classes. For example, for the book *The Kite Runner*, librarians developed "The Afghan-American Experience: Finding Truth in *The Kite Runner*" which combined basic research skills and geographic information systems.

Focus Up Front: Engaging Entering Students

Angela Oriano-Darnall
Assistant Director, Survey of Entering Student Engagement
University of Texas at Austin
512.475.6526
oriano-darnall@ccsse.org

Arleen Arnsparger
Director, Metlife Initiative on Student Success
University of Texas at Austin
303.456.5105
arnsparger@ccsse.org

Presentation Plan:

Goal: To learn how community college students experience their first several weeks of college and identify strategies that help students stay, learn and achieve their academic goals.

Through a facilitated discussion with participants, presenters will share information from new research into the entering community college student experience. Presenters/facilitators will raise questions to help participants focus their own efforts on strategies that help first-time students persist beyond the first few weeks of class.

The one-hour session will begin with an overview of SENSE (the Survey of Entering Student Engagement) and the MetLife Foundation Starting Right Initiative.

Participants will engage in a discussion about the challenges and opportunities in working with widely diverse groups of entering community college students. Drawing from the work underway with entering students in the SENSE pilot colleges, the presenters will lead a discussion about how to use data and qualitative information from students to target areas for improvement and design “front-door” strategies to increase community college students’ changes of Starting Right and achieving their academic goals. Workshop participants will have an opportunity to pose challenging questions throughout the session.

Brief video clips from focus groups with students, faculty and student services professionals will be scattered throughout the session. Participants will see and hear what students and colleagues say about the entering student experience.

Success by Design: Supporting the First-Year Seminar Instructor

Dorothy Ward
Director of the Entering Student Program
University of Texas at El Paso
915-747-8439
dpward@utep.edu

Joanne Kropp
Assistant Director, Entering Student Program
University of Texas at El Paso
915-747-5111
jtkropp@utep.edu

Ann Gabbert
Learning Communities Coordinator

University of Texas at El Paso
915-747-5329
agabbert@utep.edu

Shawna Clemente
Peer Leader Coordinator
University of Texas at El Paso
915-747-6477
ssclemente@utep.edu

The Entering Student Program at The University of Texas at El Paso offers a first-year seminar, which is a 3-credit course, to approximately 2,600 students during the academic year. An academic course with variable content related to each instructor's area of expertise, UTEP's first-year seminar (University 1301) is taught throughout the year by approximately 60 instructors. While section themes vary, all sections address the same goals and objectives.

The Entering Student Program (ESP) has 25 instructors dedicated to teaching University 1301, but to provide a sufficient number of sections and to offer major-specific themes, additional instructors are recruited from other campus units. While these instructors come with a wealth of knowledge in their disciplines, they are often less well prepared to address transitional issues and academic success skills that are important components of the course. In addition, these issues and skills must be integrated into a theme, making University 1301 a vastly different course from the teaching experience of most instructors. To help ensure program quality, ESP provides a wealth of support to both first-time and experienced University 1301 instructors.

First-time and experienced University 1301 instructors benefit from faculty development workshops and from mentoring relationships. An instructional team consisting of a peer (student) leader, academic advisor, and university librarian is assigned to each section to provide additional course support. Also provided are a textbook written specifically for University 1301 and modules, including online modules, designed to support instruction in areas such as time management, lecture note taking, and career exploration. Many University 1301 sections are in learning communities, and instructors benefit from workshops and mini-grants to support the integration of their curriculum and assignments.

This presentation will examine the various support provided to University 1301 instructors to help them deliver an effective first-year seminar to entering students.

Leadership on the Border: A Pilot Living-Learning Community at UTEP

Ann Gabbert
Learning Community Coordinator
University of Texas El Paso
915-747-5329
agabbert@utep.edu

Charles Gibbens
Director of Residence Life
University of Texas El Paso
915-747-5352
cegibbens@utep.edu

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) has been utilizing the learning community concept for over ten years. We currently offer over seventy learning communities to serve the first year

students at our institute who come from extremely diverse socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, are majority Hispanic and first generation college students. Primarily an urban commuter university with a non-traditional student body, only two percent the student body lives on campus.

Designed by a campus wide advisory committee, UTEP's Living and Learning Community provides a cohort of students with an opportunity to share common residential and academic experiences within the context of a one-year residential learning community with strongly integrated curricular and co-curricular components with a theme of Leadership on the Border. The twenty students in the initial pilot begun in Fall 2008 share core freshman courses: a critical thinking seminar course, a beginning Communications course, and optionally a large reading intensive lecture course. In the Spring semester, the students will share two classes, continue with co-curricular activities on campus and in the community, and will be encouraged to participate in and eventually become student leaders in various campus organizations such as the Student Government Association.

