



A New FYE Approach For Millennials

Presentation by:

Jean-Marie Venturini, ENGL 104 Coordinator

Otis College of Art and Design

Liberal Arts and Sciences

9045 Lincoln Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90045

t. 310.665.6920 email jventurini@otis.edu



Outline

- Introduction (“Millennials” & “Embedding”)
- Otis College of Art and Design
 - Institution
 - Faculty
 - Students
 - Challenges
 - Initial Assessment
- Why We Needed To Change Our Approach
- Data
- What We Did and How We Did It
- Millennial Characteristics Utilized
- Assessment



Connecting to Millennials

- Created a bridge between academic work and FYE within the classroom – both occurring simultaneously and integrated completely and seamlessly
- Influenced by characteristics outlined by Neil Howe and William Strauss in their 2007 work *Millennials Go to College* and M. Svinicki's "Cognitive Apprenticeship" approach discussed in *Teaching and Learning on the Edge of the Millennium: Building on What We Have Learned* (1999)



Characteristics

- smart
- ambitious
- incredibly busy
- ethnically diverse
- looking forward to planned career paths
- well prepared
- eager to please but also more pressured and reluctant to take creative chances,
- confident
- optimistic
- team and rule oriented
- work hard (tendency toward conformity)

OTIS



Institution

Mission: *Otis prepares diverse students of art and design to enrich our world through their creativity, their skill, and their vision.*

- Otis is a creative community of artists, designers and students working together in Los Angeles.
- Otis has an established 90 year history of learning communities (students grouped into studio sections of 15 students who attend all studio courses together with the same faculty for one year.)
- All studio sections are mixed in Liberal Arts and Sciences classes because of their English placement assessment.
- First Year English: ENGL 090 Developmental English; ENGL 104 Critical Analysis and Semiotics; ENGL 106 Composition and Critical Thinking



Liberal Arts & Sciences Faculty

- English faculty are not in a separate department
- One office where faculty from various disciplines gather
- Easy for coordination (about 5 faculty teaching in the first year)
- Common syllabi

OTIS



Students

Overall: *The students are a discerning group and want to learn. Students come for studying art and design but needed to learn how to become hardy, resilient, accept criticism, and take responsibility.*



Student Needs

- Conducted initial assessment in 2004 to determine topics for FYE
- Passed out in class surveys -- 33 questions organized into categories:
 - Otis Community
 - Time Management
 - Stress Management
 - Responsibility: Self and Society
 - The Otis Classroom
 - The Otis Community
 - First Year Creativity and Artistic Development
- Sampled 60% of first year population (150 students)
- Combined with anecdotal feedback



Highlights from 2004

Otis Community →

- English is my first language:
 - Yes (59%) No (40%)
- I know which office to go to at Otis when I am having difficulties.
 - Rarely or never true (17%)
 - Sometimes true (26%)
 - Often or usually true (25%)
 - Always or almost always true (25%)
 - I do not know where to go for (7%)



Time Management →

- I complete my homework on time.
 - Rarely or never true (4%)
 - Sometimes true (15%)
 - Often or usually true (30%)
 - Always or almost always true (51%)
- I see structuring my time as an important effort.
 - Rarely or never true (3%)
 - Sometimes true (17%)
 - Often or usually true (33%)
 - Always or almost always true (47%)



Stress Management →

- I am usually comfortable with the course load at Otis.
 - Rarely or never true (11%)
 - Sometimes true (45%)
 - Often or usually true (35%)
 - Always or almost always true (9%)

Responsibility: Self and Society →

- I think of myself as trapped by circumstances beyond my control.
 - Rarely or never true (27%)
 - Sometimes true (50%)
 - Often or usually true (18%)
 - Always or almost always true (4%)
- I can change my life.
 - Rarely or never true (0%)
 - Sometimes true (13%)
 - Often or usually true (33%)
 - Always or almost always (52%)



The Otis Classroom →

- This semester I approached Otis faculty members to ask questions or further assistance.
 - Rarely or never true (9%)
 - Sometimes true (38%)
 - Often or usually true (39%)
 - Always or almost always true (13%)
- Otis faculty encourage non-native English speaking students to participate in the classroom or studio.
 - Rarely or never true (8%)
 - Sometimes true (31%)
 - Often or usually true (29%)
 - Always or almost always (31%)

