

A First Year Seminar That Counts: Incorporating FYE Seminars into the General Education Curriculum

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Abstract

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 intuitional 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.

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Roundtable Discussion

- ◆ *What components are important or crucial for an FYE course to be considered as general education?*
 - *Does content matter?*
 - *Does scope matter?*
 - *Does faculty intent matter?*
 - *What matters most?*

- ◆ *How do you encourage faculty to incorporate the crucial core components into their seminar?*

- ◆ *How can you effectively recruit and encourage faculty?*

- ◆ *What University/faculty sacrifices will need to be made to offer FYE courses as general education?*

- ◆ *What are the benefits of offering FYE seminars as general education?*

- ◆ *How do you accommodate students who transfer into the University?*
 - *Those that transfer in second semester*
 - *Those that transfer later.*

- ◆ *Other Questions?*