Goals for the program include higher levels of involvement on campus, increased persistence and retention at UTEP, increased interaction with peers and faculty, and greater integration of course material within the context of the LLC. We are employing various assessment instruments, including MAP-Works and LASSI, as well as evaluating student engagement in co-curricular activities, student persistence and retention, and academic performance compared to non-LLC students.

In Fall 2009, we will expand the program to three cohorts of at-risk students.

During our assessed institutional initiative session, we will highlight our program, present assessment data, and welcome feedback from other universities with residential learning communities.

An Examination of First-Year Students' Vocational Interest Patterns

Rachel Pickett
Post-doctoral Research Fellow
University of Utah
801.581.5640
rachel.pickett@utah.edu

Paul Gore
Assoc. Professor & Director of Institutional Analysis
University of Utah
paul.gore@utah.edu

Jane Swanson
Psychology Department Chair
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
swanson@siu.edu

Virginia Rinella
Director of Pre-Major Advisement
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
vrinella@siu.edu

Career development and exploration is an essential task for first-year college students. Self-knowledge and occupational information related to career goals can assist first-year students to make the most out of their college experience and prepare to enter the world of work.

The purpose of this study was to examine in vivo career exploratory behavior of first-year college students within the context of self-expressed interests. It was hypothesized that students would explore vocational information in DISCOVER (ACT, 1988) consistent with their UNIACT interest inventory (Swaney, 1995) results. First, it is interesting to note that students with traditionally masculine Holland (1997) types explored more consistently with their UNIACT results. Enterprising and Investigative interest types are the most prestigious according to the social value and earning potential of careers in those categories (Gottfredson, 1996, 2002); students with these types also explored more consistently. If students valued masculine and vocationally prestigious results more, and felt these results were more acceptable, it may have led them to explore more consistently. Gender and first-generation college student status issues are addressed in more detail. Another potential explanation for the differences in the consistency of exploratory behavior among interest types may be rooted in the UNIACT as an interest measure.

Secondly, it was hypothesized that individuals with different interest patterns would engage in distinct vocational exploratory behavior with respect to the kind of information they sought out about occupations and majors. Social, Realistic and Artistic (Holland, 1997) students seemed to be less likely to attend to job training information compared to their Enterprising, Conventional and Investigative counterparts. Additionally, Enterprising students appeared to spend more time looking at salary and job outlook information compared to all other interest types. Overall, results suggest that students are attending to similar occupational information regardless of their specific interest type; in general, this can be interpreted as a positive finding.

Implementing and Assessing Data-Driven Institutional Initiatives to Promote Student Success

Paul Gore
Student Success Special Projects Coordinator, Associate Professor
University of Utah
801-599-4567
paul.gore@utah.edu

Rebecca Campbell
Coordinator, Academic Transition Programs Associate Professor, Educational Psychology
Northern Arizona University
(928) 523-8225
Rebecca.Campbell@nau.edu

Louisa Phinney
Graduate Assistant
University of Utah
L.Phinney@utah.edu

We will describe two very different development and implementation strategies used to promote student readiness and student success on two different campuses (one public 4-year, rural, residential institution and one public 4-year, research intensive, metropolitan, commuter campus). Both programs are built on a data-backbone of student readiness Assessment. Both programs have also developed strategies for using student assessment data (both in aggregate and individual form) to more thoughtfully align their support services and to provide those

services in a targeted fashion to incoming students. The presentation will include both a presentation of the models and their impact on student outcomes as well as the processes and struggles faced by each institution. Part of the purpose of presenting is to share those struggles and success and to get attendees from other institutions thinking about how they would coordinate similar efforts at their own home institution.

Students as Consumers of Knowledge: Are They Buying What We're Selling?

Jill Singleton-Jackson
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology
University of Windsor
519-253-3000, x 4706
jjackson@uwindsor.ca

Jeffrey Reinhardt
Graduate Student, Department of Psychology
University of Windsor
519-253-3000, x 4706
reinharj@uwindsor.ca

This presentation will begin with a discussion of the relationship between student and university both historically and today. In their widely cited tome, *How College Affects Students*, Pascarella and Terenzini convince us that attending college exerts a lifetime impact on students ranging from income to politics (1991). However, to date there has been little research into how students affect university; meanwhile, it is becoming clear that this street runs both ways.

Participants will be engaged in an open-forum exploration of the idea of the university as a business that markets to students as customers and how this has bred a new kind of student. Students' perception of education as a product is exerting influence on the university as a cultural institution with first-year students being particularly influential. This current trend toward a customer service orientation results in some students entering college with the assumption that paying tuition is somewhat akin to purchasing knowledge and services and that university staff, faculty, and administration are here to serve and meet their needs regardless of the reasonableness of their demands (e.g., expecting nearly instantaneous response to emails).

Following the presentation of the overarching topic, focus group data (quantitative and qualitative) collected from first-year arts and social sciences students will be presented. These data will be used as a springboard for small group sessions wherein participants will talk about how student expectations affect both those who deliver and pursue higher education. Participants will work in these small groups to explore this topic as it relates to their school. Both ideas for understanding today's first-year customer/student and ways for faculty, et al. to cope and interact effectively with today's first-year students will be the goal of the small groups. As a summary activity, participants will be encouraged to share insights and experiences.