The Otis Community →

- This semester, I have conversations with classmates, outside of the classroom or studio.
 - Rarely or never true (7%)
 - Sometimes true (17%)
 - Often or usually true (32%)
 - Always or almost always true (43%)



FNDT Creativity and Artistic Development →

- It is most important in the first year of art/design school to
 - Express myself through various art/design media (13%)
 - Learn technical, perceptual, and thinking skills to support my creativity (57%)
 - Specifically prepare for my intended major area of concentration (10%)
 - Generally adjust and adapt to life in a professional setting (13%)



Anecdotal Feedback

Top reasons students are successful at Otis are:

- A passion for art.
- Creativity.
- Good with time management, and make good use of small increments of time during the day.
- Good work ethic, motivated, and have the desire to do well.
- The small class size,
- The ability to stay relaxed.
- Many students feel vulnerable financially.
- The assignments are well thought out.
- Good health.
- The ability to be in the “in” group of good students (Frequent comment).
- Structured and disciplined classroom. environments were frequently cited. Students like organization and appreciate faculty who come prepared to class and who will push them.
- Success on an assignment is rewarding, creates a sense of pride.

Top reasons students have difficulty at Otis:

- Sleep deprivation.
- Poor time management.
- Lack of motivation/lazy.
- Lack of money.
- Absences.
- Slow readers or can't read well.
- Party and club too much.
- Lack of discipline.
- Too much homework.
- Procrastination.
- Lack of exercise.
- Few students see talent as a criterion for success at Otis.
- A few students commented about substance abuse.
- A few students are not ready to be students.
- Not owning a computer leaves students at a disadvantage.



Challenges in Launching FYE Program

- Lacked room in curriculum for additional units for dedicated FYE seminar course
- Favored one-one-connection
- Wanted a program that was continuous and adaptive as student pressures/needs change throughout semester
- Recognized faculty as an under-utilized resource



Initial Step

- Took a 2 unit English course and added a third unit hour for FYE guest speakers/lecturers
- Not enough application of FYE
- No connection made between Academics and Student Affairs
- Not seeing an impact on student behavior
- Feedback was positive but . . .



Saw A Missed Opportunity

- In Fall 2007, FYE was further embedded into English course
- Saw opportunity for greater engagement between Academics and Student Affairs
- Already provided a mixed context
- Asked:
 - How can we increase student engagement with FYE presentations?
 - How can we make a greater connection to the presentation information and their roles as students?



Compared Students '04 & '07

- CIRP Data

2004

- 28.8 % are non native speakers of English
- 12.8% private independent college-prep schools
- 12.8% from private religious/parochial schools
- 30.9% spent 3-5 hours/week on homework
- 21.8% spent 6-10 hour/week on homework
- 49% did not work last year
- 82% are American Citizens
- 59.3% want to understand other countries & culture

2007

- **29.8 % are non native speakers of English**
- 5.6% private independent college-prep schools
- 11.3% from private religious/parochial schools
- 34.2% spent 3-5 hours/week on homework
- 20.7% spent 6-10 hour/week on homework
- 45% did not work last year
- 82% are American Citizens
- 70.4% want to understand other countries & culture



How We Did It?

A very millennial question --- Recognized an opportunity untapped by having presentations within the classroom; an opportunity for linkages

- Fall 2007, piloted program where integrated FYE presentations with academic coursework in first year required English:
 - First outlined a theme for FYE as a guiding principal “Health and Wellness”
 - Identified topics and skills in coordination with Student Affairs & Foundation that were important for first year students:
 - Fiscal Responsibility - Social Responsibility – Diversity - Sleep Initiative - Note-taking Skills - Time Management - Locus of Control - Awareness of Services on Campus - Meyers-Brigg
 - Invited guest speakers into classroom as “experts” in subject areas from Student Affairs and Financial Aid
 - Academic Coursework connects directly to the FYE subject topics utilizing faculty as partners in presenting FYE related topics



English Course Description

- Particular emphasis was placed on mainstream ENGL 104 course.
- **Course Description:** Critical Analysis and Semiotics (CAS) is a degree-applicable reading and writing 2-unit course for foundation students and transfer students who have not completed six units of first year composition elsewhere. The emphasis is on exposing students to the world of cultural signs (semiotics) while developing a number of skills: critical and analytical reading, effective academic writing, evaluating information, and participating in college-level discussions. The reading materials and the topics examined this semester will concern popular culture with a special emphasis on gender studies, media literacy, technology and human interaction, the American national character, and issues of power and ideology. The course will build upon already acquired popular cultural literacy to enable students to explore familiar phenomena within the context of the academic world.
- Course Theme: ***Artists and Designers are the future producers of popular culture. Consequently, what is your responsibility to society?***



English Syllabus

- Included within syllabus description of FYE and its intention within course for faculty to introduce to students week 1:
 - **Embedded within the course curriculum for CAS, will be several modules connected to the First Year Experience, or FYE. FYE is meant to serve as a transition for students into the Otis Community, to provide you with information and skills necessary for a successful academic career at Otis. The theme of these FYE components focuses on Wellness and Community. We will be inviting three guest presenters into this course as well engage in several in class writing and discussion activities. College can be an unsettling experience, there is a lot to take in and FYE is meant to provide you with further support.**



Focused on Intellectual Experience

- With integration, created Common Intellectual Experiences through combination of lecture, reading and academic discourse which “includes advanced integrative studies and [requires] participation in a learning community” (AAC&U) established within the First Year English Course.



FYE Components

- Broke FYE Components into separate areas that would be covered by both Student Affairs in-class presentations and academic coursework
 - Skill Acquisition Identified As Weak
 - Information Acquisition
 - Responsibility



Skill Acquisition

- Focused on → note-taking; time management; stress management
- Used Multiple Platforms:
 - Enhanced Podcasts created through iTunesU
 - Students can access podcasts whenever and wherever they want
 - Viewable not only in the classroom but on cell phones and iPods through iTunes
 - These projects expanded the instructors teaching methods and also allowed for active student learning.
 - Reinforced note-taking skills with classroom discussion of active reading strategies, notes turned in on a weekly basis, notes taken during classroom documentary viewings (provided templates/rubrics)
 - Introduced representative from Student Affairs as guest lecturer on subject



Information Acquisition

Focused on →

- Familiarity with campus resources (ex. SRC/Financial Aid/Registration/ Student Affairs/ Counseling Services/ Wood Shop/Tool Crib)
 - Scavenger Hunt Fall 2007
 - Moved to a PowerPoint presentation Fall 2008
 - Evolve program for Fall 2009 to student presentations
- Sleep Initiative
 - Introduced representative from Student Affairs as guest lecturer on subject of Sleep Deprivation



Responsibility

Focused on →

- Fiscal Responsibility
 - Connected to Text Reading, “The More Factor” by Laurence Shames from *Signs of Life*
 - Connected to In-Class Writing Assignment Presentation by Financial Aid
- Social Responsibility
 - Theme of Course – discussion topic
 - Readings on Social Responsibility
 - Watch “The Future We Will Create: Inside the World of Ted” documentary
 - Topic of first presentation connected to Advertising
 - Subject of third paper prompt



Emphasize Connections

- Situating in academic course and creating academic assignments that directly connect, reinforced presentations and skills, allowed for greater student engagement and criticality in viewing FYI components and topics, provided structure to FYE modules, opportunity for more feedback, and increased student/instructor interaction
- Howe and Strauss note – feedback and evaluation is incredibly important to a millennial “Evaluation is not just about grade but part of the learning process and will seek evaluation and expect it whenever they want it and take feedback extremely seriously.”