Learning Modules to Enhance Student Engagement

Ken Cramer
Professor of Psychology
University of Windsor
519-253-3000 x.2239

kramer@uwindsor.ca

Craig Ross
Graduate Student
University of Windsor
519-253-3000 x.2218
rossq@uwindsor.ca

The presentation will highlight the need for student learning modules, including time management, and how to take tests and read a textbook. We then present our data from two studies, conducted during the Fall 2007 and 2008 semesters; wherein we could track midterm and final exam performance for students who received the modules either before or after the midterm. Finally, we will stimulate discussion of how this tool could be used across the first year curriculum and what challenges could be overcome from implementation.

Implementation of a New Learning Outcome-Based Undergraduate Curriculum: The Role of the First-Year Introduction to Business Course

Diana Kao
Associate Dean, Odette School of Business
University of Windsor
1-519-253-3000
kao@uwindsor.ca

John Phillips
Assistant Professor
Odette School of Business
1-519-253-3000
jrp@uwindsor.ca

Odette School of Business introduced a newly designed learning outcome-based undergraduate curriculum. A first-year Introduction to Business course was developed for the new curriculum. The objectives of the course, in terms of first-year learning experience, are primarily 1) to ease first-year business students into a business curriculum, and 2) to shape first-year business students into proper attitude toward learning in the next four years.

The Introduction to Business course takes a holistic approach in helping students develop an understanding of their future places, as entry-level managers, in business and other forms of organizations. Functional business learning is undertaken using the lecture method. In parallel, the basic elements of strategic management are introduced in order to develop students' strategic thinking capabilities. Project work focuses on adapting students' career strategies to the employment environment, and on adapting companies' strategies to their competitive environments. Finally, the case method is used to emphasize ethical self-management, group dynamics and organizational governance, and entrepreneurial processes involved in starting and managing a small business. The course demands that students use their initiative, develop their analytical, decision-making and interpersonal management skills, and take responsibility for achieving success.

Learning Objectives and Expected Outcomes:

? Knowledge: Under standard university testing conditions, students are to demonstrate that they have acquired a basic level of business-related knowledge sufficient, at a minimum, to achieve a passing grade on the combined midterm and final examinations.

? Skills: By completing individual and group projects, students are to demonstrate that they have acquired a basic strategic analytical capability sufficient, at a minimum, to achieve a passing grade on the combined individual and group projects.

? Attitudes: Using class participation as a proxy measure, students are to demonstrate a level of responsibility commensurate with that of entry-level managers. They are expected to participate actively in all classes sufficient, at a minimum, to achieve a passing grade for participation.

The presenters will discuss the design and implementation of the new business curriculum, and share their experience and observations of first-year business students from teaching multiple sections of the Introduction to Business course in the past year.

Teaching the Teacher: Faculty Development for First-Year Seminars

Donna Ritch
Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920)465-2274
ritchd@uwgb.edu

Regan Gurung
Professor
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920)465-5679
gurungr@uwgb.edu

Andrew Kersten
Professor
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920)465-2443
kerstena@uwgb.edu

Georjeanna Wilson-Doenges
Associate Professor
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920)465-2479
wilsong@uwgb.edu

Scott Furlong
Professor
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920)465-2995
furlongs@uwgb.edu

The First Year Seminar Program began as a result of first-year students at UW-Green Bay scoring statistically lower than students at other similar colleges on educational engagement measured by the NSSE. Over the course of the past two years, UW-Green Bay faculty have delivered small sections of general education courses and newly created interdisciplinary seminars as part of the First Year Seminar Program.

Our assessment results from these seminars clearly demonstrate that they are an important tool for promoting student success, a finding echoed in national studies done on first year programs

in general. Instructors play an important role in this success and for that reason faculty development is a key component. Teaching first year students is not equivalent to teaching upper-level classes and successfully facilitating small classes of students immediately from high school takes special skills. Additionally, data clearly suggests that current cohorts of first year students are different from those from years before. To that end, we have created a faculty development web site with training modules for first year seminar faculty and staff to provide a dynamic resource for first year programs.

The modules include but are not limited to understanding first year students, classroom management, peer mentors, and assessment. Practical topics focus upon the integration of writing and information literacy into the first year seminar, syllabus development, facilitation of group work, and integration with co-curricular activities.

During this session we plan to demonstrate how several of these modules can be used in faculty development in the First Year Program and developing staff to instruct first year seminar courses.

Classroom Management in First-Year Seminars

Donna Ritch
Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
(920)465-2274
ritchd@uwgb.edu

Summary: None

The Engaged Campus: Service-Learning in the First Year

Jennifer Rockwood
Director First Year Experience
University of Toledo
419-530-2330
Jennifer.rockwood@utoledo.edu

By incorporating Service Learning at the onset of their university careers, students have the opportunity to understand early on one of the overlooked hallmarks of a liberal arts education: becoming a citizen of the world.