Cognitive Apprenticeship Approach

- connected to Svinicki's cognitive apprenticeship "learning by observing and - 'expert' model" (Svinicki, 1999, pp. 15-16) – a format used to great success in studio courses that we wished to apply into the English program
- English instructors in coordination with FYE presenters create a relationship described by Svinicki as "...the learner (the apprentice) observes the instructor (the master craftsman) go about the business of thinking about the field while describing the thought process aloud." The instructor discusses the FYE modules with students in context of academic coursework



- through course assignments:
 - presentations and skills are consistently reinforced and “the instructor gradually places more and more responsibility for problem solution on learners until eventually the learners can solve the problems on their own.”
- grading and in class discussion linked to course subjects: “Provide reinforcement for activities wish to encourage” (ex. “praise, positive feedback”)
- concept of receiving grades on certain material “Emphasizes internal reinforces and motivation”
- tapping into the learner’s interest is “a way of tapping into internal motivation”
- structure of classroom “Sets challenging yet attainable goals for learning, and provide feedback on progress”(…“goals cannot be so simple that they are meaningless but they should not be beyond the capacity of the learners”)



Assessment in Fall 2007

- Previously relied on paper surveys given at the end of the semester in week 15
- Found surveys cumbersome to calculate and missed collecting immediate feedback
- Moved to online survey Structured Two-Tiered
- Initial Feedback in short specific survey (collected by Student Affairs)
- Larger wholistic impression survey (collected by CAS coordinator)



Examples From Fall 2008

Used online SurveyMonkey

Presentation: Four Corners Diversity Survey

Number of responses: 165 out of 240

Response rate: 68 %

- I learned to think critically about different issues and ideas?
91.5% Yes 8.5% No
- I learned to verbalize and articulate my own thoughts in a group setting.
85.5% Yes 14.5% No
- I learned to form and express my own opinions in front of others?
84.8% Yes 15.2% No
- The Four Corners activity assisted me in learning about diversity outside the realm of racial identity.
83% Yes 17% No
- Overall, the activity assisted me, as a first year student, to learn more about myself and others.
81.8% Yes 18.2% No
- The activity was an effective way to present the content to you.
89.7% Yes 10.3% No



Presentation: Sleep Initiative

Number of responses: 114 out of 240

Response rate: 47%

- I learned the importance of sleep.
99.1% Yes 0.9% No
- I learned that certain stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine will affect a person's sleep cycle.
93.0% Yes 7.0% No
- The sleep IQ quiz was helpful in educating me about sleep.
88.6% Yes 11.4% No
- I feel more empowered to change my sleep pattern now that I know more information.
82.5% Yes 17.5% No
- The presentation was an effective way to present the content to you.
88.6% Yes 11.4% No



Presentation: Fiscal Responsibility (Financial Aid)

Number of responses: 18 out of 140

Response rate 13%

- I learned how and when to apply for Financial Aid
88.9% Yes 11.1% No
- I learned how to manage money and debt.
94.4% Yes 5.6% No
- I learned that I am responsible for doing business with Financial Aid, Registration, and Student Accounts.
100% Yes 0.0% No
- The Financial Aid presentation was helpful.
77.8% Yes 22.2% No
- I recommend offering the Financial Aid presentation again next year.
94.4% Yes 5.6% No
- The presentation was an effective way to present the content to you.
72.2% Yes 27.8% No



Final Survey (Wk 15)

- Evaluated FYE in addition to ENGL course content
- Mixed quantitative and qualitative feedback
- (Total Responses = 30% response)
- Why so low?
 - First time faculty have used online survey
- To improve response rate:
 - Timing of Survey is key
 - Give credit (participation)
 - Provide link electronically
 - Ensure faculty are familiar with survey



Sample Data

- *Part of this course involved embedded components in addition to the presentations by guest speakers. Some of these components included the note-taking during documentaries and for homework, the PowerPoint showing you images of spaces on campus, time-management, and discussion of themes such as Health and Wellness and Social Responsibility. The goal of FYE is to help successfully transition students into the college environment. How successful were the FYE topics/components?*
 - 85% overall positive feedback to the above question
- *What topics would you like addressed in the future?*
 - scheduling issues/ techniques for focusing/ missing home
- *What concepts introduced through FYE have you been able to or unable to apply? Please explain.*
 - sleep management (recognizing the importance of sleep)
 - time management (calendaring)
- *Rate the effectiveness of the FYE program:*
 - Excellent 13 (18%)
 - Very Good 21 (30%)
 - Good 28 (39%)
 - Fair 9
 - Poor 0
 - Very Poor 0