There is a growing need for civic engagement with faculty leadership on campus. This presentation will explore experiences with teaching a First Year Seminar with a Service Learning component. Sharing best practices, student testimonials, reflection assignments, suggestions for community outreach, pedagogical justifications, training tips for instructors, slides/video from a final community event, and advice for starting a similar program on your campus will be discussed. Professors, students, instructors, academic advisers, and administrators will benefit from this presentation of faculty, community and student engagement. We will provide handouts as well as time for interaction and questions from participants.

The theme, Shaping Faculty Roles in a Time of Change: Leadership for Student Learning applies in a timely way to the engaged student Seminar. How fitting that a first-generation, working-class student will participate in a volunteer project alongside his or her wealthy

suburban counterpart; that a rural student with little exposure to other cultures pairs up with an inner-city high school graduate; or a transfer student from another time zone can learn alongside a homegrown local...the possibilities are endless, with Service Learning providing the great common denominator for higher education contributing to the public good.

In addition to this classroom teamwork, first-year students involved in Service Learning projects experience a boost to self-confidence and self-worth at an uncertain and often scary time for them. Students begin to develop critical thinking and writing skills through both reflection and interaction with the community, increased social responsibility, and even the opportunity for career exploration. In turn, our community partners can view the university as a willing participant in the betterment of local and national issues.

The Umbrella Effect: Initiating Retention Programs for an Engaged Learning Campus

Cheryl Hanewicz
Senior Director of Student Success and Retention
Utah Valley University
801-863-6539
hanewich@uvu.edu

Marcy Glassford
Coordinator Student Success and Retention
Utah Valley University
801-863-7067
marcyg@uvu.edu

Ron Hammond
Professor, Behavioral Science
Utah Valley University
801-863-8344
ronh@uvu.edu

Yuderka Lewis
Academic Advisor
Utah Valley University
801-863-6713
yudi.lewis@uvu.edu

Utah Valley University (UVU) received a Title III grant in 2005 and has used this funding to initiate a number of retention programs. The office of Student Success and Retention (SSR) was created and is responsible for managing the grant and implementing new programs. Our campus community of engaged learners' paradigm is the broad umbrella that guides our engagement-research-service efforts. SSR personnel work with faculty, administrators, and staff across campus; and these collaborative efforts are providing results. Jumpstart Orientation, which was designed for small groups of new students and their parents, was developed in 2007 through SSR and is now institutionalized within the office of Student Life. A first-year experience course has been developed with SSR funding and classes are now being offered. An additional faculty position was approved by UVU administrators to support this new initiative. Since spring 2008 a web-based Early Alert program has been offered to instructors of freshmen-intensive classes to let us know whether students are not attending class regularly or doing well academically. SSR is working closely with academic advisors and faculty members to create a seamless intervention procedure. Many initiatives are ongoing with continuous assessment cycles. Institutional Research personnel provide retention reports

and are members of SSR committees. In addition, three major retention studies have been conducted with presidential support and multi-departmental involvement to determine the reasons that students do – and do not - graduate. The results guide us in developing new initiatives. For example, we created a student wallet card that lists the top 10 strategies for graduating and includes a phone number to call if students reach a point of wanting to drop out. We incorporate undergraduate students into almost all of the research studies we perform - both as researchers and presenters in their own right – because academic involvement increases retention.

Survival of the Fittest: Change in an Evolving Peer Mentor Program

Lisa Lambert
Director, Student Success/UV Mentor Program
Utah Valley University
801-863-8741
lisa.lambert@uvu.edu

Marinda Ashman
Assistant Director, Student Success/UV Mentor Program
Utah Valley University
801-863-7227
mashman@uvu.edu

Marni Sanft
Coordinator, Mentor Pilot Program
Utah Valley University
801-863-6183
Marni.Sanft@uvu.edu

Charles Darwin claimed that the “fittest” must “succeed in adapting themselves best to their environment.” At Utah Valley University, the environment has changed dramatically as the college has become a university and defined new FYE initiatives to ensure student success and retention. As the campus has evolved, the peer mentor program has been restructured as an academic program with faculty administration and redefined as a student-led program with students helping students. This presentation will cover changes in program administration, FYE curriculum, and peer mentor training and team building in response to student need and institutional growth.

The Student Success/UV Mentor program director, assistant director, and coordinator will address reasons for changes in the program from the past to the present. They will also cover strategic planning for the future as the University develops a fully collaborative Center for Student Success with its own “real estate,” and considers making the FYE course mandatory for all incoming freshmen. They will focus specifically on the improvement initiative that emerged from the campus-wide collaboration while UVU engaged in the Foundations of Excellence program (2005-2006) to create a campus-wide FYE program and planning for significant growth. UV Mentor team leads will discuss the student perspective on changes in the program, the importance of training and team building, and the value of facilitating a student-led peer mentoring program.

The presentation will also demonstrate how assessment has motivated change in the past and helped to plan for future developments. Methods include both qualitative and quantitative research that help analyze mentor effects and FYE curriculum. The objective of this

presentation is to use research and experience that can help other institutions develop and adopt strategies to respond and adapt to institutional growth and assess student need.

Planting, Nurturing, and Harvesting Learning Communities

Christy Cheney
LinC Coordinator College-Wide/Student Success Professor
Valencia Community College
407-582-2325
ccheney@valenciacc.edu

Julie Phelps
Project Director, Achieving the Dream (AtD), and Math Professor
Valencia Community College
407-582-2527
jphelps@valenciacc.edu

David Hosman
LinC Coordinator, West/ Counselor
Valencia Community College
407-582-1303
dhosman@valenciacc.edu

Terry Rafter-Carles
LinC Coordinator, East/Student Success Professor
Valencia Community College
407-582-2637
traftercarles@valenciacc.edu

Mia Pierre
LinC Coordinator, Osceola/Student Success Professor
Valencia Community College
407-582-4874
mpierre23@valenciacc.edu

Integration across disciplines and the infusion of student support services across the curriculum is key in building the community dynamic that makes Valencia Community College's LinC (Learning in Communities) courses successful. Faculty and academic success coaches will share the "nuts and bolts" of integrated lessons, connected learning, and team teaching for the outcome of improved student grades.

Following a brief overview of the logistics of learning communities at Valencia, we will share data demonstrating the success we have had with our program. This will include the selection and training of faculty, the production and implementation of the LinC courses, including student recruitment and registration challenges. Materials provided will include: sample integrated lesson plans, examples of integrated "experiences", success coach "toolbox," a template for creating an integrated lesson or experience, along with quantitative and qualitative data. Participants will leave this interactive session with a thorough knowledge of and possible "game plan" for implementing this process at their own college.

From Data to Meaningful Information: A Strategy to Improve the Use of Assessment Data in Institutional Decision Making

Kurt Ewen
Director, Institutional Assessment
Valencia Community College
407-582-3413
kewen@valenciacc.edu

Roberta Brown
Assistant Director, Learning Assessment
Valencia Community College
407-582-3421
rbrown75@valenciacc.edu

Valencia Community College is a large multi-campus institution with a strong tradition of collaborative/consensus based decision making. While committed to the development of a culture of evidence, Valencia, like most institutions, has struggled to effectively use assessment data in its decision making process because the meaning of the most potentially useful data is often ambiguous and open to a wide variety of interpretations. This challenge has come most clearly into view as Valencia attempts to act on data emerging from the implementation of strategies tied to our work with Achieving the Dream, a Lumina Foundation funded grant initiative.

In this presentation we will share the data processing model that has been implemented at Valencia. In this particular example, the data and process by which we are examining the impact and value of mandating a Student Success course for students testing into preparatory level in three discipline areas (reading, writing and math), and the proposal to expand the mandate to include students who test into prep in two areas. We will discuss the first iteration of the process, the resulting administrative decision, the new research plan that was developed based on the feedback received and its implementation. At the time of this presentation, we will also have completed a second iteration of the data processing model. We will share how the model has helped to change the culture of the college.

By sharing the data processing model that has been implemented at Valencia, the following goals will be addressed:

1. Utilizing assessment data to improve student learning (student success)
2. Influencing institutional and policy changes
3. Promoting data driven decision making

Presenters will also share the missteps experienced with the use and dissemination of assessment data, along with the challenges of effectively making meaning of data to support institutional decision making.

Empowering Minority Students to Succeed in the First Year

Mary Allen
Interim Director of Student Success
Valencia Community College
407-582-2274
mallen@valenciacc.edu

John Stover
Director, Bridges to Success Program
Valencia Community College

407-582-1395
jstover@valenciacc.edu

Roberta Brown
Assistant Director, Learning Assessment
Valencia Community College
407-582-3421
rbrown75@valenciacc.edu

CoCo Hutchison
Professor of Student Success
Valencia Community College
407-582-2096
chutchison1@.valenciacc.edu

Larry Herndon
Professor of Student Success
Valencia Community College
407-582-1040
lherndon1@valenciacc.edu

Presenters will share how the Bridges Program, Student Success and the Math Departments college wide integrated the academic curriculum to assist minority students in making the transition from high school to college in a three-semester pilot program.

Each phase of the pilot will be discussed beginning with the selection process for the Bridges students. Next, we'll cover the design of a Summer Term B one-credit SLS 1101 course that began the student's journey of self-discovery through topics such as Mentoring, Community Service, Health, Financial Empowerment and Etiquette. Our next topic will be the Fall LinC course (Learning in Community) which combined SLS 2930 (selected topics) with MAT 0012 (Pre-Algebra). Here the students' focus changed to self-motivation through the use of Skip Downing's On Course. Continuing, the presenters will discuss the second LinC consisting of SLS 1122 and MAT 0024 (Beginning Algebra) which took place in the Spring Term. Here the focus changed to Academic success for this LinC using Ellis' Becoming a Master Student. Concluding with a discussion of how and why we used the same Student Success and Math professors for the three semesters. Also, at that time, we will share the data that has been collected including students responses from focus groups and cohort analysis of success and persistence.

Focused Inquiry: Engaging Students, Enhancing Success

Daphne Rankin
Director of Student Engagement
Virginia Commonwealth University
804-827-8204
drankin@vcu.edu

Virginia Commonwealth University, an urban research institution with over 32,000 students, has implemented a number of programs for first-year students in the past two years. These programs, housed in the University College (UC), promote a sense of community for over 3800 first-year students. Through academic advising, tutoring, writing assistance, a summer reading program, and courses introducing students to university academics, the UC fosters student success.

The implementation of Focused Inquiry (FI), one of these programs and a cornerstone of VCU's newly-developed Core Curriculum will be discussed. This year-long class emphasizes five skill areas: written and oral communication; critical thinking; collaboration; information fluency; and ethic/civic responsibility. Classes of 22 students remain with the same instructor for the year. Interdisciplinary and thematic course readings include a summer reading selection, a holiday reading, and a custom text designed by FI instructors. The course is learning-centered; students participate fully in developing the educational experience.

The FI faculty have been recruited nationally from many disciplines. Although the largest number have a composition background, other faculty come from sociology, education, art, political science, American studies, literature, philosophy, law, and theatre. FI faculty focus on maximizing student learning; research is not required, although many publish and most are professionally active.

The program is assessed through a value-added approach utilizing rubrics for each skill. Faculty demonstrate exceptional teamwork in sharing of information and teaching techniques. Examples of the teamwork that has evolved from this format will be discussed during the workshop.

A faculty evaluation system, developed by the faculty and administrators utilizing a representative model of participation, will be presented. The faculty is divided into eight teams that work together and support each other; a representative from each team works on the evaluation committee. The system took one year to create and is currently being implemented.

Learning Communities

Karen Weathermon
Director of Learning Communities
Washington State University
509-335-5488
kweathermon@wsu.edu

Summary: None

The Development of Early Intervention/Alert Initiatives

Vivia Fowler
Dean of the College
Wesleyan College
478-757-5228
vfowler@wesleyancollege.edu

Redefining the Common Readership Experience Through Service and Travel

Russell Lowery-Hart
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
West Texas A&M University
806.651.2931
rhart@wtamu.edu

Kendra Campbell
Director, First-Year Programs
West Texas A&M University
806.651.2044
kcampbell@wtamu.edu

Wes Condray
Graduate Student, Academic Affairs
West Texas A&M University
806.651.2931
wcondray@wtamu.edu

WTAMU extended its common reader program by selecting first-year students, dubbed Readership WT Ambassadors, to complete service projects through international travel. Extensive survey results indicate that WTAMU students, like their peers nationally, do not feel their generation is responsible to, or for, their international peers. As a result, students indicate little understanding of current global conflicts, and do not feel their lives will be affected by world crises. Using the curricular innovation of a campus-wide common reader program combined with travel related to the selected text, WTAMU has enhanced students' educational skills by developing their broader global understanding.

For 2007, WTAMU selected *Night*, by Elie Wiesel. Traveling the same route written by Wiesel and linking these experiences to current global situations, Readership WT Ambassadors were equipped to facilitate cultural change with their peers, families, and communities. Through an essay/interview process, first-year students were selected to travel to Poland. They returned home as Ambassadors for Change and spoke to students about what they learned, implemented projects, and encouraged "their" generation to embrace our global responsibilities. The results have transformed student engagement in our first year.

The Readership WT common book program now includes a travel component with each book selection. Linking the common reader program with study abroad and service-learning has significant curricular impacts. This coming year, WTAMU will develop curriculum assignments, projects, and services addressing the conflicts rocking Africa based on *What is the What*, by Dave Eggers. Core courses will tackle domestic issues related to Africa through policy, politics and awareness. Select students would tackle issues related to Africa through an extensive study-aboard experience where they would support existing efforts with their hands, hearts, and minds.

This session will outline how schools could develop a similar program, fund it, and implement it.

Focusing on First-Year Retention

Stephanie Sue Helmers
Assistant Director for Residence Life
Western Carolina University
(828) 227-2812
shelmers@email.wcu.edu

Brian Boyer
Resident Director
Western Carolina University
828-227-2460

bboyer@email.wcu.edu

Rodney Franks
Resident Director
Western Carolina University
828-227-3232
rfranks@email.wcu.edu

This presentation focuses on the creation of a first-year residential program designed to meet institutional struggles with retention. The program, Western PEAKS, focuses on providing students with a smooth transition to university life. When initially implemented the program sought to place students into Freshman Leadership courses and provided a series of “academic support” initiatives (i.e. study hall, tutors, writing workshops, etc.). In addition, the program provided students with more one-on-one interaction with Resident Assistants in order to provide them with a stronger connection to the university. During this first year, the program was created “on the fly.” After initial data in the Spring of 2008 indicated the program was succeeding in meeting its goals, the program was strengthened through the development of a mission statement and learning outcomes. The learning outcomes served as a driving force for re-designing structured one-on-one interactions between the students and RAs and the development of programmatic initiatives.

This presentation will detail the initial program, processes undertaken to enhance the program, the learning outcomes and various programs that support them, and future directions and goals of the program. In addition, the presenters will share details of the staffing changes, budgets, and collaborations built in order to make the program a success. Participants will learn how they can undertake similar processes on their campuses to enhance retention.

The Band of Brothers: An Atypical First-Year Course for Male Students

Brian Boyer
Resident Director
Western Carolina University
(828) 227-2460
bboyer@wcu.edu

This program will detail for participants all of the components of the Band of Brothers program at Western Carolina University. Band of Brothers offers leadership development with a focus on men’s issues. First-year participants live in a group housing arrangement that allows on-site leadership opportunities where they can put into practice the skills that they learn in the classroom. There are also opportunities to begin raising awareness of men’s issues among others in the campus community. Program participants are enrolled in a specially designed section of USI 140 that focuses on emotional wellness and gender-related studies. Students look at male socialization and expectations, how they are impacted by these forces, and how they can better confront the good, the bad, and the ugly of being a college male in the 21st century.

Since its inception this course has been extremely popular and successful. This presentation will look at core elements of the Band of Brothers program and the elements that comprise the class. The students in this class have been shown to have a significantly higher GPA and retention rate vs. students that are not in the course.

This presentation will look at possible reasons that this course has been so successful and why male students have responded so well to it. We have added three more sections of the class, and it fills up just as fast as we add it. The class has been evaluated at a 100% student

satisfaction rate. We have spent a great deal of time asking participants of this course why they liked it so much, and those results will be shared with participants as well.

FYE Web Site 3.1: Revising for Inclusion

Judith Dallinger
Associate Provost for Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
Western Illinois University
309-298-1066
J-Dallinger@wiu.edu

Katrina Daytner
Associate Professor, FYE Coordinator
Western Illinois University
309-298-1015
KM-Daytner@wiu.edu

Bradley Dilger
Associate Professor of English
Western Illinois University
309-298-2212
CB-Dilger@wiu.edu

Ronald Pettigrew
FYE Peer Mentor Coordinator
Western Illinois University
309-298-1066
R-Pettigrew@wiu.edu

The FYE program at Western Illinois University is typically described as including three main components. All new freshmen must enroll in and pass two discipline based FYE classes. Freshmen read a book provided to them as part of the Common Reading Program. Freshmen residence halls conduct FYE Seminars during the first 8-10 weeks of the fall semester. Many additional related services are offered including writing and mathematics tutoring centers, required 1 ½ day summer orientation sessions, intrusive advising, an FYE Kick Off event and New Student convocation, fall orientation, etc.

When the three primary components of the program began in Fall 2005, an FYE website was created primarily to describe the requirements for the FYE classes with an intended audience of the faculty and peer mentors who would be converting their existing courses to FYE status. A complex calendaring system facilitated the required co-curricular events requirement of the classes.

Discomfort with the site led to a major re-development in early 2007. Students enrolled in English 480, Computers and Writing, evaluated the site, and conducted focus groups analyses with other possible target audiences (including prospective and current students). Using this data, teams of students developed recommendations for new and revised sections of the site. During Summer 2007, the faculty member worked closely with the academic administrators of the program to revise and launch the new site.

In addition to descriptions of the FYE components, the current site included a weblog feature, a did you know section, a local events calendar, and other target specific sections.

The proposed poster will include a description of the current website sections and their intended target audiences, the results of the work by the English 480 class, an indication of changes from the earlier site, and usage data for the current site.

Website address: www.wiu.edu/FYE/

Preparing Peer Mentors for Success

Katrina Daytner
Associate Professor, Faculty Associate for FYE
Western Illinois University
309-298-1015
KM-Daytner@wiu.edu

Ronald Pettigrew
Graduate Assistant
Western Illinois University
309-298-1066
R-Pettigrew@wiu.edu

Adam Busard
Peer Mentor
Western Illinois University
309-298-1066
AJ-Busard@wiu.edu

Alicia Wester
Administrative Assistant
Western Illinois University
309-298-1066
AL-Wester@wiu.edu

Judith Dallinger
Associate Provost for Undergraduate and Graduate Education
Western Illinois University
309-298-1066
J-Dallinger@wiu.edu

WIU requires approximately 2000 first year students to pass two FYE courses, from approximately 35 different entry level courses from various academic departments. Each semester over 90 students serve as peer mentors with approximately 80 faculty members.

We attempted to develop a training program that is meaningful for all peer mentors. We will describe the process of creating this program, the content delivered, and share the perspective of one peer mentor's experience of the training.

Preparing the Training:

Based on a literature review of high quality FYE programs, incoming Fall 2008 FYE peer mentors were surveyed about their training interests and needs. Results of both led to contact with several representatives of campus groups asking them to participate in the Peer Mentor Training. Survey results will be shared.

The Training:

The goals of the training were to expose the peer mentors to a variety of resources on campus, to encourage reflection about how those resources might benefit the first year students with whom they would be working, and to create an active and interactive session.

The training included: participation in the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory followed by discussion; residence hall programming; ideas for and participation in ice breakers; information about student organizations on campus with special emphasis on diversity groups, and a discussion of what it means to be a mentor. We provided lunch and snacks, a nice pen, and a student planner.

The Experience:

Anecdotal feedback has been positive. Results of our current survey about students' experiences will be shared. The peer mentor co-presenter will share his reflections on the experience.

Continuing Struggles:

We continue to struggle with getting all peer mentors to be invested in their role. We are working on creating a course to provide peer mentors the option of credit, in addition to monetary compensation.

First in the Family: First-Generation Students Talk About What Gets Them Through

Kathleen Cushman
Researcher and Writer
WKCD, Inc.
917-428-3878
kathleencushman@mac.com

How should first-generation college students deal with the pressures of combining college studies with family responsibilities for their children, young siblings, and dependent elders? How can they balance the jobs that pay their way with the hours they must spend on academics? If their prior schooling proves inadequate to the demands of college work, where can they turn for help?

Because these questions are at once individual and institutional, we can learn much by attending to how actual first-generation students make their way to the four-year degree. Will a safety net of peer mentors overcome a young man's reluctance to ask for help? Do small but significant adjustments prevent a caretaker of young children from dropping off the university's rolls? Might a campus residence that combines social life with an academic focus make the difference to faltering first-year students? What does it take for such students to begin thinking of themselves as scholars?

Students with widely different situations and family histories tell their stories in six succinct audio-slideshows produced by documentarian Kathleen Cushman for the nonprofit organization WKCD, which follows youth marginalized by color, income, or language. Building on the two-volume set *First in the Family* (offering "advice about college by first-generation students" to both high school and college students), these vivid testimonies underline the need for institutions of higher learning to recognize the dilemmas of this population and extend assistance when it matters most.

In the end, that task involves both regarding such students as individuals and devising solutions that address their common needs. These narratives provide fertile ground for that work, and good evidence that such effort does bear fruit. This session invites participants to engage in

reflection, critique, and creative inquiry to yield insights and solutions as various as the students we meet here.

Targeting STEM student success and retention through development of scientific reasoning skills

Michael Edwards
NSF STEP Grant Program Manager
Wright State University
937-775-3180
michael.edwards@wright.edu

Kathleen Koenig
Assistant Professor of Physics
Wright State University
937-775-3139
kathy.koenig@wright.edu

Melissa Schen
Assistant Professor of Biology
Wright State University
937-775-3422
melissa.schen@wright.edu

Susan Yeoman
Associate Director of Students Services
Wright State University
937-775-2613
susan.yeoman@wright.edu

Michele Wheatly
Dean of College of Science and Mathematics
Wright State University
937-775-2611
michele.wheatly@wright.edu

The presentation begins with relevant background information. WSU is an open-enrollment institution and up to 50% of entering STEM-intended majors fail their first introductory science course. Student math placement test data is provided to show how it has enabled us to predict which of these entering students are seriously at risk.

The presentation describes how an innovative entry level course, SM 101, was developed to target “not-yet-ready” students. The course framework is guided by a set of scientific reasoning and mathematical skills that were determined deficient in these students. The curriculum contains 8 chapters with each focusing on specific skills. Explicit scientific reasoning training is integrated within these chapters. Skills developed early on are addressed again in new contexts in later chapters. A thorough description of the development of this research-based curriculum and the rationale behind each included activity will be provided. Other key elements of SM 101 include the use of peer instructors, supplemental instruction, and learning communities. The successes and challenges associated with these elements will be presented.

A description of the logistics of implementing a new course and lessons learned will be

provided. In particular, we discuss the need for (1) department buy-in, (2) using the course for general elective credit, and (3) automatic enrollment of "at-risk" students into SM 101. Without this support the success of the course is severely limited.

The presentation ends with a thorough description of the course evaluation plan. The rationale for chosen instruments will be discussed as well as current findings. The course has been offered four times to over 125 students. Data and findings are provided demonstrating student gains in scientific reasoning skills, changes in attitude towards science and science careers, and retention data.

This work is supported in part by NSF Grant DUE 0622466.